State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness

Performance Standard Progression: 2015-2016 to 2021-2022

In 2014, to give educators additional time to make the significant changes in instruction needed to raise the level of performance of all Texas students, the commissioner made four decisions: 1) the phase-in 1 standard would be kept in place for the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years; 2) the phase-in 2 standard would be redefined and implemented in 2015-2016; 3) a phase-in 3 standard would be created to allow for a more gradual increase of the phase-in standards; and 4) the final recommended standard would take effect in 2021-2022.

Effect of Implementing the Phase-in 2 Standard in 2015-2016

For 2015-2016, the phase-in 2 standard was scheduled to go into effect for students in grades 3-8. The graduating class of 2019, who will be taking STAAR EOCs for the first time in 2015-2016, would have also been held to the phase-in 2 standard (the standard in place when a student first takes an EOC is the standard that the student must meet on all subsequent EOC assessments).

If phase-in 2 was implemented, the agency anticipated that the passing rate on the STAAR assessments would have decreased by 10% on average.

Recommendation for Performance Standard Progression

Given the STAAR performance results for 2012 through 2015, it was recommended that the current phase-in schedule be replaced with a standard progression approach from 2015-2016 through 2021-2022, increasing performance standards annually. Intended to minimize any abrupt single-year increase in the required Level II performance standard, the standard progression approach would still allow annual, consistent, incremental improvements toward the final recommended Level II performance standard in 2021-2022.

The new performance standard progression is effective beginning with the 2015-2016 school year.

Intent and Expected Impact, Design, and Considerations of the Standard Progression Approach

Intent and Expected Impact

There is a need to adopt more rigorous performance standards in the 2015-2016 school year to motivate instruction, and to continue to move toward the goal of adopting final recommended standards in 2021-2022. However, consideration was given to the concern of a projected 10% decrease in the 2015-2016 passing rates under the phase-in 2 standard. The recommended standard progression approach addresses both issues.

Under the standard progression approach, modest, annual, consistent increases to the performance standard will keep the state on track to implement the final recommended standard in 2021-2022. Further, the agency projects that under this approach, the percent of students passing the STAAR assessments would decrease 3% on average across tests in 2015-2016, not 10%.

The recommended standard progression approach has the additional benefit of communicating to the public a consistent and easily understood method of adjusting interim standards prior to implementing the final level II standards.

Design of the Standard Progression

Similar to the original method used to develop the phase-in standards currently in effect, the performance standard progression is based on the standard deviations of scale scores. For 2015-2016, step 1 of the performance progression modestly increases the performance standard (.1 standard deviation) for all assessments except the English I and English II end-of-course assessments. The 2015-2016 performance standard will therefore be set at .9 standard deviation below the final recommended standard. In contrast, the previous phase-in 2 standard would have increased to .7 standard deviation (SD) below the final recommended standard.

In each subsequent year after 2015-2016, the performance standard will increase by .15 standard deviation, so the standard in 2016-2017 will fall .75 SD below the final recommendation, and so on, until the final recommended standard is implemented in 2021-2022. The following table illustrates the effect of the approach.
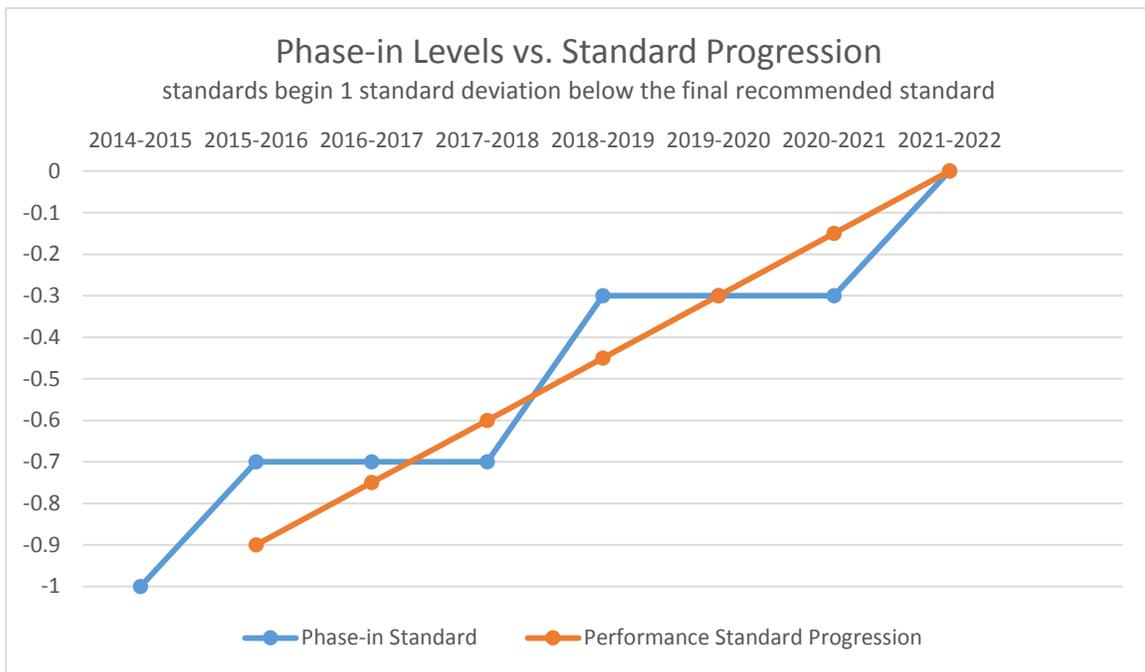
The English I and English II assessments phase-in 1 standards were established originally at 0.5 standard deviation below the final recommended standard. Similar to the other STAAR assessments, for 2015-2016, step 1 of the standard progression would be modest (.05 SD). The resulting 2015-2016 standard for these assessments is .45 standard deviation below the final recommended standard. In contrast, the previous phase-in 2 standard would have increased to 0.35 standard deviation below the final recommended standard. In each subsequent year, the standard will increase by .075 standard deviation until implementation of the final recommended standard in 2021-2022.

