TEXAS STATE VITA

I. Academic/Professional Background

A. *Name*: Monica M. Ruiz-Mills, PhD *Title*: Lecturer, Faculty Field Supervisor

B. Educational Background

Degree	*Year*	*University*	*Major*	*Thesis/ Dissertation*
PhD	2019	Texas State University	School Improvement	Dissertation: "Conducting the Symphony: How a School District Superintendent Uses Complexity Theory for Creative Leadership"
MM	1999	University of Texas at San Antonio	Music	
BME	1989	University of Texas at San Antonio	Music Education	

C. University Experience

Assistant Professor of Instruction, Resident Regional Site Coordinator	Texas State University	2025-Present
Lecturer, Curriculum and Instruction	Texas State University	2024-Present
Faculty Field Supervisor, Office of Educator Preparation	Texas State University	2024-Present

D. Relevant Professional Experience

Education Consultant	2021-Present

Principal	Antonian College Preparatory High School	2023-2024
Director of Effective District Practices and COVID Alignment Supports	Texas Education Agency	June-September 2021
Deputy Superintendent	San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District (SMCISD)	2018-2021
Assistant Superintendent for Teaching, Learning, and Assessments	SMCISD	2016-2018
Fine Arts Coordinator	Harlandale Independent School District (HISD)	2014-2016
Assistant Principal for Instruction	Legacy of Educational Excellence (LEE) High School North East Independent School District (NEISD)	2012-2014
Head Band Director	LEE High School	2001-2012
Assistant Band Director	Alamo Height High School Alamo Height ISD	1999-2001
Head Band Director	Nimitz Middle School NEISD	1992-1999
Assistant Band Director	Ed White Middle School NEISD	1989-1992

E. Other Professional Credentials (licensure, certification, etc.)

Certified Strategic Leadership Coach	Education Thought Partners	2025-Present
Superintendent Certification	State Board of Education	2018-Present
Principal Certification	State Board of Education	2012-Present
All Level Music Certification	State Board of Education	1990-Present

II. TEACHING

A. Teaching Honors and Awards:

AP Honor Roll Campus Recognition	Antonian College Preparatory High School	2023-2024
Gold Standard Designation —College Board	Antonian College Preparatory High School	2023
National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Best Communities for Music Education	Harlandale ISD	2015-2016

B. Courses Taught:

CI 2311 Education and Equity	Texas State University	2026
EDST 4371 Teacher Residency II	Texas State University	2026
CI 4325 Classroom Management & Relationships	Texas State University	2025
CI 5383 Mentoring Across the Curriculum	Texas State University	2025
EDST 4370 Teacher Residency I	Texas State University	2025
EDST 4670 Clinical Teaching Residency I	Texas State University	2025
EDST 4380 Clinical Teaching All-Level I	Texas State University	2024
EDST 4381 Clinical Teaching All Level II	Texas State University	2024
EDST 4687 Clinical Teaching EC-6	Texas State University	2024

EDST 5390 Internship for ALT Cert I

C. Directed Student Learning (i.e. theses, dissertations, exit committees, etc.):

Independent Consultant, Dissertation and Thesis Coach	Independent Consultant	2021-Present

D. Courses Prepared and Curriculum Development:

Curriculum Development:

CI 5383 Online instructional module with Instructional Designer	Texas State University	2024-2025

Developed the following:

On-campus ACT/SAT test prep tutorial sessions (Antonian College Preparatory High School)

Blended learning model in Early College High School (SMCISD)

Personalized learning programs for flexible school models (SMCISD)

Individualized professional learning opportunities for teachers and staff (SMCISD)

District-wide Trauma-Informed training in collaboration with Texas State University (SMCISD)

Curriculum for a revised Fine Arts TEKS, campus, and student engagement (HISD)

E. Other:

Led district-wide instructional initiatives, such as the following:

Began construction process for a $1.9M capital campaign for infrastructure improvements (Antonian College Preparatory High School)

NWEA MAP testing, Grade 9 and 10 (Antonian College Preparatory High School)

Virtual Tutoring Support Systems (Antonian College Preparatory High School)

Expansion of innovative courses with industry-based certification pathways (Antonian College Preparatory High School)

Intern Placement for Texas State University’s Social Work department (SMCISD)

Partnerships with Transcend New Schools, Gear Up UT grants (SMCISD)

STREAM (STEM+Arts+Recreation) Summer Program (HISD)

Cultural Arts Festival (HISD)

Booster Clubs/Parent Organizations (HISD)

University Interscholastic League (UIL) Fine Arts Events (HISD)

Wolf Trap Foundation Program for Pre-K STEAM learning initiatives (HISD)

End-of-Course (EOC) Remediation Program (NEISD)

Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Success (NEISD)

Summer Re-Testing for EOC and TAKS (NEISD)

Spearheaded Professional Learning Community (PLC) opportunities, such as the following:

Effective Schools Framework training (SMCISD)

G. Teaching Professional Development Activities Attended

Strategic Leadership Coaching Program–Education Thought Partners
Research-Based Instructional Strategies
Education Elements New School Rules Collaborative
Student Learning Objectives Training–Pilot District
Authentic Professional Development Aligned to Fine Arts Instruction
Lead4Ward Data Analysis Training
National Dropout Convention

III. SCHOLARLY/CREATIVE

A. Works in Print (including works accepted, forthcoming, in press):

1. Books:

a. Chapters in Books:

Voigt, S., Chatmon, A. A., & Ruiz-Mills, M. (2022). We Are in this Together: Practices for a More Inclusive Environment. In J. A. S. Kinsey & M. L. Martin (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Learner-Centered Approaches to Teaching in an Age of Transformational Change* (Chapter 5). IGI Global. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-6684-4240-1.ch005

Mills, M. (2021). COVID-19 and Creative Leadership: Leading Through Complexity. In K. J. Fasching-Varner, S. T. Bickmore, & P. G. G. Schrader (Eds.), *The Corona Chronicles: On Leadership, Processes, Commitments, and Hope in Uncertain Times* (Chapter 1, Section 1.3). Dio Press, Inc.

