

TRYING ON TEACHING

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Some research (Berry, Kuhs, Ginsberg, and Cook, 1988¹) suggests that high school students are more motivated to pursue a career in teaching when they have acquired experience working with children as mentors, teachers or leaders. The influence of such experiences is generally magnified when they are structured, supervised and sustained over an extended period of time. Pre-collegiate programs (e.g., South Carolina Teacher Cadet Program) designed to recruit high school students to teaching have proven effective, but no research of which we are aware has specifically examined the effects of a formal pre-collegiate program designed to recruit students to *music* teaching.

The purpose of this project was to explore the effects of authentic context learning and multifaceted mentoring relationships on teaching career motivation and commitment, teacher and musician identity, teaching efficacy beliefs and teaching effectiveness. Study participants included five undergraduate students selected through an application process, and eleven high school students selected from a pool of 27 individuals nominated by high school band directors representing area schools. The study was situated within a 12-week community-based middle school band outreach program, and a mosaic of formal and informal processes was used to provide study participants with mentoring. All participants completed an extensive questionnaire that addressed critical psychological facets of teacher development (motivation, commitment, efficacy, identity) at the beginning and end of the study, and were video-recorded weekly as they engaged in teaching activities (primarily sectional rehearsals for high school students, sectionals and full ensemble rehearsals for undergraduates).

Analyses of questionnaire and video data show that psychological constructs can be measured and teaching effectiveness can be evaluated in a reliable fashion. While there was no substantive change in teaching career commitment or occupational identity over time, students reported a significant increase in social motivation for teaching (i.e., the influence of other people, such as peers and family members, was greater at the end of the study than at the beginning) and became more efficacious about their ability to manage classroom behavior. Teacher identity was significantly related to music teaching career commitment and two facets (intrinsic motivation, work motivation) of motivation for music teaching, as well as end-of-study measures of teaching efficacy. Teaching effectiveness ratings varied across individuals but were relatively stable over time. Correlations between overall teaching effectiveness (composite/average of ratings over time) and psychological variables were of weak to moderate magnitude.

¹ Berry, B., Kuhs, T. M., Ginsberg, R., & Cook, N. R. (March, 1988). Recruiting talent to teaching: An assessment of the impact of the South Carolina teacher cadet program. Eric Document 296 991