



# Chapter 1 Historical Overview of Assessment in Texas

## Timeline

### Assessment Provisions in State Law

### Curriculum Guidelines for Assessment

## Timeline

The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) program was administered to Texas students for the first time in 2011–2012. However, Texas has a long history of student assessment dating back to 1979, when its first statewide testing program was implemented. Over the years, changes in legislation and policy have impacted the size and scope of the assessment program. This chapter provides an overview of these changes, starting with a timeline of key events, followed by a summary of recent changes in state law, and concluding with a review of changes in the state curriculum.

### —1979

The Texas Assessment Program began in 1979 when the 66<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature enacted a law requiring basic skills competencies in mathematics, reading, and writing for grades 3, 5, and 9.

### —1980

As required by statute, Texas assessed minimum skills in mathematics, reading, and writing with the Texas Assessment of Basic Skills (TABS) assessments.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) implemented the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS) examinations. TEAMS was the first state assessment that students in Texas were required to pass to be eligible to receive a high school diploma.

### —1990

The implementation of another criterion-referenced testing program, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), shifted the focus of assessment from minimum skills to academic skills. The TAAS mathematics, reading, and writing assessments were administered in the fall to students in grades 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11.



**—1993**

Administration of the TAAS assessments was shifted to the spring, and the grades and subjects assessed were reconfigured.

Until 2002, TAAS was administered every spring to students in grades 3–8 and 10 in mathematics and reading; grades 4, 8, and 10 in writing; and grade 8 in science and social studies. Passing the exit-level tests in mathematics, reading, and writing at grade 10 became a requirement for high school graduation.

**—1994**

The State Board of Education (SBOE) approved a plan to develop Spanish-language versions of assessments for grades 3–6.

Algebra I and Biology end-of-course (EOC) assessments were administered to students who completed these courses.

**—1995**

As part of Senate Bill (SB) 1, enacted by the 74<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, 1995, TEA was required to develop English II and U.S. History EOC assessments to first be administered by the 1998–1999 school year. In addition to the Algebra I and Biology EOC assessments that were administered beginning in 1994, the new English II and U.S. History EOC assessments could be used instead of TAAS to fulfill the assessment graduation requirements.

**—1996**

The Spanish-language TAAS mathematics and reading assessments were incorporated into the testing program in 1996 for grades 3 and 4 and in 1997 for grades 5 and 6.

**—1998**

Per SB 1, 74<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, 1995, English II and U.S. History EOC assessments were first administered to students who completed these courses. Including Algebra I and Biology, these four EOC assessments were administered as state-mandated assessments and as an option for meeting graduation requirements through 2002.

**—1999**

With passage of SB 103, the 76<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, 1999, required the development of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in grades 3–10 and 11 to replace TAAS as the exit-level graduation requirement. The TAKS assessments were administered beginning in 2003.



**Reading  
Proficiency  
Tests in English  
(RPTE)**

SB 103 also required the development of a system to assess the reading proficiency and language acquisition of emergent bilingual\* (EB) students. As a result, the Reading Proficiency Tests in English (RPTE) system was developed.

**—2000**

The RPTE system was first administered in 2000 to EBs in grades 3–12.

**—2001**

The State-Developed Alternative Assessment (SDAA) was introduced and administered in lieu of TAKS to eligible students receiving special education services in grades 3–8.

**—2002**

As required by SB 103, 76<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, 1999, TAAS was administered for the last time in grades 3–8. Exit-level TAAS remained the graduation requirement for students who were in grade 9 or above on January 1, 2001.

**—2003**

TAKS replaced TAAS as the primary state assessment program. To satisfy legislative requirements, TAKS was designed to be more comprehensive than its predecessors and to measure more of the state-mandated curriculum known as the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). As required by law, students for whom TAKS was the graduation testing requirement had to pass exit-level assessments in four content areas—mathematics, English language arts, science, and social studies—to graduate from a Texas public high school. Spanish versions of TAKS were administered in grades 3–6.

