



2019 Annual  
Texas Assessment Conference

*What You Should Know*




**The Texas Education Agency (TEA)** is committed to supporting student success. The Texas assessment program develops multiple tools that provide teachers, parents, and students ways to measure student mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The portfolio of tests in the assessment program currently includes the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®), STAAR Alternate 2, STAAR Spanish, STAAR Interims, the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS), and the TELPAS Alternate. The TELPAS tests exist to assess the progress that limited English proficient (LEP) students make in learning the English language.

The successful administration of the STAAR and other tests requires collaboration and coordination between TEA and a variety of stakeholders within the state's school systems. Testing coordinators and assessment professionals play a key role in the administration of statewide assessments.

The information necessary to administer the Texas assessment program is vast. We hope this condensed version of important things to remember will serve as a helpful resource for you in the essential role you play in measuring the success of Texas students.

Remember that more in-depth information is just a click away at [TexasAssessment.gov](https://www.texasassessment.gov) and [TEA.Texas.gov](https://www.tea.texas.gov)

**The Student Assessment Team  
Texas Education Agency**



# **The Quick Download on Texas Assessments**

# Student Assessment Update

Sunday, Nov. 3, 4:00 p.m., Room: ACC, BRs EFG

## ***What You Should Know:***

- Your input influences the assessment program. Here are just a few of the recent programmatic changes that came from your feedback:
  - ▶ New STAAR paper materials count based on initial registration
  - ▶ Improvements to STAAR Alternate 2 material distribution
  - ▶ New Student Assessment “Help Desk” customer service system
  - ▶ Test Administration materials updates/improvements (e.g., DCCR improvements)
- Program updates based on state/federal requirements



**The Big Question:** What should I do when I’m not sure how to complete a process or have any questions regarding the Texas Assessment program?

**Here’s the Answer:** The Student Assessment Division and our partners ETS and Pearson are here to help you. Please don’t hesitate to reach out for assistance. Consider us all your partners in supporting student success.

# STAAR Substitute Assessments — What's Allowable

Sunday, Nov. 3, 2:45 p.m., Room: ACC, 17A

## *What You Should Know:*

- Substitute assessments may not be used in place of STAAR end-of-course assessments for federal accountability purposes. However, substitute assessments may continue to be used to meet individual student's graduation requirements.
- For accountability purposes, "taking" a STAAR end-of-course assessment means receiving a score (i.e., score code "S").
- Public comment on the proposed amendments to TAC, §101.4002, STAAR Substitute Assessments, is open until November 12, 2019.



**The Big Question:** For December 2019, does a student have to take a STAAR end-of-course assessment prior to using a substitute assessment to fulfill graduation requirements?

**Here's the Answer:** No, the new policy for substitute assessments will not be effective until January 2020, which is after the December administration. However, this is the recommended policy for the 2019–2020 school year so that districts and campuses may fulfill federal accountability requirements.

# Fundamentals of Assessment Literacy

Monday, Nov. 4, 3:45 p.m., Room: ACC, 16B

## *What You Should Know:*

- There are three types of assessments:
  1. Formative assessments measure student performance on specific student expectations to inform a teacher's instructional choices, immediate adjustments to unit plans, or changes to lessons. Examples include class quizzes and exit tickets.
  2. Interim assessments measure a student's understanding of a broader span of student expectations to monitor progress, predict summative performance, and identify students for intervention. Examples include benchmarks and STAAR interim assessments.
  3. Summative assessments measure student mastery of a broader span of student expectations at the end of an instructional unit to determine the effectiveness of the program. Examples include student portfolios and the STAAR summative assessment.
- Formative assessments are used to evaluate individual student performance. Interim assessments are used to evaluate student and class level performance. Summative assessments are used to evaluate performance at the student, class, and district levels.



## **The Big Question:**

Why is assessment literacy important?

**Here's the Answer:** A student's success depends on many factors. Some of those include a solid curriculum, great instruction, and a balanced assessment system. It is important for practitioners to be knowledgeable about assessment as a tool to ensure student success across the entire school year.

## State-Developed STAAR Interim Assessments

Monday, Nov. 4, 8:00 a.m., Room: ACC, Ballroom G

## Interim Assessments A to Z

Monday, Nov. 4, 2:30 p.m., Room: ACC, Ballroom G

### ***What You Should Know:***

- Last year more than half of Texas districts participated in the free, optional STAAR interim assessments. Last year's STAAR interim assessments overall had a 75% accuracy rate of predicting summative performance.
- This year interim assessments have an expanded subject offering including math and reading, science, social studies, Algebra I, English I, English II, Biology, and U.S. History. We've also added refreshable braille for Reading Language Arts and social studies, and Spanish language content supports.
- This year, we've released a new class rostering functionality in the Online Reporting Suite to better support districts in providing teacher access to student data.



