



2026-2027

**TAME Emerging Division
(0-4 Year) Contest Guidelines**

TAME Emerging Division (0–4 Year) Rules & Guidelines

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1. Purpose

The TAME Emerging Division was established to encourage the growth and development of new and re-established high school mariachi programs throughout Texas. This division provides an opportunity for directors and students to gain valuable performance experience while building a strong foundation for future competitive success.

The focus of the Emerging Division is educational growth, program development, and student achievement while maintaining the standards and expectations of the Texas Association of Mariachi Educators (TAME).

This division is intended to serve as a developmental pathway for new programs before advancing into the appropriate TAME classification structure.

2. Eligibility Requirements

2.1 Program Eligibility

A program may enter the Emerging Division if it meets one of the following criteria:

- The mariachi program is within its first four (4) years of existence.
- The mariachi program has been re-established after a period of inactivity and is within its first four (4) years of rebuilding.
- The program has not previously exceeded four (4) consecutive years of participation in the Emerging Division.

2.2 Previous State Qualification Restriction

To preserve the educational intent of the Emerging Division, the following programs are not eligible to participate:

- Any program that qualified for the TAME State Mariachi Contest prior to the establishment of the Emerging Division.
- Any program that has previously demonstrated a competitive level of performance by advancing to the State Contest before the implementation of this category.
- Programs with a documented history of State Contest participation may not enter the Emerging Division regardless of a change in director, temporary decline in enrollment, or restructuring of the ensemble.

Exception: A re-established program may petition the TAME Executive Board for consideration if the program has been inactive for an extended period and can

demonstrate that it is being rebuilt as a new program. Approval shall be at the sole discretion of the TAME Executive Board.

2.3 Intent of the Rule

The Emerging Division was created to provide performance and educational opportunities for new and developing programs, not as an alternative classification for programs that have previously achieved State-level competitive success. Programs that have already qualified for State have demonstrated a level of achievement that exceeds the developmental purpose of this division and should compete in their appropriate classification or division.

2.4 Director Certification

The director registering the ensemble must certify that the program meets all eligibility requirements established by TAME.

2.5 Consecutive Years of Participation

- Programs may participate in the Emerging Division for a maximum of four (4) consecutive years.
- Upon completion of the fourth year, the program must advance into the appropriate TAME classification structure.
- Programs may not re-enter the Emerging Division after completing four consecutive years unless approved by the TAME Executive Board under extraordinary circumstances.

2.6 Division Declaration

Programs wishing to participate in the Emerging Division must declare their intent at the time of Area Contest registration.

Once registered, programs shall remain in the Emerging Division for the entire contest season, including advancement to State if applicable. Programs may not transfer divisions during the same contest season.

2.7 Student Eligibility

- Participants must be enrolled in grades 9–12 and be eligible under all UIL and local district requirements.
- Students must be bona fide members of the school mariachi program they represent.
- UIL No Pass, No Play regulations shall apply.

- Only registered students may participate in the contest.
- Students participating in multiple ensembles must follow all TAME Handbook requirements.
- Middle School/Junior High participation is only permitted as outlined in the TAME Handbook

3. Classification

The Emerging Division is a High School classification only and is intended for new and re-established high school mariachi programs that meet eligibility requirements.

Programs shall remain exclusively in this division during their eligibility period.

4. Instrumentation

Traditional mariachi instrumentation is encouraged and may include violins, trumpets, guitars, vihuelas, guitarrones, harps, and other approved instruments.

All ensembles shall consist of a minimum of seven (7) and a maximum of twenty-four (24) members.

Instrumentation requirements, scoring implications, and performance standards shall align with the TAME Official Handbook and Guidelines.

5. Performance Requirements

5.1 Repertoire Requirements

Schools are required to perform a minimum of two songs, one of which is in the style of a Son Jalisciense. Be aware of the time requirements for your group. · The two songs can also be performed as part of a popurri. An introductory “Tema” can also be included but does not count as one of the two songs. Individual songs or popurri’s are permitted as long as a Son Jalisciense or a song in the style of a Son Jalisciense is included within the performance (a complete son is not required as long as it is included)

5.2 Performance Time Requirements

All time limits and penalties shall align with the TAME Official Handbook and Guidelines.

5.3 Repetition of Music

All music repetition policies shall follow the TAME Official Handbook and Guidelines. 'A varsity or non-varsity/JV mariachi may not repeat music within 4 school years of playing it at the Area Contest and/or State Finals. Middle school mariachi may not repeat music within 2 school years of playing it at Area contests. This includes musical selections/arrangements, song titles (regardless of musical arrangement or style) song lyrics etc. Introduction temas (i.e. Those specifically written for the group) can be repeated but must not use too much time. (i.e. 30-45 sec. intro)'.

6. Performance Procedures

6.1 Contest Procedures

All contest procedures, logistics, sound, video, and operations shall follow the TAME Official Handbook.

7. Adjudication

Judging shall follow the official TAME rubric and TAME Official Handbook.

7.1 Scoring System/Awards Recognition

All scoring, penalties, and rating systems align with the TAME Official Handbook and Guidelines.

8. Awards & Recognition

Programs may receive:

- Division Ratings (Comments Only)
- Placement Recognition
- Special Awards as determined by TAME

9. Director Expectations

Directors must maintain TAME membership, follow all rules, demonstrate professionalism, and support the educational mission of TAME.

10. Governing Authority

This document supplements the TAME Official Handbook. The Handbook supersedes in any conflict. The TAME Executive Board retains final authority for interpretation.

11. Philosophy Statement

The Emerging Division builds the foundation for future mariachi excellence in Texas.

"Building strong foundations today creates exceptional mariachi programs tomorrow."