

## TESTIMONY ON MIDDLE SCHOOL FINE ARTS ENRICHMENT

ROBERT FLOYD

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TEXAS MUSIC EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

Good morning. My name is Robert Floyd and I serve as Executive Director for the Texas Music Educators Association. I thank you for the opportunity to offer brief testimony on the essential role rigorous fine arts instruction performs in directly engaging and motivating middle school students to excel academically. We applaud the legislature, and you specifically, Chairman Shapiro, for your decisive action to include a middle school fine arts course requirement for the first time in Texas schools.

We are grateful that Texas is a leader in delivering meaningful and rigorous instruction in the fine arts. Many middle schools currently offer traditional band, orchestra, choir, theater arts, and visual arts courses. Some campuses also offer general music, instrumental ensemble, jazz band, guitar, and mariachi which are also TEKS-based. While we support complementary innovations in the curriculum, we strongly assert and advocate that all fine arts courses we teach be based on the four strands of our TEKS and that the content be both demanding and substantive. Likewise we must not permit our middle schools to sacrifice quality for **any** subject on the altar of currency or relevance. Rather we must serve to transition students to the academic rigor and performance expectations of the upper levels of the secondary curriculum.

We can point to a variety of sources and data that demonstrate the positive effects of providing a balanced and sequential program in the fine arts in the schools, and documentation of these are included in your packet:

- The 1400 All-State students who performed at our state convention in February earned an average SAT score 390 points above the State average. Some suggest that these SAT scores are so high simply because “smart kids” do music. However, the Dana Consortium recently released an extensive study directly relating rigorous and systematic study in the fine arts to enhanced cognition.
- Students of the arts in general continue to outperform their non-arts peers on the SAT. Data from the College Board, Profile of College-Bound Seniors National Reports from 2006-2009 show that students enrolled in fine arts courses score from 11 to 13 percent higher than students not enrolled in any fine arts courses.
- As Dan Pink testified in the Senate chamber before the legislature at the beginning of the last session, the additional benefits of instruction in fine arts promote a positive work ethic, high performance expectations, increased teaming responsibilities, and exceptional opportunities to develop creative abilities.

- Student drop-out rates and absenteeism are lower and accountability ratings are higher on campuses that have a higher percent of students participating in fine arts than students from campuses with lower enrollment in the fine arts. I have distributed the revised data.
- The Brownsville ISD reports that in the spring of 2008 middle school fine arts students passed TAKS in each of the subject areas at a rate up to 30 percent higher than the district average passing rate. Interestingly, the most significant gap is in math and science. This report is included in your binder.
- Spring and Aldine ISDs conducted a statistical analysis correlating study in fine arts with discipline referrals. On the average, Spring ISD reported ninety percent of the discipline referrals were from non-fine arts students and only ten percent of discipline referrals came from students involved in the arts. Aldine ISD results were similar.
- And as a sidebar, there are 222 direct correlations between middle school TAKS objectives and fine arts TEKS.

Collectively and individually the data support the successes our students experience through fine arts instruction. However, along with our successes we also need to share our concerns. The hyperfocus on middle school TAKS preparation is negatively affecting fine arts instruction. In a recent survey of fine arts administrators across the state, the concerns expressed were prioritized accordingly:

- The practice of TAKS pullout is setting up many students for failure. They get so far behind in class, especially band or orchestra, they just give up and drop the class. Once you lose them in middle school, you lose them for good.
- Literally hundreds of students in our middle schools have been denied the opportunity to participate in a fine arts course in sixth grade, because these students are automatically scheduled into a TAKS remediation course instead. Regrettably, such intervention precludes these students from involvement in instrumental music, like band or orchestra, as sixth grade is the age-appropriate entry level grade to learn an instrument. English language learners are quite often the student population group most victimized by such a policy.
- Double blocking of TAKS-assessed subjects minimizes elective opportunities.
- High school level courses are continuing to be emphasized in middle school, depriving students of opportunities to take academic electives in grades 7 and/or 8.

Ironically, fine arts may be the one course that can positively support success in other academic classes due to its unique qualities, attributes, and benefits of study. Hopefully the new fine arts course requirement will address some of these concerns. Middle school is a critical juncture for fine arts study, and we must do all we can to provide the opportunities for and promote student participation.

I close with the following two thoughts:

- First, fine arts study serves genuinely gifted and talented students who are not identified and served through existing GT programs due to the definitions of what it means to be a G/T student and the assessment procedures currently in place.
- Secondly, for the past four years TMEA has been working to develop its own individual student assessment initiative solely to raise the quality of instruction and student achievement in our music classes throughout Texas. We have made exciting progress and are already running web-based pilots in elementary schools across the state and plan to start performance-based online assessments at the secondary level this next school year.

As former Congresswoman Barbara Jordan stated so eloquently when asked about the importance of the arts, *“The arts are not a frill. The arts are a response to our individuality and our nature, and help to shape our identity. They have a wonderful universality. The arts have the potential to unify. They can speak in many languages without a translator. The arts do not discriminate. They arts can lift us all up.”*

I thank you for your time and will be willing to answer any questions.

# Creativity in 21st Century Workforce Preparation

Creativity and innovation are the keys to success for students entering the workforce of the future according to business and technology leaders who addressed Texas Legislators at a special briefing January 26, 2009 in the Senate Chamber co-chaired by Senator Florence Shapiro (R-Plano), Senate Education Committee Chair, and Representative Rob Eissler (R-The Woodlands), House Public Education Committee Chair.