### **The Big Question:**

When can students take interim assessments?

**Here's the Answer:** For some subjects, two different assessments administration opportunities are available, and districts can choose when to schedule either or both administrations. For other subjects, there is only a single opportunity available.



## Supporting Teachers with Interim Assessments

Monday, Nov. 4, 9:15 a.m., Room: ACC, 16B

### *What You Should Know:*

- Interim data is valuable for teachers and can be used to inform instruction and remediate as needed.
- Districts can give teachers access to interim data using the Online Reporting Suite (ORS).
- A new rostering feature is being rolled out in November to limit teacher access to a particular group of students.



### **The Big Question:**

Will my teachers have access to only their students?

**Here's the Answer:** Yes, as a result of stakeholder feedback, beginning November 11, a new rostering functionality will be available to give teacher access to interim data for a specific subset of students.

## STAAR Alternate 2 Updates

Tuesday, Nov. 5, 8:30 a.m., Room: Hilton Austin Hotel, 410

### *What You Should Know:*

- TEA Office of Student Assessment is partnering with Office of Review and Support to monitor STAAR Alternate 2 participation rates through new SPED Indicator #4.
- The STAAR Alternate 2 Justification/Assurances form will be emailed out to districts who have STAAR Alternate 2 participation rates over 1.0 percent on October 25, 2019, with a deadline of submitting the form to TEA by November 22, 2019.
- TEA created the STAAR Alternate 2 Companion Document (flow-chart) that provides a simplified way to look at STAAR Alternate 2 participation requirements. You can find the document on the STAAR Alternate 2 resources webpage.



**The Big Question:** I am a region specialist and would like to access STAAR Alternate 2 participation results. Where would I find that data for region and district?

**Here's the Answer:** The Analytic Portal on TexasAssessment.gov has STAAR Alternate 2 region, district, and campus participation results.

## TEA Update on STAAR Social Studies

Monday, Nov. 4, 10:30 a.m., Room: ACC, 18B

### *What You Should Know:*

- Optional online interim assessments will be available for Grade 8 social studies and U.S. History during the 2019-2020 school year.
- Summative social studies assessments during the 2019-2020 school year and thereafter will be aligned to the streamlined 2018 social studies TEKS.
- Questions from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) civics test will be field tested on the spring 2020 U.S. History STAAR test.



**The Big Question:** Will the USCIS civics questions on the spring 2020 U.S. History test count toward student scores and accountability ratings for districts and campuses?

**Here's the Answer:** No, the USCIS civics questions on the 2020 test will not be counted in the calculation of student scores and campus and district accountability ratings. The USCIS civics questions on the spring 2020 U.S. History STAAR tests will be used only for field testing purposes.

# TEA English and Spanish Language Arts and Reading Update

Monday, Nov. 4, 8:00 a.m., Room: ACC, Ballroom F

## ***What You Should Know:***

- There will be a two-year assessment transition for reading and writing English and Spanish STAAR assessments.
- HB 3906 eliminates the stand-alone writing assessments at grades 4 and 7 beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.
- The federal requirement to assess the full breadth of the reading and language arts curriculum includes writing at all grade levels. To ensure compliance with this requirement, new multiple-choice writing items that assess revising and editing will be field tested within the reading assessments at grades 3-8 beginning in spring of 2020.
- Revised assessment documents, including assessed curriculum and test design schematics, as well as samples of the new multiple-choice writing items will be available on the TEA website.



**The Big Question:** Will the new multiple-choice writing items embedded in the reading assessments count toward student scores and accountability ratings for districts and campuses?

**Here's the Answer:** No, performance on field test questions will not be counted in the calculation of student scores or campus and district accountability ratings in 2020 or 2021. New multiple-choice writing items on the spring 2020 and 2021 grades 3-8 reading STAAR assessments will be used only for field testing purposes.

# TEA Update on STAAR Mathematics and Science

Monday, Nov. 4, 9:15 a.m., Room: ACC, Ballroom F

## *What You Should Know:*

- Optional online interim assessments for science will be available for Grade 5, Grade 8, and biology during the 2019-2020 school year.
- The State Board of Education is undertaking the review and revision of science TEKS with final adoption expected during the 2020-2021 school year.
- Field testing of new assessment item types required by HB 3906 will not begin before the 2020-2021 school year.



**The Big Question:** Will the Spring 2020 Algebra I EOC have two sections of the test, one with the aid of technology and one without the aid of technology?

**Here's the Answer:** No. Although HB 3906 allows this, it is not required and is not being implemented in the current school year.

