

Music Education in the Law

Fine arts education requirements are defined in the Texas Education Code (TEC) passed by the Texas Legislature. Below is an outline of requirements in law that affect music education which, along with art, theatre, and dance make up the fine arts.

Texas Education Code Mission & Objectives

A well-balanced and appropriate curriculum will be provided to all students. — TEC, Objective 4.

Each district shall ensure all children in the district participate actively in a balanced curriculum designed to meet individual needs. — TEC, Chapter 28.002

Required Curriculum and Skills

The TEC directs school districts with kindergarten through grade 12 to offer the **Required Curriculum**.

The TEC segments the Required Curriculum into Foundation and Enrichment subjects. Fine arts is part of the **Enrichment Curriculum** and thus must be taught.

The State Board of Education adopts the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for all subjects of the Required Curriculum. **Music TEKS** are defined for every level, and instruction must cover 100% of these TEKS as a condition of accreditation. Districts must provide instructional materials that cover 100% of the TEKS in all fine arts courses.

Requirements at the Grade Level



Elementary

State Board rule mandates that school districts provide TEKS-based instruction in all subjects/courses of the Required Curriculum in grades K–5, including music.



Middle School

State Board rule mandates that each student complete one fine arts course in grades 6–8, and the district must offer courses in three of the four fine arts disciplines (or two, if reduced by the commissioner of education based on school size).



High School

High schools must offer at least two of the four state-approved fine arts subjects. Every high school student must successfully complete one fine arts credit to graduate.



Pull-out Limitations

The TEC directs school districts to establish policies that strictly limit the pull-out of students from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation. The policy limits pull-out to 10% of the school days on which the class is offered (unless authorized to extend to 25% by a parent/guardian).



Graduation

The TEC states that the Foundation High School Program require one credit of fine arts for graduation for all students. Students under the latest graduation program may pursue an Arts and Humanities endorsement that allows the serious music student the flexibility to take multiple fine arts courses as part of their graduation plan.