“Schools need to promote creative, inventive thinking by integrating the arts with other subjects,” Sen. Shapiro said. “It’s not about art or science; it’s about melding the two and promoting both of them together.”

Dan Pink, author of the *New York Times* and *BusinessWeek* bestseller, *A Whole New Mind—Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future* shared his message on why “left-brain” dominance is gone and why the future belongs to a different kind of person with a different kind of mind—creative and emphatic “right-brain” thinkers.

Pink was joined by Dr. Viktors Berstis, IBM master inventor; Raymond Hartfield, Director K–12 Education, AT&T; and Jack Bacon, NASA systems engineer and former project manager of the International Space Station.



It’s not art or science; it’s art and science combined. We should promote both of them together, not either or. What this is about is melding the two, not one in place of the other.

—Sen. Florence Shapiro

We look for artists because those are the people who are going to fill 21st century jobs. They have to know the science to comprehend but they have to go beyond the science to serve the customer.

—Raymond Hartfield, AT&T

We have the strongest arts education programs in the country. And people look to Texas as a leader. We want to make sure we are not moving in the wrong direction when other countries are getting it and are moving to enhance right brain creativity and thinking.

—Robert Floyd, TMEA Executive Director

We need to make sure we are preparing our kids for their future and not our past . . . What I see in businesses is a premium on novelty, nuance and customization. That’s what business is about today. And I fear that our schools are going exactly in the opposite direction. They are increasingly about routines, right answers, and standardization at precisely the moment that the economy is no longer about those things.

—Dan Pink



Dan Pink

The last few decades have belonged to a certain kind of person with a certain kind of mind—computer programmers who could crank code, lawyers who could craft contracts, MBAs who could crunch numbers. But the keys to the kingdom are changing hands. The degree of the future is the MFA, and this future belongs to a very different kind of person with a different kind of mind. These people will now reap society’s richest rewards and share its greatest joys.

—from *A Whole New Mind* by Dan Pink



# Learning, Arts, and the Brain

## The Dana Consortium Report on Arts and Cognition Released March 2008

### The Study

In 2004, the Dana Arts and Cognition Consortium brought together cognitive neuroscientists from seven universities across the United States to grapple with the question of why arts training has been associated with higher academic performance. The following are conclusions from this ground breaking research that further solidify the correlation between arts study and improved cognition.

### Significant Conclusions

- An interest in a performing art leads to a high state of motivation that produces the sustained attention necessary to improve performance and the training of attention that leads to improvement in other domains of cognition.
- Specific links exist between high levels of music training and the ability to manipulate information in both working and long-term memory; these links extend beyond the domain of music training.
- In children, there appear to be specific links between the practice of music and skills in geometrical representation, though not in other forms of numerical representation.
- Training in acting appears to lead to memory improvement through the learning of general skills for manipulating semantic information.

All information reported here is from the Dana Consortium Report, "Learning, Arts, and the Brain," released in March 2008. The full report is available in the Data and Study Results section of the Resource Center on [www.tmea.org](http://www.tmea.org).



*Children with early training in the visual arts had a higher degree of phonological awareness (auditory skill correlated with reading ability) than children with no such training.*



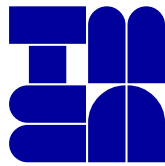
*Participants who had formal musical training showed significantly stronger neural enhancement and suppression effects, indicating better cognitive control . . . results suggest that formal musical training may generalize by having an impact on other brain systems that are different than those affected by training.*

*Musicians scored better compared to the non-musicians on a test of long-term verbal memory, but this advantage disappeared when we prevented the musicians from rehearsing the material. We also found evidence that the musicians had a greater span of verbal working memory compared to the non-musicians. We attribute both of these effects to the enhanced use of rehearsal skills in musicians, rather than to a "hard-wired" difference in verbal memory capacity.*



*Intensive music training is associated with improved performance in the core mathematical system for representing abstract geometry.*