English I/II EOC Phase-in Levels vs. Standard Progression
standards begin .5 standard deviation below the final recommended standard
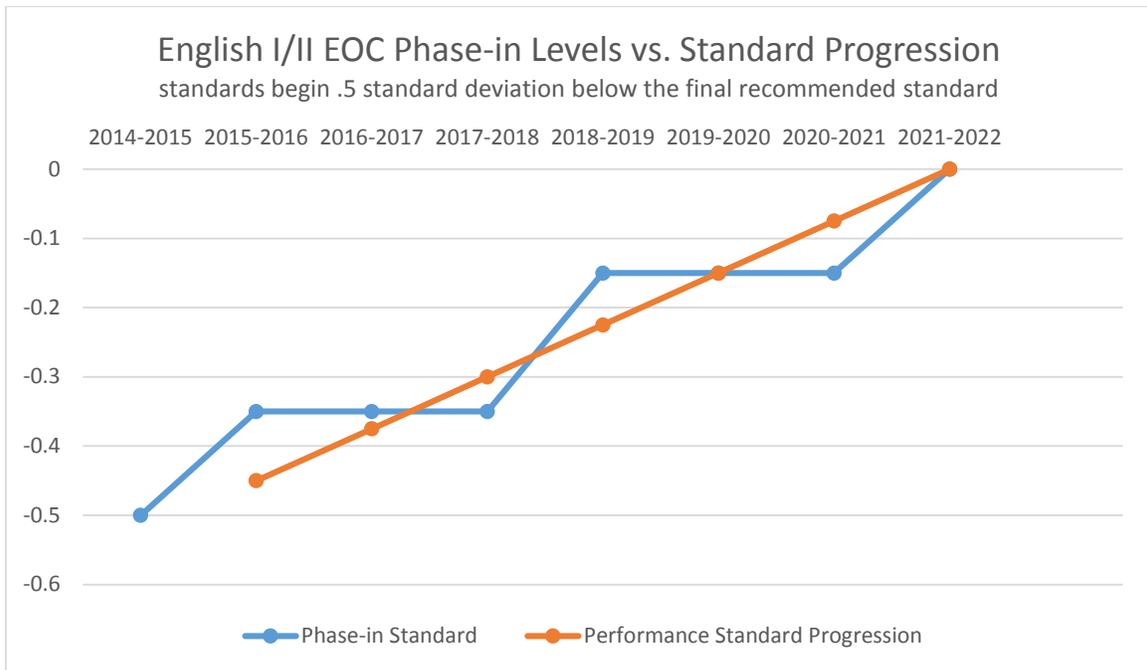
Considerations

The standard progression is calculated on scale scores, not raw scores. It is critical to note that raw score increments may vary from year to year because cut scores are defined by scale scores, not raw scores, and corresponding raw score cuts are influenced by the difficulty of test items selected for use in any given year.

Also, the impact of the standard progression is based on 2014-2015 school year data. There may be unexpected changes in passing rates in the 2015-2016 school year due to one more year of curriculum implementation and public response to adopting higher performance standards.

The following tables show the 2014-2015 pass rate for each grade and subject, and the projected 2015-2016 pass rates under the previous phase-in 2 standard and the new performance progression standard.

Tables of Estimated Impact in 2015-2016 of Each Standard as Compared to the 2014-2015 Pass Rate[1].

Grades 3-8 Mathematics, Percent Passing
2014-2015 Phase-in 1
2015-2016 Standard Progression vs Phase-in 2