The Student Success Initiative (SSI), enacted by the Texas Legislature in 1999, made satisfactory performance on the grade 3 reading assessment, the grade 5 mathematics and reading assessments, and the grade 8 mathematics and reading assessments a promotion requirement for Texas students. The first cohort of students affected by this law was the grade 3 class of 2002–2003. Passing student performance on the grade 5 mathematics and reading assessments was a promotion requirement for the first time in the 2004–2005 school year. Grade 8 promotion requirements became effective in the 2007–2008 school year. In 2009, the Texas Legislature amended the SSI to remove the grade 3 promotion requirement.

\*Note: As of the 2021-2022 school year, the term “emergent bilingual student” replaced the terms “English language learner” and “English learner” due to legislative requirements.

**State-Developed  
Alternative  
Assessment  
(SDAA)**



**—2004**

In order to fulfill requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), the Texas Observation Protocol (TOP) was developed. The TOP assessment program provided training and guidelines so that holistic English language proficiency ratings could be assigned to students based on observations during regular instructional time. These holistic ratings were developed in the language domains of listening, speaking, and writing in grades K–12 and in reading in grades K–2.

Together, TOP and RPTE assessments for grades 3–12 formed the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS).

**—2005**

In response to NCLB regulations, TEA first reported assessment results using a linguistically accommodated testing (LAT) administration process in order to include eligible recent immigrant EBs in the state's mathematics assessments in grades 3–8 and 10.

In order to align SDAA to the statewide TAKS testing program, TEA developed SDAA II and administered it for the first time in spring 2005. SDAA II, offered in mathematics, English language arts, reading, and writing, was available to students enrolled in grades 3–10 who received special education services and who were instructed in the state-mandated curriculum but for whom TAKS was an inappropriate measure of their academic achievement and progress.

Student performance on the grade 5 mathematics and reading assessments was included as an SSI requirement for the first time in the 2004–2005 school year.

In response to the Governor's 2004 Algebra Incentive Program, the Algebra I EOC assessment was revised and administered on a voluntary basis to students who completed Algebra I coursework.

Executive Order RP53, issued by the Governor in December 2005, called for increased college readiness programs in Texas schools and authorized the development of a series of EOC assessments in subjects assessed by TAKS in grade 11.

As a result of the 2004 Algebra Incentive Program and Executive Order RP53, the state reestablished development of the Algebra I EOC assessment and began developing EOC assessments in Geometry, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and U.S. History.



**State-Developed  
Alternative  
Assessment II  
(SDAA II)**



## —2006

TAKS–Inclusive (TAKS–I) was offered for the first time in 2006 for students receiving special education services and for whom TAKS, even with allowable accommodations, was not an appropriate measure of academic progress. TAKS–I met the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 requirements for those subjects and grade levels that were assessed with TAKS but not with SDAA II. TAKS–I was administered in science at grades 5, 8, and 10 and at exit level; in science in Spanish at grade 5; in social studies at grades 8 and 10 and at exit level; and in English language arts and mathematics at exit level.

The state’s standards for addressing the English language proficiency needs of EBs were revised in 2006–2007 to explicitly require all teachers to implement English language proficiency standards (ELPS), along with content-area TEKS, in the instruction of EBs.

## —2007

TAKS–I and SDAA II were administered for the final time.

LAT administrations of the state’s reading and English language arts assessments were first implemented for eligible recent immigrant EBs in grades 3–8 and 10.

In May 2007 the Texas Legislature enacted SB 1031, expanding the role of the EOC assessment program. The bill phased out the TAKS assessments for grades 9, 10, and 11 and replaced them with the EOC assessments as a component of the new high school graduation requirements to begin with the incoming freshman class of 2011–2012. The bill required the development of the following six EOC assessments in addition to those required by the 2004 Algebra Incentive Program and the December 2005 Executive Order RP53:

- Algebra II
- English I
- English II
- English III
- World Geography
- World History



As a result, the high school grade-level-based testing represented by TAKS was replaced with the course-specific EOC assessments in Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, World Geography, World History, U.S. History, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and English I, English II, and English III beginning in spring 2012.

**—2008**

Passing student performance on the grade 8 mathematics and reading assessments was an SSI requirement for promotion for the first time in the 2007–2008 school year.

EOC assessments in Geometry and Biology were first administered on a voluntary basis in response to the Governor’s 2005 executive order.

