

House Bill (HB) 8, 89th Texas Legislature, 2nd Called Session, 2025, was passed in September 2025. This bill introduces significant changes to the Texas Assessment Program beginning in the 2027–28 school year. These changes include replacing the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) with a new instructionally supportive assessment program—the Student Success Tool—for Texas public school systems (i.e., public school districts and open-enrollment charter schools). The bill also changes several accountability requirements.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is providing this frequently asked questions document to address:

- assessment questions related to the 2025–26 and 2026–27 school years, the two school years prior to the implementation of the new testing program;
- assessment questions related to the 2027–28 school year, when the Student Success Tool will be implemented; and
- accountability questions related to the implementation of HB 8.

The document will be updated periodically with new questions and answers as needed.

General Assessment Questions for the 2025–26 and 2026–27 School Years

1. **Since the STAAR English II end-of-course (EOC) assessment will be removed beginning with the 2027–28 school year, will English II still be included in the February 2026 STAAR Stand-Alone Field Test?**

Yes. TEA will still need to develop and administer STAAR English II assessments for the 2026–27 school year for those students who have the English II EOC assessment as part of their high school graduation requirements. Therefore, campuses selected to administer English II for the February 2026 STAAR Stand-Alone Field Test will still need to administer this assessment.

2. **Will there also be a stand-alone field test during the 2026–27 school year?**

Yes. In planning and preparing for the new assessment program, TEA will need to administer stand-alone field tests during the 2026–27 school year to help develop a sufficient number of test questions for the adaptive beginning-of-year (BOY) and middle-of-year (MOY) assessments that are part of the Student Success Tool. Texas Education Code (TEC) §39.0225(d), added by HB 8, requires school systems to participate in all field testing necessary to develop the new assessment program. In addition, TEC §39.035(b) permits TEA to administer stand-alone field tests as needed to develop new assessment instruments.

3. **Will TEA continue to offer optional STAAR Interim Assessments?**

Yes, but only through 2026–27. TEA will continue to offer optional STAAR Interim Assessments during the 2025–26 and 2026–27 school years. When the new assessment program with BOY and MOY assessments is implemented beginning in the 2027–28 school year, interim assessments will no longer be provided.

4. **With the amendments in law to benchmark assessments, can Texas public school systems continue to administer them?**

Yes, but only through 2026–27. The changes to TEC §39.0262 and §39.0263 are not effective until the 2027–28 school year. Until then, school systems may continue administering benchmark assessments as previously permitted. However, the intent of the law is to safeguard instructional time by discouraging excessive use of practice assessments. School systems are encouraged to begin evaluating their assessment practices in preparation for the upcoming changes introduced by HB 8.

Assessment Questions for the 2027–28 School Year

General Questions

5. What is an adaptive assessment, as required for the new BOY and MOY assessments?

An adaptive assessment adjusts the test questions presented based on the ability of each student. The test questions provided to a student are based on the student’s responses to previous questions. Because the assessment adapts or adjusts as the student moves through the assessment, each student will experience a different set of test questions. In addition, an adaptive test design allows assessments to be administered more quickly with fewer questions needed to achieve accurate results, thus saving instructional time for students and teachers.

6. Will TEA continue to involve educators in the review of test questions?

Yes. TEA will continue to involve educators in all aspects of the test development process. Specifically, TEC §39.02301(c) requires test questions for the new assessment program to be reviewed and approved by committees of teachers. TEA is required to invite to each committee about 40 teachers, with representatives from each region of the state, and to prioritize teachers nominated by regional education service centers. The teachers will review each proposed test question to ensure it is aligned to the TEKS and appropriate for the grade level. Educators can view testimonials from previous committees and teachers can apply for future committees by visiting the [Texas Educator Committees](#) web page.

7. Are there time length limitations for the new BOY, MOY, and end-of-year (EOY) assessments?

Yes. TEC §39.02301(k) establishes that the assessments must be designed to minimize the impact on student instructional time, with most students expected to complete the assessment within the time frames below.

Grade Level	BOY and MOY Assessments	EOY Assessments
Grades 3 and 4	60 minutes	90 minutes
Grades 5–8	75 minutes	105 minutes

8. When during the school year will the BOY, MOY, and EOY assessments be administered?

TEC §39.02301(i) establishes the general schedule for when the assessments must be administered. TEA will provide specific testing windows in an updated 2027–28 Student Assessment Testing Calendar in spring 2026.

Assessment	BOY Assessment	MOY Assessment	EOY Assessment
General Schedule	Between the fourth Monday in August and September 30	Between January 2 and February 21	Between May 1 and May 30 (writing component in April)

9. Why will the writing component of reading language arts (RLA) EOY assessments be administered in April, before the remaining portion of the RLA EOY assessments is administered in May?