## TELPAS and TELPAS Alternate Updates

Monday, Nov. 4, 8:00 a.m., Room: ACC, 17A

### *What You Should Know:*

- This year, in response to stakeholder feedback, teachers' training certificates will be saved in the TELPAS Online Training Center.
- This year, also in response to stakeholder feedback, districts have the option of using centralized raters for grades 2-12 student writing collections.
- For students in grades 3-12, the TELPAS Alternate Participation Requirements form requires the language proficiency assessment committee (LPAC) in conjunction with the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee to answer question 1: "Is the student identified in PEIMS as LEP?" and initial the assurances in Step II of the form.



**The Big Question:** Are districts required to use centralized raters for grades 2-12 student writing collections?

**Here's the Answer:** No, the implementation of centralized raters is not a requirement. It is solely an option created by request of stakeholders to provide districts some flexibility in the TELPAS assessment of grades 2-12 student writing collections.

# TELPAS Training and TELPAS Assessment Management System Overview

Sunday, Nov. 3, 4:00 p.m., Room: ACC, 18A

## *What You Should Know:*

- The TELPAS Test Administrator Manual will be shipped based on manual counts entered by the district.
- The TELPAS Rater Manual will be posted online only.



**The Big Question:** Will I receive TELPAS Test Administrator Manuals if I don't enter counts?

**Here's the Answer:** If a previous count is listed for a campus, the campus will receive the number of manuals indicated in the previous count. If no previous count is listed (the campus didn't receive manuals the previous year), the campus will not receive any manuals.

## TELPAS Online Testing Technology Panel

Monday, Nov. 4, 2:30 p.m., Room: ACC, 16B

### *Things You Should Know:*

- The use of Proctor Cache, Pearson supplied software that reduces the amount of bandwidth needed for online testing, will be bypassed by default, as a result of the limited number of districts requiring the feature.
- A list of TestNav error codes is located on the TestNav 8 Support Page. The list will provide you with the error message and solutions or next steps.



**The Big Question:** Is proctor caching required? If so, how do I remove the bypass default?

**Here's the Answer:** No, proctor caching is no longer required as most districts have enough bandwidth to support the testing load. If a district wants to use proctor cache, the bypass default will need to be removed.



# STAAR Alternate 2 and TELPAS Alternate Assessment Management System

Monday, Nov. 4, 1:15 p.m., Room: ACC, Ballroom G

## *Things You Should Know:*

- Student registration must be submitted for each STAAR Alternate 2 student in order to receive test materials for that student.
- STAAR Alternate 2 student registration will open later to provide more time for districts to obtain information for all students.
- To better provided an accurate number of manuals required by a district, counts for TELPAS Alternate Manuals must be entered by the district this year. Manuals will not be sent if counts are not entered.



**The Big Question:** How do I ensure that I received STAAR Alternate 2 test materials and TELPAS Alternate Test Administrator Manuals?

**Here's the Answer:** For STAAR Alternate 2, students must be registered by 1/3/20, to receive testing materials. If a student arrives in your district after this date, he or she must be registered and an additional order must be placed. For TELPAS Alternate, districts must enter manual counts for each campus by 11/8/19.

## Processing your Test Materials

Monday, Nov. 4, 1:15 p.m., Room: ACC, 16B

### ***What You Should Know:***

- Establishing effective material returns processes and implementing best practices are critical to avoid incorrect campus attributions.
- The most common unnecessary transcription is from answer documents with highlighter marks. The only time that a document with a highlighter mark should be transcribed is if the mark smears the student response making it difficult to read or determine the intended student response.
- If you are unsure about how to handle a unique or new situation you can contact the Texas Assessment Support Center via telephone at (855) 333-7770 or via email at STAAR3-8@ets.org or STAAREOC@ets.org.



**The Big Question:** What is the most important thing to know about the answer document?

**Here's the Answer:** The track row at the right hand side of the answer document is the most critical area for scanning; damage or markings in this area may prevent or delay processing.

## New DTC Q&A with ETS

Monday, Nov. 4, 3:45 p.m., Room: ACC, 17A

### *What You Should Know:*

- Reading available resources and using them as a reference for information is a key piece of information for new DTCs.
- Consider your lifelines for help: TEA's Student Assessment Division and the Customer Service Teams.
- Process is important; have systems and processes in place to make work during testing go more smoothly.
- Use best practices shared during ETS webinars and trainings to avoid rework.



**The Big Question:** What should the DTC do if a student's date of birth and ethnicity are incorrect on the precoded answer document received by the district?

**Here's the Answer:** The precoded answer document should be voided and a new answer document should be hand-gridded with the correct information.

## Precodes – Start to Finish

Monday, Nov. 4, 8:00 a.m., Room: ACC, 18C

### *Things You Should Know:*

- Focus on paper test takers first to ensure receipt of pre-codes and test booklets.
- Allow time to review data files for errors and conflicts in advance of the closing of the paper materials window to ensure receipt of accurate precoded answer documents.
- Use the Precode Verification Report to confirm data accuracy and quantity of precodes to be received.
- Column AO defaults to paper for 3-8 and online for EOC; for EOC, be sure to put a P in Column AO for paper test takers.