To fulfill federal accountability requirements, the TAKS–Alternate (TAKS–Alt) assessment was implemented. TAKS–Alt was an assessment based on alternate achievement standards designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

The TAKS (Accommodated) assessment replaced TAKS–I for students receiving special education services who met the eligibility requirements for specific accommodations. TAKS (Accommodated) was a general assessment based on the same grade-level academic achievement standards as TAKS, but it included format changes (e.g., larger font, fewer questions per page) and contained no embedded field-test items.

The TAKS–Modified (TAKS–M) assessment was administered for the first time for grades and subjects required to be tested for federal accountability. TAKS–M was an alternate assessment based on modified academic achievement standards designed for students receiving special education services who met participation requirements.

In response to NCLB regulations, LAT administrations of the state’s science assessments were first implemented for eligible recent immigrant EBs in grades 5, 8, and 10.

Revised TELPAS reading assessments were first administered for grades 2–12 to more fully address NCLB goals for assessing English language proficiency. TELPAS reading for grades 2–12 was designed to be administered as an online testing program.

**—2009**

The TAKS–M assessment was administered for all grades and subjects. Exit-level TAAS was administered for the last time.

A vertical scale was implemented for TAKS mathematics and reading assessments in grades 3–8, as required by the Texas Legislature.

With passage of House Bill (HB) 3, the 81<sup>st</sup> Texas Legislature, 2009,





placed emphasis on postsecondary readiness by requiring that the performance standards for mathematics and reading assessments in grades 3–8 be linked from grade to grade to the college readiness performance standards for the Algebra II and English III assessments. The required vertical linking along with the phase-out of TAKS at the exit level necessitated the design of a new series of assessments to ultimately indicate college readiness.

HB 3 also removed the SSI requirement for students in grade 3 to pass the TAKS reading assessment for promotion to grade 4.

EOC assessments in Chemistry and U.S. History were first administered.

## —2010

EOC assessments in Physics and World Geography were first administered.

## —2011

New STAAR 3–8 field-test items were embedded in most TAKS operational test forms, with the exception of grades 4 and 7 writing, which were stand-alone field tests.

EOC assessments in English I and Algebra II were administered for the first time. In addition, other EOC assessments—Algebra I, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, World Geography, and U.S. History—were administered as operational assessments.

## —2012

In spring 2012, the STAAR program replaced TAKS. At grades 3–8, STAAR assessments were administered for the same subjects and grades that were assessed with TAKS. At high school, grade-specific assessments were replaced with 15 STAAR EOC assessments: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, English I reading, English I writing, English II reading, English II writing, English III reading, English III writing, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, World Geography, World History, and U.S. History.

Depending on their graduation program, under HB 3, students were required to meet the passing standard Level II: Satisfactory Academic Performance (or at least achieve a predetermined minimum score) on at least 11 of the 15 STAAR EOC assessments. Additionally, students needed to meet a cumulative score requirement in each content area.

STAAR Modified and STAAR Alternate replaced TAKS–M and TAKS–Alt at grades 3–8 and high school. At grades 3–8, STAAR Modified and STAAR Alternate assessed the same subjects and grades as STAAR. At high school, STAAR Modified included nine EOC assessments for administration in 2012–2013: Algebra I, Geometry, English I reading,





English I writing, English II reading, English II writing, Biology, World Geography, and World History. STAAR Modified English III reading, English III writing, and U.S. History were scheduled to be administered for the first time in 2013–2014. STAAR Alternate included nine EOC assessments at high school: Algebra I, Geometry, English I, English II, English III, Biology, World Geography, World History, and U.S. History.

A phase-in period for the STAAR performance standards provided school districts with sufficient time to adjust instruction, offer new professional development, increase teacher effectiveness, and close knowledge gaps. The Commissioner of Education determined the appropriate timeline for phasing in the performance standards.

The STAAR 3–8 phase-in standards for Level II performance began with the 2012 test administration. Phase-in 1 standards for Level II were in effect for the 2011–2012 and 2012–2013 school years, and phase-in 2 standards were in effect for the 2013–2014 and 2014–2015 school years. The final recommended Level II standards were in place for the STAAR 3–8 assessments beginning in the 2015–2016 school year. The STAAR EOC phase-in periods for performance standards were on a student-by-student basis by content area (mathematics, English, science, and social studies). The phase-in standard to which students were held depended on when the students began testing in a content area, and it applied to all assessments in that content area.

