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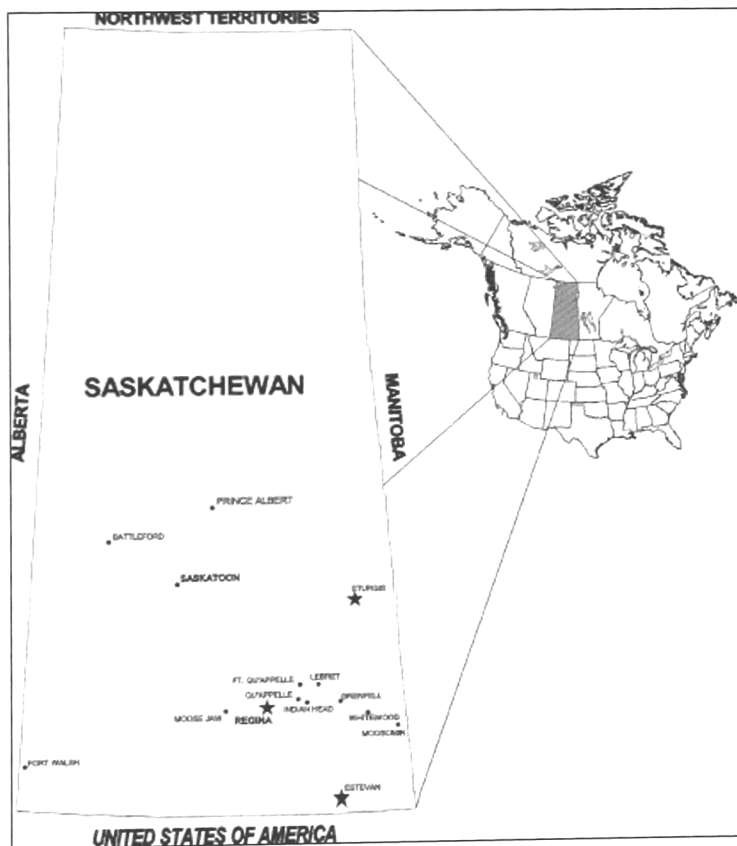
School Bands in Saskatchewan, Canada: A History

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The province of Saskatchewan entered the Canadian Confederation in 1905. Prior to becoming a Canadian province, the name “Saskatchewan” designated a large district in the expansive Northwest Territories. North Dakota and Montana border the province on the south; the current Northwest Territories are to its north. To the east and west are the Canadian provinces of Manitoba and Alberta, respectively (see figure 1).¹

Figure 1
Illustrative map of Saskatchewan



¹For a more detailed treatment of this topic, see Edwin Bruce Wasiak, “The Historical Development of School Bands in Saskatchewan: A Study of Four Selected School Divisions” (D.M.A. diss., Arizona State University, 1997).

Despite an often harsh environment, innovations in the arts contributed to the quality of life in Saskatchewan from its earliest days as a province. The Regina Symphony Orchestra, founded in 1908, is one of Canada's oldest symphony orchestras. The Saskatchewan Music Festival Association, also organized in 1908, was among the first of its type in North America. The University of Saskatchewan established a degree program in music in 1934, the first in western Canada. The Saskatchewan Arts Board, established in 1948, "was the first organization of its kind on the continent."² Saskatchewan became the first province in western Canada to employ a provincial music supervisor in its Department of Education with the hiring of Rj Staples in 1949. Nevertheless, the implementation of band programs in the schools occurred comparatively late in Saskatchewan. It was not until the 1950s that bands gained a foothold in the province's schools.³

Many factors that shaped the history of school bands in the province were as basic as geography, climate, and the economy. Others were related to education initiatives, other government policies, and social values. The development of band programs in four school divisions illustrate this history. The four school divisions selected for this study were the earliest to establish and sustain school band programs in four general population categories: rural (Sturgis School Unit), small urban centers (Estevan Collegiate), large urban centers (Regina Public School Division), and separate school divisions (Regina Roman Catholic Separate

²W.A. Riddell, *Cornerstone For Culture: A History of the Saskatchewan Arts Board From 1948 to 1978* (Regina, SK: Saskatchewan Arts Board, 1979), v.

³William L. Brandhagen, "The Regina Symphony Orchestra," in *Encyclopedia of Music in Canada*, 2d ed.; Mossie Hancock, *Music for One . . . Music for All: The Story of the Saskatchewan Music Festival Association 1908-1988* (Regina, SK: Saskatchewan Music Festival Association Inc., 1988), 5; and J. Paul Green and Nancy Vogan, *Music Education in Canada: A Historical Account* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 387. Rj is Mr. Staples' complete given name.

