The Professional Development Appraisal System (PDAS)

The PDAS is a teacher evaluation system created by the Texas Education Agency following the passage of Senate Bill 1 in 1995. The goal of the PDAS is to advance the level of the professional practice of teaching in Texas. The evaluation criteria incorporate the learner-centered proficiencies and promote continuous professional development. All public school teachers in Texas, including fine arts teachers, are appraised once a year. Specific links between the TEKS and TAKS objectives can be found by downloading the following documents:

- PDAS and Elementary Fine Arts Teachers
- PDAS and Middle School Fine Arts Teachers
- PDAS and High School Fine Arts Teachers

The PDAS appraises teaching according to the following eight domains:

**Domain I: Active, successful student participation in the learning process**

Students are actively and successfully engaged in learning at high cognitive levels, e.g., demonstrating critical and creative thinking, problem solving, and other complex thinking skills in solving fine arts problems. Students are self-directed, when appropriate in lessons and activities, and they are able to connect learning to work and life applications, to the other fine arts, and to non-arts disciplines.

**Domain II: Learner-centered instruction**

The goals and objectives of fine arts teachers are based on the basic knowledge/skills and concepts/themes of the discipline. Course content relates to the varied interests and characteristics of students, and instructional strategies promote critical thinking and problem solving. Motivation techniques emphasize the integral value of knowledge and skills, involving students meaningfully in the learning process. Whenever possible, teachers make use of available technology. These and other effective instructional strategies for fine arts teachers are discussed in the Instructional Strategies pages.

**Domain III: Evaluation and feedback on student progress**

Effective assessment of learning in the fine arts is necessary for attainment of the Fine Arts TEKS. Student assessment is aligned with class goals, objectives, and instructional strategies. Ideally, assessment:

- reinforces student learning
- is individualized to meet the diverse needs of students
- provides students with constructive feedback
- gives them opportunities to relearn and reevaluate performance on difficult course content.

See the Student Assessment pages for more information and ideas on effective student assessment in fine arts, including topics such as performance assessment.

**Domain IV: Management of student discipline, instructional strategies, time, and materials**

Whenever possible, fine arts teachers should participate in the development and implementation of their campus discipline management procedures. Teachers are clear with students about their expectations for desired student behavior in class, intervening and re-directing disruptive, inappropriate, and off-task behaviors. Teachers reinforce desired behavior when appropriate and interact with students in an equitable manner. The classroom environment promotes and encourages self-discipline and self-directed learning on the part of students.

Refer to the Safety section in the Instructional Strategies pages to evaluate safety concerns specific to fine arts classes. In addition to safety considerations, teachers must efficiently manage the many and varied instructional materials required for students with diverse needs and interests.

**Domain V: Professional communication**

Fine arts teachers should practice appropriate verbal, non-verbal, and written communication in their interactions with students, parents, staff, and community members. They should be courteous and supportive, respectfully addressing individual student needs, such as those of reluctant students or students having difficulty with course content.

**Domain VI: Professional development**

Teachers should seek out professional development activities that correlate with their discipline’s TEKS, with campus goals and policies, and with the varied needs of their students. Ideally, professional development activities address teachers’ past performance appraisals. See the Professional Development pages for more information on opportunities in the fine arts. In addition, fine arts teachers constructively collaborate with other teachers to enhance student performance.

**Domain VII: Compliance with policies, operating procedures, and requirements**
Fine arts teachers should comply with all policies, operating procedures, and legal requirements. They should also participate in policy and procedure development whenever possible. Teachers consistently contribute to making their schools safe, orderly, and stimulating learning environments for all students.

**Domain VIII: Improvement of academic performance of all students on the campus**

Domain VIII evaluates teaching on the basis of its relationship to student achievement on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS):

1. Diagnosing student needs and providing performance feedback related to appropriate TAKS objectives and Fine Arts TEKS
2. Aligning planning and delivery of instruction to all appropriate TAKS objectives and Fine Arts TEKS
3. Collaborating with other faculty and administration to improve TAKS performance of all students
4. Identifying students who are at risk and developing strategies to assist these students
5. Monitoring the attendance of all students and intervening to promote regular attendance.

To address the criteria, fine arts teachers must identify TAKS objectives taught or reinforced in their classes on Teacher Self-Report Forms. Though fine arts teachers may not have primary responsibility for teaching skill sequences assessed in the TAKS, they can reinforce TAKS-related skills while teaching the Fine Arts TEKS. For example, a grade 7 art teacher covering Impressionist painting might ask students to describe the setting, circumstances, relationships, and themes in a painting and to compare one painting to another. For homework, students could search primary sources and write a composition that documents and elaborates on a point of view expressed in the in-class comparison.

Data for appraisal of each domain are gathered from observations, Teacher Self-Report Forms, and other documented sources. The data describe how teachers led to increased student achievement, made the whole school safe and orderly, and created a stimulating learning environment for all students.