## —2013

In spring 2013, exit-level TAKS was administered as a primary assessment to grade 11 students for the last time. Retests continued to be administered for students who were eligible and who had TAKS as their graduation requirement. TAKS–M was also administered for the last time in spring 2013.

The STAAR progress measure, which provides information about students' academic improvement or growth, was reported for the first time.

In June 2013, the 83<sup>rd</sup> Texas Legislature enacted HB 5, which reduced the number of STAAR EOC assessments from 15 to 5: Algebra I, English I, English II, Biology, and U.S. History. Consequently, spring 2013 was the final administration of STAAR World Geography, World History, Chemistry, Physics, and Geometry assessments. STAAR Algebra II and English III were administered again in 2015–2016 as optional assessments. The legislation also mandated the creation of combined reading and writing assessments for English I and English II and required the redesign of the STAAR Alternate program by 2014–2015.

After reviewing changes in STAAR performance between spring 2012 and 2013, the Commissioner of Education extended phase-in 1 through the 2013–2014 school year.



## —2014

The redesigned STAAR English I and English II assessments were administered for the first time in spring 2014.

The STAAR On-Track Measure, which provides information about whether a student is on track to be at or above the Level II passing standard in a future target year, was reported for the first time. The English language learner (ELL) progress measure was also reported for the first time to provide a gauge of annual improvement on STAAR for EBs.

In response to new federal accountability requirements, STAAR Modified was administered for the final time in spring 2014. A new, accommodated version of the STAAR assessment, STAAR A, was developed.

STAAR Alternate was administered for the final time in spring 2014. As required by HB 5, STAAR Alternate 2 was developed as an assessment that would not require teachers to prepare tasks or materials.

After reviewing changes in STAAR performance between spring 2012 and 2014, the Commissioner of Education implemented a new three-step phase-in plan, wherein phase-in 1 would be extended through the 2014–2015 school year; phase-in 2 would be implemented in 2015–2016 through 2017–2018; phase-in 3 would be implemented in 2018–2019 through 2020–2021; and the final recommended performance standards would be implemented in 2021–2022 and beyond.

## —2015

STAAR 3–8 mathematics assessments aligned to the revised TEKS were administered in spring 2015. A standard-setting committee was convened, and new performance standards were established.

The online assessment STAAR A was administered for the first time in spring 2015. This assessment provided embedded accommodations designed to help students who meet eligibility requirements access the content being assessed. STAAR A had the same performance standards as STAAR.

STAAR Alternate 2 was administered for the first time in spring 2015. Although the assessment had standardized administration materials, test administrators were able to apply appropriate accommodations to test items in order to help students access the content being assessed.

In 2015–2016, the Commissioner of Education decided to replace the performance standards phase-in approach with a standard progression approach from 2015–2016 through 2021–2022, the year final standards were scheduled to be in place.



## —2016

To meet the legislative requirements of HB 743, 84<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, 2015, the length of each STAAR grades 3–8 assessment was reduced by five to eight questions by removing all embedded field-test items.

STAAR grades 4 and 7 writing tests were also redesigned for completion in one four-hour administration.

In 2016, the STAAR reading grades 3–5 assessments in English and Spanish were linked with the Lexile Framework and El Sistema Lexile, respectively. These are tools that can help teachers, parents, and students locate challenging reading materials. English Lexile measures typically range from 200L to 1600L; Spanish Lexile (El Sistema Lexile) measures typically range from 200L to 1400L.

TEA provided the STAAR L for the student group referred to as EBs in 2016. STAAR L was a linguistically accommodated English version of the STAAR grades 3–8 and EOC mathematics, science, and social studies assessments. STAAR L was an online testing program.

## —2017

In the 2016–2017 school year, to meet the legislative requirements of HB 743, 84<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, 2015, the total length of each STAAR grades 3–8 assessment was reduced so that 85% of students in grades 3–5 could complete each test within 2 hours, and 85% of students in grades 6–8 could complete each test within 3 hours.

STAAR A and STAAR L were replaced by STAAR online with the accommodations referred to in 2017 as Content Supports and/or Language and Vocabulary Supports in 2017. The change was made to offer a wider range of accommodations and accessibility features according to the needs of each student.