School Division). The population categories represent all publicly funded school divisions in Saskatchewan.⁴

Antecedents and Precedents

In the late 1800s, British immigrants who settled what is now Saskatchewan brought traditions of the industrial and military bands that were so prevalent in Britain at the time. The influence of these British prototypes remained evident almost a century later. The North West Mounted Police (NWMP) organized the earliest bands in the province, the first of which was established at Fort Walsh in 1878. Soon thereafter, NWMP bands were established at Battleford, Fort Qu'Appelle, and Regina.⁵

The Prince Albert Cornet Band, a town band founded in 1883, was most likely Saskatchewan's first civilian band. Before the

⁴In Canada, education falls under the jurisdiction of the provincial governments. In Saskatchewan, the provincial Minister of Education presides over the department responsible for elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education. At various points, this ministry has been called the Department of Education, Saskatchewan Education, and Saskatchewan Education, Training, and Employment. Although the ministry oversees all educational concerns, locally elected school boards provide governance for the school divisions. As described in the Saskatchewan *Education Act, 1978*, "A school division shall consist of any portion of Saskatchewan which is designated under this Act to be the unit for local governance of schools and for the provision and administration of educational services in those schools" (Section 18, article 1). School divisions may be public, separate, or high school divisions. School districts (known as "school units" before 1978) are school divisions that do not include a city within the area of jurisdiction (Section 120). In Saskatchewan, public school divisions are all those other than separate school divisions (Section 2.dd). "A minority of electors in a school district, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, may establish a separate school division" (Section 22, article 2). Taxpayers may choose to pay taxes to either a public or separate school division; therefore, both public and separate schools are publicly funded, receive equal levels of funding from the provincial government, and are open to all residents. Private schools fall outside the domain of either the public or separate school divisions. Private schools are "owned, controlled, and administered by a person who is not a public authority" (Section 2.bb). Church denominations, individuals, or institutions operating a school for profit may establish a private school. Statutes of Saskatchewan, *The Education Act, 1978*, c.17, 26 May 1978, Section 2.bb; Section 2.dd; Section 18, article 1; Section 22, article 2; and Section 120.

⁵"Bands of the Force," *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Quarterly* 8 (October 1940): 155-66; and "Bands of the Force (Continued)" *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Quarterly* 8 (January 1941): 265-70.

turn of the century, similar groups were assembled in the fledgling communities of Regina, Moose Jaw, Grenfell, Qu'Appelle, Indian Head, Moosomin, Whitewood, Kolin, and conceivably elsewhere.⁶

These early bands contributed to community cultural life by providing music for all occasions: sports days, sporting events, ceremonial occasions, public skating and ice carnivals, fairs, and parades. Bands were often the first large concert ensembles established in prairie towns, where they performed indoor and outdoor concerts for the enjoyment of the citizens.⁷

The first school bands were formed at Indian residential schools at Lebret (1892) and Regina (1894).⁸ During the first three decades of the twentieth century, bands were organized at several public and private schools. These instances were isolated, infrequent, and typically short-lived; nevertheless, they established precedents for contemporary school band programs. After World War II, service organizations such as the Kinsmen, Kiwanis, Lions, and Elks clubs assumed a major role in sponsoring community bands. These bands were the most immediate antecedents of Saskatchewan's contemporary school band programs.

Initiating Forces

Forces leading to the establishment of bands in each of the four selected school divisions were idiosyncratic to their particu-

⁶*Prince Albert Times and Saskatchewan Review*, 7, 28 February 1883; 25 April 1883; 30 November 1883; 21 December 1883; 29 February 1884; *Leader* (Regina), 31 December 1889; 4 March 1890; 29 September 1891; 13 October 1891; 22 December 1891; *Standard* (Regina), Supplement, 11 May 1899; *Qu'Appelle Progress*, 12 August 1886; *Leader-Post* (Regina), 2 June 1953; Margaret Beard, "Early Bands in Moosomin," in *Moosomin Century One: Town and Country* (Moosomin, SK: Moosomin History Book Committee, 1981), 137-39; and Rose Junek, Mary Norek, Edward Biley, et al., "Czech Music Kept Alive," in *Treasury of Memories* (Brandon, MN: S. L. Kolin Centennial Committee, 1986), 137-39.

⁷For a more detailed treatment of this topic, see Ed Wasiak, "Saskatchewan's First Bands: 1878-1913," *Canadian Band Journal* 22:1 (fall 1997): 20-23; and Ed Wasiak, "Saskatchewan's First Bands: 1878-1913, Part Two," *Canadian Band Journal* 22:2 (winter 1997): 10-12.

