Chapter 5 STAAR Modified

Overview

State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Modified is an alternate assessment based on modified academic achievement standards for students receiving special education services who meet participation requirements. STAAR Modified has been designed to meet federal requirements mandated under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. According to federal regulations, all students, including those receiving special education services, must be assessed on grade-level curriculum. STAAR Modified covers the same grade-level/course content as STAAR, but STAAR Modified assessments have been changed in format (larger font size, fewer items per page, etc.) and test design (shorter test blueprint, fewer answer choices, simpler vocabulary and sentence structure, etc.).

House Bill (HB) 3 legislation called for the STAAR assessments to replace the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) assessments. During the 2011–2012 school year, STAAR assessments were required for students in grades 3–8 and high school for students first enrolled in grade 9. Students in grade 10 or above were still required to take the TAKS assessments as part of their graduation requirements.

In June 2013, the 83rd Texas Legislature passed HB 5, which reduced the number of STAAR end-of-course (EOC) assessments needed for graduation from fifteen to five—Algebra I, English I, English II, biology, and U.S. history. Only the five STAAR EOC assessments required by HB 5 were administered in 2013–2014. To meet the requirements of HB 5, the separate reading and writing EOC assessments were redesigned as combined reading and writing assessments for English I and English II and were first administered in spring 2014. U.S. history was also administered for the first time in spring 2014.

As a result, in 2013–2014 the STAAR Modified assessments were available for students in grades 3–8 and high school for the following EOC exams:

- English I
- English II
- Algebra I
- Biology
- U.S. History

In 2014, all TAKS–M assessments were phased out and STAAR Modified was available in all tested areas in grades 3–8 and high school. Refer to chapter 8, "Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and TAKS (Accommodated)," for detailed information about these programs.

The STAAR Modified assessments administered in 2013–2014 are shown by grade and course in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1. 2013–2014 STAAR Modified Assessments

Grade/Course	Assessed Content Area/Course
Grade 3	mathematics and reading
Grade 4	writing, mathematics, and reading
Grade 5	mathematics, reading, and science
Grade 6	mathematics and reading
Grade 7	writing, mathematics, and reading
Grade 8	mathematics, reading, science, and social studies
EOC Assessments	Algebra I, English I, English II, biology, U.S. history

The state administered the STAAR Modified assessments for the last time during the 2013–2014 assessment cycle. The U.S. Department of Education notified states that assessments based on modified standards for students served by special education would not count toward accountability purposes after the 2013–2014 school year. As a

result, performance standards were not set for the U.S. history assessment administered for the first time in spring 2014.

Participation Requirements

For students receiving special education services, federal and state laws require the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee to make decisions about each student's placement in the Texas assessment program. The first consideration is the general assessment, STAAR, with or without allowable accommodations. If the general assessment is not appropriate, the ARD committee then considers the participation guidelines for STAAR Modified. The decision to administer STAAR Modified is neither based solely on disability category or placement setting, nor is it determined administratively; rather, the decision lies with the ARD committee based on the participation requirements.

Students receiving special education services are eligible to take STAAR Modified in one or more content areas if the answer to all three eligibility questions below is "Yes."

1. Do the student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP) statements in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) lead the ARD committee to conclude that the student is multiple years behind grade-level or course expectations and will not progress at the same rate and level of rigor as his or her non-disabled peers?
2. Does the student's IEP contain standards-based (TEKS-based) goals indicating that the student requires modified content in order to access the grade-level or course curriculum?
3. Does the student require direct and intensive instruction in order to acquire, maintain, and transfer skills to other contexts?

Any student who meets participation requirements for STAAR Modified may take the STAAR Modified assessments. However, only two percent of the tested population can count as proficient for the purpose of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) performance calculations.

Testing Requirements for Graduation

Students taking the STAAR Modified EOC assessments are in the Minimum High School Program (MHSP) because they are receiving modified instruction. For those students eligible to take STAAR Modified EOC, passing the assessments is not a requirement for graduation. A student's ARD committee determines individual requirements for graduation.

Test Development

The test development process for STAAR Modified follows, as closely as possible, the procedures used to develop other assessment programs in Texas, coupled with the additional requirements specific to STAAR Modified.

The STAAR Modified blueprints mirror the STAAR blueprints and reflect that the students taking STAAR Modified are assessed on the same grade-level curriculum as general education students. The number of items on the STAAR Modified blueprints is reduced from the number of items on the STAAR blueprints by 20 percent. The STAAR Modified blueprints contain similar percentages of readiness and supporting items as found in the STAAR blueprints.

Issues of validity, reliability, fairness, accessibility, and consistency in meaning are carefully considered as part of the item modification and review processes. As STAAR Modified items are developed and reviewed, attention is given to the standards of fairness, the principles of alignment to the TEKS curriculum and universal design. According to the principles of universal design, every item must have precisely defined constructs and demonstrate maximum legibility, maximum readability, and maximum comprehensibility. Similarly, each item must be adaptable for purposes of accommodations, be accessible and non-biased, and take special populations into consideration.

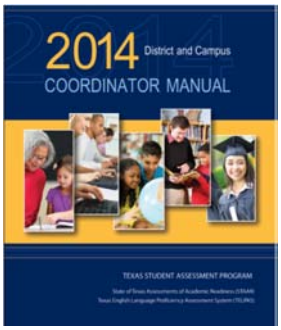
Using results from a literature review of modifications that would be appropriate for students with disabilities, TEA modified existing STAAR items to create items for STAAR Modified. Modification guidelines were developed for each subject/content area to ensure that the modifications did not affect the construct of the items, and that the item modifications would be consistent across development years.

In addition to strictly adhering to these modification guidelines, TEA convenes internal and external educator item review meetings to provide additional verification that the modified items meet the criteria listed above. Texas educators—general and special education classroom teachers, curriculum specialists, administrators, and regional education service center (ESC) staff—play a vital role in the STAAR Modified development process. The participation of these education professionals enables TEA to develop high-quality alternate assessment instruments that accurately measure the TEKS curriculum.

Training

The test administration training for STAAR Modified is the same as the training available for STAAR, and can be found in the Training section of chapter 4, “State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR).” For each test administration in the 2013–2014 school year, ESC personnel and district coordinators were given a district testing coordinator packet that contained all the information and materials necessary for overseeing test administrations, as well as copies of the coordinator and test administrator manuals.

Additional training opportunities were conducted via the Texas Education Telecommunication Network (TETN), 2014 ESC Training, and the 2014 Texas Assessment Conference.



District and Campus Coordinator Manual

The 2014 District and Campus Coordinator Manual (DCCM) explains the responsibilities of district and campus testing coordinators for the STAAR program. This manual contains preparation and administration procedures for every program for the 2014 calendar year. Separate test administrator manuals are available for districts prior to the first assessment administration for each grade.

