



Frequently Asked Questions About Interim Assessments

1. What are the interim assessments?

The interim assessments are an optional TEA tool to help school districts and open-enrollment charter schools identify students' strengths and weaknesses and help predict student performance on the STAAR. The spring 2018 interim assessments are a pilot administration; the functionalities are in a trial phase. Feedback from the pilot will be incorporated into the full launch of the interim assessments, which will be available in two administrations during the 2018–2019 school year.

2. What grades and subjects are tested?

For the spring 2018 pilot, grades 3–8 mathematics and reading interim assessments are available. For the 2018–2019 school year, Algebra I, English I, English II, and grades 3–5 Spanish mathematics and reading will also be available.

3. What accessibility features will be available for the interim assessments?

For the spring 2018 pilot, students will have access to the universal online accessibility tools and text-to-speech. Complete personal needs and preferences (PNP) and accessibility features will be ready for the 2018–2019 school year.

4. When will the interim assessments be available?

For the spring 2018 pilot, the testing window is January 29 to March 23. During the 2018–2019 school year, there will be two administrations available. These testing windows will be longer than the pilot.

5. How are the interim assessments administered?

The interim assessments will be delivered in an online format through the STAAR Online Testing Platform (SOTP).

6. When can I register students?

For the spring 2018 pilot, registration opens January 9, 2018.

7. How do I register students?

Educators register students in the STAAR Assessment Management System via a student data file upload or individually. Specific instructions for registering students for interim assessments are included in the Interim Assessments User's Guide.

8. What are the interim assessment items like?

Interim assessment items are a mixture of former STAAR summative test items and additional items developed with Texas teachers. All items are fully aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The interim assessments use multiple choice items and a type of open-ended question known as a "griddable item" (in mathematics assessments only), which provides students opportunities to derive an answer independently without being influenced by the answer choices provided with the question. The interim assessments are delivered in an online format.



9. Where can I find reports of student performance on the interim assessments?

Educators can access reports of student performance through the Assessment Management System.

10. What reports of student performance are available?

The Assessment Management System displays probability results immediately after testing is completed. These results show percentage probabilities of achieving Approaches and Meets grade level expectations on the STAAR. In addition to these immediate results, a data file will also be available. For students who have completed and submitted tests by February 23, a data file will be available on March 5. A final data file for all students participating will be available two weeks after the test window closes. Both of these data files will include useful information, such as the student responses to each test question and the student's relative strength or weakness in each reporting category. Reporting category strength or weakness is relative to the entire test. For example, relative strength is reported if a student did not perform well on the entire test but performed well on a reporting category. Relative weakness is reported if a student performed well on the entire test but performed poorly on a reporting category. Most students will receive a "2" in the reporting category strength/weakness indicator for a particular reporting category. More detailed reporting will be included in the full launch of the interim assessments in 2018–2019.

11. Are the interim assessments part of STAAR accountability?

No. The interim assessments are a tool that districts and educators can use to improve outcomes for students in Texas. The optional assessments are delivered through the STAAR Online Testing Platform, and the interim reports include a percentage likelihood of achievement on STAAR, but the interim assessments are NOT part of the accountability system.

12. What will TEA do with the data from the interim assessments?

TEA will not have access to the student data. The state dashboard will provide an overview of schools and districts who are participating, but it will not provide specific score information or any student-level data.

13. How can my school or district participate in the pilot?

Districts interested in participating in the interim assessment pilot should contact TEA student assessment via email at StudentAssessment@tea.texas.gov. Educators who would like to participate in the pilot should contact their districts. Districts that choose to participate will be asked to provide feedback via a survey. This will help TEA to improve the resources and testing experience in the 2018–2019 school year, when the interim assessments formally launch. Additionally, TEA will conduct on-site cognitive labs to get first-hand information from students and educators regarding their experience with the tool.

14. Who can I contact for more information about interim assessments?

For technical questions related to registration in the Assessment Management System, using the STAAR Online Testing Platform, and reports of student performance, contact the Texas Assessment Support Center at 855-333-7770 or STAAR3-8@ets.org. For all other questions about interim assessments, contact TEA student assessment at 512-463-9536 or StudentAssessment@tea.texas.gov.