⁸Dominion of Canada, *Annual Reports of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Years Ended 31st December 1892 and 1894, Sessional Papers* (No. 14, 1893 and No.14, 1895).

lar communities. The opportunity to gain funding for instruments and uniforms from the Air Cadet League of Canada and the Canadian Department of Defense was the primary factor that led to the organization of the Central Collegiate Air Cadet Band in 1942, the first band organized in Regina's Public School Division.⁹ According to the band's director, Rj Staples, the cadet band was "the first complete school concert band and first uniformed school marching band" in Saskatchewan.¹⁰

In another division, it was essentially the will of two individuals, a young musician named D'Arcy Mossing and school superintendent J.P. Miller, that provided the initiative needed to organize the Regina Separate School Band in the fall of 1950. This band was the first elementary school band and the first separate school band in the province.¹¹

In the towns of Estevan and Sturgis, interest in establishing school bands was prompted by the demise of the local town bands. When the Sturgis School Unit Band was organized in 1955, it became the first system-wide band program established in a rural Saskatchewan school unit.¹²

⁹"Minutes of the Regular Meetings of the Regina Collegiate Institute Board," TD, 1 December 1941, 2 March 1942, 1 February 1943, 5 April 1943, 4 December 1944, J. A. Burnett Education Centre, Regina, SK; and "Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Regina Collegiate Institute Board to Discuss the Purchase of Band Instruments for Cadet Band," TD, 15 February 1943, J. A. Burnett Education Centre, Regina, SK.

¹⁰Rj Staples, quoted in Johanna Weweler, "Rj Staples: Innovative Saskatchewan Music Educator" (Master's thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1973), 253.

¹¹J.P. Miller, "Origin of the Band," in *Regina Catholic School Bands 25th Anniversary Program* (Regina, SK: Business Printers for Regina Catholic School Band Parents Association, 1975), 9; D. Mossing, interview by author, tape recording, Regina, SK, 29 December 1993; Lee W. Strezlecki, Assiniboia, SK, to Rj Staples, Regina, ALS, 1 August 1953, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; Rj Staples, Regina, to Lee Strezlecki, Assiniboia, SK, TL, 4 September 1953, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; H. Williams, telephone interview by author, 22 April 1996, transcript in possession of author, Lethbridge, AB; and "Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Graton Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 13," TD, 12 September 1950, 10 October 1950, Regina Catholic Schools Education Center, Regina, SK.

¹²Sturgis News," *Preeceville Progress*, 27 June 1956; and Rj Staples, "Interview with J.P. Weweler, 12 August 1972," in "Rj Staples: Innovative Saskatchewan Music Educator," 40.

Implementation processes in each of these school divisions were also specific to local situations; however, in every instance, cooperation between school boards and other organizations was involved. This cooperation was most evident in Estevan, where, in October of 1950, the Estevan Board of Trade took the first official steps toward re-establishing a town band when it requested financial assistance from the Estevan Town Council. The council agreed, with the provision that the band operate under the supervision of the Estevan Collegiate Institute and that it become part of the school curriculum—an innovative proposal at that time. Soon thereafter, discussions ensued and delegates from the Town Council, the Estevan Board of Trade, the Estevan Collegiate Board of Trustees, and various service clubs formed the Estevan Band Committee. Under the enthusiastic leadership of school trustee and amateur musician Willis Whitby and Estevan Board of Trade member David Bannantyne, Sr., the new committee immediately set out to organize a band.¹³

Band activity resumed in Estevan in January of 1952 under the direction of C. R. Hordern. Initially, the band was called the Estevan Collegiate and Community Band and included both student and adult members. According to Estevan publisher, historian, and musician Andrew King, it was “the only plan of its kind . . . in Canada.”¹⁴

¹³[D. Bannantyne, Sr.], “The Estevan Collegiate Band Story,” TMs (photocopy), September 1964, Estevan Band Parents Association Archival Collection, Estevan Junior High School, Estevan, SK; G. Trout, former school board chair and former Mayor of Estevan, interview by author, tape recording, Estevan, SK, 18 July 1995; “Council Favors Band for Estevan,” *Estevan Mercury*, 2 November 1950; “Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Estevan Town Council,” TD, 30 October 1950, Estevan City Hall, Estevan, SK; and “Minutes of the Regular Meetings of the Board of Trustees for Estevan Collegiate Institute,” TD, 14 November 1950; 9 February 1951, 10 March 1951, Estevan School Division Offices, Estevan, SK.

¹⁴Andrew King, “Broadening Educational Experiences—Estevan Band Experiment,” *Leader-Post* (Regina), 17 May 1962.

The Larger School Units Act of 1944 and curriculum reform introduced by the Department of Education in 1963 set the stage for the Saskatchewan school band movement. The resulting changes—including consolidation of rural school populations; construction of large, well-equipped centralized high schools; revisions to educational philosophy and curricula to encompass a wider array of course offerings; and the hiring of specialist teachers and music supervisors—made it viable to establish school band programs in both rural and urban centers.

By the early 1960s, several school bands were active in the province; however, it was a program introduced by the Department of Education in August 1966, a program specifically intended to encourage the creation of schools bands, that triggered the general proliferation of school bands. This program provided grants for instruments, music, equipment, clinics, and teacher training.¹⁵ The department also hired a provincial band consultant “to assist in the development of school band programs throughout the province of Saskatchewan.”¹⁶

This program had the desired effect. The department issued grants to twenty-six new bands during the 1966-67 academic year. Within five years, a reported 12,586 students were participating in 261 school bands throughout the province. Eventually, in 1975, the initiative program was discontinued as school bands became established components of the educational system (see table 1).