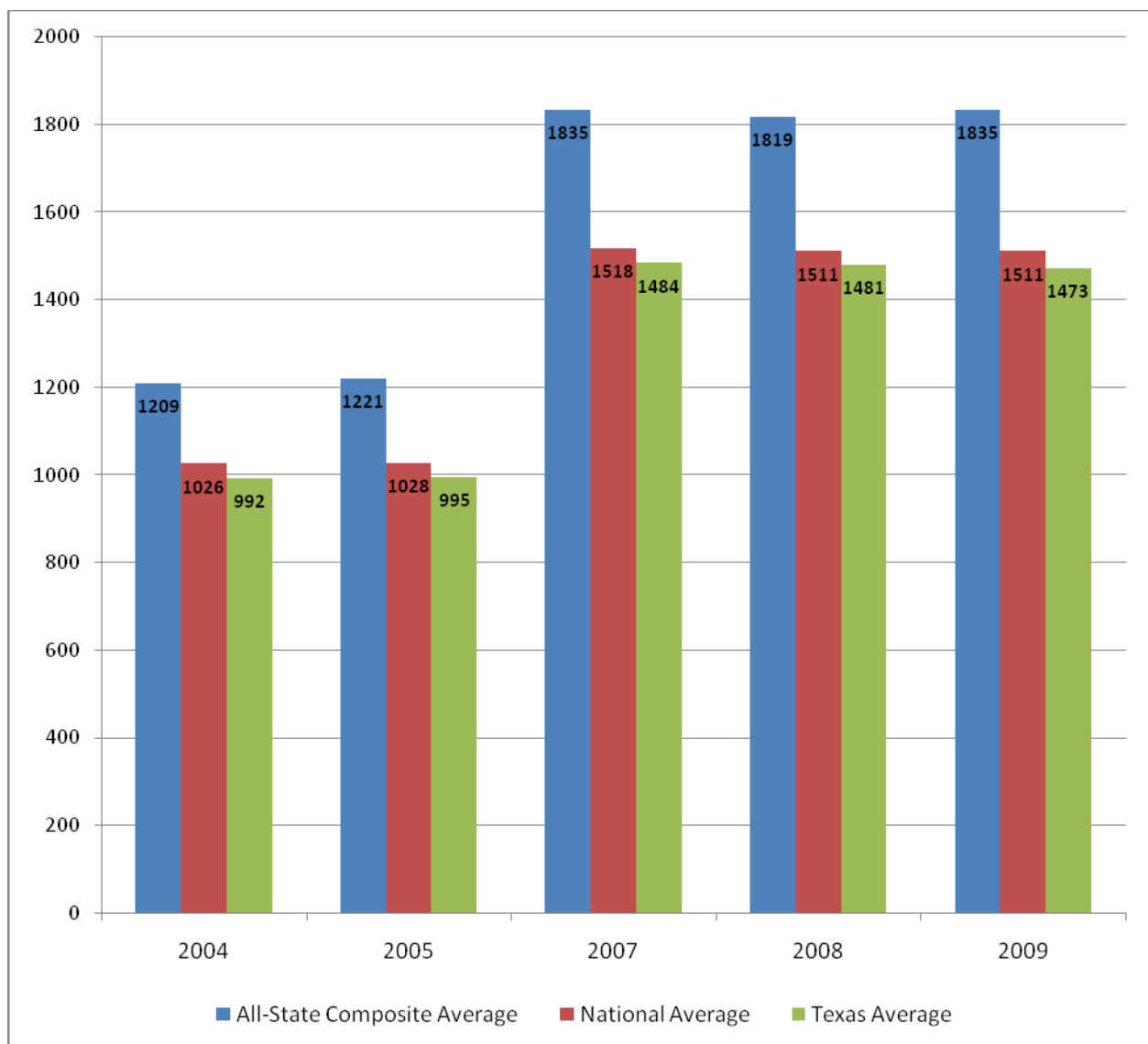


## Five-Year SAT Score Comparison

### Texas All-State Musicians Compared to the National and State Average

*Texas All-State musicians have consistently scored about 20% higher than the national average and about 22% higher than the Texas average.*