Test Administrations

In spring 2014, the STAAR Modified assessments had two types of administrations: operational administrations and a special operational administration.

An operational administration is one in which all items included on the test have been previously field-tested and evaluated before the test administration to determine whether the items should appear on an operational assessment. Students receive a score based on their performance.

A special operational administration is one in which all items included on the test have not been previously field-tested. However, students still receive a test score based on their performance on the assessment. To give students their scores on a special operational administration, items are analyzed immediately after the administration, and item statistics are evaluated to determine which items are appropriate to contribute to a student's score. The STAAR Modified U.S. history assessment was the only special operational administration in 2014.

About 315,000 STAAR Modified assessments were administered in 2013–2014. The number of STAAR Modified assessments administered in each grade/course is shown in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2. STAAR Modified Assessments Administered in 2013–2014

STAAR Modified Assessment	Assessments Administered
Grade 3 mathematics	9,841
Grade 3 reading	11, 273
Grade 4 mathematics	13,237
Grade 4 reading	14,518
Grade 4 writing	14,449
Grade 5 mathematics	21,721
Grade 5 reading	21,181

Grade 5 science	13,279
Grade 6 mathematics	15,150
Grade 6 reading	15,393
Grade 7 mathematics	14,684
Grade 7 reading	14,636
Grade 7 writing	14,619
Grade 8 mathematics	19,645
Grade 8 reading	17,962
Grade 8 science	11,774
Grade 8 social studies	11,548
Algebra I	13,716
English I	12,893
English II	12,193
Biology	11,158
U.S. History	9,895

Educational Materials Required for Testing

DICTIONARIES AND THESAURUSES

English-language dictionaries and thesauruses must be provided to all students for the writing assessment at grade 7, the reading assessments at grades 6–8, and the English I and II assessments.

There must be at least one dictionary for every five students; it is also recommended that there be one thesaurus for every five students, if possible. Students may also use a combination dictionary/thesaurus. An English as a second language (ESL) dictionary that uses simple English and pictures to define words may be provided for English language learners (ELLs). Both paper and electronic dictionaries are permitted, though electronic dictionaries must not allow access to the Internet.

Dictionaries may not be provided to a student taking the grades 3–5 reading assessments or the grade 4 writing assessment unless the student meets the criteria for such an accommodation. Students with disabilities who receive special education or Section 504 services may use dictionaries on STAAR Modified if they meet the eligibility criteria for the Dictionary accommodation.

CALCULATORS

Calculators were provided to students for the STAAR Modified Algebra I and biology assessments. Students were permitted to use their own calculators instead of those provided by the district. Students were permitted to use more than one calculator during the assessment. At a minimum, districts were required to provide the following:

- a graphing calculator for each student taking Algebra I
- a calculator for every five students taking biology

Any calculator could be used to fulfill the minimum requirements listed above except for those that included a computer algebra system (CAS), that allowed access to the Internet, or that had photographic capabilities. The use of an electronic device that has a calculator as an application (e.g., a cell phone) was not permitted.

All calculator memory had to be cleared to factory default both before and after testing. Any programs or applications had to be removed or disabled prior to testing. Test administrators were instructed to contact a calculator's manufacturer for specific assistance in effectively preparing a calculator for use during testing.

Calculators were not provided to students taking the grades 3–8 mathematics assessments or the grades 5 and 8 science assessments unless a student met the eligibility criteria for such an accommodation. Students with disabilities who receive special education or Section 504 services may use calculators on STAAR Modified if they meet the eligibility criteria for calculation devices.

Testing Accommodations

Accommodations are practices and procedures that provide equitable access to grade-level or course curriculum during instruction and assessment. The decision to use a particular accommodation with a student is made on an individual basis and takes into consideration both the needs of the student and whether the student routinely receives the accommodation in classroom instruction and testing. Further information on testing accommodations can be found in chapter 4, "State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)." Specific information about each accommodation can be found on the Accommodations Resources page on TEA's Student Assessment Division website.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

For a student who receives special education or Section 504 services, the decision to allow the student to use accommodations during the state assessments is made by the student's ARD committee or Section 504 placement committee. In those rare instances where a student does not receive special education services but does meet the eligibility criteria due to a disabling condition, the decision to allow accommodations on the state assessments is made by the appropriate team of people at the campus level, such as the Response to Intervention (RTI) team or student assistance team. Further information on the types of accommodations available for students with disabilities can be found in chapter 4, "State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)."

After determining the instructional accommodation(s) that are effective for a student with disabilities, the educator should investigate whether each accommodation is allowed on a state assessment.

Dyslexia Accommodations

Accommodations are available for students who have dyslexia and other reading disabilities on the STAAR Modified reading assessments in grades 3 through high school. These accommodations include

- having all items and answer choices read aloud to a student, and
- extending the four-hour testing time over an entire school day.

The needs of the student should be carefully considered when determining the most appropriate accommodations for the STAAR Modified assessments.

Oral Administration

Oral administration is an accommodation that allows for test questions and answer choices for mathematics, reading, science, and/or social studies tests to be read aloud or signed to eligible students taking the STAAR assessments. Two levels of reading support are available: read questions and answer choices at the student's request, and read all questions and answer choices. Required reference materials (e.g., a dictionary) and allowable supplemental aids (e.g., a list of grammar rules or a math chart) may be read to students, but the test administrator cannot interpret or help apply the information contained within the aids. STAAR may be administered orally to individual students or to a group of students, depending on student needs. All references to reading support during an oral administration also apply to signing during a signed administration.

A student is eligible for an oral administration if he or she routinely and effectively uses this accommodation during classroom instruction and testing and meets at least one of the following criteria:

- The student receives special education services and is identified with dyslexia or has evidence of reading difficulties.
- The student receives Section 504 services and is identified with dyslexia or has evidence of reading difficulties.
- The student does not receive special education or Section 504 services but is identified with dyslexia.

The ARD committee or Section 504 committee decides whether a student exhibits evidence of a reading difficulty, which is defined as a problem with reading that may be caused by a learning disability or other conditions such as ADHD, an emotional or behavioral disability, or processing or memory issues.

Students with Visual Impairments

Test administrators receive specific instructions for testing visually impaired students using braille test booklets. Districts are required to indicate on the answer document

whether the student used a large-print or braille version of a test. Large-print and braille test booklets are available for all STAAR Modified operational administrations.

Linguistic Accommodations

Linguistic accommodations are language supports that make grade-level academic assessments in English more accessible to ELLs. The Texas English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) require all teachers to linguistically accommodate the instruction of ELLs in their classes in a manner that is commensurate with the students' English language proficiency levels. The policies for the STAAR linguistic accommodations support these ELPS requirements.

More information about the STAAR linguistic accommodations can be found in chapter 4, "State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)," and on the Accommodations Resources page on TEA's Student Assessment Division website.