In 2017, the STAAR reading grades 6–8 assessments were linked with the Lexile Framework.

The new STAAR Report Card was launched to offer Texas parents greater individualized student information. This information includes how a student performed on a specific STAAR assessment, how a student progressed from the previous school year, and the appropriate level of reading difficulty for a student.

In spring 2017, STAAR performance standards were frozen and relabeled. The STAAR performance labels were changed to Masters Grade Level; Meets Grade Level; Approaches Grade Level; and Did Not Meet Grade Level.

TAKS was administered for the final time.



## —2018

In the 2017–2018 school year, the new interim assessments were piloted for grades 3–8 mathematics and reading.

The STAAR Report Card was provided in Spanish, and the Texas Assessment website was enhanced to allow parents to log in directly to the Student Portal to view their child’s test results.

As required by HB 1164 from the 84<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, TEA completed a pilot study to examine alternative methods of assessing writing. The pilot study included the collection and scoring of a range of student writing samples produced throughout the school year.

In 2018, TELPAS holistic ratings for the language domains of listening and speaking in grades 2–12 were replaced with standardized online item-based assessments.

In addition, the TELPAS reading assessment was redesigned based on a shortened blueprint.

TELPAS standard setting was conducted for listening, speaking and reading. The new standards were first implemented with the 2018 spring administration.

To meet the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), TEA completed a cognitive lab and pilot study for TELPAS Alternate, an assessment for EBs in grades 2–12 with the most significant cognitive disabilities who cannot participate in general English language proficiency assessments, even with allowable accommodations.

## —2019

In the 2018–2019 school year, STAAR signed administration and braille administration were administered online for the first time in American Sign Language (ASL) and refreshable braille. STAAR grades 3–5 Spanish assessments were offered online for the first time.

Two operational interim assessment opportunities were offered for teacher and student use in grades 3–8 mathematics and reading, grades 3–5 Spanish mathematics and reading, Algebra I, English I, and English II.

The TELPAS Alternate assessment for EB students with significant cognitive disabilities in grades 2–12 was administered operationally for the first time in 2019. Standard setting was completed, and results were approved by the Commissioner of Education.

In 2019, a STAAR English Learner Performance Measure was calculated for all eligible students on all STAAR grades 3–8 and EOC assessments, except for Algebra II and English III.





## —2020

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Greg Abbott used his statutory authority under Texas Government Code, [§418.016](#), to suspend annual academic assessment requirements for the remainder of the 2019–2020 school year. Therefore, the STAAR and STAAR Alternate 2 assessments were not administered in spring and summer 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the administrations of TELPAS and TELPAS Alternate had already begun, completion of these assessments was optional for districts. TEA received approval from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) to waive statewide assessment and accountability requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the ESSA, for the 2019–2020 school year.

The agency helped coordinate the flow of COVID-19-related information from the state to districts, helped districts solve problems, and provided guidance to improve instruction and outcomes for all public school students.

The agency also published [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Support and Guidance](#) on the TEA website, which included resources and guidance for primary and secondary education and health and safety information and resources.

The agency also launched free, optional end-of-year (EOY) and beginning-of-year (BOY) assessments that school systems and parents could choose to administer in the absence of STAAR to evaluate the academic progress students made during the 2019–2020 school year. More than 63,000 EOY assessments and nearly 649,000 BOY assessments were submitted.

## —2021

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of balancing health and safety concerns with the impact on student learning and growth. For parents, educators, and policymakers to understand the impact of the pandemic on student learning, state assessments continued through the administrations of STAAR, STAAR Alternate 2, TELPAS, and TELPAS Alternate. TEA processed and reported all available data from the 2020–2021 school year but did not calculate accountability scores or assign A–F grade ratings. SSI promotion, retention, and retesting requirements were waived for the 2020–2021 school year. The retests for grades 5 and 8 STAAR mathematics and reading language arts were not administered.

The STAAR online testing window was extended to five weeks for spring 2021 STAAR grade 3–8 assessments and STAAR EOC assessments, and to two weeks for December 2020 and June 2021 EOC assessments. During the 2020–2021 school year, a record number of STAAR



assessments—approximately 64% of the over eight million STAAR and STAAR Spanish assessments—were administered online.