¹⁵Rj Staples, Provincial Supervisor of Music, Memo to: Supervisors and Music Specialists, re: “New things for the coming year,” TD, n.d. [c. fall 1966], Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; Rj Staples, Provincial Supervisor of Music, Memo to: Music Supervisors and Specialists, re: “Department of Education paying for band clinics,” TD, 6 October 1966, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; and Rj Staples, Provincial Supervisor of Music, re: “Instructions to Band Clinicians,” TD, 3 November 1966, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK.

¹⁶Department of Education, “Band Consultant Required” (ad copy), TD (photocopy), n.d., Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK.

Table 1
Department of Education Sponsored Band Activity: 1966-1975^a

	<u>1966-7</u>	<u>67-8</u>	<u>68-9</u>	<u>69-0</u>	<u>70-1</u>	<u>71-2</u>	<u>72-3</u>	<u>73-4</u>	<u>74-5</u>
Grants to new bands	26	27	25	26	18	16	29	34	51
Depart. of Ed. band clinics	10	12	11	16	17	17	17	29 ^b	21 ^b
Music supervisors/specialists ^c	120	178	297	105	120	160	218	235	263
Band instrument grants ^d	12	40	36	—	—	—	—	—	90

^aProvince of Saskatchewan, Department of Education, "School Music," in *Annual Reports 1967-1975* (Regina, SK: The Queen's Printer, 1967-75).

^bIncludes choral and classroom music clinics.

^cFigures for 1966-69 include full- and part-time music supervisors and music specialists; those for 1969-75 include full-time music specialists only.

^dIn Canadian dollars, in thousands; figures were not reported for some years.

Bands Within the Educational Enterprise

At various points, bands seem to have served as the predominant vehicle for music education in the four school divisions, and eventually (after 1966) that became the case throughout the province. Nevertheless, despite being sanctioned by the Department of Education as full-credit classes since 1964, band programs have remained on the periphery of the educational enterprise. Issues surrounding rationale, credit, scheduling, curriculum, facilities, and teacher certification support this claim. Regardless, bands in all four school divisions generally became a stronger presence in the school system over time.

Proponents have supported bands in the Saskatchewan school system for various reasons: as developers of discipline and citizenship; as a wholesome activity for youth; as a public relations vehicle; and as a highly effective medium for teaching musical skills, appreciation, and understanding to large groups of students.

Even in the case of the province's first school band at the Qu'Appelle Industrial School, the principal, Father Hugonnard, was quick to recognize the public relations value of his school's band. In his annual report to the Department of Indian Affairs in 1892, Hugonnard noted: "It is an attraction for the boys, and has a civilizing effect on them, and to the public is a striking proof that

Indian children can be educated, since they can be taught to read music and play it correctly in so short a time."¹⁷

After the introduction of the Department of Education's school band initiative program in 1966, community bands sponsored by service clubs were anxious to incorporate into the school system for pragmatic reasons. Funding through the education system generally improved the financial security of a band program and reduced the burden of raising funds for volunteer support organizations. Other advantages included increased accessibility, convenience, fewer conflicts with other interests and activities, and the availability of the band to perform at school functions.¹⁸

Interestingly, Provincial Supervisor of Music Rj Staples was not entirely in agreement with the department's initiatives program:

The program which Staples advocated was a balanced program. . . . This balance has been somewhat offset in Saskatchewan with the large amount of financial aid given in the form of grants solely to bands. Staples was never in favor of the practice of encouraging only one aspect of musical activity, and tried to discourage Premier [Ross] Thatcher [leader of the provincial government] from such a measure; however, Thatcher was adamant.¹⁹

As band programs became a curricular component in the school system, the rationales used to support school bands became more philosophical and education oriented. Typically, these rationales made reference to the effectiveness of bands in teaching a lifelong appreciation for music and music's aesthetic values. A statement by Regina Catholic Separate Schools band director D'Arcy Mossing in the early 1970s is particularly eloquent:

I believe there is music in our youth today, and if given the opportunity to make music . . . in a favorable environment, they will make the most of that opportunity. . . . [M]usic exerts a powerful influence in their lives. . . . [W]ith enthusiasm and energy, they explore its past and present forms, and in time they gain an understanding which can lead

¹⁷*Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs* (for 1892), 203.

¹⁸"Analysis of 1975-76 Band Program," in "Minutes of Committee Meeting," TD, 26 April 1976, Regina Catholic School Band Parents Association Archival Collection, St. Matthew School, Regina, SK.