Student Success Initiative

The Student Success Initiative (SSI) provides a system of academic support to help students achieve success on grade level in mathematics and reading. SSI incorporates a grade-advancement component adopted by the Texas Legislature in 1999 to ensure that all students receive the instruction and support they need to be academically successful in mathematics and reading.

Under the SSI grade-advancement requirements, students are required to pass the STAAR Modified grade 5 mathematics and reading assessments to be promoted to sixth grade. Additionally, students are required to pass the STAAR Modified grade 8 mathematics and reading assessments to be promoted to ninth grade.

In 2013–2014, students in grades 5 and 8 had three opportunities (April, May, and June) to pass the STAAR Modified mathematics and reading assessments. For students who take the STAAR Modified assessments and do not achieve at least Level II: Satisfactory Academic Performance, the ARD committee determines if students must retest. The ARD committee also makes decisions regarding promotion, accelerated instruction, and retention.

More information about the Student Success Initiative is available on TEA's Student Assessment Division website.

Scores and Reports

There are a variety of reports that show a student's performance on the assessments in the STAAR Modified program. Refer to the information below for details about the types of scores given on reports and the types of reports available.

Description of Scores

Scores for the STAAR Modified assessments consist of the number of items answered correctly (raw scores), scale scores, and reporting category performance information.

Raw Score

The number of items that a student answers correctly on a STAAR Modified assessment is the student's raw score. The raw score can be interpreted only in terms of a specific set of test items on that test form. However, because the difficulty of items might vary among test forms over time, differences in student performance across tests or administrations cannot be compared using raw scores alone. To compare student scores across different test forms and different administrations, raw scores must be converted to scale scores.

Scale Score

A scale score is a conversion of the raw score onto a scale that is common to all test forms for that assessment. Scale scores allow for direct comparisons of student performance between specific sets of test items from different test administrations.

The scale score is used to determine whether a student attained Level II: Satisfactory Academic Performance or Level III: Advanced Academic Performance. (Performance-level cut scores are discussed in the Performance Standards section of this chapter.) Scale scores were available for all STAAR Modified assessments administered in 2014, except for U.S. history. Performance standards for U.S. history were to be set in summer 2014, but because the STAAR Modified assessment program was discontinued after the spring 2014 administration only raw scores for U.S. history were available to districts after the spring 2014 administration.

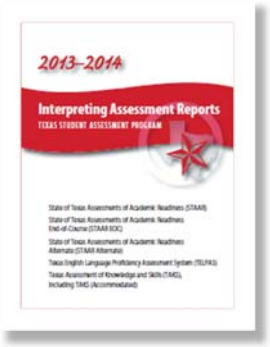
Scale scores are also used to compare the performance of an individual student with the performance of a demographic group, a program group, an entire campus, or a district at a particular grade. For example, the scores for a Hispanic student in a gifted and talented program can be compared with the average scores of other Hispanic students, other gifted and talented students, all the students on a campus, or any combination of these aggregations at that grade.

Additional Performance Information

Other scores can provide information about a student's relative strengths or weaknesses in core academic areas. For example, reporting category-level data can identify areas where a student might be having difficulty. This identification can help campuses plan the most effective instructional intervention. Finally, individual student test scores are also used in conjunction with other performance indicators to assist in making placement decisions. While scores can contribute to decisions regarding placement, educational planning for a student should take into account as much student information as possible.

Report Formats

Two types of reports are provided for the various testing programs: standard and optional. Standard reports are provided automatically to districts. Information contained in standard reports satisfies mandatory reporting requirements. To receive optional reports that detail student performance data in additional formats, a district must select the corresponding optional reports in the *Administration Details* screen in the Texas Assessment Management System, delivered through PearsonAccess. Generally, districts are required to pay a nominal fee for each optional report requested. Standard and optional reports were available for all STAAR Modified grades and courses that had operational assessments.



For more information about scoring and reporting for STAAR Modified, refer to the TEA publication Interpreting Assessment Reports located on TEA's Student Assessment Division website.

Use of Test Results

Test results can be used to evaluate the performance of a group over time. Average scale scores and the percentage of students meeting the Level II and Level III performance standards can be analyzed by grade and content area across administrations to give insight into whether student performance is improving across years. For example, the average scale score for students who receive special education services and who took the STAAR Modified grade 4 writing test can be compared over time.

Test results can also be used to compare the performance of different demographic or program groups. The STAAR Modified scores can be analyzed within the same content area of any single administration to determine which demographic or program group had the highest average scale score, which group had the lowest percentage meeting the Level II performance standard, or which group had the highest percentage achieving the Level III performance standard, etc. Other scores can be used to help evaluate the academic performances of demographic or program groups in core academic areas. For example, reporting category data can help campuses and districts identify areas of potential academic weakness for a group of students. The same methodology can be applied to an entire campus or district. Test results for groups of students can be used when evaluating instruction or programs that require average-score or year-to-year comparisons. Because the tests are designed to measure content areas within the required state curriculum, the consideration of test results by content area and by reporting category might be helpful when evaluating curriculum and instruction. In addition, all test scores can be compared with regional and statewide performance within the same content area for any administration.

Generalizations from test results can be made to the specific content area being measured on the test. However, because each test measures a finite set of skills with a limited set of items, any generalizations about student achievement derived solely from

a particular assessment should be made with great care and with full reference to the fact that the conclusions were based only on that assessment. Instruction and program evaluations should take into account as much information as possible to provide a more complete picture of performance.

Parent Brochures

TEA's Student Assessment Division produces a brochure titled "Understanding Your Child's Confidential Student Report (CSR): A Guide for Parents" to help parents understand their child's STAAR 3–8 test results. This brochure provides a brief summary of the STAAR program, including STAAR Modified, and explains information contained on a CSR so that parents can understand their child's test report. The brochure, available in both English and Spanish, was provided to districts for distribution with individual student STAAR Modified performance results. For STAAR Modified EOC, an explanation of the test results is printed on the CSR for each individual assessment.

Performance Standards

Performance standards relate levels of test performance directly to what students are expected to learn, as defined in the statewide curriculum. This is done by establishing cut scores that distinguish between performance levels or categories. Standard setting is the process of establishing these cut scores that define the performance levels for an assessment.

Performance Levels and Policy Definitions

For the STAAR Modified assessments, the performance levels are

- Level I: Unsatisfactory Academic Performance,
- Level II: Satisfactory Academic Performance, and
- Level III: Advanced Academic Performance.

More detailed descriptions, known as policy definitions, of each performance level are as follows:

Level I: Unsatisfactory Academic Performance

Performance in this category indicates that students are inadequately prepared for the next grade or course even with instructional modifications such as simplified language and concepts. They demonstrate an insufficient understanding of the assessed knowledge and skills. Students in this category are unlikely to succeed in the next grade or course without significant and/or additional modifications and increased support.