*\*2006 Averages were not available for comparison*

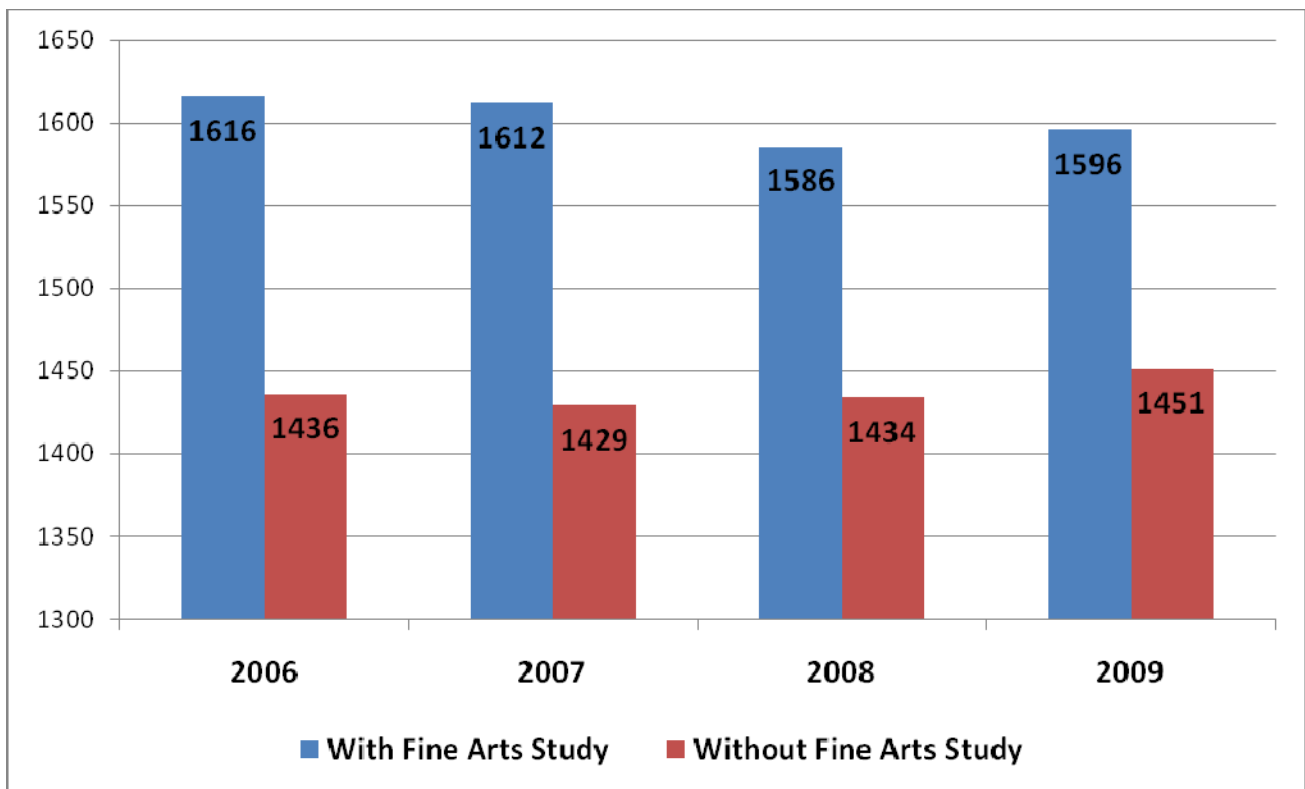


## Texas Music Educators Association

7900 Centre Park Drive, Austin, TX, 78754 • (888) 318-TMEA • [www.tmea.org](http://www.tmea.org)

## Students Enrolled in Fine Arts Courses Score Higher on the SAT than those with no Fine Arts Coursework

*Students of the arts continue to outperform their non-arts peers on the SAT, according to reports by the College Entrance Examination Board. Data from the College Board, Profile of College-Bound Seniors National Reports from 2006-2009 show that students enrolled in fine arts courses score from 11 to 13% higher than students not enrolled in any fine arts courses.*



# Educating Through the Arts:

How Fine Arts TEKS Correlate to TAKS Objectives

## 933 direct correlations

Fine Arts TEKS to TAKS connections from K-12

397 direct correlations: Elementary TAKS to Fine Arts TEKS

222 direct correlations: Middle School TAKS to Fine Arts TEKS

314 direct correlations: High School TAKS to Fine Arts TEKS

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358 correlations of **Theater Arts TEKS\*** to the TAKS\*\* objectives.

94 direct correlations of **Dance TEKS** to the TAKS objectives.

359 direct correlations of **Music TEKS** to the TAKS objectives.

213 direct correlations of **Art TEKS** to the TAKS objectives.

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*TEKS to TAKS correlation study conducted by the Center for Educator Development in Fine Arts (2006)*

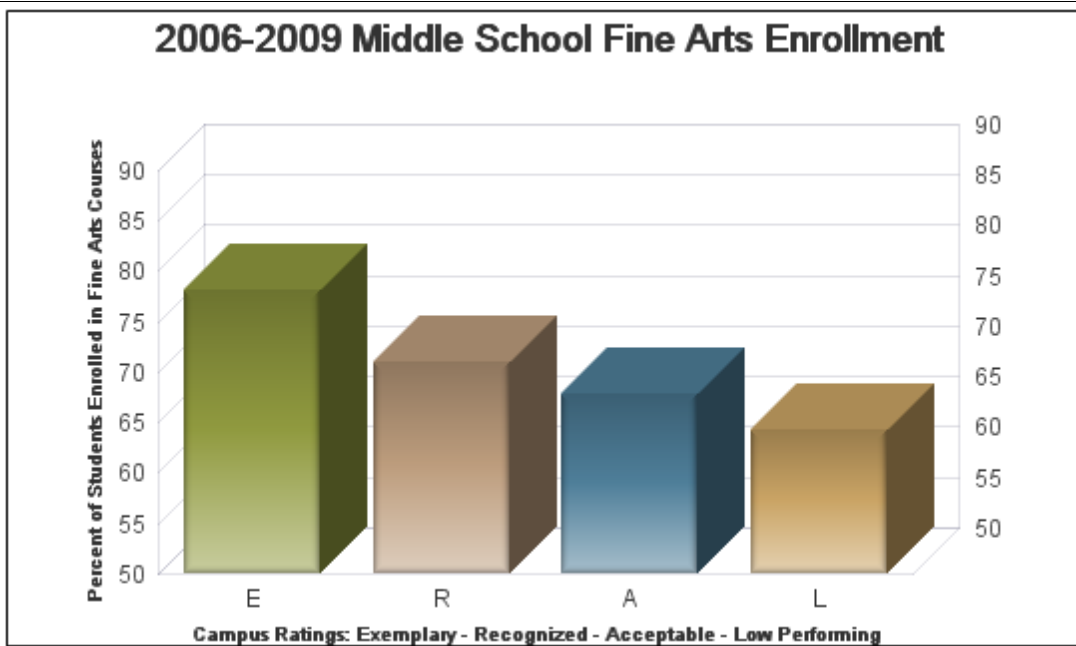
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\*TEKS—Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (State Standards)

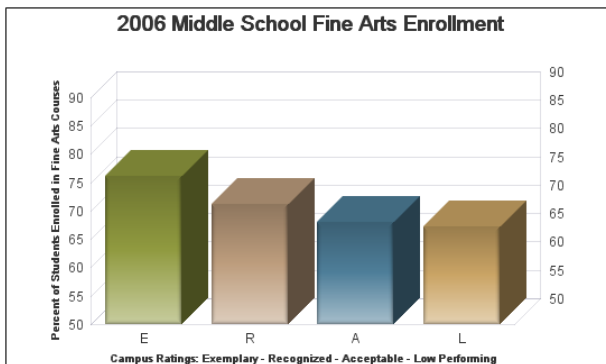
\*\*TAKS—Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (Statewide Student Performance Assessment)