¹⁹Weweler, "Rj Staples: Innovative Saskatchewan Music Educator," 42.

to a life long love. . . . Music is a means of enriching and humanizing their lives.²⁰

Department of Education documents released in 1974 and again in the 1990s indicate that the official philosophy of music education in Saskatchewan has been grounded in the tenets of aesthetic education for more than two decades.²¹ However, philosophy tended to follow, rather than direct, practice. The music educators themselves never adopted a universal philosophical statement; consequently, considerable differences in individual philosophies existed among them.

As early as 1950, high school students could earn half credits “for participation in bona fide school bands and orchestras.”²² Regulations governing the granting of full academic credit for participation in school performing groups were implemented in 1964. These regulations, which were revised further throughout the 1960s, were sufficiently flexible to accommodate a variety of local situations across the province. Students could earn academ-

²⁰D. Mossing, “Director’s Annual Report presented at Annual Meeting,” TD, 16 October 1972, Regina Catholic School Band Parents Association Archival Collection, St. Matthew School, Regina, SK.

²¹Department of Education, *Division Four Music Curriculum—An Approved Course Outline and Supplement* (Regina, SK: Province of Saskatchewan, September 1974); and Humanities Branch, Curriculum and Instruction Division, Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment, *Band 10, 20, 30 Curriculum Requirements* (Regina, SK: Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment, 1993).

²²[Rj Staples], Province of Saskatchewan Department of Education, Music Supervision Branch, “Organization and Administration of School Bands and Orchestras,” TD, October 1950, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK.

ic credit for band as members of either a school band or an accredited community band.²³

No provincial curriculum for band was implemented until 1993. Consequently, school band directors were left largely to their own devices when determining the instructional content of their lessons and rehearsals. Typically, instructional materials consisted primarily of method or instruction books and selected repertoire.²⁴

The band music performed reflected general trends in the development of wind band repertoire. Typically, concert fare during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s consisted of anthems, overtures, marches, novelty pieces, transcriptions, solo and ensemble features, waltzes, and hymns. Since the 1970s, Saskatchewan school bands have performed more sophisticated music, including more original works for contemporary concert band. Nevertheless,

²³Rj Staples, Memo to: Principals and Supervisors of Music re: "High school credits for extra-curricular musical activity," TD, 5 May 1966, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; Rj Staples, Provincial Music Supervisor, Province of Saskatchewan Department of Education, Form SM-36 and attached certificate re: "Preliminary approval of the sponsorship and direction of musical organization for accredited High School Bands and Orchestras and Choruses," TD, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; Province of Saskatchewan Office of the Supervisor of Music, "Application Form for Assessment of Qualifications of Directors of Organizations Applying for High School Credits for Extra-Curricular Musical Activity," TD, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; Province of Saskatchewan Department of Education, "Regulations Governing the Granting of Full Credit for High School Bands and Orchestras and Choruses Bulletin SM-15," TD, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; Province of Saskatchewan Department of Education, "Regulations Governing the Granting of Half Credit for High School Bands and Orchestras and Choruses," TD, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; Province of Saskatchewan Department of Education, "Regulations Governing the Granting of High School Credits to Students Enrolled in Community Bands Bulletin SM-15a" (Revised /68), TD, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; and [Rj Staples], "Some Observations on School Music in Saskatchewan," n.d., TD, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK.

²⁴The most commonly used instruction books were Maurice Taylor, *Easy Steps to the Band* (New York: Mills Music, Inc., 1939) in the 1950s and early 1960s; Fred Weber, *First Division Band Method* (Rockville Center, NY: Belwin, Inc., 1961-68) in the late 1960s and 1970s; James D. Ployhar, *Band Today* (Miami, FL: CPP/Belwin, 1977) in the late 1970s and 1980s; and Bruce Pearson, *Best in Class* (San Diego, CA: Neil A. Kjos Company, 1983) in the 1980s.

mass-produced educational publications for school bands continue to be performed extensively.

Teaching materials and repertoire were almost exclusively the product of American composers and publishers, although compositions by British composers Ralph Vaughan Williams (*Folk Song Suite*) and Gustav Holst (*First Suite in Eb and Second Suite in F*) were the works most commonly cited by band directors as staples in their high school bands' repertoire. Compositions by Canadian composers have been performed comparatively infrequently.

As band programs were incorporated into the school system, increasingly rehearsal time was scheduled into the timetable as a regular subject; however, scheduling for band instruction continued to be idiosyncratic and inconsistent. Instruction and rehearsals often occurred outside regular school hours or were superimposed onto the academic timetable, which required band students to be excused from classes to attend band rehearsals.

Public performances served both utilitarian and educational purposes. Bands in all four school divisions established similar routines of performance activities at the school, community, provincial, and (occasionally) national and international levels. Typically, they performed public concerts, competed in music festivals, and entertained at school and community events. However, there were some differences in the nature of performance activities between the school divisions. For example, because the Regina Catholic Schools band program was affiliated with a religious denomination, performances at church services and other church-related events occurred frequently.

