



# Texas Coalition for Quality Arts Education

## Supporting Organizations

ArtGives.Org  
ARTReach Texas  
Association of Texas Small School Bands  
BigThought, A Learning Partnership  
Center for Educator Development in the Fine Arts  
Houston A+ Challenge  
Kodály Educators of Texas  
Lamar University College of Fine Arts & Communication  
North Texas Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts  
San Antonio Parks & Recreation Department  
Stephen F. Austin University College of Fine Arts  
Texarkana Regional Arts & Humanities Council  
Texas Art Education Association  
Texas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance  
Texas Bandmasters Association  
Texas Choral Directors Association  
Texas Congress of Parents and Teachers  
Texas Dance Educators Association  
Texas Educational Theatre Association, Inc.  
Texas Federation of Music Clubs  
Texas Music Administrators Conference  
Texas Music Educators Association  
Texas Music Educators Conference  
Texas Music Teachers Association  
Texas Orchestra Directors Association  
Texas Tech University, College of Visual and Performing Arts  
University of North Texas, College of Music

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## Educators urge inclusion of fine arts grades in uniform GPA rule

AUSTIN—Fine arts advocates today urged the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to include high school students' grades in state-approved fine arts courses in the uniform grade point average calculation.

"It is truly astonishing that statements have recently come from the coordinating board's staff denigrating the study of music and the other fine arts as 'non-academic' and thus equating these courses to extra-curricular athletic events," said Robert Floyd, Executive Director of the Texas Music Educators Association, at a public hearing in Austin.

A state law passed in the last legislative session requires the Higher Education Coordinating Board to adopt a uniform high school GPA formula for use by Texas universities. Commissioner of Higher Education Raymund Paredes has proposed a rule for adoption at the board's October meeting that excludes grades from fine arts courses in the GPA calculation, but includes and gives extra weight to Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual credit fine arts courses.

"Surely the members of the board do not want the State of Texas to go on record as a place where the study of music and the other fine arts is not considered academic," Floyd said. "If the Coordinating Board fails to recognize the hard work and academic achievements of the 650,000 Texas high school students enrolled in fine arts courses, I'm sure the board and members of the legislature will hear from outraged parents throughout the state."

Floyd pointed out that Texas law includes fine arts among the academic subjects of the required curriculum. The law also mandates that all instruction in these required subjects, including fine arts, be based on the rigorous standards outlined in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) adopted by the State Board of Education.

Fine arts courses are also included in the core academic curriculum of the federal "No Child Left Behind" law.

"Once and for all, we must end the misconception that studying, rehearsing and performing music in classrooms across Texas is an extra-curricular activity," Floyd said. "Any professional educator who believes that is appallingly misinformed about Texas education law."

Floyd testified to the board on behalf of the Texas Coalition for Quality Arts Education, a coalition of more than 40 organizations that promotes quality fine arts instruction for every student in Texas schools.

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