The More the Better

Texas schools with higher enrollment in fine arts courses have better academic ratings, academic rating growth, and graduation rates.

by Frank Coachman

s part of our ongoing work to substantiate the importance of fine arts education, TMEA leaders recently completed a study of 2006–2010 enrollment data reported by Texas schools. The results clearly demonstrate a correlation between higher fine arts enrollment and higher campus academic ratings and graduation rates. TMEA and the Texas Coalition for Quality Arts Education shared this data at the 2011 Arts Education Days at the Capitol. The report, along with other compelling advocacy materials, is available online at www.tmea.org/localadvocacy.

After comparing the yearly data on campus academic ratings, campus rating improvement, and graduation rates to the yearly fine arts course enrollments, the following summary observations were made:

Academic Rating: campuses with a higher percentage of student enrollments in fine arts courses achieved higher academic ratings.

Academic Rating Improvement: campuses showing academic rating improvement from 2006 to 2010 reported averaged increases in fine arts course enrollments.

Graduation Rates: campuses with a higher percentage of student enrollments in fine arts courses reported higher graduation rates.

The following tables summarize the results of comparing the mean values of fine arts enrollment, states as percentages, with campus academic rating, improvement in campus academic rating, and graduation rates.

		By academic rating, e of students enrolled rses:	
2010	Exemplary Recognized Acceptable Low	73% 75% 73% 60%	2010
2009	Exemplary Recognized Acceptable Low	76% 69% 66% 65%	2009
2008	Exemplary Recognized Acceptable Low	72% 67% 66% 58%	2008
2007	Exemplary Recognized Acceptable Low	80% 69% 64% 56%	2007
2006	Exemplary Recognized Acceptable Low	76% 70% 66% 63%	2006

enrollments in fine arts courses achieved higher academic ratings. *Hiddle School:* By academic rating, *High School:* By academic rating,

Academic Rating: campuses with a higher percentage of student

	in fine arts cou				
	Exemplary	66%			
20	Recognized	61%			
10	Acceptable	60%			
	Low	54%			
	Exemplary	72%			
2009	Recognized	57%			
90	Acceptable	57%			
	Low	55%			
	Exemplary	77%			
200	Recognized	60%			
80	Acceptable	54%			
	Low	53%			
	England	60%			
	Exemplary				
200	Recognized	64%			
7	Acceptable	54%			
	Low	50%			
	Exemplary	73%			
200	Recognized	55%			
6	Acceptable	50%			
	Low	45%			

the percentage of students enrolled

Academic Rating Improvement: campuses with academic rating improvement from 2006 to 2010 reported averaged increases in fine arts course enrollments.

Middle School: By academic rating, the percentage of students enrolled in fine arts courses:

Low (2006)	63%
Exemplary (2010) 2 campuses	71%
Low (2006)	72%
Recognized (2010) 15 campuses	75%
Acceptable (2006)	68%
Exemplary (2010) 32 campuses	70%
Acceptable (2006)	67%
Recognized (2010) 297 campuses	75%

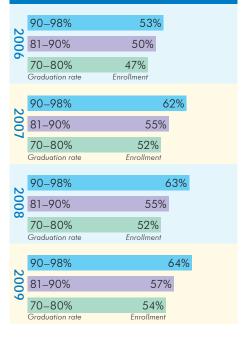
High School: By academic rating, the percentage of students enrolled in fine arts courses: Low (2006) 36%

Exemplary (2010)	53%
2 campuses	
Low (2006)	45%
Recognized (2010)) 57%
19 campuses	
Acceptable (2006	b) 52%
Exemplary (2010)	65%
48 campuses	
Acceptable (2006	51%
Recognized (2010) 61%
441 campuses	

Data Examination

The examination included data from all "Regular Instructional" campuses for the entire state. Data from traditional high school (grades 9–12) and middle school (grades 6–8) campuses were included in this study. County-District-Campus codes were used to match the data collected from the data sources: campus ratings, total student enrollments, graduation rates, and total student enrollments in Fine Arts. The data used in this study is maintained by Texas Education Agency and available through the TEA website or Graduation Rates: campuses with a higher percentage of student enrollments in fine arts courses reported higher graduation rates.

By graduation rate percentage, the percentage of students enrolled in fine arts courses:



by specific request. The following data were included:

- Fine Arts Enrollment Data (requested data): Grades 6–8 (enrolled [2005–2010]) and Levels I–IV (completion [2005–2010]): Music, Art, Theater, Dance.
- 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 PIEMS Statewide Campus Level Data: Campus total enrollment, accountability rating, graduation rate.

The examination consisted of determining the percentage of students at each campus enrolled in fine arts courses and calculating that average for the campuses assigned each academic ranking for each year from 2006 to 2010 and graduation rate range for each year from 2006 to 2009.

If you have any questions about the data collection or synthesis, contact Frank Coachman, TMEA Deputy Director, at fcoachman@tmea.org or by phone at (512) 452-0710, ext. 102.

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