TEC §39.02301(i) requires the writing component of the RLA EOY assessments, which includes open-ended or constructed-response questions, to be administered between April 1 and April 15 to allow sufficient time to score the student responses and include those results along with the results for the remaining portion of the RLA EOY assessment administered in May on the reporting timelines required by TEC §39.02301(l).

10. Will school systems be required to use the state BOY and MOY assessments if they are already using a different product for this purpose?

TEC §39.023(q), added by HB 8, requires TEA to approve a list of alternative norm-referenced assessments that school systems may administer in place of the state BOY and MOY assessments. More information on the timeline for providing the approved list of alternative norm-referenced assessments will be provided in the future. If a school system chooses to use an approved alternative norm-referenced assessment instead of the state assessments, the school system must cover the costs.

11. Are BOY and MOY assessments required for high school courses?

No. TEC §39.023(c) was amended to require TEA to provide for the availability of BOY and MOY assessments for Algebra I, Biology, English I, and U.S. History, but these BOY and MOY assessments are optional. If school systems choose to administer optional BOY and MOY assessments for high school courses, the testing windows will follow the same schedule as the testing windows for grades 3–8.

12. How does the new assessment program affect high school graduation requirements?

There are no changes to assessment graduation requirements for the graduating classes of 2026 and 2027. These students still have the STAAR English II assessment, as well as the other four STAAR EOC assessments as part of their high school graduation requirements.

Although there were changes to TEC §39.025, such as the removal of the English II EOC assessment by the 2027–28 school year, students will still have to pass EOC assessments to meet high school graduation requirements. More information on the transition plan for high school graduation assessments for 2028 and beyond will be provided in the future.

Assessments for Special Populations

13. Will accommodations be available for the new assessment program?

Yes. As indicated in TEC §39.02301(h), BOY, MOY, and EOY assessments, including Spanish versions of these assessments for students in grades 3–5, must be designed to support accommodations. Since these assessments will be provided online, students who meet the eligibility criteria for accommodations will be able to use the online embedded supports (e.g., text-to-speech) they currently use.

14. Will paper versions of the new assessments be available for students who need paper materials?

Yes. TEA will continue to offer paper versions, including braille versions, of BOY, MOY, and EOY assessments for students who require paper materials. As described by TEC §39.02342, the paper versions of the BOY and MOY assessments will be nonadaptive.

15. Will there be an alternate version of the BOY and MOY components of the new assessment program for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?

No. TEC §39.023(b) specifies that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are exempt from taking BOY and MOY assessments. As a result, there will not be alternate BOY or MOY assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

Assessment Results

16. What are the reporting timelines for the new assessment program?

The new assessment will be designed to deliver student results as quickly as possible. Specifically, under TEC §39.02301(l), TEA must notify school systems of the results of BOY, MOY, and EOY assessments no later than two business days after the close of the applicable testing window. Beginning in the second year of implementation, the BOY and MOY assessments will provide results immediately upon completion.

17. Will there be a rescore process for RLA constructed-response questions?

Yes. TEC §39.02301 requires TEA to automatically rescore constructed responses if the agency determines that a student would attain the next highest performance level on an RLA assessment if the student's response improves by one point. In those cases, the constructed responses will be rescored at no cost to the school systems. In addition, school systems will continue to have the option to submit constructed responses to be rescored, and TEA will continue to cover the cost of rescoring for any score that improves.

Accountability Questions

18. When will the 2028 accountability manual and the “What If” ratings be available?

TEC §39.053(f-1), added by HB 8, requires TEA to refresh the accountability system and update cut scores every five years. In addition, TEC §39.053(f-3) requires TEA to publish “What If” results for the two school years before the updated accountability ratings are released. To publish 2026 and 2027 “What If” ratings using 2028 methodology, the *Accountability Rating System Manual* for 2028 ratings will be adopted in rule in summer 2026, before the start of the 2026–27 school year.

To minimize confusion between “What If” ratings and actual ratings while ensuring school systems fully understand the refresh and can plan accordingly, TEA will publish “What If” ratings for 2026 and 2027 after the release of actual A–F ratings for those years but well in advance of 2028 ratings. These “What If” ratings will be provided in a method that is outside of the TXschools.gov website.

To provide clarity of performance comparisons when 2028 ratings are issued for the refresh year, 2027 “What If” ratings will be retroactively provided on TXschools.gov under the Performance History tables. This approach is similar to what visitors to TXschools.gov see today when looking at 2022 performance for the 2023 refresh.

For years when the accountability system is not refreshed, the accountability manual will be adopted in rule by July 15 of the year before implementation.

19. Will there be changes to accountability scaling and cut points based on the use of a new assessment program in the accountability system?

Accountability scaling and cut points are different than assessment scaling and cut points. Under TEC §39.02301(f), the cut points or performance standards for the new assessment

program are required to be set at an equivalent level of rigor as the performance standards for STAAR. The new assessment program will continue to report Masters Grade Level, Meets Grade Level, Approaches Grade Level, and Did Not Meet Grade Level.

