



2016 STAAR A UPDATES

TETN Event #39786

TEA's Student Assessment Division



Disclaimer

- These slides have been prepared and approved by the Student Assessment Division of the Texas Education Agency.
- If any slide is amended or revised for use in local or regional trainings, please remove this slide as well as the TEA footer at the bottom of each slide.

Suggested Training for Region, District, and Campus Professionals

- It is the intent of TEA's Student Assessment Division that all resources created to clarify testing and accommodation policies be accessible to educators at the region, district, and campus levels, including classroom teachers.
- This presentation does not take the place of reading the associated documents.
- Relevant district and campus staff will need to read all of the policies and related resources once they are posted on the TEA webpage. These documents contain all the details.

General Reminders

- STAAR A is the **same** as STAAR in the following ways:
 - *Same passing standards*
 - *Same time limits*
 - *Same assessed curriculum*
 - *Same test blueprint*
 - *Same progress measures*

- STAAR A is **different** than STAAR in the following ways:
 - *STAAR A contains accommodated STAAR test questions and selections; however, not necessarily the same ones as STAAR on the day of the test*
 - *No field test questions (this applies to EOC only since STAAR 3-8 have no field test items in 2016)*
 - *Online administration*
 - *Embedded accommodations*
 - *Braille and Spanish versions of the assessment are not available*

General Reminders

- STAAR, with or without allowable or approved accommodations should be the first consideration.

- If an ARD or 504 committee determines the student requires additional accommodations in order to access the assessed curriculum, STAAR A Eligibility Requirements should be reviewed. Students receiving the following services may be eligible for STAAR A.
 - *Students with identified disabilities who are receiving special education services.*
 - *Students identified with dyslexia or a related disorder (as defined in Texas Education Code §38.003) and are receiving Section 504 services.*

Eligibility Criteria: “Related Disorders”

- **Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §74.28 requires that:**
 - a) *The board of trustees of a school district must ensure that procedures for identifying a student with dyslexia or a related disorder and for providing appropriate instructional services to the student are implemented in the district.*

- **Texas Education Code (TEC) §38.003 defines dyslexia in the following way:**
 - (1) *“Dyslexia” means a disorder of constitutional origin manifested by a difficulty in learning to read, write, or spell, despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence, and sociocultural opportunity.*

 - (2) *“Related disorders” include disorders similar to or related to dyslexia such as developmental auditory imperceptions, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling disability.*

Eligibility Criteria: “Related Disorders”

- **Dyslexia (and its related disorders) is a neurological, language-based disability.**
- If a district has not already specified “related disorders” and finds it necessary, the district may consider reviewing board-approved policy to ensure alignment with TAC §74.28 and TEC §38.003. TEA does not set policy guidelines for districts.
- The Dyslexia Handbook includes information about **co-occurring** disorders (i.e., ADHD, anxiety, anger, etc.). Co-occurring disorders should be addressed through appropriate referral processes (Dyslexia Handbook, page 11).
- **TEC §42.006(a-1)** also requires that students who are identified as having dyslexia be reported through PEIMS.

Scheduling Online Test Sessions

- Districts are provided the latitude to adjust test dates within the testing week when a conflict arises for STAAR (including STAAR A) grades 3–8 and EOC assessments with the exception of STAAR (including STAAR A) grades 4 and 7 writing and English I and II assessments. No notification to TEA is required.
- As the testing week approaches, districts that are having difficulty scheduling the online administration of the STAAR A grades 4 and 7 writing or English I and II tests due to issues related to their technology infrastructure should contact the Student Assessment Division's Test Security team at 512-463-9536 for guidance.

Test Administration Directions

- Test administrator directions are much shorter than last year and have been written with the assumption that all students taking STAAR A have accessed the tutorials and are familiar with the online system.
- Directions regarding moving through the test and accessing the tools have been deleted from the manual, condensed, and embedded into the online system (about 5 screens of instruction) for students to access independently.
- An online tools appendix that explains the function of each tool has been added to the manuals for teachers to access prior to or during a test if needed to assist a student.