TEA did not extend STAAR paper testing windows because of the time required to ship, process, and score paper testing materials and maintain reporting dates.

The STAAR Alternate 2 testing window was extended to include a two-week preview window and a six-week test administration window.

The testing windows for TELPAS and TELPAS Alternate were both extended to 14 weeks. In addition, TEA allowed TELPAS raters to conduct monitored calibration activities in a virtual or remote setting.

## —2022

As announced in fall 2020, the Texas assessment program transitioned to a new vendor team—Cambium Assessment, Inc. (CAI) and NCS Pearson, Inc.— for the 2021-2022 school year.

CAI hosts and manages the testing platform for all assessments and manages the registration, administration, scoring, and reporting for the entire assessment portfolio. Pearson is responsible for item development and test form construction.

The December 2021 EOC assessment was the first summative test administered on the new platform with 448,479 tests submitted online during the two-week testing window—just over 87% of the total of 514,238.

In spring 2022, the STAAR 3–8 and EOC assessments were administered to Texas students—with a new record number of 6,659,074 STAAR and STAAR Spanish assessments administered online, nearly 82% of the total 8,128,683 tests.

The STAAR Alternate 2 testing window was a five-week test administration window with a two-week preview window.

TELPAS and TELPAS Alternate test administration windows returned to six weeks, concluding at the end of March.

The online TELPAS reading test included an embedded field test for writing, in an effort to standardize the writing domain in future years. Spring 2022 was also the first time the paper reading test provided a braille option for students with visual impairments.

## Assessment Provisions in State Law

### Texas Education Code



State law pertaining to the statewide student assessment program is found in [TEC Chapter 39, Subchapter B](#). Assessment provisions relating to grade promotion requirements are located in [TEC §28.0211](#).

In May 2007, the 80<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature enacted [SB 1031](#), requiring changes to the assessment program. These changes included the implementation of an EOC assessment program, changes to the assessment administration window, limitations on the frequency of stand-alone field testing, provisions for accelerated instruction based on assessment results, and a revised release schedule for test questions and answer keys for most Texas assessments.

In June 2009, the 81<sup>st</sup> Texas Legislature enacted [HB 3](#), which made further changes to the assessment program. These included requiring TEA to develop assessments in a manner that allows for the measurement of performance across grades culminating in postsecondary readiness performance standards in Algebra II and English III. These performance standards set by the Commissioner of Education are part of the STAAR program, which encompasses the EOC assessments mandated by SB 1031 and the new grades 3–8 assessments mandated by HB 3.

Changes resulting from HB 3 that took effect during the 2008–2009 school year included eliminating the requirement that assessments administered for the purpose of retesting were subject to mandatory release; specifying that TEA was no longer required to develop assessment study guides; eliminating exit-level testing under the TAAS program; and requiring the Commissioner of Education, rather than SBOE, to determine performance levels for assessments.

In 2011, the 82<sup>nd</sup> Texas Legislature passed [HB 2135](#), which stated that students enrolled in and taking the assessment for an above-grade-level course were not required to take the grade-level assessment. The bill also addressed the use of STAAR EOC performance results of students below grade 9 who take a STAAR EOC assessment, including how those results must be included in accountability performance indicators. HB 2135 also amended the SSI so that a student was not required to take the corresponding SSI assessment in grades 5 and 8 if the student was enrolled in either

- a course in the subject for which the student received high school academic credit and was administered a STAAR EOC assessment; or
- a course in the subject intended for students above the student's enrolled grade and was administered the corresponding assessment instrument.
- HB 2135 also prohibited a student in an SSI grade from being denied promotion on the basis of performance on an assessment if the student was taking an above-grade-level assessment instead of the grade-level assessment.



In June 2013, the 83<sup>rd</sup> Texas Legislature enacted [HB 5](#), which reduced the number of STAAR EOC assessments required for graduation from 15 to 5: Algebra I, English I, English II, Biology, and U.S. History. The administration of Algebra II and English III was delayed until 2015–2016 and became optional based on the decision of each district. In addition, the separate reading and writing assessments for English I and English II were required to be combined into a single assessment for each course with a single reported score. HB 5 removed the requirement to provide a cumulative and minimum score and to include the STAAR EOC assessment results as 15 percent of a course grade. In addition, HB 5 required a conversion table to reflect STAAR EOC scale scores on a 100-point scale.