Level II: Satisfactory Academic Performance

Performance in this category indicates that students are sufficiently prepared for the next grade or course with instructional modifications such as simplified language and concepts. They generally demonstrate the ability to understand and apply the assessed knowledge and skills in familiar contexts. Students in this category have a reasonable likelihood of success in the next grade or course with continued modifications and support.

LEVEL III: ADVANCED ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Performance in this category indicates that students are well prepared for the next grade or course with instructional modifications such as simplified language and concepts. They demonstrate the ability to understand and apply the assessed knowledge and skills. Students in this category have a high likelihood of success in the next grade or course with continued modifications and support.

Standard-Setting Process for STAAR Modified

Standard setting for STAAR Modified took into consideration a variety of factors such as policy, TEKS content standards, educator knowledge about what students should know and be able to do, and information about how student performance on state assessments aligns with performance on other assessments.

TEA used an evidence-based standard-setting approach (O'Malley, Keng, & Miles, 2012) for the STAAR program. Using this approach, TEA defined and implemented a nine-step process to establish performance standards for STAAR Modified. The nine steps are:

1. Conduct validity and linking studies.
2. Develop performance labels and policy definitions.
3. Convene a policy committee and/or develop reasonable ranges for performance standards.
4. Develop grade-/course-specific performance level descriptors.
5. Convene standard-setting committees.
6. Review performance standards for reasonableness.
7. Approve performance standards.
8. Implement performance standards.
9. Review performance standards.

Tables 5.3 and 5.4 provide high-level descriptions and timelines for these nine steps as implemented in the STAAR Modified 3–8 and STAAR Modified EOC standard-setting processes, respectively. Although HB 5 legislation removed the requirement for the review of performance standards at least once every three years, step nine is included in the process because this step was considered when setting performance standards for STAAR Modified.

Table 5.3. Overview of the STAAR Modified 3–8 Standard Setting Process

Standard-Setting Step	Description	Timeline
1. Conduct empirical studies	Scores on each assessment are linked to performance on other assessments in the same content area (when available).	Studies started in spring 2012 and will continue throughout the program.
2. Develop performance labels and policy definitions	A committee was convened jointly by TEA and the THECB to recommend performance categories, performance category labels, and general policy definitions for each performance category for the STAAR program. This information was adapted to apply to the STAAR Modified program.	September 2010
3. Develop performance standard ranges	STAAR Modified EOC performance standards and empirical study results are used to identify reasonable ranges ("neighborhoods") for the cut scores for Levels II and III.	August 2012
4. Develop grade/subject specific performance level descriptors (PLDs)	Committees consisting primarily of educators started with the general STAAR PLDs to develop STAAR Modified PLDs as an aligned system, describing a reasonable progression of skills within each content area (mathematics, English, science, and social studies).	September 2012
5. Convene standard-setting committees	Committees consisting of K–12 educators used the performance labels, policy definitions, PLDs, and reasonable ranges to recommend cut scores for each STAAR Modified assessment.	October 29–November 9, 2012
6. Review performance standards for reasonableness	TEA reviews the cut-score recommendations across grades and subjects.	November 2012
7. Approve performance standards	The commissioner of education approves performance standards.	December 2012
8. Implement performance standards	Performance standards are reported to students for the spring 2012 administration with phase-in standards applied.	January 2013
9. Review performance standards	Performance standards are reviewed at least once every three years.*	If applicable

* In June 2013, the 83rd Texas Legislature enacted House Bill 5, which removed the requirement to review performance standards (Step 9). Prior to this legislation, Step 9 was scheduled for fall 2014. TEA may review the performance standards if deemed applicable.

Table 5.4. Overview of the STAAR Modified EOC Standard-Setting Process

Standard-Setting Step	Description	Timeline
1. Conduct empirical studies	Scores on each assessment are linked to performance on other assessments in the same content area (when available).	Studies started in spring 2012 and will continue throughout the program.
2. Develop performance labels and policy definitions	A committee was convened jointly by TEA and the THECB to recommend performance categories, performance category labels, and general policy definitions for each performance category for the STAAR program. This information was adapted to apply to the STAAR Modified program.	September 2010
3. Convene a policy committee	Committee considers policy implications of performance standards and empirical study results and makes recommendations to identify reasonable ranges ("neighborhoods") for the STAAR EOC cut scores. This information is used to inform the reasonable ranges for the STAAR Modified cut scores.	February 1–2, 2012
4. Develop grade-/course-specific performance level descriptors (PLDs)	Committees consisting primarily of educators started with the general STAAR PLDs to develop STAAR Modified PLDs as an aligned system, describing a reasonable progression of skills within each content area (mathematics, English, science, and social studies).	June 2012
5. Convene standard-setting committees	Committees consisting of K–12 educators used the performance labels, policy definitions, PLDs, and reasonable ranges to recommend cut scores for each STAAR Modified EOC assessment.	August 8–14, 2012
6. Review performance standards for reasonableness	TEA reviews the recommendations across content areas.	September 2012
7. Approve performance standards	The commissioner of education approves the performance standards.	December 2012
8. Implement performance standards	Performance standards are reported to students for the spring 2012 administration with phase-in standards applied.	January 2013
9. Review performance standards	Performance standards are reviewed at least once every three years.*	If applicable

*In June 2013, the 83rd Texas Legislature enacted House Bill 5, which removed the requirement to review performance standards (Step 9). Prior to this legislation, Step 9 was scheduled for fall 2014. TEA may review the performance standards if deemed applicable.

Standard-Setting Committees

The task of each standard-setting committee was to recommend the two cut scores that would define the three performance levels for each of the STAAR Modified assessments. The standard-setting committees were made up of K–12 stakeholders. Each committee included general education teachers who were experts in both the assessed content and the curriculum, and special education teachers having expertise with students who take the STAAR Modified assessments.

Committee members were provided with reasonable ranges within which performance standards should be set. The ranges were determined after a careful consideration of the alignment of performance standards across the STAAR Modified 3–8 and EOC assessments in the same content area, relevant information from the policy committee, and results of various empirical studies. (The studies provided research-based anchors for setting performance standards that were meaningful and rigorous.)

In August 2012, TEA convened standard-setting committees that recommended performance standards for the STAAR Modified Algebra I, geometry, English I reading, English II reading, English I writing, English II writing, biology, and world geography assessments.

In spring 2014, reading and writing were combined into a single measure and only one score was reported so new standards had to be established for STAAR Modified English I and English II. The test forms for the combined English assessments were created from existing, previously administered STAAR Modified English I and II forms, and no changes to the constructs being assessed were made. For these reasons, empirical studies, referred to as bridge studies, were conducted to transfer the existing Level II and Level III reading and writing cut scores onto the new, combined STAAR Modified English I and II scales. When the existing reading and writing cut scores were transferred over to the new combined English scale, the transferred values fell in close proximity (values for the separate reading and writing cuts differed by two or fewer raw-score points). The new Level II and Level III cut scores were placed at the midpoint between the bridge study results for the STAAR Modified English reading and writing.