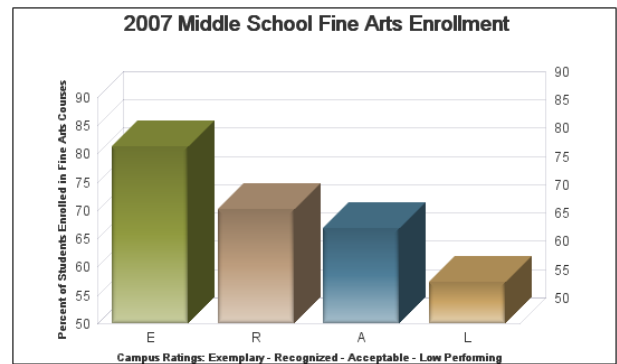
# Texas Middle School Campus Accountability Ratings Compared with Fine Arts Enrollment



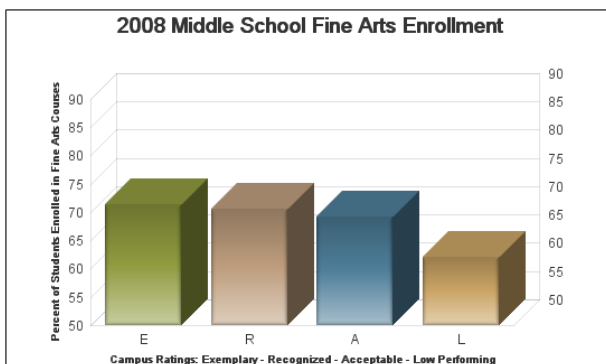
E – 78.14%; R – 70.90%; A – 67.88%; L – 64.19%



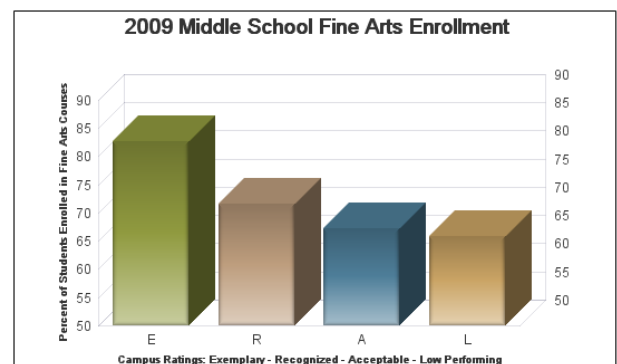
E – 76.17%; R – 71.14%; A – 67.96%; L – 67.17%



E – 81.30%; R – 70.27%; A – 66.90%; L – 57.29%



E – 71.17%; R – 70.53%; A – 69.16%; L – 62.02%

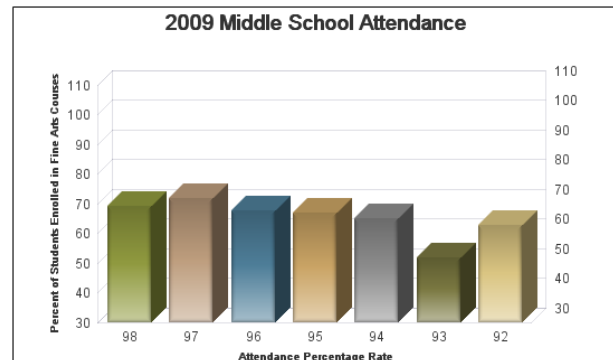
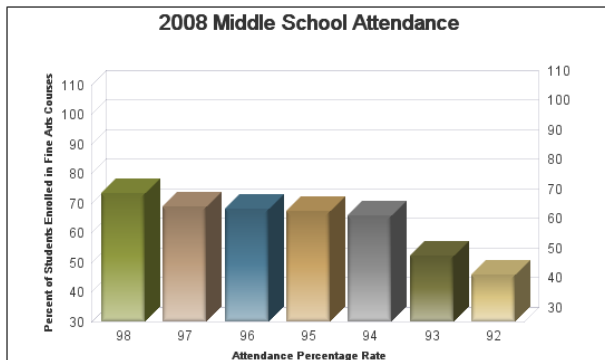
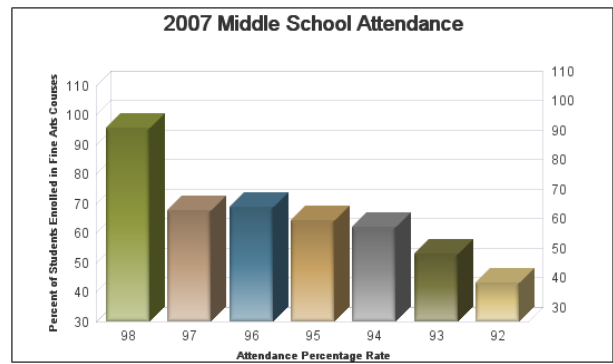
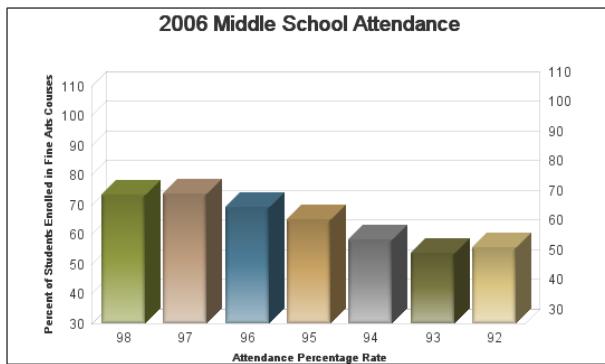
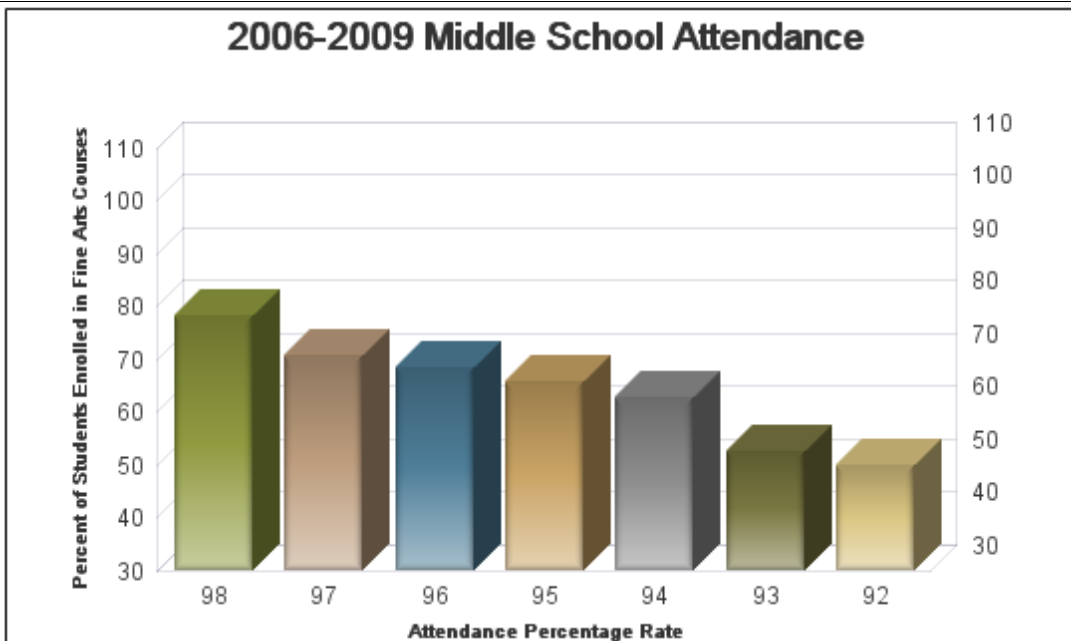