Green and Vogan identified a shortage of qualified teachers as the most fundamental impediment to the implementation and continuance of school band programs throughout Canada.²⁵ Initially, the Saskatchewan Department of Education addressed the problem by granting special teaching certificates to individuals with musical expertise but no academic credentials in music education, and by recruiting band directors from the United Kingdom and the United States.

Band directors hired in the four school divisions included retired British and Canadian military band personnel, Americans

²⁵Green and Vogan, *Music Education in Canada*, 349-98.

with university degrees in instrumental music education, teachers of other subjects with musical backgrounds, professional musicians with no teaching credentials, Canadians with degrees in instrumental music education from American institutions, and, later, Canadians trained in Canadian institutions. The number of directors hired who were born in Saskatchewan and had attended Saskatchewan universities increased gradually as the province's two universities responded to the need for qualified band directors by establishing degree programs in instrumental music education during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Women were not hired as band directors in any of the four school divisions until 1975, when the Regina Catholic and Sturgis school divisions hired female directors. Although the number of women band directors increased after 1975, men continued to dominate the profession for some time. This situation has changed noticeably in recent years.

Growth and Development: Local and Provincial Conditions

The Great Depression and the two World Wars adversely affected civilian band activity during the first half of the twentieth century. Conversely, the number of military and paramilitary bands increased during war years.²⁶ No such monumental events contributed to either the growth or decline of school bands during the second half of the century. Rather, provincial trends and particular local conditions proved more consequential.

In the four programs studied, the most salient factors that affected growth and development were the band directors, parent organizations, program structures, and advocacy efforts. The most effective combination was a well-qualified band director with strong musical, interpersonal, and leadership skills; an active parent organization; a coordinated and sequential program; and advocates in positions of authority or influence. Enrollments fluctuated in all four of the school divisions, but entry into the school cur-

²⁶Wasiak, "The Historical Development of School Bands in Saskatchewan," 72-77.

riculum generally resulted in enrollment gains for the band programs.

Conditions specific to each community affected the general well being of the respective band programs. For example, in the Sturgis School Unit, the need for rural students to be excused from other classes and to travel considerable distances to attend full band rehearsals was a perennial problem. Yet, under the direction of Duane Emch (1964-1970), the Sturgis Unit Band was very successful.

British bands were the prototypes for the first military, civilian, and (later) community bands in the province, but American influences on Saskatchewan school bands have been widespread and profound. Initially, Saskatchewan school band directors adopted American teaching methods and materials, performed American compositions, and generally relied heavily on American expertise. The contemporary American symphonic band, concert band, wind ensemble, jazz or stage band, and, to a much lesser extent, marching band have served as paradigms. Americans have taught instrumental music in Saskatchewan schools and universities. Indeed, Americans trained most Saskatchewan school band directors, in both Canadian and American universities. Americans also served regularly as adjudicators, clinicians, guest conductors, and instructors at the Saskatchewan School of the Arts. The need to rely on American expertise diminished gradually as the number of qualified Canadians increased.

Curriculum reform has also had an effect on school bands. In 1981, the Saskatchewan Department of Education initiated significant curriculum reform across all subject areas. After its release in February 1984, it was clear that *Directions: The Final Report* would be the driving force for revisions in Saskatchewan's educational system for some time. *Directions* placed "Aesthetic Education" (later called "Arts Education"), including music, at the core of the school curriculum. Initially, the Arts Education program was conceived as a "conceptually-based [sic] integrated aesthetic education program" encompassing four strands: dance, drama, visual

arts, and music.²⁷ Although Saskatchewan band directors generally approved of placing the arts at the core of the school curriculum, the new Arts Education curriculum generated considerable concern over several fundamental issues: (1) breadth would take precedence over depth, (2) the integrity of each of the arts would be lost, (3) general classroom teachers lacked the expertise necessary to teach music, and (4) well-developed school band programs would be seriously compromised or dismantled in favor of less expensive and less time-consuming general classroom programs.²⁸

In 1989, the Saskatchewan Band Association and Saskatchewan Music Educators Association successfully lobbied the Department of Education to develop a curriculum for school bands. In September 1993, the department released *Band 10, 20, 30 Curriculum Requirements* for implementation in the schools.²⁹

Specialized courses such as band were to be extensions of and compatible with the general arts education curriculum. All newly developed arts education curricula, such as *Band 10, 20, 30 Curriculum Requirements*, included three essential components: cultural/historical, critical/responsive, and creative/productive. The intention was to broaden the scope of musical learning in school band programs.³⁰

²⁷Saskatchewan Department of Education, "Minister's Advisory Committee Curriculum and Instruction Review," in *Directions: The Final Report* (Regina, SK: Saskatchewan Department of Education, February 1984), 30-32; and Ken Horseman, "Music Education, Core Curriculum and Aesthetic Education," TD, Saskatchewan Band Association Archival Collection, SBA Office, Yorkton, SK. Horseman was the Executive Director of Curriculum in the Development Division of the Saskatchewan Department of Education.