In October and November 2012, TEA convened standard-setting committees that recommended performance standards for STAAR Modified grades 3–8 mathematics, grades 3–8 reading, grades 4 and 7 writing, grades 5 and 8 science, and grade 8 social studies.

STAAR Modified world history was administered for the first time in May 2013. Performance standards for world history were to be set in summer 2013; but, due to HB 5 legislation, the assessment was discontinued after the spring 2013 administration and performance standards were not set.

STAAR Modified U.S. history was administered for the first time in spring 2014; but, because of the elimination of modified assessments following 2013–2014, no performance standards were set for U.S history.

Phase-In of Performance Standards

A phase-in period has been implemented for the STAAR Modified performance standards in order to provide school districts with sufficient time to adjust instruction, provide new professional development, increase teacher effectiveness, and close knowledge gaps. The commissioner of education determined the appropriate timeline for phasing in the performance standards.

A two-step phase-in for Level II: Satisfactory Academic Performance was in place for all STAAR 3–8 and EOC assessments, including modified assessments. Phase-in 1 performance standards for Level II were in effect for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, and 2013–2014 school years.

Outcome of Standard Setting

The standard-setting process elicited recommended cut scores that reflect the level of performance a student must achieve for each performance category of the STAAR Modified assessments. Performance standards for the STAAR Modified grades 3–8 assessments and Algebra I, English I, English II, and biology were recommended by standard-setting committees and approved by the commissioner of education. Tables 5.5 and 5.6 show the approved performance standards in scale score units for the STAAR Modified 3–8 and EOC assessments, respectively.

Table 5.5. STAAR Modified 3–8 Performance Standards

Assessment	Phase-in 1 Level II	Phase-in 2 Level II	Final Recommended Level II	Final Recommended Level III
Grade 3 mathematics	2800	2900	3000	3578
Grade 4 mathematics	2800	2900	3000	3526
Grade 5 mathematics	2800	2900	3000	3691
Grade 6 mathematics	2800	2900	3000	3462
Grade 7 mathematics	2800	2900	3000	3551
Grade 8 mathematics	2800	2900	3000	3577
Grade 3 reading	2800	2900	3000	3306
Grade 4 reading	2800	2900	3000	3238
Grade 5 reading	2800	2900	3000	3312
Grade 6 reading	2800	2900	3000	3316
Grade 7 reading	2800	2900	3000	3368
Grade 8 reading	2800	2900	3000	3436
Grade 4 writing	2800	2900	3000	3349
Grade 7 writing	2800	2900	3000	3422
Grade 5 science	2800	2900	3000	3234
Grade 8 science	2800	2900	3000	3509
Grade 8 social studies	2800	2900	3000	3348

Table 5.6. STAAR Modified EOC Performance Standards

Assessment	Phase-in 1 Level II	Phase-in 2 Level II	Final Recommended Level II	Final Recommended Level III
Algebra I	2800	2900	3000	3470
English I	2800	2857	3000	3359
English II	2800	2857	3000	3302
Biology	2800	2900	3000	3500

Review of Performance Standards

In June 2009, TEC §39.0242 required that performance standards for the STAAR program be reviewed at least once every three years. Step 9 of the standard-setting process, "review performance standards," was scheduled for fall 2014. In June 2013, the 83rd Texas Legislature enacted HB 5, which removed the requirement to review performance standards. TEA may review the performance standards if deemed applicable.

Scaling

Scaling is a statistical procedure that places raw scores on a common scoring metric in order to make test scores comparable across test administrations. As with previous Texas assessment programs, the STAAR program uses the Rasch Partial-Credit Model (RPCM) to place test items on the same scale across administrations for a given STAAR Modified assessment. Once performance standards have been set for an assessment, the Rasch scale is then transformed to the more user-friendly metric of a reporting scale in order to further facilitate interpretation of the test scores. Details of the RPCM scaling method used in Texas are provided in chapter 3, "Standard Technical Processes."

Reporting Scales

Scale scores for STAAR Modified assessments are reported on a horizontal scale. Horizontal scale scores allow for direct comparisons of student performance between specific sets of test items from different test administrations. For all STAAR Modified assessments, a scale score of 3000 represents the final recommended Level II performance standard. In addition, the standard deviation for those scales was set at 200. It is important to note that although Level II scale score values are fixed across horizontally scaled assessments within content areas, Level III scale score values vary across all STAAR Modified assessments. However, these Level III scale score values will stay constant over time. The STAAR Modified scale scores represent linear transformations of Rasch-based performance estimates (θ). Specifically, the transformation is made by first multiplying θ by a slope constant (A) and then adding an intercept constant (B). This operation is described by the equation below:

$$SS_\theta = A \times \theta + B \qquad (1)$$

A and B in Equation (1) are referred to as the horizontal scaling constants. These same transformations will be applied each year to the Rasch proficiency level estimates for that year's set of test items. Values for the horizontal scaling constants are provided in Tables 5.7 and 5.8 for the STAAR Modified 3–8 and EOC assessments, respectively.

Table 5.7. Horizontal Scaling Constants for STAAR Modified 3–8

STAAR Assessment	*A*	*B*
Grade 3 mathematics	317.5113	2864.1052
Grade 3 reading	244.2943	2877.1200
Grade 4 mathematics	304.9280	2914.9251
Grade 4 reading	232.5136	2797.9457
Grade 4 writing	386.5413	2919.2129
Grade 5 mathematics	389.5123	2988.7041
Grade 5 reading	275.1252	2862.7125
Grade 5 science	260.2186	2679.6709
Grade 6 mathematics	446.3956	3011.6063
Grade 6 reading	281.7367	2852.3700
Grade 7 mathematics	459.9354	3040.9343
Grade 7 reading	278.1452	2880.1194
Grade 7 writing	408.0328	2862.4930
Grade 8 mathematics	457.1662	3030.1730
Grade 8 reading	253.5742	2857.9984
Grade 8 science	328.2878	2817.4720
Grade 8 social studies	301.6569	2853.0931

Table 5.8. Horizontal Scaling Constants for STAAR Modified EOC

STAAR Assessment	*A*	*B*
Algebra I	405.0300	2972.8630
English I	374.3335	2876.0956
English II	360.7667	2923.8782
Biology	341.6655	2847.2755

Equating

Used in conjunction with the scaling process, equating is the statistical process that takes into account the slight differences in difficulty across test forms and administrations and allows the scores to be placed onto a common scale. By using statistical methods, TEA "equates" the results of different tests so that scale scores across test forms and testing administrations can be compared. In the 2013–2014 school year, the STAAR Modified equating activities included pre-equating. Refer to chapter 3, "Standard Technical Processes," for detailed information about equating.