E – 82.74%; R – 71.56%; A – 67.18%; L – 65.88%

Includes: **Regular Instructional** campuses serving grades **06-08** reporting fine arts enrollments and having an accountability rating or **Exemplary**, **Recognized**, **Acceptable**, or **Low performing**

Compiled April 19, 2010 by Frank Coachman, Deputy Director, Texas Music Educators Association

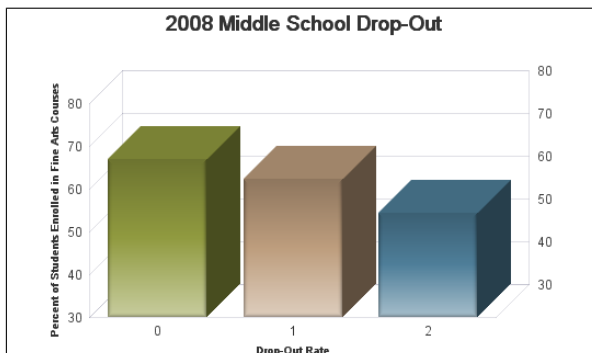
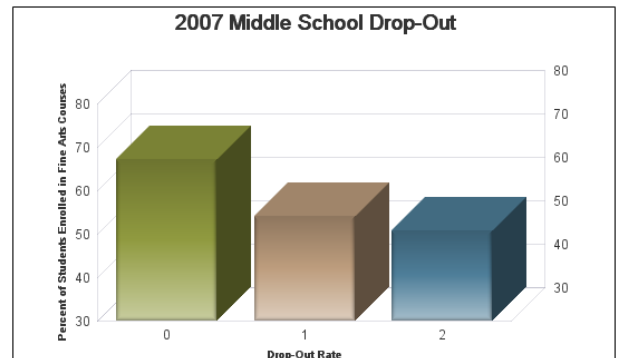
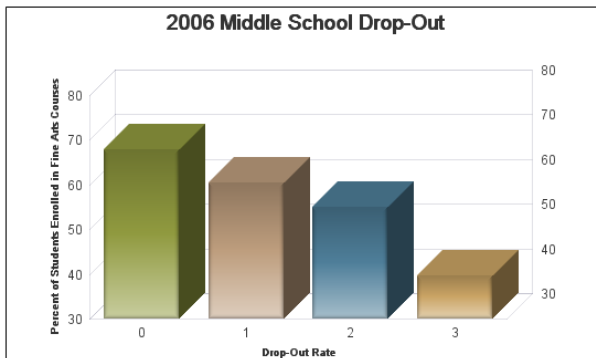
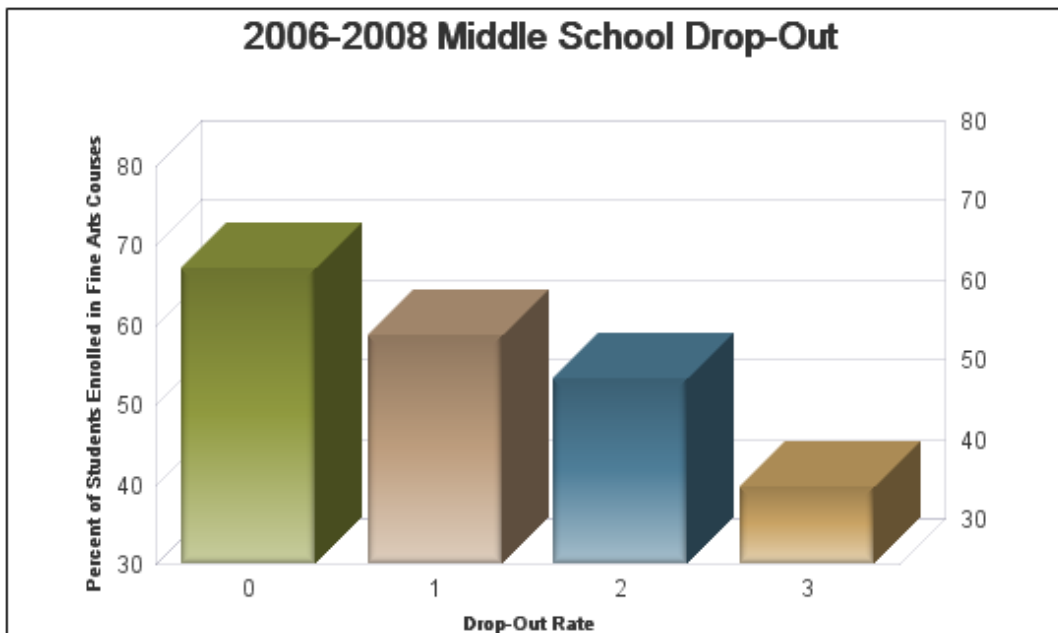
# Texas Middle School Campus Attendance Rates Compared with Fine Arts Enrollment