²⁸[Peter D. England, Saskatchewan Band Association president], "Saskatchewan Band Association Brief to the Honorable Patricia A. Smith, Minister of Education Regarding the Report of the Core Curriculum Advisory Committee Titled Program Policy Proposals," TD, n.d. [c. June 1986], SBA Archival Collection, SBA Office, Yorkton, SK.

²⁹Humanities Branch, Curriculum and Instruction Division, Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment, *Band 10, 20, 30 Curriculum Requirements* (Regina, SK: Saskatchewan Education, Training, and Employment, 1993).

³⁰*Ibid.*, 3-4.

Individuals, Organizations, and Institutions

Among the individuals, organizations, and institutions that contributed to the growth and development of school bands in Saskatchewan, several were especially influential. Countless individuals made important contributions to the development of school bands: school administrators, band directors, school board trustees, volunteer instructors, and parent volunteers working in local band organizations. Not surprisingly, band directors were the most influential individual contributors.

Band directors have played many diverse and complex roles. They provided the inspiration and musical leadership necessary to effect improvements in their bands; provided direction in developing effective instructional models; played leadership roles in various professional and cultural associations; and created opportunities for students to extend their musical education by organizing band camps, honor bands, clinics, and festivals. They have also served as advocates for instrumental music education in various political, educational, and cultural arenas.

Four music educators played particularly important roles in various contexts: Dwaine Nelson of the University of Saskatchewan; Frank Connell, director of the Moose Jaw Lions Junior Band and founding director of the Saskatchewan School of the Arts; Don Cowan of the University of Regina; and Rj Staples, provincial music supervisor. Of these, no one contributed more to the proliferation of school bands than Rj Staples. In his role as provincial music supervisor, he: (1) administered the government school band initiative grant program; (2) enabled students to gain full academic credit for band participation; (3) organized university courses to train school band directors; (4) arranged for the Department of Education to pay the expenses associated with the Sturgis Unit Band's performance at the 1963 Saskatchewan School Trustees Convention (which inspired a number of trustees to form bands in their own school divisions); (5) advocated the formation of bands to all school boards in the province; (6) estab-

lished the position of Provincial Band Consultant; and (7) assisted school boards in finding qualified band directors.³¹

Among the organizations, volunteer parent associations played the most consistent and prominent roles in sustaining local school bands by providing financial and moral support. Parents raised funds, provided volunteer labor, and served as advocates for each of the four programs studied. The involvement and commitment on the part of such organizations was crucial to the well being of band programs, especially during periods of limited school board support.

Provincially, two service clubs, The Moose Jaw Kinsmen Club and the Downtowners Optimist Club of Regina, made important contributions by sponsoring major provincial band festivals.³² Since 1957, several professional associations have also promoted and supported the growth and development of school bands. The most active and influential of these were the Saskatchewan Music Educators Association and the Saskatchewan Band Association. The Saskatchewan Music Educators Association's most tangible contribution has been its ongo-

³¹Rj Staples to Johanna Weweler, ALS, 16 March 1972, in Johanna Weweler, "Rj Staples: Innovative Saskatchewan Music Educator," Appendix R; Province of Saskatchewan Department of Education, Office of the Music Supervisor, "Saskatchewan School Music and School Unit Music Supervisors," TD, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; Rj Staples, Memo to: Supervisors and Music Specialists, re: "new things for the coming year," TD, n.d. [c. fall 1966], Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; Rj Staples, Memo to: Music Supervisors and Specialists, re: "Department of Education paying for band clinics," TD, 6 October 1966, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; Rj Staples, Memo re: "Instructions to Band Clinicians," TD, 3 November 1966, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; [Rj Staples], Province of Saskatchewan Department of Education, Music Supervision Branch, "Grants to Assist Schools in the Purchase of Band Instruments," TD, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; [Rj Staples], Province of Saskatchewan Department of Education, Music Supervision Branch, "Organization and Administration of School Bands and Orchestras," TD, October 1950, Rj Staples Files, Saskatchewan Archives, Regina, SK; Province of Saskatchewan, Department of Education, "School Music," in *Annual Reports 1967-1975* (Regina, SK: the Queen's Printer); and Government of Saskatchewan, Schedule I.B.2 *Foundation Grants Act*, 1970, 19 June 1970.

³²These organizations sponsor the Moose Jaw Kinsmen International Band and Choral Festival and the Downtowners Optimist Club of Regina Annual Band and Vocal Jazz Festival, respectively.

ing sponsorship of the Provincial Honour Band. Since its formation in 1982, the Saskatchewan Band Association has devoted its efforts specifically to addressing the needs of bands (both community and school) in the province.³³

Among institutions, the provincial government played the most significant role. Several government departments were involved, most notably the Department of Education. However, the provincial government supported band activity through other departments and agencies as well, including the Saskatchewan Arts Board, the Department of Culture and Youth (in the 1970s), and the Saskatchewan Council of Cultural Organizations.

