

Texas Coalition for Quality Arts Education Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

Thank you for taking your time to answer the following brief questionnaire. This information will be shared with arts education supporters as they prepare to vote in the upcoming election. If you have any questions about the content or would like more information, please contact Robert Floyd, TCQAE Chair, at (512) 452-0710, ext. 101.

Name Paul Cardwell District 9

Returning the Questionnaire: Return this questionnaire either in the included envelope, or by fax to (512) 451-9213.

Benefits of Music Education

Last year, the Texas Music Educators Association conducted an analysis of student enrollment in Texas middle school and high school fine arts courses (music, theatre, art, and dance). The analysis found that student enrollment in fine arts courses was 36 percent higher in schools rated "exemplary" than in schools rated "low performing." Also, schools with higher student involvement in fine arts had better student attendance records. In addition, students selected as Texas All-State musicians have SAT scores over 300 points higher than the state average and over 200 points higher than the national average.

1. Do you believe that studying music and other fine arts helps improve student performance in other academic courses?
 Yes No Undecided Would like more information
2. Do you believe that student involvement in music and other fine arts reduces the drop out rate by keeping some at-risk students interested in school?
 Yes No Undecided Would like more information
3. Do you believe that instruction in music and other fine arts provides students with learning skills that enhance college preparedness?
 Yes No Undecided Would like more information
4. Do you believe that creativity fostered by a fine arts education is a trait highly valued by employers in building a 21st century workforce?
 Yes No Undecided Would like more information

Education Priorities

Many believe that being in a school band, orchestra, or choir is an extracurricular activity, yet these are standards-based academic courses for which students receive course credits. State law requires every high school student to have at least one fine arts credit to graduate. However, student enrollment in high school and middle school music courses has been steadily declining for the past 10 years and, in elementary grades, music education is often sacrificed to prepare for TAKS tests.

5. Do you support or oppose making fine arts courses part of the core curriculum for Texas schools?
 Support Oppose Undecided Would like more info
6. Do you support or oppose removing students from music and other fine arts courses for TAKS preparation drills?
 Support Oppose Undecided Would like more info
7. Do you support or oppose a legislatively-created blue ribbon task force, appointed by the governor, to recommend ways to increase opportunities for students to study music and other fine arts in our schools?
 Support Oppose Undecided Would like more info

Opportunities to Study Fine Arts

During the 81st legislative session, new high school graduation programs were voted into law that provide students more flexibility to take academic courses they value.

8. Would you support or oppose legislation that would add more requirements and thus take away the flexibility added during the last session?
 Support Oppose Undecided Would like more info

*Thank you for completing this questionnaire.
Please return it in the envelope provided, or fax it to (512) 451-9213*

Questionnaire results will be posted on www.GoArts.org

PLEASE NOTE ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Thank you

I have a basic problem with multiple choice surveys - they are too much like the standardized tests which are destroying our educational systems. Therefore, I have answered on the basis of closest opinion, and include this to get a more accurate picture of the proper shade of meaning. I would hope these qualifiers could be posted with the results. My "undecided" responses do not mean "duh, I don't know." They mean the choices are inadequate. Otherwise, 2. yes, 7. support, 8. oppose.

1. That has been documented in many studies.

2. Some students, probably. The same argument is made for exempting athletics from no pass no play. However, it is doubtful that very many stay in school just to blow a saxophone or agitate a bag of air on the basketball court.

3. Not just learning skills, but a useful base of knowledge as well.

4. Unfortunately, in spite of exceptions which would indicate yes, most employers today are interested only in what will get them money and care little about their employees or society as a whole.

5. Back to number 3's base of knowledge.

6. I oppose TAKS, No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top, or any other cookie-cutter method to make everyone, as Malvina Reynolds wrote in "Little Boxes", "all made into ticky-tacky and all think just the same."

7. I think such a qualified panel should be created, but I don't think Perry or White are capable of selecting one.

8. In principle, I support flexibility, but not at the expense of further watering down a weak curriculum. Strengthening existing courses would be more effective than a one-size fits all core. However, I also reject White's plan that some should be trained to be drudge laborers and others to go to college and rule. There was too much of that before Brown v. Board!