Pre-Equating

Pre-equating is conducted for STAAR Modified assessments. The pre-equating process is one in which a newly developed test form is linked, before it is administered, to a set of items that appeared previously on one or more test forms. During the 2013–2014 school year, pre-equating was conducted for all STAAR Modified operational assessments, except U.S. history. In 2013–2014, U.S. history was administered for the first time so there were no statistics to use in pre-equating. Typically, an assessment like U.S. history would be scaled after the administration and would serve as the base for pre-equating future administrations of the assessment. However, because STAAR Modified has been eliminated for subsequent years, no scaling or equating was necessary for U.S. history in 2013–2014.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the expectation that repeated administrations of the same test should generate consistent results. Reliability is a critical technical characteristic of any measurement instrument because unreliable instruments cannot be used to make valid interpretations.

During the 2013–2014 school year, the reliability of the STAAR Modified scores was estimated using statistical methods such as internal consistency, classical standard error of measurement, conditional standard error of measurement, and classification accuracy. Refer to chapter 3, "Standard Technical Processes," for detailed information about reliability.

Internal Consistency

For the STAAR Modified assessments administered in spring 2014, the internal consistency estimates ranged from 0.65 to 0.87. For the different student groups, estimates were found to be similar; for grade 8 reading, for example, the reliability for the total group was 0.83, for females only was 0.83, for males only was 0.84, for African Americans only was 0.83, for Hispanics only was 0.82, and for whites only was 0.85.

Because internal consistency estimates typically decrease as the number of test items decrease, internal consistency estimates for individual reporting categories can be noticeably lower than those for the full test. Lower internal consistency estimates indicate that interpretations of student reporting category scores are not as reliable as those based on the complete test. For example, the STAAR Modified grade 5 mathematics test contains 40 items, and its overall estimated reliability was 0.84. The STAAR Modified grade 5 mathematics reporting category "Numbers, Operations, and Quantitative Reasoning" contains 14 items. The estimated reliability for the scores in this reporting category was 0.67. Therefore, the lower reliability at the reporting category level should be taken into account when making interpretations of the scores at this level.

Estimates of internal consistency at the overall level, as well as by reporting categories and for student groups for the spring 2014 STAAR Modified assessments, are provided in Appendix C.

Classical Standard Error of Measurement (SEM)

For the STAAR Modified assessments administered operationally in spring 2014, SEM values ranged from approximately 2 to 3 raw score points across grades and content areas. The SEM values for the STAAR assessments administered in spring 2014 are provided in Appendix C.

Conditional Standard Error of Measurement (CSEM)

Conditional standard error of measurement (CSEM) provides a reliability estimate at each score point on a test. It is an estimate of the average test score measurement error conditional on the proficiency estimate or scale score estimate. For the 2013–2014 school year, CSEM values for STAAR Modified assessments were approximately 80 to 154 scale score points in the middle of the scale score ranges. The CSEM values for the spring 2014 STAAR Modified assessments are provided in Appendix C.

Classification Accuracy

Classification accuracy provides an estimate of the accuracy of student classifications into performance categories based on current test results. Classification accuracy rates for STAAR Modified assessments ranged from 81.6 to 87.1 percent. The classification accuracy rates for the spring 2014 STAAR Modified assessments are provided in Appendix C.

Validity

The results of the STAAR Modified assessments are used to guide educational planning related to the knowledge and skills that students are acquiring in each academic content area. Texas follows national standards of best practice and collects validity evidence annually to support the many uses of the STAAR Modified scores. TEA also receives ongoing input from the Texas Technical Advisory Committee with regard to plans for collecting validity evidence for the Texas assessment program. The sections that follow describe how different types of validity evidence were collected for the STAAR Modified assessments during the 2013–2014 school year. Refer to chapter 3, “Standard Technical Processes,” for more detailed information about validity.

Evidence Based on Test Content

The STAAR Modified assessments have been developed to align with content as defined by the TEKS. Content validity evidence is collected at all stages of the test-development process. Nationally established test-development processes for the Texas assessment program are followed while developing the STAAR Modified

assessments in order to support the use of the STAAR Modified scores in making inferences about students' knowledge and understanding of the TEKS.

Because STAAR Modified is a version of STAAR, the test-development processes for both assessments play an intricate role in building validity evidence. To achieve the highest level of content validity, the process of aligning both STAAR and STAAR Modified to the TEKS curriculum includes review by numerous committees of Texas educators.

Relationship to the Statewide Curriculum

As part of the transition to the STAAR assessment program in 2012, teachers, curriculum specialists, test-development specialists, college educators, and TEA staff worked together in advisory committees to identify appropriate assessment reporting categories for STAAR, including the STAAR Modified assessments. The input of the advisory committees is reflected in the assessed curricula and test blueprints.

Early in the development process, prototype items were developed for the STAAR Modified assessments. As part of the item-development process, advisory committees and TEA staff reviewed these prototypes to identify how well these items would measure the student expectations to which the items were aligned. These early reviews provided valuable suggestions for item-development guidelines and item types. Item-development guidelines continued to be refined throughout the test-development process, as various STAAR Modified item-review committees shared their feedback about how the student expectations could be effectively assessed.

Educator Input

As part of the annual process of item development, committees of Texas educators meet to review the STAAR Modified items and confirm that each item appropriately measures the TEKS to which it is aligned. These item-review committees also review the assessment items for content and bias. The committees are made up of Texas K–12 educators, and these committees revise and edit items, as appropriate, prior to test administrations. Item-review committees are convened for all STAAR Modified assessments.

Test Developer Input

Item writers and reviewers follow test-development guidelines that explain how content aligned to given TEKS statements should be measured. At each stage of development, writers and reviewers verify the alignment of the items with the assessed student expectations. When STAAR Modified was designed as an alternate assessment based on modified achievement standards, special education content specialists developed detailed guidelines so that the modifications made to the STAAR items were consistent. After the items were modified, educator committees for each content area at each grade level reviewed the original STAAR item and the STAAR Modified version of the item to make sure that the modified item still measured the same underlying skill as the original item. In this way, the alignment between the TEKS curriculum and the STAAR items carries through to the STAAR Modified items.

Evidence Based on Response Processes

Response processes refer to the cognitive behaviors that are required to respond to a test item. Texas collects evidence to show that the way students respond to items on the STAAR Modified assessments reflects accurate measurement of the construct.

ITEM TYPE

Student response processes on the STAAR Modified assessments vary according to item types. Across STAAR Modified, three types of items are administered to students: multiple-choice items on all assessments; gridded-response items on mathematics assessments; and written compositions on grades 4 and 7 and English I and II assessments.