The universities also supported school bands. In addition to establishing degree programs to train instrumental music educators, the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan bands were models to which school bands could aspire. Faculty members served as clinicians, adjudicators, guest conductors, and soloists at various festivals and concerts, and both institutions sponsored festivals and clinics for school bands. University facul-

³³"SBA Week," in "Minutes of the SBA Board of Directors Meeting," TD (photocopy), 15 June 1985, Saskatchewan Band Association Archival Collection, SBA Office, Yorkton, SK; [Peter D. England, SBA president], "Saskatchewan Band Association Brief to the Honorable Patricia A. Smith, Minister of Education Regarding the Report of the Core Curriculum Advisory Committee Titled Program Policy Proposals," TD (photocopy), n.d. [c. June 1986], Saskatchewan Band Association Archival Collection, SBA Office, Yorkton, SK; Canadian Band Association, "Canadian Band Week Proposal Oct. 26 - Nov. 1 1986," TD (photocopy), Saskatchewan Band Association Archival Collection, SBA Office, Yorkton, SK; Peter D. England, Committee Chairman, "Saskatchewan School of the Arts Committee Report," TD (photocopy), 31 October 1987, Saskatchewan Band Association Archival Collection, SBA Office, Yorkton, SK; Saskatchewan Band Association, "Brief on The Saskatchewan School of the Arts—Presented to: The Arts Board and the Saskatchewan School of the Arts Advisory Committee," TD (photocopy), 13 September 1987, Saskatchewan Band Association Archival Collection, SBA Office, Yorkton, SK; Saskatchewan Band Association, "Formal Planning Document 1989-1991," February 1989, TD (photocopy), Saskatchewan Band Association Archival Collection, SBA Office, Yorkton, SK; Colin Maxwell, Minister of Parks, Recreation, and Culture to G. McLean, SBA President re: "Arts Strategy Task Force," TD (photocopy), 27 June 1989, Saskatchewan Band Association Archival Collection, SBA Office, Yorkton, SK; and [G. McLean, SBA president], "Brief to the Saskatchewan Arts Strategy Task Force from the Saskatchewan Band Association," TD (photocopy), n.d., Saskatchewan Band Association Archival Collection, SBA Office, Yorkton, SK.

ty members also served the Saskatchewan Music Educators Association and the Saskatchewan Band Association as board members.

The roles played by school boards must be acknowledged as well. Throughout the histories of the four selected programs, school board support ranged from marginal to enthusiastic. Nevertheless, without the cooperation of the local school boards, however limited, it would have been impossible to establish and sustain band programs in any of the school divisions.

Conclusions

The first Saskatchewan school divisions in the four general population categories to establish and sustain band programs were the Sturgis School Unit (rural), Estevan Collegiate (small urban centers), Regina Public School Division (large urban centers) and Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division (separate school divisions). These band programs anticipated the general proliferation of school bands.

Saskatchewan, like most of North America, experienced a "school band movement." In this case, an incentive program introduced by the Saskatchewan government in 1966 was the catalyst that triggered the proliferation of school bands. In addition, American influence on Saskatchewan school bands has been pervasive since the late 1960s.

Band directors, organizational structures, band parents associations, and advocates in positions of influence were the factors that most dramatically affected the development and well being of bands in each of the four school divisions studied. While bands generally gained a stronger foothold in each of the four school divisions from their inception onward, band programs have remained peripheral to the mainstream of the educational enterprise.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the golden age of the Saskatchewan school band movement may have passed. Strong funding from the government and school boards during the 1960s and 1970s facilitated the rise of school bands. Conversely, ongoing economic restraint throughout the 1980s and early 1990s restricted growth. Few new programs have been initiated in recent years, and some established programs have shrunk or been eliminated. The full effects of the implementation of the arts education

curriculum in the early 1990s remain to be seen; however, it appears that the arts education curriculum has eroded, rather than supported, the general state of school bands in the province.

Nevertheless, school bands continue to make important contributions to the education of Saskatchewan students. Each year, large numbers of students participate in school band programs throughout the province. Performance levels have improved steadily, and today Saskatchewan school bands are among the best in Canada.³⁴

³⁴Over the past decade, Saskatchewan bands have been invited to perform at various prestigious events. The Campbell Collegiate Jazz Bands performed at the International Society for Music Education (ISME) Conference in Seoul, South Korea (1992); the International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE) Conventions in Washington, DC (1991), San Antonio, TX (1993), and Los Angeles, CA (1995); and MusicFest Canada in Calgary (1995). Invitations to perform at the Montreux and Monterey Jazz Festivals (1995) were declined. The Swift Current Comprehensive High School Wind Orchestra performed "Showcase Concerts" at the national Rocky Mountain Music Festival in Banff in 1996 and 1997. The University of Saskatchewan Wind Orchestra performed at the World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles Conferences in the Netherlands in 1989 and Austria in 1997.