HB 5 also impacted the STAAR Alternate assessments. The legislation stated that, beginning in 2014–2015, teachers may not be required to prepare tasks or materials for alternate assessments. In order to meet this requirement, the STAAR Alternate assessments were redesigned. STAAR Alternate 2 was administered for the first time in spring 2015.

The 83<sup>rd</sup> Texas Legislature, 2013, enacted [SB 906](#), which also impacted the STAAR Alternate assessments. SB 906 stated that the adopted performance standard may not “[indicate] that a student’s performance on the alternate assessment does not meet standards if the lowest level of the assessment accurately represents the student’s developmental level.” To meet this requirement, TEA maintained the STAAR Alternate adjusted performance standard in 2013–2014 rather than applying the final recommended standard.

The 83<sup>rd</sup> Texas Legislature, 2013, established the new Foundation High School Program as the default graduation program for all students entering high school beginning in 2014–2015.

In 2015, the 84<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature passed [SB 149](#), which added TEC §28.0258 to revise the assessment graduation requirements. A student who has not met the EOC assessment graduation requirements for no more than two courses may receive a Texas high school diploma if the student qualified to graduate by means of an individual graduation committee (IGC). The assessment provisions of SB 149 were effective beginning with the 2014–2015 school year.

[HB 743](#), passed by the 84<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature in 2015, required that the STAAR assessments be designed so that 85 percent of students taking an assessment in grades 3–5 can complete a test in two hours and 85 percent of students taking a test in grades 6–8 can complete an assessment in three hours.

In response to HB 743, for the spring 2016 administration TEA reduced the overall length of every STAAR assessment in grades 3–8 by five to eight questions. Additionally, TEA redesigned the two-day grades 4 and 7 writing tests into single-day tests that can be completed in one four-hour administration. TEA also collected time-to-administer data during the spring 2016 administration to determine which grades 3–8 assessments were in compliance with the timing requirements of HB 743.

Using the time-to-administer data from the STAAR grades 3–8 spring 2016



administration, TEA redesigned the grades 3–8 assessments by reducing the total number of questions and the number of field-test questions on most assessments to meet HB 743’s timing requirements. Redesigned assessments were administered beginning in spring 2017.

In 2015, the 84<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature passed [HB 2349](#), which requires a school district or charter school to report to TEA whether a student assessed with a STAAR assessment transferred into a Texas school or district from out of state during the current school year. HB 2349 also revised the state’s assessment requirements for students to be eligible to receive a Texas diploma. Effective with the 2015–2016 school year, a student who earned high school credit for a course for which there is an EOC assessment prior to enrolling in a Texas public school, and for which a Texas public school district accepted the credit, is not required to take that EOC assessment to receive a Texas diploma. Prior to HB 2349, a student on the foundation high school program was required to take and pass all five EOC assessments in order to receive a Texas diploma, regardless of course enrollment.

In 2019, the 86<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature passed [HB 3906](#), which addresses several components related to assessments and administration that expands input from educators and provides more flexibility at the campus level for test administration.

Key components of the bill are:

- Establish a new assessment Educator Advisory Committee (which was created in January 2020).
- Investigate and develop a transition plan to administer all STAAR tests electronically by the 2022–2023 school year.
- Develop an integrated formative assessment pilot that informs instruction during the year and can potentially replace the single summative assessment.
- Establish a cap so that no more than 75 percent of the questions on any STAAR test can be multiple choice. This takes effect for all STAAR tests by the 2022–2023 school year to align with the legislative requirement for the Texas Education Agency to develop a plan to transition to a fully electronic administration by 2022–2023.
- Eliminate the stand-alone writing assessments for grades 4 and 7. Grades 4 and 7 writing assessments remained unchanged for the 2020–2021 school year. During this time, revising and editing items were field tested in the reading assessments at grades 3– 8.
- Continue the development and administration of the STAAR Interim Assessments

[HB 1244](#), passed by the 86<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature in 2019, added TEC §39.023(c-7), requiring that the United States history EOC assessment include 10 questions randomly selected from the civics test administered by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) as part of the naturalization process. The USCIS



questions included on the EOC assessment must align with the TEKS for United States History Studies Since 1877. HB 1244 applies to students beginning those entering grade 9 during the 2019–2020 school year.

