

Overview of Content of Fine Arts TEKS Relative to the Revision Process

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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?

- Generally, yes. However, here are some considerations:
- Should a third student expectation (C) be added to the Music, Level II Perception Strand of the Music TEKS? Three student expectations currently exist in the Perception Strand of Music, Levels I, III, and IV in the Music TEKS.
- Consider a little more specificity in Elementary Music in terms of exact concepts. This is specifically relative to the area of reading and writing music notation under the Creative Expression/Performance strand. Perhaps state which rhythmic and melodic concepts should be covered at each grade level in order to offer a sequential curriculum. The same might be true of meter.
- Theatre TEKS 6 grade and upward should show more progression in the mastery of skills. Currently the Theatre 6 TEKS look very similar to Theatre IV TEKS. It would be more accurate to simplify certain areas and build more fully on them later, specifically Historical/Cultural Heritage and Response/Evaluation. The goal is basically to structure it with an apparent scaffolding of knowledge. This could also be done with Perception and Creative/Expressive performance perhaps to a lesser degree.

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

- Yes, current vocabulary and terminology in the Fine Arts TEKS for Art, Dance, Music, and Theatre seem to be correct.
- Some educators in the Dance community have suggested that the vocabulary be simplified and more user-friendly to ensure accurate utilization/delivery of the Dance TEKS.
- In Elementary Theatre, the word “dramatize” is used very early. Creative Drama should perhaps incorporate a specific process, since it is more process-oriented and not so much outcome/performance-oriented. Because in most of the state, the “generalist” teacher is required to deliver the Theatre TEKS, creative dramatics can be used to deliver any content area. This would be a means of exposing students to the basic components of Theatre without placing teachers outside of their area of expertise or comfort zone.

- In Music K-5 Perception strand, the TEKS specifically indicate when some concepts such as specific musical forms are taught. But it might be good to clarify/specify when other terminology should be taught to explain other music concepts, especially in terms of melody, rhythm, and music reading.
- In the Music K-5 Historical/Cultural Heritage strand, it is specified that we teach music representing American and Texas heritage, and also generically teach music representing diverse genres, styles, periods, and cultures. Perhaps consider more specific information to be included that stipulates which styles or genres might be easily covered in age-appropriate music.

3. Are there specific areas that need to be updated or reworked?

- As mentioned previously, Music K-5 expectations in reading and writing music might be structured in an age-appropriate spiral. Seat time varies across the state, and must be considered.
- The Theatre TEKS in grades 3 and 4 seem to generally have expectations that are a bit premature, and perhaps need some wordsmithing.
- In the TEKS for 7th and 8th grade Theatre Knowledge and Perception (Creative Expression and Performance) 7.3 A or B, there is no mention of a basic understanding of the stage areas or performance space (Proscenium/Arena/Thrust etc.)
- Much of the content in HS Theatre TEKS is specific to acting, and it is unreasonable to cover all of those objectives in Technical Theatre courses.
- We definitely should develop a separate set of TEKS for Technical Theatre.
- Consider whether the prerequisites in the “General requirements” of the Art, Dance, Music, and Theatre TEKS, Levels II-IV be stated as “mandatory,” or “recommended.” The prerequisites in all of the Fine Arts TEKS are currently worded as mandatory (unlike most other academic disciplines' TEKS), but, ultimately, it is a local school district decision to determine required prerequisites for courses. There is inconsistency across the state on this, and maybe that's okay if local district option is to be the goal.
- Possibly consider a separate set of Music TEKS for the vocal and the instrumental track in grades 6, 7, 8, and Levels I-IV.
- Possibly consider a separate set of Music TEKS for specific courses such as Music Theory.
- Possibly consider incorporating more technology at all levels.
- Dance TEKS at all levels might have a little more emphasis on Choreography, Injury prevention, and Dance History
- Dance I TEKS should perhaps include Jazz as one of the components along with the other dance forms.

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

- Music TEKS are grade-level appropriate. However, they seem very broad and generic for a teacher who is truly developing a sequential curriculum.
- Dance TEKS for grades 6-8 should be added. There is already some “overlap” with PE TEKS, and some districts are able to blend Dance with PE/Wellness 7 and 8.
- A case could possibly be made to make the TEKS for Dance 6-8 be fairly closely aligned with Dance I, and then expand a bit in scope on the upper level courses. This is because several districts across the state are teaching middle school dance, and basically utilizing the TEKS for Dance I as the standard...although sometimes blended with PE/Wellness 6, 7, 8.
- We could consider adding Dance TEKS for K-5, but it would be a tremendous challenge for districts to offer it other than as a PE component, since so little time is available in the day for fine arts already.
- As stated earlier, all levels of the standards should include a little more emphasis on personal conditioning, injury prevention, and basic health-related principles.
- In the Music K-5 Perception strand, specific types of musical forms are stated, spiraling all the way up to Theme and Variation in fifth grade. It might be good to sequentially “spiral” other musical concepts in the other strands as well.
- In Secondary Music, it would seem beneficial to have separate TEKS for Vocal and Instrumental curriculum, as well as separate TEKS for Music Theory, Music History, etc. While naturally many of the music concepts are similar or identical, there are instructional differences in the curriculum.
- Possibly create TEKS for Vocal Ensemble, grades 7-8, since Instrumental Ensemble 7-8 TEKS already exist.
- Refer to earlier comments on Creative Dramatics and the progression of Theatre skills 6-12.

