



STAAR — The Next Generation

A new testing journey begins with the launch of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness or STAAR™ in the 2011–2012 school year. The standardized testing program includes tests for students in grades 3–12.

The new rigorous program will focus on readiness for success in subsequent grades and courses and, ultimately, for college and career.

What is STAAR?

STAAR is the state's student testing program. Over the course of their public school career, students will be tested in the core subject areas—reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. The number of tests taken each year will vary from two to four, depending on the grade level.

The STAAR tests for elementary and middle school grades will cover the same subjects and grades as the previous testing program, the Texas Assessment of

Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). Students in the fifth and eighth grades still must pass the mathematics and reading tests in order to be promoted to the next grade. At the high school level, 12 (EOC) assessments will replace grade-specific tests.

How does STAAR differ from TAKS?

The STAAR will be more rigorous than previous state tests. It will contain more test questions at most grade levels. The majority of new STAAR assessments will test material students studied that year. In contrast, TAKS high-school level tests were required by law to test content studied over multiple years.

Also, for the first time since the state began its standardized testing program, the tests will have a time limit. Unless a student is eligible for an accommodation, each student will have four hours to complete each assessment.

What's different about the high school testing program?

The changes in the testing program are most apparent at the high school level. Under the TAKS program, students took two tests in ninth grade and four tests in both 10th and 11th grade. A student was required to pass the four exit-level tests given at 11th grade in order to graduate.

This system will be replaced with 12 EOC assessments, which students will take

whenever they take the corresponding course. The STAAR EOC scores will account for 15 percent of a student's final grade in the associated course.

What tests must you take in high school?

Students entering the ninth grade in the 2011–2012 school year will be the first class required to take STAAR EOC assessments.

The 12 EOC assessments are:

- English I, English II, English III
- Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II
- Biology, Chemistry, Physics
- World Geography, World History, and U.S. History

If a student is enrolled in grade 8 or below and is taking a course for which there is a STAAR EOC assessment, that student will be required to take the applicable STAAR EOC assessment.

Phase-Out Plan for TAKS and Phase-In of STAAR

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Grades 3-8				
Grade 9				
Grade 10				
Grade 11				
Grade 12				

How will STAAR be administered?

STAAR assessments for grades 3–8 will be administered in a paper format only. The STAAR EOC assessments will be offered in both online and paper formats.

How many days will be devoted to testing each year?

Students will spend two to five days out of the 180-day instructional year taking state tests. Students in fifth and eighth grades who must pass STAAR assessments to be promoted to the next grade and high school students who must meet testing requirements to earn a high school diploma will have additional retesting days available if they need them.

What score is needed to pass the STAAR?

The passing standards will be set in 2012. It is likely that the standards will be phased in over a number of years, which is a practice Texas has used with previous student testing programs.

Will students who receive special education services take the STAAR?

The admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee for a student who receives special education services will determine the appropriate test. Some students will take the general STAAR. Others will take the STAAR Modified, which covers the same content as the general STAAR but

uses a modified format and test design, such as fewer answer choices and simpler sentence structure and vocabulary. STAAR Alternate will be available for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. As with the TAKS-Alt, teachers will observe students as they perform standardized tasks that measure student progress on skills aligned with the academic grade-level content standards.



Where can I get more information about the new testing program?



The latest information about STAAR will always be available at:

www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/staar/.

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**State of
Texas
Assessments of
Academic
Readiness**

**A parent's guide to the
student testing program**

