

Jim Van Zandt's Written Feedback on the Fine Arts TEKS Pursuant to Committee Drafts and Reports to SBOE in July

NOTE: This report is in the format of the questionnaire sent by TEA. There might be some redundancy, in that some of my responses intentionally appear under more than one question.

The committees did an outstanding job of creating first drafts, and the questions and feedback from the State Board of Education in July were very helpful, appropriate, and relevant. I look forward to the public input and continuing dialogue.

1. Is a complete and logical development of fine arts concepts followed for each grade level or course? What recommendations do you have for improvement?

ART, Grades K-5 and K-8:

I believe the draft is generally excellent in terms of sequence, content, rigor, and relevance.

Art, Grades 9-12:

I believe the draft is generally excellent in terms of sequence, content, rigor, and relevance.

The committee's draft clearly and appropriately has stated the need for the art TEKS to be taught specifically within the Fine Arts area, by highly qualified professionals certified in Art.

The revisions to the Art I TEKS seem to negate the fine arts credit substitutions of Principals and Elements of Floral Design, Digital Art and Animation, and 3-D Modeling and Animation. With these revised Art TEKS, these Career and Technical Ed courses will be difficult to implement due to scheduling, facilities, and resources as they attempt to populate these courses. Art History should be "imbedded" in the other art courses.

“Pre-AP” (“General Requirements” in Art, Level II) is a local school district course designation – similar to honors courses. The College Board does not apply that designation, so the offer of Pre-AP Art I and II will need to be reconsidered.

DANCE, Grades K-8:

The addition of Dance, Grades 6-8 is absolutely needed! It is strongly encouraged because it will provide an aligned and sequential transition for high school dance courses, and assist school districts with compliance with the middle school fine arts course requirement for all students.

Middle school dance could serve as a substitute for the “structured physical activity” requirement.

I agree with the SBOE directive that

MUSIC, Grades K-5:

I believe the draft is excellent in terms of sequence, content, and relevance, especially with the additional focus on music literacy.

The increased specificity in the language is appropriate and appreciated.

References to “movement” should count toward a portion of the requirements for “structured physical activity.”

I concur with Ms. Lowe that there might be additional “cross-curricular” references.

MUSIC, Grades 6-8:

Although there is less “specificity” than in Grades 5-6, I believe the draft is excellent.

In continuing to refine the TEKS at this level, the following priorities should be kept in mind:

- o Overall vertical alignment
- o Increased rigor and specificity relative to sequential instruction
- o Compartmentalized SEs in appropriate strands

Under Creative expression/performance, there are SEs (3)(A) and (B) referring to timbre, intonation, rhythm, posture, embouchure, etc. I would recommend the addition of an SE that refers to “clarity/accuracy of instrumental or vocal technique, including articulation, bowing, and/or diction.”

Vocal Ensembles should be added to Music, Grades 7 & 8, Instrumental Ensemble (in addition to Jazz Band) is under grades 7-8, and Vocal Ensemble offered as a music course in high school, Levels IV.

MUSIC, Grades 9-12:

The draft includes excellent clarifications and specificity related to rigor.

It is crucial that we not take any steps that dilute the excellence that Texas ~~drums~~, and orchestras enjoy. I appreciate the committee’s stated goals (in their verbal report to the SBOE) of protecting the “performance standard” of our ensembles while:

- o Increasing the rigor and sequential instruction
- o Providing tools for college ~~ad~~ readiness

We should add the word “articulation” to the list in (2)(E) and (3)(F) in Music, ~~Level~~ plus the related SEs in Levels II, III, and IV. ad Eo7 y3o0 Tw 2.95

Applied Music I and II is offered in the current Music TEKS. The new proposal offers Applied Music I, II, and III. It is still unclear why Level III is needed, and unclear why Level IV was not added. I recommend that we add levels I and II only.

I support the addition of Music and Media Communications, Levels I-

It is unclear why Mariachi, Piano, and Guitar have been separated from Instrumental Ensemble, Levels I-IV.