Navigating the Online Test

- At any point during the test session, the test administrator may use the online tools appendix in the test administrator manual to assist students if they have trouble navigating through the assessment or need reminders of how to use the tools and accommodations.
- A student may be provided with a “reminder card” that indicates the settings (e.g., color, speaking rate, zoom size) the student prefers as determined during the tutorial session. The student must be allowed to determine whether he or she uses these settings when taking STAAR A. The test administrator may NOT set up the student’s accommodation preferences nor can the test administrator require a student to use the preferences determined during the tutorials.

Policy: Grade 4 Writing

- Last year's policy regarding transcribing student's responses to the writing prompt for STAAR A grade 4 writing has not changed for the 2016 administration. It is not necessary for students taking 4th grade STAAR A writing to meet the eligibility criteria for Basic Transcribing.
- This specific group of students may have their responses to the writing prompt transcribed into the online test in accordance with guidelines listed in the accommodations triangle document for Basic Transcribing.
 - *Note: This is not a requirement of the administration and decisions regarding this provision must be based on individual student need. TEA will continue to review this policy for subsequent administration years.*
- Students in all other grades and subjects must meet the eligibility requirements for Basic Transcribing as described in the corresponding document found in the accommodation triangle.

Policy: Technology-based Spelling Assistance

- Spell check is NOT an embedded accommodation for the written composition. Students eligible for Spelling Assistance will use what they use in class.
- If the student uses spell check, speech-to-text, text-to-speech, or word predictor, they will not be able to access this feature when logged in to an online test. Consider the following ways for the student to respond to a writing prompt while using technology-based spelling assistance.
 - *Option 1:* The student may use a second laptop/computer to type a response using the spelling assistance while logged in to STAAR A. The student will need to transfer the response to the composition typing box.
 - *Option 2:* The student can exit the test session, respond to the prompt using spelling assistance, print out the response, log back in to STAAR A, and then transfer his or her responses in the composition typing box. The student will need access to a STAAR test booklet (form 1 for English I and English II) in order to see the prompt while out of the online test. Note that once STAAR A is exited, the student will not be able to see the pop-ups or rollovers or the writing checklists until the student logs back in to the test session.

Reading Support

- According to the Oral/Signed Administration policy, eligibility for this accommodation is not applicable to STAAR A and should not be determined or documented. All students taking STAAR A have reading support available to them.

- Text-to-speech via a *Speak* button is available to all students taking STAAR A.

- However, text-to-speech does not work on pop-ups or rollovers. A test administrator may read aloud pop-ups and rollovers for students who request this assistance.
 - *Test administrators may **NOT** read aloud pop-ups or rollovers in text that have a DO NOT READ icon (i.e., reading selections, editing selections, editing questions).*
 - *Test administrators should be trained using the “Oral/Signed Administration Guidelines” document.*

Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- Signing or oral interpreting are allowable access methods. Separate eligibility for the accommodation is not needed and documenting the level of reading/signing support is not a requirement. Test administrators should provide the same reading support to students as they need in class, keeping in mind what sections of STAAR A are not eligible for reading support.
 - *Training – Oral/Signed Administration Guidelines and the General Instructions for Administering Statewide Assessments to Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing*
 - *Group administration – Depending on the needs of the students, the test administrator can move around the room reading/signing as needed or can read aloud/sign the test to the entire group of students. (Remember, the test administrator cannot read aloud/sign any text with a DO NOT READ icon).*
 - *A proctor form of STAAR A for projection purposes is not an option at this time.*

Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- Students who don't sign and depend on lipreading – The test administrator can read aloud the test as the student watches the face/lips – “oral interpreting”. For students who don't need help with the whole test or can understand some of the text to speech, the staff member can repeat just the parts as the student needs.
- Students who don't have hearing aids or FM systems and who don't sign – Consider how the student accesses material in the classroom. If the student depends primarily on vision to access information, use of a test administrator to read the test to the student, acting as an “oral interpreter,” is an option. If the student primarily uses hearing and can understand the text to speech but needs some words repeated, the test administrator can repeat just the parts as the student needs. If a student primarily uses hearing but cannot understand the text to speech, the test administrator can read the question out loud to the student. Use of an FM system for testing purposes may be helpful. This should be determined before the day of the test.