2. Articles:

a. Non-refereed Articles:

(2016). T-TESS & Fine Arts – 4-Part Quarterly Series. *Music Education Journal*, 26-28.

(2016). T-TESS: Showcasing What We Do As Music Educators, Part 1 of a 4-part series. *Bandmasters Review, September 2016,* 19-20.

(2016). T-TESS: Showcasing What We Do As Music Educators, Part 2 of a 4-part series. *Bandmasters Review, December 2016*, 21-23.

(2017). T-TESS: Showcasing What We Do As Music Educators, Part 3 of a 4-part series. *Bandmasters Review, April 2017*, 17-18.

(2017). T-TESS: Showcasing What We Do As Music Educators, Part 4 of a 4-part series. *Bandmasters Review, June 2017*, p 24.

(2010). Keeping Everyone Eligible—Failure is Not an Option! *Bandmasters Review, September 2010*, 15-16.

B. Works Not in Print:

1. Papers Presented at Professional Meetings:

(2021). *HB 4545 Overview.* Lead4Ward AccountabilityConnect.

(2021). *HB 4545 and Other Legislative Updates*. Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) and Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) Accountability Forum with Moak, Casey, & Associates.

(2021). *HB 4545, High Impact Tutoring, and TCLAS Funding–What School Boards Need to Know.* Educational Service Center (ESC).

(2010). *Maintaining Academic Eligibility*. Kingsville ISD Fine Arts and Athletic Professional Learning.

2. Invited Talks, Lectures, and Presentations:

(2023, July 20). *T-TESS for Band Directors*. [Presentation]. Texas Bandmasters Association New Teacher Symposium, San Antonio, TX.

(2020, Sept. 25). *How to Use Design Thinking to Improve PLCs Based on Campus Needs*. [Presentation]. TASA Conference, Austin, TX.

(2018, Jan. 28). *We've Always Done It That Way*. [Presentation]. TASA Conference, Austin, TX.

(2017, Nov. 15). *Community & Attendance* [Presentation]. UCEA Annual Convention, Denver, CO.

(2017, Oct. 27). *Instructional Supervision Presentation Based on Theory of Edward Pajak*. [Presentation]. Council of Professors of Instructional Supervision (COPIS) Annual Conference, Austin, TX.

(2017, Feb. 8). *T-TESS & the Arts*. [Presentation]. Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) Clinic/Convention, San Antonio, TX.

(2016, Nov. 17). *T-TESS Training*. [Presentation]. San Antonio Fine Arts Administrators Conference, Dallas, TX.

(2014, Feb. 12). *Getting Administration on Your Side*. [Presentation]. Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) Clinic/Convention, San Antonio, TX.

3. Research in Progress:

(2026) Hays, S., Valdez-Gainer, N., & Ruiz-Mills, M. *In what ways do district partners support EC–6 teacher residents to ensure their long-term success and retention in the teaching profession?* [Research in progress].

3. Consultancies:

Strategic planning and student voice initiatives for various school districts, which included creating a curriculum committee at Antonian College Prep to facilitate parent and student feedback on course selections, calendars, and curricula.

C. Scholarly / Creative Fellowships, Awards, Honors:

KIPP Leadership Design Fellowship

Recognized for Supporting Bond Projects ($107.3M in 2017 and $64.9M in 2014)

D. Scholarly / Creative Professional Development Activities Attended:

Transcend / New Schools Transforming School Redesign Collaborative
WestEd Quality Teaching for ELL Symposium (QTel)

E. Media Recognition:

Featured in various district-wide publications for leadership and innovation in education.

IV. SERVICE

A. Institutional

1. Department/School:

UIL Music Executive Committee–Region 12 (SMCISD)
Executive Leadership Cabinet (SMCISD)
District Coordinator for School Improvement (SMCISD)
Transcend/New Schools Transforming School Redesign Collaborative (SMCISD)
Education Elements New School Rules Collaborative (SMCISD)
Texas State Leadership Cohort for Teachers: Emerging Leaders Program
Texas Performance Accountability Consortium (TPAC)
Region 12 UIL Executive Advisory Board for Music (Superintendent Designee) (SMCISD)
District Curriculum Committee (NEISD)
Fine Arts Department Chair (NEISD)

B. Community:

Volunteer, Christy's Hope Foundation
Volunteer, Vietnam Army Grunt Museum
Mentor, The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) Mentor Program
Scholarship Committee Member, Executive Women International

C. Organization Memberships:

Texas Band Masters Association
Texas Music Educators Association
American Educational Research Association
American Association for Teaching & Curriculum
University Council for Educational Administration

D. Service Honors and Awards:

PTA Life Member, Superintendent Award, NEISD

E. Service Grants and Contracts:

1. Funded External Service Grants and Contracts:

Gear UP Grant (SMCISD, 2016), $1.2M

2. Submitted, but not Funded, External Service Grants and Contracts:

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Grant, US Department of Education, (Not funded, 2025), $250K

F. Service Professional Development Activities Attended:

Lone Star Governance Training
US Prep Conference