



A Podcast From Senator Florence Shapiro
Texas Senate District 8

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2009 - AUSTIN, TEXAS

CONTACT: florence.shapiro@senate.state.tx.us or 512/463-0108

Today's podcast from Senator Shapiro is related to:

- [Arts In Education](#)

Time Count: 2 minutes, 52 seconds

Today's Direct From Shapiro focuses on arts in education. Senator Shapiro, this week you passed CS HB3, the school accountability bill, off the Senate floor. What was amended?

Senator Shapiro: "I amended it to reinstate one credit of Fine Arts and one credit of P.E. in all graduation programs.

Since we first voted on SB 3, it has become apparent that Fine Arts education is becoming more and more critical to post-secondary readiness. Exposure to fine arts is critical not just in the middle school grades, not just in elementary, but in high school as well to ensure students are post-secondary ready."

The Higher Education Coordinating Board currently requires three hours of performing and visual arts credit for a student to graduate with a baccalaureate degree from a Texas institution, right?

Senator Shapiro: "Yes, and to not include a fine arts requirement in high school runs counter to that requirement. I've been convinced that the 4X4+2 plan without a fine arts requirement does not support a seamless P-16 education for all Texas students.

As I mentioned, one credit will also go to physical education for the graduation in the bill, because the ever growing obesity rate among Texas students - I believe the economic impact of health issues, make it imperative that Texas promotes physical education in an attempt to encourage exercise and healthy living."

When you break down the numbers--What does adding one fine arts requirement and one physical education requirement for high school students mean now?

Senator Shapiro: "Well, we were doing eight electives and since we now put a mandate for one art, one physical education, we now have six electives. But I believe this will work to everyone's ability.

My accountability bill emphasizes post-secondary readiness by holding schools accountable for educating students to the college readiness level and creating a high school graduation program that is flexible and relevant."

CSHB 3 now moves to a conference committee to resolve the differences between the House and Senate version of the bill. What's the great realization about this bill?

Senator Shapiro: "We, undoubtedly, realize that the role of Fine Arts has become an increasingly important balancing point. I guess what we have to recognize is the Senate bill has one credit of art and the House version does not, the Senate version has one credit of physical education and the House version does not. A Conference Committee has to resolve those differences. You know, Dan Pink, one of the leading voices in the changing 21st Century workforce, reminded us at the beginning of Session - in a session that he had with the Legislature - that the skills necessary for today's students to compete and be productive, tomorrow, require the type of creative and problem solving skills that Fine Arts courses deliver."

###