[HB 4545](#) passed in the 87<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session and became effective as of June 2021. The statute establishes new requirements for accelerated instruction for students who do not pass the STAAR. The legislation includes:

- Elimination of grade retention and retesting requirements in grades 5 and 8.
- For any student who does not pass the STAAR test in grade 3, 5, or 8 in mathematics or reading, a new LEA requirement to establish an accelerated learning committee to develop an individualized education program for the student and monitor progress.
- For any student who does not pass the STAAR test in grades 3– 8 or STAAR EOC assessments, clarification of prior supplemental accelerated instruction requirements, specifying that it must include either being assigned a classroom teacher who is a certified master, exemplary, or recognized teacher, or receiving supplemental instruction (tutoring) before or after school or during the school day.

## Curriculum Guidelines for Assessment

TEKS were adopted by SBOE in July 1997 and were implemented as the statewide curriculum for Texas in the 1998–1999 school year. TEKS replaced the Essential Elements, which were implemented in 1984. TEKS were developed to be more specific and focused than the Essential Elements, with emphasis placed on the knowledge and skills students were expected to learn rather than on the delivery standards expected of teachers.

TEKS are reviewed and updated on a periodic basis by SBOE. As revisions are made to TEKS, changes are subsequently made to the assessment program to maintain a strong, direct, and effective link between the TEKS curriculum and the statewide assessments.

The STAAR reporting categories and the corresponding TEKS student expectations that are eligible for testing are available on the [STAAR Resources](#) webpage on TEA’s Student Assessment Division website.

## TEKS Revisions

Following the schedule for TEKS review, SBOE has revised TEKS as follows.

- In 2010, SBOE adopted revised social studies TEKS; alignment with those TEKS was reflected in the 2012 STAAR social studies assessments.
- In 2012, SBOE adopted new mathematics TEKS; alignment with the new TEKS was reflected in the 2015 STAAR grades 3–8 mathematics assessments and in the 2016 STAAR Algebra I and Algebra II assessments.



- In 2017, SBOE adopted new English and Spanish reading language arts TEKS to be implemented in classrooms beginning with the 2019–2020 school year for grades K–8 and beginning with the 2020–2021 school year for high school.
- In 2017, SBOE adopted streamlined science TEKS for grades K–8 science and four high school science courses. The streamlined TEKS were implemented in classrooms beginning with the 2018–2019 school year.
- In 2018, SBOE adopted streamlined social studies TEKS for grades K–8 social studies and five high school social studies courses. The streamlined TEKS for middle school and high school were implemented in classrooms beginning with the 2019–2020 school year. Alignment with these TEKS will be reflected in the 2019–2020 STAAR social studies assessments. The streamlined TEKS for kindergarten through grade 5 were implemented in classrooms beginning with the 2020–2021 school year.

Additionally, in 2008 TEA and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) established vertical teams to develop College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), as required by HB 1. Specifically, TEA and THECB undertook a process of vertical alignment to link the CCRS to the TEKS in mathematics, English reading, science, and social studies. As part of the TEKS review process, SBOE incorporated the CCRS into TEKS, making Texas the first state in the country to adopt a curriculum aligned to college and career readiness. Additional information about this topic can be found in the [Texas College and Career Readiness Standards](#) report available on [THECB's](#) website.

## English Language Proficiency Standards

SBOE adoption of new grades K–12 [ELPS](#) for EBs was effective in December 2007. Beginning in 2008, TELPAS assessments aligned to these standards. As with TELPAS, the TELPAS Alternate assessment is aligned to the ELPS. However, there are alternate proficiency level descriptors (PLDs) for TELPAS Alternate.

In August 2013, a review of the TELPAS reading proficiency standards was conducted to evaluate the alignment of the proficiency standards between the TELPAS and STAAR assessments. The new TELPAS performance standards were implemented in the 2013–2014 school year. In 2018, TELPAS listening and speaking performance standards were established for the first time, and new TELPAS reading performance standards were established due to the test redesign. In 2019, the TELPAS Alternate assessment was administered operationally for the first time.