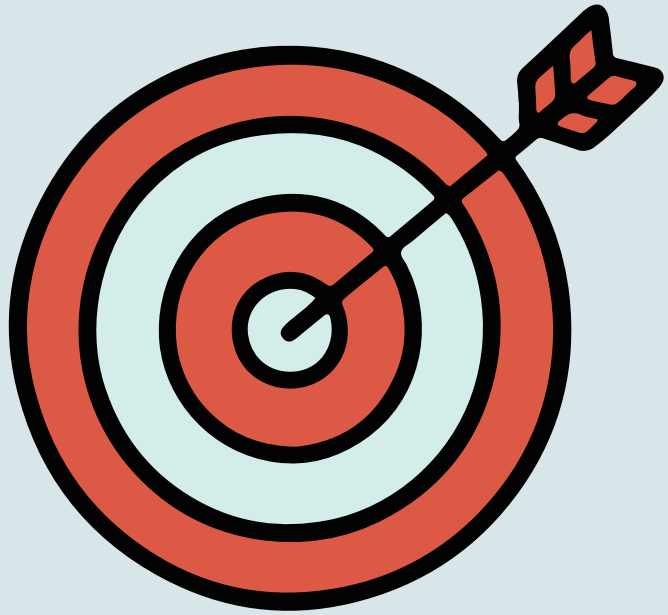


EDUCATION CODE § 28.002

Texas (1995) -
Required Curriculum
(Fine Arts)



Purpose

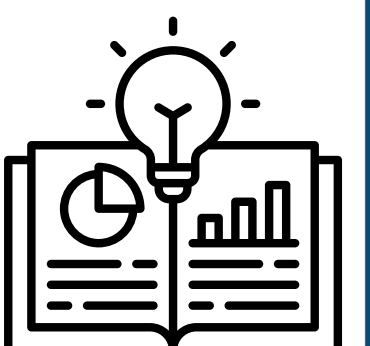
Texas Education Code § 28.002 requires public school districts to provide students with a broad curriculum that includes both core academic subjects and enrichment subjects. Fine arts is specifically listed as part of the required enrichment curriculum, giving music, art, dance, and theater a formal place within Texas public education.

Context:

Texas places fine arts within its statewide required curriculum rather than treating it only as an optional extracurricular activity. The State Board of Education establishes Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards for fine arts courses, including specific standards for music at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.



Texas law also requires students in grades 6-8 to complete at least one fine arts course during those three years. Under the Foundation High School Program, students also generally complete one fine arts credit for graduation, which can be satisfied through approved courses including music, art, dance, and theater.



What is the impact?

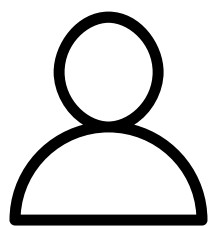


Policy Actions

The policy requires K-12 school districts to include fine arts in their required curriculum and provide instruction aligned with state TEKS standards. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 must complete at least one fine arts course, and high school students generally need one fine arts credit for graduation.

For music, Texas has specific state standards for courses including Music Levels I-IV and Music Studies, giving districts a defined curriculum for what students should learn in music classes.

Who is affected?



The policy affects students in Texas public schools by requiring districts to provide access to fine arts within the curriculum. Middle school and high school students are particularly affected because they must complete fine arts coursework to meet state requirements.

Music and other fine arts teachers are also affected because districts need qualified educators and courses that meet Texas fine arts standards.

Why does this policy matter?

The policy formally recognizes fine arts as part of a complete public education and ensures that students have at least some exposure to arts education during middle and high school.

For music education, this creates a statewide basis for offering music courses and establishing common learning standards rather than leaving music entirely to individual district preference. It can also protect some level of access when schools face competing curriculum priorities.



Limitations

The law requires access to fine arts generally, not music specifically, so students may fulfill the requirement through art, theater, dance, or other approved courses.

It also does not provide a dedicated funding source for music education. As a result, districts can still vary significantly in available teachers, instruments, ensembles, facilities, and advanced music courses, meaning access and program quality may remain unequal across Texas.

Sources

- <https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/?tab=1&code=ED&chapter=ED.28&artSec=28.002>
- <https://www.tmea.org/music-education-in-the-law/>