After the STAAR items are modified by TEA and Pearson special education and content assessment specialists, the items are reviewed by educator committees to help ensure that the modifications made the items accessible to the STAAR Modified student population while maintaining the construct of the item.

Texas also gathers evidence to show that response processes do not advantage or disadvantage one or more student groups. This evidence comes from several sources. When item types were initially considered for inclusion in the STAAR Modified assessments, the item types were pilot-tested to study the way students engage with the various item presentations. After item types were determined to be appropriate for STAAR Modified, evidence about student responses was gathered annually through educator and expert reviews and analyses of individual student responses to these items. Every year during educator reviews, educators evaluate whether item content for a given item type is being appropriately assessed and whether students will be able to accurately demonstrate their knowledge of the construct given the items' planned format. When items are field-tested, additional data are gathered about students' responses. Data such as item difficulty, item point-biserial correlations, and differential item functioning are all evaluated with regard to the item type. For additional information, refer to the Item Analyses section of chapter 3, "Standard Technical Processes."

SCORING PROCESS

For multiple-choice items, statistical keychecks are conducted for all STAAR Modified assessments during the equating process. Score reliability and validity indices are generated and evaluated for every STAAR Modified assessment (refer to the Item Analyses section of chapter 3, "Standard Technical Processes").

Tables 5.9 and 5.10 summarize reader agreement rates by grade and the validity results, respectively, for the STAAR Modified assessments administered in spring 2014 that included written compositions. The reader agreement rate is expressed in terms of absolute agreement between the first reader's score and the second reader's score. Validity is expressed in terms of exact agreement between the score assigned by a given reader and the "true" score approved by TEA.

Table 5.9. Summary of Reader Agreement (Reliability) for 2014 STAAR Modified

STAAR Modified Assessment	Number of Responses Read	Agreement Rate (%) After 2 Readings	Number of Third Readings	Agreement Rate (%) After 3 Readings
Grade 4 writing	14,611	81%	132	100%
Grade 7 writing	14,791	78%	74	100%
English I	13,245	79%	17	100%
English II	12,567	80%	17	100%

Table 5.10. Summary of Validity Packet Results for 2014 STAAR Modified

STAAR Modified Assessment	Agreement Rate (%)
Grade 4 writing	91%
Grade 7 writing	89%
English I	88%
English II	89%

Evidence Based on Internal Structure

The internal consistency of the STAAR Modified assessments is evaluated every year using KR20 for assessments that have only dichotomously scored items (i.e., multiple-choice and gridded-response items). For the STAAR Modified assessments that have a combination of multiple-choice items and written compositions (i.e., the writing assessments), internal consistency is evaluated using stratified coefficient alpha. These internal consistency evaluations are made for all students and for reported student groups, such as female, male, African American, Hispanic, and white students. Estimates of internal consistency are made for the full assessment as well as for each reporting category within a content area and can be found in the Reliability section of this chapter.

Evidence Based on Relationships to Other Variables

Another method Texas uses to provide validity evidence for the STAAR Modified assessments is analyzing the relationship between performance on a given STAAR Modified assessment and performance on another STAAR Modified assessment, a process that supports what is referred to as criterion-related validity. By examining this relationship, empirical evidence can be collected to show that performance on the STAAR Modified assessments is consistent with expectations.

Correlations between the STAAR Modified content area scale scores were calculated. The correlations across all grades and courses ranged from 0.39 to 0.74. These correlations are considered moderate, which suggests that scores across content areas are related but not redundant. This is expected because each pair of STAAR Modified assessments measures academic content areas but different types of knowledge and skills. Correlations between writing and science and writing and social studies in grades 3–8 are not included because students do not take these assessments in the same grade. Correlations between the STAAR Modified content-area scale scores at the same grade level can be found in Appendix C.

The correlations between the total score and the STAAR Modified reporting category scores were also calculated within the grade and content area. Across all subjects and grades, the correlations between each reporting category and score ranged from 0.56 to 0.90. More specifically, the range of correlations within reading across all grades was 0.56 to 0.90. For mathematics, the range of correlations was 0.56 to 0.89. Science had a correlation range of 0.64 to 0.84, while social studies had a correlation range of 0.68 to 0.86. Lastly, the correlations of the total test score to the reporting category scores for writing ranged from 0.75 to 0.86. The magnitudes of these correlations were found to support theoretical relationships between reporting categories and the overall test.

Additional validity evidence was collected in the form of discriminant validity, which demonstrates that the STAAR Modified scores are unrelated to demographic variables (e.g., gender and ethnicity). Theoretically, student characteristics such as ethnicity and gender should not relate to their performance on the assessment; therefore, the lack of meaningful empirical relationships between these measures is expected.

To investigate the relationship between the STAAR Modified scores and demographic variables, correlations were computed specifically for gender and ethnicity. The correlation between the STAAR Modified scores and gender was 0.038, and the correlation between the STAAR Modified scores and ethnicity was 0.059. Both the gender and ethnicity correlations are very small and do not indicate a meaningful relationship between the STAAR Modified scores and either demographic variable.

Evidence Based on Consequences of Testing

In 2011–2012, TEA formally captured and documented the intended and unintended consequences of the STAAR Modified assessment program by administering a consequential validity survey to educators. The consequential validity survey allowed educators to document the extent to which they believed the administration of STAAR Modified has led to changes in certain areas, such as student achievement, impact on teachers, and curricular and instructional reform.

Educators reported many positive changes due to the administration of STAAR Modified; however, a majority of educators also responded that there are teachers who are feeling more burdened when preparing students to take STAAR Modified and that the public may not perceive STAAR Modified as being helpful for students. Despite these results, more than half of the educators responded that students are responding

positively when taking STAAR Modified. For more information about the 2011–2012 consequential validity survey results, please refer to chapter 5, "STAAR Modified," of the 2012–2013 Technical Digest.

Measures of Student Progress

While progress measures were calculated and reported for STAAR in July 2013, these measures were not yet available for STAAR Modified. In fall 2013, progress measure results were made available for the first time for STAAR Modified through the student data portal. In 2014, progress measures for STAAR Modified were provided for the first time on Confidential Student Reports (CSRs) and in district accountability files.

Because STAAR is the basis of the STAAR Modified assessments, the progress measure for STAAR Modified mirrors that of STAAR, using a gain score approach. Student progress on STAAR Modified is classified as *Did Not Meet*, *Met*, or *Exceeded* in relation to a progress target. However, because STAAR Modified questions include three answer options rather than four, the chance score is defined as 33 percent of the possible multiple-choice raw-score points. Otherwise, the progress measure for STAAR Modified is the same as the progress measure for STAAR. For more information about the STAAR progress measure, refer to the Measures of Student Progress section in chapter 4, "STAAR".