MUSIC STUDIES:

The creation of this category of “non-performance” music courses is a fabulous plan.

I believe that the SEs for some of courses in this category, e.g. Music Appreciation, Music Theory, Music Business, etc should each be different. There are just too many differences in the content. I concur that each will need its own PEIMS code, but some of these courses might need their own set of SEs, e.g., Music Theory or Composition

There is some concern about the change from Music History to Music Appreciation. They are not the same. Music Appreciation would seem to be a less rigorous content area. (However, I do see some rationale, in that students are able to achieve college/university dual credit in Music Appreciation because Music History is an upper level college/university course.) But again, there is just too much

2. Have the correct vocabulary and terminology been used? Where could changes be made for accuracy and/or clarity?

The identification of the four (or five) basic strands in the introductions of some disciplines seems difficult to read, partly because of the punctuation including colons, commas, and lack of capitalization.

Not all disciplines identify the strands in the introduction the same way. This is actually not necessary, but it would be good to be consistent between the disciplines.

Each word in the title of the strands should be capitalized in all disciplines. In the draft, some are, and some are not.

“Theatre” was sometimes misspelled in the high school Theatre TEKS (“Theater” – should be “Theatre” unless “Theater” is referring to a facility, not an academic discipline).

Some disciplines have added a fifth strand of the TEKS, and the titles are slightly different between the disciplines. While the proposed strand titles seem to make sense within each given discipline, the document as a whole might be more stakeholder friendly if the disciplines all had the same four (or five) “basic” strand titles. This is especially true when we provide professional development at

Music and Media Communication III should read Music and Media Communications I-II.
(Add an "s" to "Communication")

Music, Grades 912: In Levels III and IV, KS (4) should read "Creative Expression" instead of "Music Literacy."

Correct the spelling of "literature" in (1)(C) in Theatre 5 changing it from "literate" to "literature."

4. Are the fine arts concept/content statements grade-level appropriate? Are important concepts missing at any grade level?

Music, Grades 912: Curriculum vitae and audition SEs are not appropriate for every student. These are great optional enrichment opportunities for certain students, but should not be required for every high school music student.

Theatre, Grades K-5: There is too much detail to be successfully taught by classroom generalist teacher. I worry about compliance, especially with the already crowded schedule and curriculum demands.

5. Are the Student Expectations (SEs) clear and specific?

Generally yes, but with some exceptions addressed in responses to other questions

6. Are the subject areas aligned horizontally and vertically?

Generally yes, but with some exceptions addressed in responses to other questions

7. Should consideration be given toward adding other courses at the high school level to provide more options for students?

NO. Many new courses have been proposed, and districts struggle with funding, staffing, scheduling and facilities. We still have the option of Innovative Courses to meet local needs

8. Do you have any other suggestions for ways in which the fine arts TEKS can be improved?

For professional development purposes, utilize the following ~~basic strand titles~~ "basic strand titles" for all disciplines (with customization within each document allowed as currently proposed). Dance and Theatre could "sub-caption" their two components of the Creative Expression strand with their respective documents. Each word to be capitalized in the titles as follows:

1. Foundations
2. Creative Expression
3. Historical and Cultural Relevance
4. Critical Evaluation and Response

Course prerequisites for each of the four fine arts disciplines should be stated and ~~consistency~~ consistency pertaining to prerequisites across the Fine Arts TEKS for Art, Dance, Music, and Theatre is important. (This has been an ongoing problem over the years with the current ~~KS TE~~ KS TE)

Use of technology in creating art should be emphasized in the Creative Expression strand in Grades 6-8 to prepare students for the various technological courses in the high school Art TEKS, including Art and Media Communications I-II-

Use of technology in creating music should be emphasized in the Creative Expression strand in Grades 6-8 to prepare students for the various technological courses in the high school Music TEKS, including Music and Media Communications I-II-