Includes: **Regular Instructional** campuses serving grades **06-08** reporting fine arts enrollments and having an attendance rate of 92 and higher

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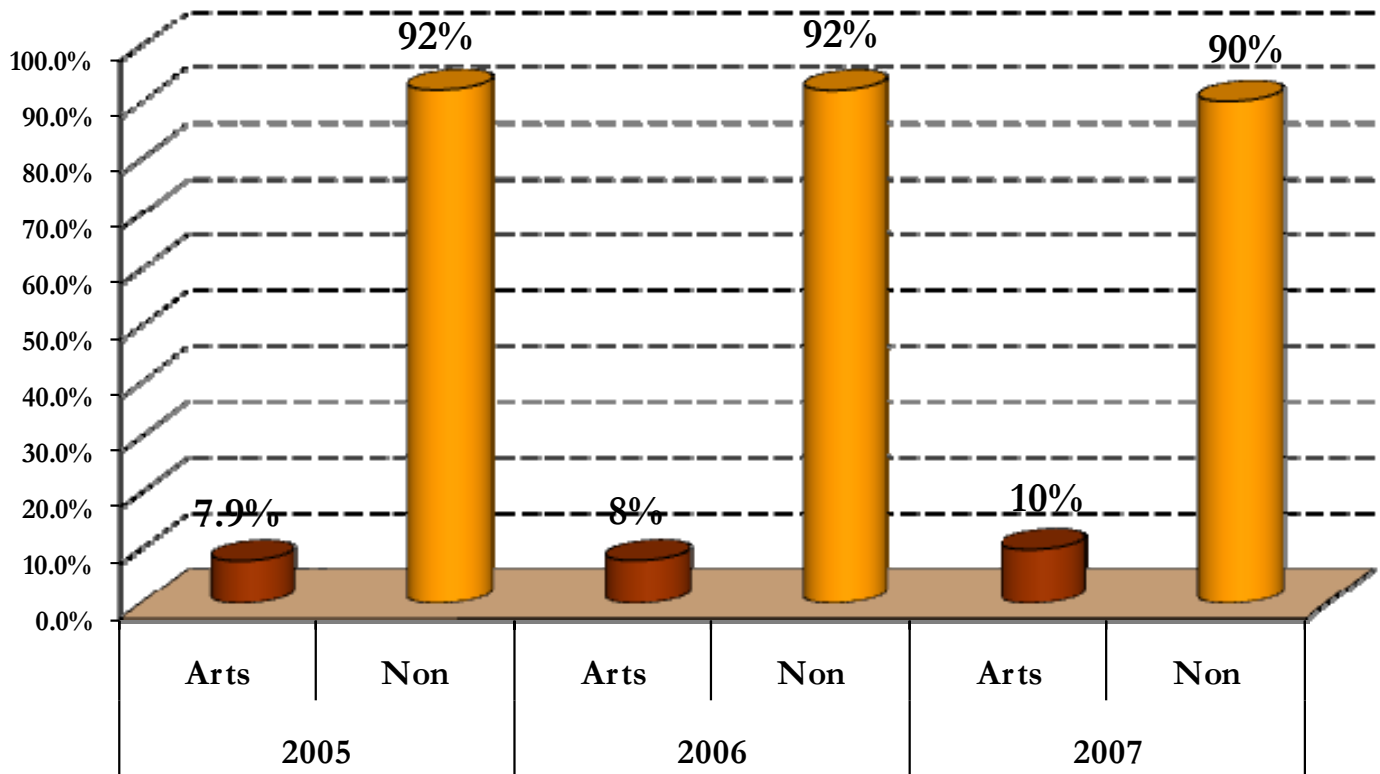
# Texas Middle School Campus Drop-Out Rates Compared with Fine Arts Enrollment



