August 29, 2022

Subject: Texas Assessment Program Updates for the 2022–2023 School Year

To the Regional and District Testing Coordinator Addressed:

The purpose of this communication is to inform Texas public school districts and open-enrollment charter schools about updates to the Texas Assessment Program for the 2022–2023 school year.

Redesign of STAAR
The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) program has been redesigned for the 2022–2023 school year to align more closely with effective classroom instruction. Key elements of the redesign include:

- the addition of new non-multiple-choice questions that give students more ways to show their understanding and better reflect questions teachers ask in the classroom;
- the addition of a writing component to reading assessments for grades 3–8 to better support the interconnected way these subjects are taught; and
- the incorporation of more cross-curricular passages into the new reading language arts (RLA) assessments so that test questions can reference topics students have learned about in other classes.

TEA is actively working to update existing STAAR redesign resources and provide additional resources. More information about these resources will be available soon.

Beginning with the December 2022 STAAR end-of-course (EOC) assessments, STAAR will become an online testing program to ensure that students have access to the robust accommodations that can be provided online. Students are expected to test online with the exception of students who require accommodations that cannot be provided online or students whose specific setting precludes technology access. In these rare and unavoidable circumstances, a student may be eligible for a special paper administration of an online STAAR test. Refer to the special administration section below for more information.

Based on the redesign, including the transition to online testing, the following additional updates to the STAAR program will be implemented beginning with the 2022–2023 school year.

- The spring 2023 STAAR assessments will be administered during three two-week testing windows, with one window for each content area group: RLA, science and social studies, and mathematics. Each district and campus may schedule the specific content-area tests on any day within the corresponding two-week testing window, except for Monday of week 1, the primary week. Although there are three separate testing windows based on content area, these testing windows are considered one administration—the spring STAAR administration.
- The majority of the test directions for students taking STAAR will be moved to the online testing environment and will appear at the beginning of the tests. As a result, one *STAAR Test Administrator*

Manual will contain instructions for all STAAR assessments, including grades 3–8 and EOC assessments. The *STAAR Test Administrator Manual* will be distributed to districts in two shipments, one for the December administration and one for the spring administration.

- For the small number of STAAR paper test booklets printed, there will be a separate test booklet for each grade and subject, similar to the STAAR EOC test booklets. Each STAAR test booklet will be distinguishable by a particular color; for example, grade 3 mathematics will be a shade of pink, and grade 3 RLA will be a shade of orange.

TEA is removing the maximum time allowed for STAAR assessments based on feedback from educators, parents, and students, as well as other changes to the program. Districts will no longer have to stop students from testing after a four- or five-hour testing period. Students are expected to complete STAAR tests in about three hours. Any students who are still testing after four hours should be consolidated into a general testing area to continue testing. Students may continue testing until the end of the school day.

Redesign of TELPAS Reading and Writing
Based on input from educators, the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) reading and writing domains will be combined in an online test for students in grades 2–12 this year. Because of this new standardized version of a writing assessment, districts will no longer need to holistically rate writing samples for students in grades 2–12. Students in kindergarten and grade 1 will continue to be holistically rated in all four language domains—listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Special Administration of an Online Assessment
Starting this school year, districts will no longer have to request a special administration of an online assessment for STAAR or TELPAS. Instead, campus level 504 or admission, review, and dismissal committees are responsible for confirming a student has met the eligibility criteria for a special administration. A student may be eligible for a special administration of an online assessment if the student requires a testing accommodation that is not possible to provide in an online setting.

To indicate that a student is eligible for a special administration, the district must ensure that the student has either the *Special Ed Indicator Code* or the *Section 504 Indicator Code* turned on in the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE). In addition, the district will need to set the *Test Mode* field to "Paper" and select the specific paper test format in the new *Paper Test Format* field for that student prior to the close of an administration's initial order window.

Districts must make every effort to administer STAAR and TELPAS assessments online. In rare situations where appropriate computers or technology are absolutely unavailable, as may occur on occasion with a homebound student or a student in juvenile justice alternative education programs (JJAEPs), jails, or detention centers, that student may be eligible for a special paper or holistic administration. Contact Texas Testing Support at 833-601-8821 or TexasTestingSupport@cambiumassessment.com for assistance.

It is important to note that there are no longer answer documents for these paper tests; instead, students should be instructed to record their responses in their test booklets. Authorized district staff members must enter student responses into the Data Entry Interface (DEI) for scoring as student responses in test booklets will not be scored. Districts should schedule tests during the first part of each testing window and reserve the last two to three days for entering student responses into DEI. All data must be entered and verified by 11:59 p.m. (CT) on the final day of the testing window for each administration as indicated on the Calendar of Events.

Testing System Updates

Test Information Distribution Engine
Based on input from educators, TIDE has been updated to include numerous enhancements. The TIDE Enhancements for the 2022–2023 School Year training module, available in the Learning Management System (LMS), explains the enhancements in detail. A few examples are provided below.

- A new TIDE messaging indicator will serve as an electronic bulletin board where important information can be rapidly shared. Anyone logging in to TIDE is alerted to new announcements by a colored banner at the top of the screen.
- For students who need to test outside of their enrolled district, the enrolled district can indicate a secondary testing district and campus on an individual student's record in TIDE.

Test Delivery System
For STAAR and TELPAS assessments administered online, campuses now have the option to administer either a proctored or unproctored test session in the Test Delivery System (TDS). The proctored option allows test administrators to actively monitor, from the Test Administrator Interface of TDS, the progress of each student logged in to his or her test session. In addition, campuses can now schedule test sessions—proctored and unproctored—up to three weeks prior to the opening of a testing window.

Centralized Reporting System
Starting this school year, the Centralized Reporting System (CRS) will be used as a teacher portal so that educators can access student results for the entire Texas Assessment Program. For summative assessments like STAAR, teachers' and other campus-level users' access to CRS will be on a delayed release schedule after test results are provided to district testing coordinators. To enable teachers' access to student results, districts will need to upload rosters that associate teachers with their specific students. CRS will allow teachers to access individual student performance, class performance, and disaggregated test results to inform student interventions and instructional programs.

For more information about the updates for this school year, refer to the *District and Campus Coordinator Resources*. Further information and trainings will be provided later this fall. If you have questions about the updates or about the Texas Assessment Program, contact TEA using the Student Assessment Help Desk.

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