Reference Materials and Embedded Accommodations

- Mathematics and science reference materials are available in the online test.
- Punnett squares are available to students taking Biology.
- Writing checklists are available to students taking grade 4 writing, grade 7 writing, English I, and English II.
- Paper versions of these materials that are specifically appropriate for online test administrations may be downloaded and printed from the Texas Assessment Resources webpage so the student may use during testing.
 - Punnett squares and writing checklists should be destroyed or returned with nonscorables.

Paper Request Process

- When rare unavoidable circumstances exist where students cannot access an online assessment, TEA may authorize a paper administration. Requests for paper administrations based on the lack of familiarity with online testing by students or districts will not be approved.
 - ***Accommodations cannot be applied***
A student may need a testing accommodation that is not possible to provide in an online setting.
 - ***Technology access is precluded***
Districts must make every effort to administer STAAR A online. In rare situations where computers or technology are absolutely not available, as may occur on occasion with homebound students or jails, districts may seek permission to administer a paper test.

Paper Request Process

- Instructions for Requesting Permission to Administer a Paper Test
 - *The district testing coordinator must submit a request to TEA for approval to administer a paper test at least two weeks in advance of the administration of a test as scheduled on the Student Assessment Calendar. **The updated paper request form will be posted early February 2016 to the District and Campus Coordinator Manual 2016 Resources webpage.***
 - *If a student also needs a Type 2 accommodation (i.e., Complex Transcribing, Math Scribe, Photocopy, Extra Day, Other), consult the Accommodation Request Process for Type 2 Accommodations document located on the Accommodations for Students with Disabilities webpage. Include the accommodation and rationale with the request to administer a paper test. Do NOT submit a separate online Accommodation Request Form.*
- Once TEA has approved the request for a paper administration, a materials order will be issued to the appropriate testing contractor on behalf of the district. **The nonsecure portion of the STAAR A Paper Administration Guide will be posted by the end of February 2016 to the STAAR A webpage.**

Graduation Requirements

■ For students receiving Section 504 services

- *Students are required by TEC §28.025(c) to meet all curriculum requirements and assessment graduation requirements in order to receive a Texas high school diploma.*

■ For students receiving special education services

- *The admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee makes educational decisions for a student, including assessment graduation requirements as described in Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §89.1070(b).*
- *Although the student will need to participate in the assessment, the ARD committee will determine whether retesting is necessary.*

STAAR Algebra II and English III

- STAAR A is not available for Algebra II and English III.
- If a district is participating in these assessments, **ALL** students enrolled in these courses will take STAAR with or without allowable or approved accommodations.
- The results of these assessments are for instructional use only and do not factor in to a student's graduation requirements.

Resources

- **Tutorials** were made available to districts at the end of January. Information about accessing this resource can be found on TEA's Student Assessment Division webpage under "What's New in Student Assessment."
- **Tools Practice** will be posted to the TEA website as they become available.
- **Educator Guide** will be posted by the end of February 2016 to the STAAR A Resources webpage.

Resources

- **Oral/Signed Administration Guidelines** will be posted by the end of February 2016 to the Accommodations for Students with Disabilities webpage. This must be used for training test administrators reading aloud secure test content.
 - *Test administrators providing an oral/signed administration.*
 - *Test administrators reading aloud pop-ups and rollovers in an online administration of STAAR A.*
 - *Test administrators providing a signed administration of STAAR A online.*
 - *Test administrators administering a paper version of STAAR A.*

- **Released tests** will be posted to the TEA website in summer 2016.

Contact Information

■ TEA's Student Assessment Division

- 512-463-9536 (for questions needing an immediate answer or for questions that are unique and complex)
- Assessment.studentswithdisabilities@tea.texas.gov (for general questions that do not need an immediate answer)

■ ETS

- (855) 333-7770
- STAAR3-8@ets.org or STAAREOC@ets.org