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

- “Student expectations” in the Fine Arts TEKS are identical for each course within a discipline, rather than being subject-specific. This is very vague, and possibly discourages adherence to the standards. In other words, the current student expectations for all different art, music, and theatre courses within the same levels are identical. For example, the student expectations for Drawing, Level II and Painting, Level II are identical (Art TEKS); the student expectations for Orchestra Level II and Music Theory, Level II are identical (Music TEKS); and the student expectations for Theatre Arts, Level II and Theatre Production, Level II are identical (Theatre TEKS).

- If the student expectations remain identical in the Fine Arts TEKS for all courses within each level, should course descriptions be created? For example, Instrumental Ensemble and Vocal Ensemble in the Music TEKS are intended for small/specialty ensemble groups (e.g., Mariachi, quartets, quintets, Madrigal, woodwinds, brass, percussion, etc.) – not full ensembles (e.g., band, choir, orchestra) to accommodate block scheduling issues.
- Should “informal/formal performances” be added to the student expectations of the Creative expression/performance strand of the Dance TEKS and Theatre TEKS – similar to the Music TEKS? A word of caution: Formal performances could tie dance to space, lights and accoutrements, which could pose a resources and facilities problem with many districts
- In the Theatre TEKS K-5, the expectations become vague if the same terminology is used over and over, rather than terminology that includes more rigor over time.
- SEs in the Dance TEKS seem to be clear and specific, but become a little more vague at the upper levels. It does help that “action” words are used throughout all levels.
- Music TEKS are very clear, but not specific. For example, in Music K-5 Creative Expression/Performance, 1.3 , - A) “Read simple examples of music notation B) write simple examples of music notation. and in 1.4, A) create short rhythmic patterns B) create short melodic patterns.” The student expectations in these areas basically stay this broad with a few additional words added but do not provide any additional specificity regarding the concepts through-out 5th grade.

6. Is the subject area aligned horizontally and vertically?

- Each of the four fine arts subject areas of art, dance, music and theatre under the Fine Arts TEKS are aligned horizontally and vertically, but again, seem broad and general.

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

- As mentioned earlier, it would be good to have separate standards for Choir and instrumental music (Band/Orchestra), as well as Music Theatre, Music History, etc.
- Consider adding Musical Theatre as a TEKS based course (currently, Musical Theatre I-IV is a state-approved fine arts innovative course)
- Consider adding Costume Design as a TEKS based course (currently a state-approved fine arts innovative course)
- Possibly consider dual credit options that could be made available: Theatre Appreciation, Costume History, Stagecraft.
- Across the state, there has been discussion of the possibility of blending courses such as Building Trades and Technical Theatre. Once again, a word of caution: This seems like a reasonable idea but could go wrong quickly. The idea of scenic carpentry and building

trades working in unison is fathomable, but there could be a concern that the “building trades” side might not be able to deliver the play analysis and design elements of Technical Theatre. It is possible that both Building Trades and Technical Theatre would suffer. Although “scenic” carpentry and “real” carpentry share many of the same techniques and tools of woodworking, they are geared toward completely different ends.

- Consider adding additional high school dance courses to the Dance TEKS (Dance History, Choreography, etc.)
- Consider adding additional high school theatre courses to the Theatre TEKS (Theatre History, etc.)
- Consider adding Graphic Design, Level II (and/or Level I) course to the Art TEKS? Currently, Graphic Design is only a Level III and IV course in the Art TEKS.
- Consider whether Applied Music, Levels III and IV courses could be possibly created in the Music TEKS. Currently, Applied Music is only Levels I and II in the Music TEKS. However, this could have a negative impact on Band, Choir, and Orchestra enrollment, or on any of the other arts strands.
- Should technology-based courses for the Art, Dance, Music, and Theatre TEKS be created? It is currently possible to receive an MFA in projection design. Definitely a technology based degree.
- Should the state-approved Art and Media Communications innovative course become an Art TEKS-based course?
- Should any of the other state-approved fine arts innovative courses become Fine Arts TEKS-based courses? FYI, there is a total of 24 state-approved innovative fine arts courses, and many of them are relevant and rigorous.
- Consider adding Film/TV/media courses to Theatre TEKS. Although much of the equipment and technology falls into the realm of CATE, the idea of script development, acting for the camera, character, framing a shot, and so many other things falls squarely in one of several of the Fine Arts and most specifically in Theatre.
- There has been discussion about creating multiple courses for Art I, like currently exists for the later levels (Painting, Drawing, Ceramics, Sculpture.) While I am not recommending this, there has been some talk across the state about it. If this were to happen, would the CTE course of Principles and Elements of Floral Design still serve as a Fine Arts substitution? Would the two new Technology Applications courses be approved as fine arts substitutions? (These currently are fine arts substitutions because the TEKS for these courses were aligned with Art, Level I TEKS.

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

- The Theatre TEKS K-5 might include verbs that are more rigorous (avoid, for example, verbs like "observe", "expand", and "assume").

- Some of the “introductions” could be more streamlined to make a more simple and succinct statement.
- Although it seems desirable to be a bit more specific with Elementary Music and Art TEKS, consideration still needs to be given to the fact that districts have varying amounts of seat time, often less than once per week.
- The “current” Fine Arts TEKS are, by design, quite broad. This was done, in part, to accommodate the potential strengths and limitations of programs ranging from rural to large suburban schools. These limitations can include things such as facilities, budgets, teacher allocation, teaching experience, and expertise. However, I believe that the TEKS can be sharpened a bit, and made more specific while allowing each program to teach to its strengths. This could be accomplished by adding a few more of what are now innovative courses, and leaving it up to districts as to which of them to offer for Fine Arts credit. It is in the best interest of the students, individual campuses, and the Fine Arts as a whole that we engage the students and introduce to them the experience and enrichment the Arts have to offer.