Progress Classifications

Gain scores are compared to progress targets to determine if a student *Did Not Meet*, *Met* or *Exceeded* the progress expectation. In this way, the progress targets define the expectation of annual progress for each grade and content area. These progress targets are grounded in the STAAR Modified performance standards and the goal of having all students achieve at or above Level II: Satisfactory Academic Performance.

Specifically, the *Met* progress target is defined as the distance between the final recommended performance standards from the prior-year grade and the current-year grade in the same content area. For students who achieved Level I or Level II performance in the prior year, the *Met* progress target is based on the distance between the final recommended Level II standards in the prior year and current year grades and content area. For students who achieved Level III performance in the prior year, the progress target is based on the distance between the Level III standards in the prior year and current year grades and content areas. These definitions are based on the goal that students in Level I will eventually attain Level II performance, students in Level II will at least maintain Level II performance, and students in Level III will maintain Level III performance.

The *Exceeded* progress classification is a designation reserved for those students who have demonstrated significant growth over the course of the year, beyond that of the *Met* progress target. The *Exceeded* progress target is defined as the distance between the Level II standard in the prior year and the Level III standard in the current year.

Students with gain scores less than the *Met* progress target are classified *as Did Not Meet* progress. Students with gain scores greater than or equal to the *Met* progress target and less than or equal to the *Exceeded* progress target are classified as having *Met* the progress target. Students with gain scores greater than the *Exceeded* progress target are classified as having *Exceeded* the progress target.

Because the Level III performance standards are not the same across grades and content areas (i.e., they do not have the same numerical value), the *Met* progress targets for Level III and *Exceeded* progress targets differ from grade to grade and across content areas. Table 5.11 lists the STAAR Modified progress measure targets.

Table 5.11. STAAR Modified Progress Measure Targets

Current Year Test	Prior Year Test	Met Level I/II[1] Target	Met Level III[2] Target	Exceeded[3] Target	Top Score Range[4]	Chance Score Range[5]
Grade 4 Mathematics	Grade 3 Mathematics	0	-52	526	36-38	0-12
Grade 5 Mathematics	Grade 4 Mathematics	0	165	691	38-40	0-13
Grade 6 Mathematics	Grade 5 Mathematics	0	-229	462	40-42	0-13
Grade 7 Mathematics	Grade 6 Mathematics	0	89	551	41-43	0-14
Grade 8 Mathematics	Grade 7 Mathematics	0	26	577	43-45	0-14
Algebra I	Grade 8 Mathematics	0	-107	470	41-43	0-14
Grade 4 English Reading	Grade 3 English Reading	0	-68	238	33-35	0-11
Grade 5 English Reading	Grade 4 English Reading	0	74	312	35-37	0-12
Grade 6 Reading	Grade 5 English Reading	0	4	316	36-38	0-12
Grade 7 Reading	Grade 6 Reading	0	52	368	38-40	0-13
Grade 8 Reading	Grade 7 Reading	0	68	436	40-42	0-14

NOTE: Negative progress targets result from the use of horizontal scales (all STAAR Modified tests have horizontal scales) and the movement across scales (from grades 3–8 to EOC). For more information, please see question 6 in the STAAR Progress Measure Q & A document on the STAAR Resources page of TEA's Student Assessment Division website.

[1] Met Level I/II is the distance or difference between the final recommended Level II standards on the current-year and prior-year tests.

[2] Met Level III is the distance or difference between the Level III standards on the current-year and prior-year tests.

[3] Exceeded is the distance or difference between the current-year test Level III standard and the prior-year test final recommended Level II standard.

[4] Top Score Range is the range of the top three possible raw scores on the current-year test.

[5] Chance Score Range is the range of raw scores that could be reasonably attained through guessing alone. For mathematics (including Algebra I) and reading tests, chance is defined as 33 percent of the multiple-choice questions (i.e., not including griddable questions).

In addition, steps for calculating progress measures and the progress targets for each STAAR Modified grade and content area can be found in the "Calculating Progress Measures" document on the http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/staar/ page of TEA's Student Assessment Division website.

Classification Exceptions

There are some places on the STAAR Modified scale, specifically at the extreme high and low ends of the scale, where the application of the *Did Not Meet*, *Met*, and *Exceeded* definitions would not be appropriate. At the extreme ends of the scale, unlike the rest of the scale, answering one more question correctly results in large differences in scale scores. For this reason, several places on the scale have been identified as exceptions to the *Did Not Meet*, *Met*, and *Exceeded* definitions.

- All students scoring at the three highest raw scores in the current year will be classified as having *Exceeded* the progress target.
- Students who maintained Level III performance from the prior year to the current year will be classified as having *Met* or *Exceeded* the progress target. (*Did Not Meet* classification will not be applied to these students.)
- Students scoring at or below chance in the current year will be classified as *Did Not Meet* progress.

Chance represents the score that could be reasonably obtained by guessing alone. For all STAAR Modified assessments, chance is defined as 33 percent of the possible multiple-choice raw-score points since these questions have three answer options. The score values associated with these exceptions for each STAAR grade and content can be found in Table 5.11 and in the "Calculating Progress Measures" document on the STAAR Resources page of TEA's Student Assessment Division website.

Results

STAAR Modified progress measure results from 2013–2014 are provided in Appendix C. For each grade and content area or course, the largest numbers of students were classified as either *Did Not Meet* or *Met*. In contrast, the *Exceeded* classification applied to a smaller number of students. This pattern was expected because by definition it requires a significantly more progress to receive an *Exceeded* progress classification beyond what is required to receive the *Met* progress classification.

Sampling

In 2013–2014, there were no research studies, audits, or field tests conducted for STAAR Modified. Therefore, sampling was not required.

Test Results

Appendix C provides scale score distributions and statistics and RSSS conversion tables, as well as mean p-values and reliability estimates by reporting category and content area, for all STAAR Modified assessments administered in spring 2014. Table 5.12 shows spring 2014 pass rates for STAAR Modified.

Table 5.12. STAAR Modified Spring 2014 Pass Rates (at the Phase-in 1 Standard)

Content Area	Grade/Course	Pass Rate
Mathematics	Grade 3	66%
	Grade 4	69%
	Grade 5	68%
	Grade 6	63%
	Grade 7	60%
	Grade 8	64%
	Algebra I	47%
Reading	Grade 3	71%
	Grade 4	68%
	Grade 5	78%
	Grade 6	67%
	Grade 7	66%
	Grade 8	70%
Writing	Grade 4	56%
	Grade 7	69%
Science	Grade 5	60%
	Grade 8	70%
	Biology	54%
Social Studies	Grade 8	62%
English	English I	67%
	English II	76%

Future of STAAR Modified

As previously mentioned, 2013–2014 is the last year that STAAR Modified will be administered in Texas. Students who took STAAR Modified in 2013–2014 will be included in the general assessment population for STAAR in 2014–2015 and will have the option to take an accommodated version of STAAR, called STAAR A, if they meet eligibility requirements.