For the A–F accountability system, TEA is required to ensure that the scaling methodology and cut points do not change the rigor of the accountability system’s goals when an underlying assessment change occurs per TEC §39.054(a-7), added by HB 8.

However, as amended, TEC §39.053(f) requires the commissioner to increase the rigor of the 2028 refresh cut scores to continuously improve student performance, with 15-year goals of eliminating achievement gaps based on race, ethnicity, and economic disadvantage and ensuring Texas is ranked as one of the top five states on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and in postsecondary success. There may be changes to cut points for the 2028 accountability system based on this new refresh requirement; however, these changes will not be due to the implementation of the new assessment program, which occurs during the same school year.

The changes to scaling for the 2028 refresh will be included in the *Accountability Rating System Manual* when it is proposed in rule in summer 2026.

20. Will Domain IIA use only Algebra I and English I EOC assessments taken in high school for growth?

Yes. With the removal of the English II EOC assessment, the refreshed 2028 accountability system will include annual growth and accelerated learning for Algebra I and English I assessments and will no longer include English I to English II growth.

21. Will Domain IIA for high school campuses be scaled differently?

During an accountability refresh year, scaling and cut scores may be updated. Scaling and cut scores are not changed in non-refresh years. TEC §39.053(f) requires the commissioner to increase the rigor of the 2028 refresh cut scores to continuously improve student performance, with 15-year goals of eliminating achievement gaps based on race, ethnicity, and economic disadvantage and ensuring Texas is ranked as one of the top five states on NAEP and in postsecondary success. All domains will be updated during the 2028 accountability refresh year to reach the new 15-year goals for NAEP achievement and postsecondary success.

22. Will the Preliminary 2028 Framework be updated to reflect the new requirements?

Yes. The framework of the methodology for the 2028 accountability ratings was posted on August 28, 2025, before HB 8 was signed into law. The framework will be updated in spring 2026 to reflect the new requirements in HB 8 after public feedback on the preliminary framework has been reviewed by TEA and the Texas Accountability Advisory Group (TAAG).

23. What changes are happening to military readiness in the accountability system?

Starting with the 2028 accountability refresh, TEC §39.053(c)(1)(B)(iv) adds achieving a passing score on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test and completion of a Junior Reserve Officer Training Corp (JROTC) program as an indicator of military readiness to the College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) measure. Therefore, starting with the graduating class of 2027, school systems that have students who both (a) successfully complete a JROTC program of study and (b) achieve at least a minimum score on the ASVAB will receive CCMR credit for those students as military ready.

The minimum passing score on the ASVAB will be included in the *Accountability Rating System Manual* when it is proposed in rule in summer 2026. Information on how to report this data to TEA will be communicated in 2026 as well.

24. Are there changes related to Domain III calculations for new campuses?

Yes. TEC §39.053(c-7) requires TEA to provide alternative prior-year data for a newly established campus that lacks the prior-year data necessary for Domain III calculations. Information on how this will be implemented has already been included in the Preliminary 2028 Framework.

25. When will we know more about a potential indicator related to a through-year growth measure?

TEC §39.053(c-6) requires that not later than the 2029–30 school year, a measure of growth and improvement from the beginning through the end of the school year will be presented to TAAG to consider for the A–F accountability system. Not later than March 15, 2029, a report of the measure will be provided to the legislature. More information about this measure will be communicated in the future.

26. Are there any changes to the resubmission or appeals process for school systems that have errors in their CCMR data submitted?

Yes. TEC §39.053(c-8) requires TEA to provide an opportunity for school systems to submit additional prior-year information relating to CCMR indicators during the collection of current-year information for CCMR indicators. TEA has begun implementing this requirement via adjustments to the working submission process as indicated in the TEA correspondence dated July 17, 2025, titled [PEIMS Working Submission for 2025 A-F Accountability Ratings](#).

27. What is the difference between the local accountability system and the local indicators of accountability included in HB 8?

TEC §39.0532, Reporting of Local Indicators of Student Engagement and Workforce Development, added by HB 8, allows school systems to provide TEA information regarding additional indicators for reporting purposes only. These local indicators are extracurricular engagement, pre-K participation, math and reading academy completion rates, middle school career and technical education (CTE) participation, and advanced course completion rates. These local indicators will be featured on the TXschools.gov website to allow parents and the public to track progress over time but will not be included as part of the A–F rating calculations. More information will be provided regarding this data collection prior to the 2028 ratings reporting on TXschools.gov.

Separately, TEC §39.0544, Local Accountability System, allows school systems to go through a process to adopt alternative indicators that can be used in A–F rating calculations for campuses. Refer to the [Local Accountability System](#) web page for more information about developing a local accountability system. HB 8 included grant funds to help school systems develop local accountability systems. More information on the HB 8 Local Accountability System grants will be communicated this winter.