August 26, 2011

TO THE SUPERINTENDENT ADDRESSED:

SUBJECT: 2011–2012 Mandatory STAAR EOC Testing Activities

This letter outlines the statewide State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR™) end-of-course (EOC) testing requirements for spring 2012 and notifies districts of campuses that have been selected for additional mandatory EOC testing activities that are necessary to ensure that adequate data are available for the development of the STAAR program.

STAAR EOC Assessments

For students first enrolled in grade 9 or below in the 2011–2012 school year, the twelve STAAR EOC assessments—Algebra I, geometry, Algebra II, biology, chemistry, physics, English I, English II, English III, world geography, world history, and U.S. history—will be administered statewide to students enrolled in these courses as part of their graduation requirement. In spring 2012 STAAR EOC assessments will be provided in both online and paper formats so that districts can determine which format or combination of formats best fits their local needs.

In addition, seven of the twelve STAAR EOC assessments—Algebra II, chemistry, physics, English II, English III, world history, and U.S. history—will require the mandatory participation of students on selected campuses who are enrolled in these courses but whose graduation requirement is TAKS. It is important to note that only campuses selected to participate in this additional mandatory testing will be able to administer STAAR EOC assessments to students with a TAKS graduation requirement.

Starting in late May, campuses will receive score reports for all students (STAAR graduates and TAKS graduates) that take the assessments.

Data from a sample of students representative of the state are critical to the state’s ability to build high-quality assessments. The selection criteria used in the STAAR EOC sampling process for 2012 are as follows.

Sampling Process for STAAR EOC Assessments Administered to TAKS Students

• Testing is required for campuses selected to participate in mandatory testing activities.
• Campuses will not be assigned more than three STAAR EOC assessments.
• STAAR English II and English III assessments consist of two parts, writing and reading, administered over two days. To reduce overall burden at the campus level, English II and English III assessments will each be counted as two assignments.
• For campuses selected to participate in mandatory testing, the maximum number of students required to test for each STAAR EOC assessment is 300. Campuses may not exceed the maximum number of students.
• Campuses need to select students whose graduation requirement is TAKS and who are enrolled in the appropriate courses to participate in mandatory testing.
• Campuses selected to participate in mandatory testing will be assigned to test on paper but will have the flexibility to test online or use any combination of paper and online testing, except for the English II and English III assessments, which must be administered on paper. Districts can change their paper testing mode during the participation collection window,
which is September 23–November 7, 2011. During this window districts will submit their participation counts (enrollment numbers) to Pearson for each of their campuses.

- Campuses identified as JJAEP, DAEP, or TYC have been excluded from mandatory testing activities.

**STAAR Modified and STAAR Alternate EOC Assessments**

For students first enrolled in grade 9 or below in the 2011–2012 school year who qualify for STAAR Modified and STAAR Alternate, four EOC assessments—Algebra I, biology, English I, and world geography—will be administered to students enrolled in these courses as part of their graduation requirement.

In addition, in spring 2012 a mandatory stand-alone field test is planned for STAAR Modified geometry and English II. All students enrolled in grade 10 during the 2011–2012 school year who will take TAKS–M English language arts (ELA) and mathematics tests will also be required to participate in the stand-alone field test for STAAR Modified geometry and/or English II, provided the student is enrolled in the course. STAAR Modified assessments will be administered in paper mode only. Campuses will not receive score reports for students who participate in these two STAAR Modified field tests.

In spring 2012 there is no stand-alone field testing planned for STAAR Alternate. However, selected campuses will participate in an audit, with notification of participation to be distributed in spring 2012.

**STAAR L EOC Assessments**

For English language learners (ELLs) first enrolled in grade 9 in the 2011–2012 school year who qualify for the linguistically accommodated versions of STAAR (STAAR L), the mathematics, science, and social studies EOC assessments will be administered to students enrolled in these courses as part of their graduation requirement. In spring 2012 the STAAR L EOC assessments will be administered in paper mode only.

In addition, during the May 2012 EOC testing window, some students whose graduation requirement is TAKS will participate in a mandatory STAAR L online study in geometry and world history. The purpose of the study is to examine the effectiveness of the STAAR L online interface and make any needed refinements before the online accommodation interface is implemented in 2013. ELLs and non-ELLs will participate in the study. The assessments will be administered to students in grade 10 and above only, and campuses will not receive score reports. No students for whom STAAR is the graduation requirement will participate in the study. Instructions for completing the study will be sent to the selected districts before the May EOC testing window.

**Challenges and Benefits of the Mandatory Testing Activities**

TEA recognizes the challenges districts and campuses will face with regard to time and resources when they are selected to participate in mandatory testing activities as the state transitions to a new testing program. However, the mandatory testing activities in 2012 will provide several benefits.

- TEA will have data to inform the development and implementation of student progress measures for the new STAAR program prior to use for state and federal accountability.
• By participating in the STAAR Alternate audit, campuses help provide validity evidence that the assessment is being administered appropriately and can help identify areas of the assessment process that need further clarification or training.
• Campuses selected for the STAAR L study will have an opportunity to gain experience with and help refine the new computer-based linguistic accommodation approach prior to implementation of the interface in spring 2013.

District testing coordinators have been copied on this correspondence. The information below will assist them in reviewing the selections for your district.

Campus assignments for the 2012 mandatory testing activities can be found in the Texas Assessment Management System, delivered through PearsonAccess, at http://www.TexasAssessment.com/login. Once logged in with your secure user ID, click the Test Results tab, click the View Published Reports link, change the administration to “2011–2012 Texas General,” and select the “Campus Field Test Assignments” file to view the testing assignments for your district and a summary of the participation guidelines for the associated mandatory testing activities.

TEA greatly appreciates districts’ continued support of these critical activities through their participation. Refer to the 2011–2012 student assessment testing calendar at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/calendars/ for testing dates. If you have questions about the selection process or need additional information about the 2011–2012 assessment activities, please contact the Student Assessment Division. Call Pearson’s Austin Operations Center at 800-252-9186 with questions concerning access to your assignments.

Assessment Contact Information
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cc: ESC and District Testing Coordinators