

**Subject:** February 2019 STAAR Writing Prompt Field Test

August 27, 2018

To the Education Service Center and District Testing Coordinator Addressed:

The purpose of this communication is to notify districts and charter schools regarding required participation in the 2019 State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) writing prompt field test scheduled for February 11–14, 2019.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has made a concerted effort to minimize the amount of instructional time used for state testing purposes, particularly stand-alone field testing. Writing prompts are no longer embedded as field-test items in STAAR grades 4 or 7 writing or English I and English II to make these tests more manageable. Hence, a stand-alone field test for writing prompts must be conducted every few years. Having separate administrations for the writing prompts (summative and stand-alone field test) provides students a better opportunity to demonstrate their writing performance.

### **District Requirements**

Districts and charter schools will be notified of the selection in the mandatory sample for the February 2019 writing prompt field test by September 7, 2018. The field-test assignments will include the campus(es), grade(s) or course(s), and number of students expected to participate in the writing prompt field test. The number of students represents the number of students tested at a grade in spring 2018.

When a campus is selected to participate in grade 4 (English and Spanish) or grade 7, all eligible students enrolled in the grade who are scheduled to take STAAR writing are required to participate in the field test. When a campus is selected to participate in English I or English II, all eligible students enrolled in the course are required to participate. English learners and students with disabilities should participate in the field test, unless a student requires an accommodation that is not available in the paper field-test (e.g. content and language supports or braille). Documentation about participation in the field-test administration is not required in a student's paperwork.

When identifying the mandatory sample, the following campuses will be excluded.

- Campuses rated as Improvement Required (IR) in the last three years
- Campuses selected for NAEP testing in 2019

### **Field-Test Administration**

The writing prompt field test will be administered only on paper. Districts will receive paper test materials January 28–February 1, 2019, for all students participating in the field test. Materials lists will be available in the Assessment Management System. Precoded answer documents will not be sent to districts.

Districts will be required to administer the writing prompt field test to all students at a campus in a selected grade or course. Online and braille tests will not be available for the writing prompt field test. If a student requires an accommodation (e.g., content and language supports) that is not available in the paper field-test administration, that student is not required to participate in the field test. Students participating in the field test will be administered one writing prompt in

the grade or course in which the student is enrolled in spring 2019. Students should be able to complete the writing prompt field test in less than 90 minutes.

Test administrator instructions will be provided online in a separate document that will be available on TEA's website in January 2019. Districts may administer the STAAR writing prompt field test any time during the testing window (February 11–14, 2019). All field-tests must be completed by February 14, so materials can be returned by February 15. Districts will not receive writing prompt field-test results.

**Timeline**

Please refer to the timeline of events for the STAAR writing prompt field test provided below.

Districts receive paper test materials.	January 28–February 1, 2019
Districts administer writing prompt field test.	February 11–14, 2019
Districts return paper writing prompt field test materials.	By February 15, 2019

Testing is mandatory for campuses selected for the 2019 STAAR writing prompt field test. Field-test data from a sample of students who are representative of the state are critical to the state's ability to build high-quality assessments.

TEA recognizes the challenges districts and campuses face with regard to time and resources when they are selected to participate in mandatory state testing activities. However, the writing prompt field test is necessary to replenish the STAAR item bank. TEA has released STAAR assessments for the last five years, and we have not field-tested writing prompts since 2014.

If you have questions about the 2019 STAAR writing prompt field test, please contact the Student Assessment Division.

Texas Education Agency  
Student Assessment Division  
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