



2025-2026

**TAME Middle School Regional
Contest Guidelines**

Guidelines and Rules

Mission

To provide middle school mariachi ensembles with a **localized, high-quality performance opportunity** that does not require overnight travel. This initiative supports **equitable access** to competition experiences for younger students and aligns with **district safety and budget constraints**.

Goals of the Middle School Regional Division

- Provide meaningful, high-quality competition experiences **without overnight travel**.
- Ensure young performers are **evaluated fairly, positively, and developmentally appropriately**.
- Promote **community engagement** through locally hosted events.
- Help schools **build momentum, pride, and visibility** for their mariachi programs.
- Maintain **alignment with the TAME State Handbook** and uphold **consistent statewide standards**.

Regional Format & Hosting

1. **Host Eligibility:** Events may be hosted by **TAME-member schools, school districts, or regional universities**.
2. **Host Site Requirements:**
 - Performance stage
 - Warm-up area
 - Judges' panel and scoring setup
 - Space for an optional clinician (if available)

3. **Scheduling:** TAME will coordinate a **statewide schedule of regional events** to prevent date conflicts.

Eligibility Criteria

1. **Grade Level:** Ensemble members must be students in grades **6–8 only**.
2. **School Affiliation:** Groups must be part of a **public, charter, or private school-based mariachi program**.
3. **Regional Assignment:** Schools must compete at the **designated regional site** corresponding to their **TAME region or zone**.
4. **Travel Limitation:** **No overnight travel** is permitted. Events must be accessible as **same-day trips** within a reasonable travel radius.

Note: All eligibility and participation requirements must adhere to the **TAME Handbook** and are aligned with **TAME State competition standards**.

Performance Requirements

1. **Number of Pieces:** Each ensemble must perform **three (3) contrasting selections**.
2. **Time Limit:** Total performance time may not exceed **10 minutes**.
3. **Suggested Styles:**
 - At least **one traditional mariachi genre** (e.g., *son*, *ranchera*)
 - At least **one contrasting style** (e.g., *bolero*, *huapango*)
 - The *son* may be from **any region**—it does **not** have to be *jalisciense*.
4. **Instrumentation:** Must include at least **five core mariachi instruments**. Flexible accommodations may be made for **developing ensembles**.

All performance and adjudication procedures must follow the guidelines established in the TAME Handbook and align with TAME State requirements.

Adjudication

Adjudication focuses on **developmentally appropriate criteria**, including:

- Pitch and Intonation
- Ensemble Balance
- Style Accuracy
- Rhythmic Precision
- Student Engagement and Stage Presence

Placement System

Ensemble Awards:

- 1st Place
- 2nd Place
- 3rd Place

Optional Individual/Sectional Awards:

- Outstanding Section (e.g., Violins, Rhythm, Trumpets)
- Notable Soloist (if applicable)

Recognition

- All ensembles receive a **Regional Certificate** and **Director Feedback Packet** (including written and/or audio comments).
- **First-place ensembles** may qualify for a **State Recognition Invitation** and **video showcase opportunity**.

- Host sites may offer **regional trophies or plaques**, depending on sponsorships or local support.

Optional Add-Ons (Based on Host Capacity)

- Director roundtable or clinic
- Adjudicator-led mini-workshops
- Combined performance or mass ensemble piece

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