



85th Legislative Session Priorities for Texas Music Educators Association and Texas Coalition for Quality Arts Education



Protect the opportunity currently defined in state law and state board rule for every student to receive fine arts education in grades K–12.

Objective 4 of the TEC states we will provide a well-balanced and appropriate education for all students. ESSA further defines a “well-rounded” education for all children that includes music and arts along with all other academic subjects.

Include Fine Arts in Domains Four and Five of the A–F Accountability System.

Research supports the positive impact of sequential arts participation on college and career readiness. Arts students develop creativity, confidence, problem-solving skills, perseverance, focus, collaboration, dedication, and accountability. In addition, 21st century learning is about integrating subject areas in new and inventive ways. Along those lines, many states have shifted their approach from STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) to STEAM (including Arts). The Arts are not extracurricular—they are an integral part of a high-quality education. School districts should be recognized and rewarded for providing meaningful learning opportunities in the arts.

Arts & Humanities endorsement students who opt out of the fourth science credit to take another advanced arts & humanities course as allowed by law should still receive the Distinguished Program designation.

In their junior or senior year, serious Arts students may realize that an additional Arts-based course would better benefit their college path rather than a fourth science course. Unfortunately, if they decide to substitute for the fourth science course, they are no longer eligible to graduate under the Distinguished Program. TMEA believes students should be able to substitute a rigorous arts- or humanities-based course that works best for their future endeavors while still receiving recognition under the Distinguished Program.

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Support multiple elective opportunities for middle and high school students while maintaining flexibility for students to take arts courses throughout their K–12 education.

Texas middle and high school students have a wide variety of electives from which to choose as well as opportunities to *get ahead* in their core courses. While we support these opportunities, TMEA also emphasizes the importance of students’ ability to participate in the Arts throughout middle and high school. Getting ahead may be a worthy goal, but ensuring flexibility to receive a well-rounded education is equally important.

Continue the positive work accomplished in House Bill 5 (83R) regarding endorsement plans, and recognize the rigor and relevance present in all endorsement plans.

The multiple pathways concept created within House Bill 5 was a significant step forward for Texas education, especially as relates to student engagement. TMEA supports the continuation of the endorsement model and the ability for students to select courses that are meaningful for their future college and/or employment goals.

Continue to allow local districts the flexibility to meet the requirements of HB 18 (84R)—that all students in either 7th or 8th grade receive instruction in specific career options, graduation program flexibility, distinguished level of achievement graduation requirements, and college readiness standards—in a manner they deem appropriate.

Local control should allow districts to determine how to best provide this information to students. They should not be required to place every student in a new course, thus taking away an elective they value such as fine arts.

Monitor any changes in statute that would liberalize current law limiting removal of students from arts programs for STAAR remediation and preparation.

Such practice continues to be a problem, despite HB 5 (83R) language that restricts such behavior. This kind of practice limits effective teaching and learning in our classrooms, as well as each student’s mastery of the TEKS.