**The Big Question:** Can I use my PEIMS source file for registration?

**Here's the Answer:** Districts may choose to use their PEIMS Source File for 3-8 administrations only. For EOC administrations, retester data will be loaded into the Assessment Management System. Districts can register new students and edit existing registrations as needed.

## Maximizing Use of the Calendar of Events

Sunday, Nov. 3, 4:00 p.m., Room: ACC, 17A

### *What You Should Know:*

- District and campus staff can now download an electronic calendar of events, in its entirety or by program, to help manage upcoming dates.
- Use the new hover feature on the Calendar of Events in the District and Campus Coordinator Resources (DCCR) to better understand the meaning of each event.
- The Calendar of Events has three sections: pre-administration, administration, and post-administration. These work together to complete the testing cycle.



**The Big Question:** What happened to the Participation Counts Window?

**Here's the Answer:** Beginning in December of 2019, registration now determines the number of precoded answer documents and test booklets a district will receive. Districts submit paper registrations during the "Districts submit student registrations for STAAR and STAAR Alternate 2 paper materials" line on the Calendar of Events.

# Accessibility Policy for State Assessments

Tuesday, Nov. 5, 9:45 a.m., Room: Hilton Austin Hotel,  
Austin Grand Ballroom, 6th Floor

## *Things You Should Know:*

- There are several key processes that have been improved/updated based on feedback from stakeholders:
  - ▶ Starting this year, a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) by itself can only make designated supports recommendations for extra time, content and language supports, and oral administration.
  - ▶ Prereading text for revising selections will no longer be offered.
  - ▶ Two new improvements to braille administrations include: 1) a simplified materials order process for students needing embedded supports, and 2) the extension of the preview materials window to prepare materials.



**The Big Question:** Which designated supports can LPACs recommend without the input from any other campus-level committee?

**Here's the Answer:** LPACs can recommend content and language supports, extra time (same day), and oral administration without the input from any other campus-level committee.

# Test Security Update

Monday, Nov. 4, 9:15 a.m., Room: ACC, 17A

## *Things You Should Know:*

- All secure test content is confidential and should be protected. This includes test booklets, online assessments, online test tickets, completed answer documents, STAAR Alternate 2 stimulus images and text, and TELPAS calibration activities and components for holistically rating student performance. It is a Class C misdemeanor offense if an individual intentionally discloses the contents of a secure assessment, including the answer to any item in the assessment, and the disclosure is likely to affect the performance of one or more students. (Sec. 39.0302. Secure Assessment Instruments; Criminal Penalty)
- Keep in mind how quickly test content can be disseminated between students. Remind campus staff to remain alert to the possibility of information being shared with students taking makeups or assessments later in the testing windows.
- The same top three irregularities reported during 2018 and 2019 were: 1) Accommodation not provided, 2) Exempt or ineligible student tested, and 3) Unmonitored/improperly secured test material.



**The Big Question:** How soon should I notify TEA of a possible serious testing violation?

**Here's the Answer:** Immediately! Investigating serious violations can be complicated and confusing. Experienced TEA staff are ready to guide you and can help minimize the stress that often accompanies these situations. Remember, all confirmed testing irregularities must be reported to TEA within 10 working days.

## Pearson Best Practices & Helpful Tips

Monday, Nov. 4, 10:30 a.m., Room: ACC, 16B

### *Things You Should Know:*

- Use the Training site at <https://trng-tx.pearsonaccessnext.com> which contains the infrastructure Trial admin, to become familiar with the steps and processes for test setup and administration.
- Learn from other districts how to perform Pearson tasks like creating test sessions, uploading files, and running operational reports.



**The Big Question:** How would you best prepare for a big testing day?

**Here's the Answer:** Confirm that all technical equipment meets minimum system requirements for online testing, confirm all test administrators have been trained, confirm all student information has been entered and verified in the system, and test session are set up.



# Did You Also Know ...?

During the 2018-2019 school year, 1.7 million interim tests were completed across 619 districts on 2,439 campuses.



During the 2018-2019 school year, 1,368,591 STAAR tests were administered online compared to 9,088,272 administered on paper. The Texas Legislature has tasked the Texas Education Agency to develop a transition plan to administer all STAAR assessments electronically by 2022-2023.



Texas is the first state to develop an alternate English language proficiency assessment for student with significant cognitive disabilities, TELPAS Alternate. Texas teachers participated in every stage of the test development, drafted the observable behaviors, and developed the classroom examples used for teacher training.



**Texas Education Agency**  
**Student Assessment Division**  
1701 N. Congress Avenue  
Austin, TX 78701

Email us at [StudentAssessment@tea.texas.gov](mailto:StudentAssessment@tea.texas.gov)



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