Legend: ■ 2014-2015 Phase-in 1   ■ 2015-2016 Standard Progression   ■ 2015-2016 Phase-in 2
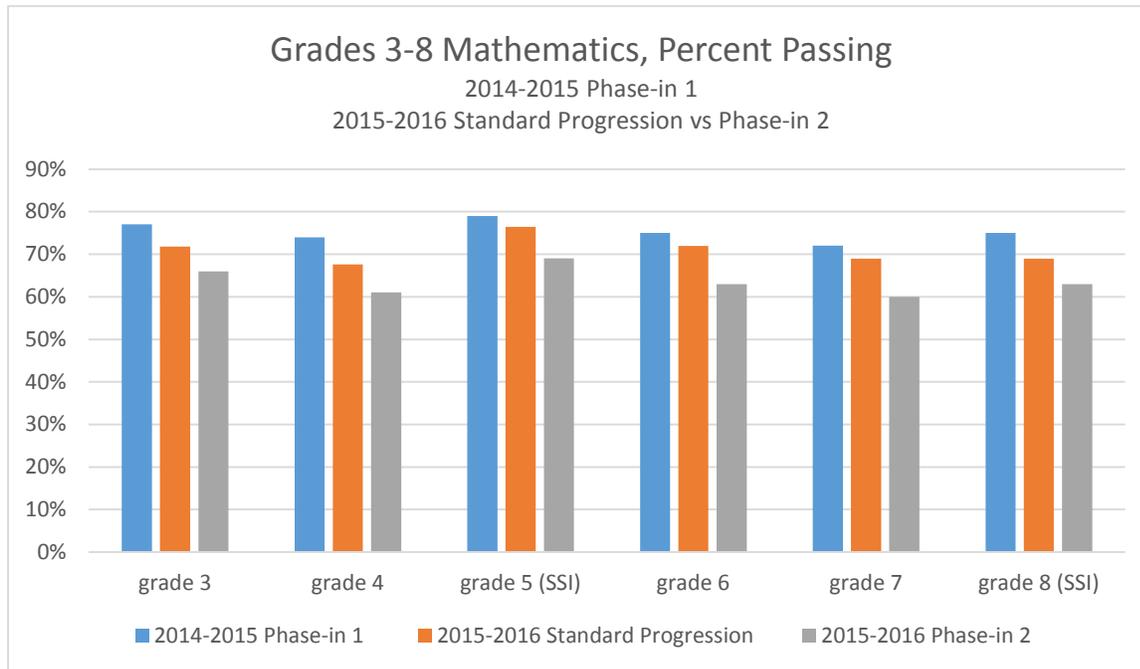
[1] [1] The estimated impact for the 2015-2016 school year for both the phase-in 2 and the new standard progression is based on 2014-2015 school year data. There may be unexpected changes in passing rates in the 2015-2016 school year due to an additional year of curriculum implementation.

Grades 3-8 Reading, Percent Passing
2014-2015 Phase-in 1
2015-2016 Standard Progression vs Phase-in 2

Legend: 2014-2015 Phase-in 1 · 2015-2016 Standard Progression · 2015-2016 Phase-in 2

Categories: grade 3, grade 4, grade 5 (SSI), grade 6, grade 7, grade 8 (SSI)
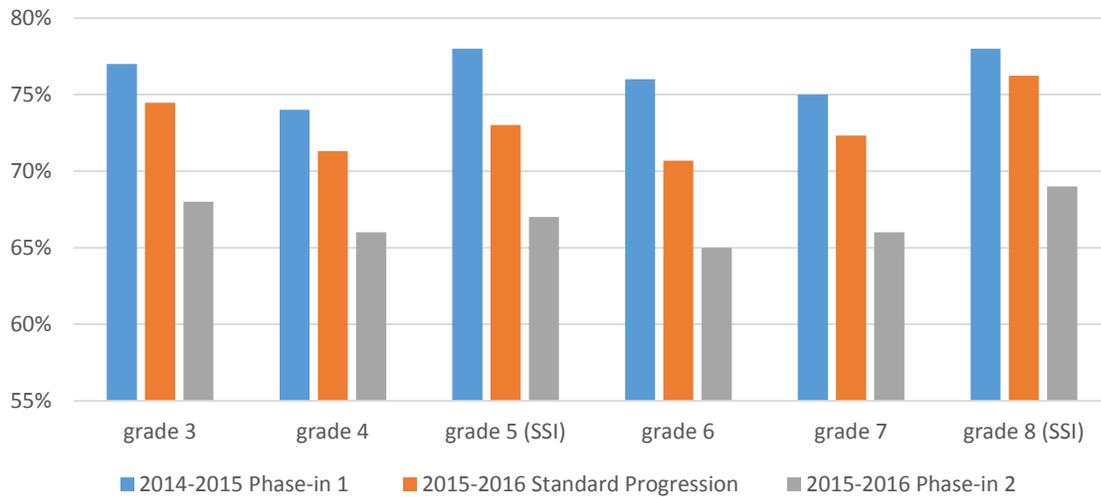
Grades 4 and 7 Writing, 5 and 8 Science, 8 Social Studies Percent Passing
2014-2015 Phase-in 1
2015-2016 Standard Progression vs Phase-in 2

Legend: 2014-2015 Phase-in 1 · 2015-2016 Standard Progression · 2015-2016 Phase-in 2

Categories: grade 4 writing, grade 7 writing, grade 5 science, grade 8 science, grade 8 social studies

EOC Percent Passing
2014-2015 Phase-in 1
2015-2016 Standard Progression vs Phase-in 2

Categories: Algebra I, Biology, English I, English II, US History

Legend:
- 2014-2015 Phase-in 1
- 2015-2016 Standard Progression
- 2015-2016 Phase-in 2