Includes: **Regular Instructional** campuses serving grades **06-08** reporting fine arts enrollments and reporting a drop-out rate of 0 to 3

Compiled April 19, 2010 by Frank Coachman, Deputy Director, Texas Music Educators Association

# Spring ISD Discipline Totals Comparison



Brownsville Independent School District  
Department of Fine Arts

The Department of Fine Arts 2007  
TAKS Results for Secondary Schools

*Middle School Band Students*

Campus	Reading	Math	Writing	Science	Social Studies
Besteiro	92.4	84.6	94.4	63.6	100.0
Cummings	88.4	80.0	97.4	76.0	90.2
Faulk	80.4	75.0	96.4	90.9	100.0
Garcia	90.2	76.0	98.3	81.1	92.5
Lucio	92.7	92.4	95.7	82.9	97.4
Oliveira	89.9	83.0	93.2	81.9	94.4
Perkins	88.3	70.2	95.6	66.0	94.3
Stell	97.3	88.9	100.0	88.7	100.0
Stillman	93.6	78.1	96.6	81.8	94.9
Vela	93.6	88.5	99.0	90.5	98.8
<b>Total MS Band</b>	<b>91.5</b>	<b>82.4</b>	<b>96.6</b>	<b>81.5</b>	<b>95.9</b>
<b>Total District</b>	<b>74.6</b>	<b>59.8</b>	<b>87.6</b>	<b>51.9</b>	<b>79.3</b>

*Middle School Choir Students*

Campus	Reading	Math	Writing	Science	Social Studies
Besteiro	95.1	73.1	100.0	60.0	88.9
Cummings	83.3	74.1	79.4	67.4	88.4
Faulk	68.0	53.4	82.5	54.8	80.6
Garcia	85.3	66.3	95.5	61.8	91.2
Lucio	90.0	89.6	93.2	89.6	97.0
Oliveira	92.4	84.4	100.0	67.4	94.1
Perkins	85.5	63.4	94.4	68.0	94.0
Stell	92.0	85.8	96.7	80.8	100.0
Stillman	89.8	76.1	98.0	74.7	92.9
Vela	97.4	89.0	100.0	83.3	94.5
<b>Total MS Choir</b>	<b>88.9</b>	<b>77.1</b>	<b>95.4</b>	<b>72.7</b>	<b>93.2</b>
<b>Total District</b>	<b>74.6</b>	<b>59.8</b>	<b>87.6</b>	<b>51.9</b>	<b>79.3</b>

Brownsville Independent School District  
Department of Fine Arts

**Middle School Visual Arts Students**

Campus	Reading	Math	Writing	Science	Social Studies
Besteiro	91.1	80.6	93.0	66.7	91.7
Cummings	82.1	67.3	91.6	62.2	82.2
Faulk	74.4	61.7	88.1	46.7	70.8
Garcia	80.7	66.5	90.5	67.5	<b>100.0</b>
Lucio	83.6	82.6	95.4	78.2	93.1
Oliveira	85.8	78.3	92.5	43.1	74.6
Perkins	82.7	64.3	91.3	53.3	86.7
Stell	<b>94.9</b>	83.2	<b>98.7</b>	80.5	94.3
Stillman	89.9	69.3	97.9	69.2	85.9
Vela	92.3	<b>85.4</b>	<b>98.7</b>	<b>86.8</b>	92.3
<b>Total MS Art</b>	<b>85.7</b>	<b>74.4</b>	<b>94.3</b>	<b>66.3</b>	<b>86.2</b>
<b>Total District</b>	<b>74.6</b>	<b>59.8</b>	<b>87.6</b>	<b>51.9</b>	<b>79.3</b>

**Middle School Dance Students**

Campus	Reading	Math	Writing	Science	Social Studies
Besteiro	82.1	<b>71.4</b>	94.7	N/A	75.0
Cummings	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Faulk	90.5	58.7	<b>100.0</b>	75.0	<b>100.0</b>
Garcia	89.2	69.9	<b>100.0</b>	68.0	96.0
Lucio	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Oliveira	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Perkins	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Stell	<b>94.7</b>	70.9	N/A	75.0	94.6
Stillman	87.0	64.3	<b>100.0</b>	<b>75.9</b>	93.1
Vela	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Total MS Dance</b>	<b>87.9</b>	<b>70.2</b>	<b>98.4</b>	<b>68.1</b>	<b>91.0</b>
<b>Total District</b>	<b>74.6</b>	<b>59.8</b>	<b>87.6</b>	<b>51.9</b>	<b>79.3</b>

**Total District Fine Arts Students vs. District Non Fine Arts Students**

	Reading	Math	Science	Social Studies
District FA	<b>86.9</b> (17.8% higher)	<b>73.6</b> (24.9% higher)	<b>69.4</b> (25.3% higher)	<b>91.3</b> (19% higher)
District Non FA	69.1	48.7	44.1	72.3