

The Student Success Initiative

Educator Guide



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SSI Overview

INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Student Success Initiative (SSI) is to ensure that all students receive the instruction and support they need to be academically successful in mathematics and reading. This effort depends greatly on schools, parents and guardians, and community members working in partnership to meet individual student needs.

The SSI was enacted by the 76th Texas Legislature in 1999. Although changes have been made in subsequent sessions, these are some of the core principles.

- By the start of the school year, a district must make public the requirements for grade promotion under [Texas Education Code \(TEC\) §28.021\(d\)](#).
- SSI grade-advancement requirements apply to the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) grades 5 and 8 mathematics and reading assessments. If an eligible student does not demonstrate proficiency on these assessments, the student is automatically retained at the same grade level for the next school year. **NOTE:** This requirement has been waived for the 2020–2021 school year.
- Required accelerated instruction must occur after the administration of the assessment for which a student was not successful (Did Not Meet Grade Level).
- Two additional testing opportunities are provided for a student who was not successful on the first administration. **NOTE:** This requirement has been waived for the 2020–2021 school year.
- In addition to accelerated instruction, the district is responsible for developing an accelerated instruction plan (AIP) that will provide the student with ongoing instructional support during the next school year.
- A student, who is not successful on a grade-advancement assessment and who is promoted to the next grade level, must be assigned to a teacher who has full state certification to teach that subject and grade.

The complete text of the Texas Education Code (TEC) can be found online at www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/DOCS/ED/PDF/ED.28.pdf.

The law was further clarified through the adoption of [19 TAC, Chapter 101, Assessment, Subchapter BB, Commissioner’s Rules Concerning Grade Advancement and Accelerated Instruction](#). The commissioner’s rules include the following:

- assessment of student needs at preceding grades and corresponding early intervention activities that address those needs
- continuous and ongoing evaluation by a variety of means
- research-based instructional programs, which are defined as programs that are supported by scientific research that has been included in peer-reviewed studies or been reviewed by a neutral panel; additional evidence that supports effectiveness includes positive reports from districts and progress monitoring/outcome data from districts

Purpose

This educator guide has two purposes:

- to provide clear administrative guidance on the SSI process, with step-by-step instructions that are accompanied by sample forms and letters that are available online
- to assist district- and campus-level personnel in their roles concerning accelerated instruction

SSI Educator Guide Organization

The SSI Educator Guide is organized as follows:

- SSI Overview
- SSI Activities Guide
- SSI Topics

The **SSI Activities Guide** is designed to be a chronological explanation of the SSI activities and requirements that occur throughout the school year. The guide includes a timeline of SSI assessments and notification dates and requirements. The guide also includes a checklist for the administration.

The **SSI Topics** section provides specific program information organized by subject matter. The topics include Requirements for Special Populations, Mobile and Migrant Students, Accelerated Instruction, and Parent Notification.

In addition to this educator guide, sample forms and letters that districts might use for the required and optional notification and progress-monitoring activities of the SSI are found on the [Student Success Initiative](#) webpage on TEA's Student Assessment Division website. The forms are available in English and Spanish in a format for easy downloading and editing for local use.

This educator guide is designed to provide campus personnel with the resources to implement the law and the rules. Additional SSI information is available on the [Texas Assessment Program Frequently Asked Questions](#) document.

SSI Activities Guide

This section outlines step-by-step the responsibilities for campus personnel in the implementation of the SSI. It includes the following subsections:

- Activities Timeline (includes references to corresponding forms)
- Administration of STAAR

The sample forms and letters referenced in the Activities Timeline can be found on the [Student Success Initiative](#) webpage.

SSI Activities Timeline

2020–2021 School Year

	When	What	Sample Forms for Required Notification
Beginning of School Year	Early Fall 2020	For all students in grades 5 and 8, notify parent of SSI requirements.	Parent Notification at Beginning of Grade 5 or Grade 8—M/R.B
Mathematics Administration	May 11, 2021	Administer the STAAR grades 5 and 8 mathematics assessments.	
	Beginning on the date listed on the Calendar of Events as On-Demand Data File Available in Assessment Management System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Receive student results for the STAAR grades 5 and 8 mathematics assessments.[†] ■ Begin accelerated instruction. 	
	Within five working days of receiving results from testing contractor	Notify parent of results for the STAAR grade 5 or 8 mathematics assessment (for students who were successful).	Parent Notification of Student Performance—M.1
	Within five working days of receiving results from testing contractor	Notify parent of results for the STAAR grade 5 or 8 mathematics assessment and of plans for accelerated instruction (for students who were not successful).	Parent Notification of Student Performance—M.2
Reading Administration	May 12, 2021	Administer the STAAR grades 5 and 8 reading assessments.	
	Beginning on the date listed on the Calendar of Events as On-Demand Data File Available in Assessment Management System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Receive student results for the STAAR grades 5 and 8 reading assessments.[†] ■ Begin accelerated instruction. 	
	Within five working days of receiving results from testing contractor	Notify parent of results for the STAAR grade 5 or 8 reading assessment (for students who were successful).	Parent Notification of Student Performance—R.1
	Within five working days of receiving results from testing contractor	Notify parent of results for the STAAR grade 5 or 8 reading assessment and of plans for accelerated instruction (for students who were not successful).	Parent Notification of Student Performance—R.2
End of School Year	Late Spring 2021	For grade 4 or 7 students identified as “at risk,” notify parent of child’s need for mathematics intervention.	Parent Notification at End of Grade 4 or Grade 7—M.A
	Late Spring 2021	For grade 4 or 7 students identified as “at risk,” notify parent of child’s need for reading intervention.	Parent Notification at End of Grade 4 or Grade 7—R.A

[†]Schools will receive results within 10 working days of receipt of the scorable assessment materials by the testing contractor or within 10 days of online test submissions.

NOTE: All sample forms and notification letters can be found on the [Student Success Initiative](#) webpage in a format that facilitates downloading and editing for local use. All forms are provided as templates only. When modifying the sample forms for local purposes or creating forms, schools should be careful to include all of the components required by the grade-advancement law and commissioner’s rules.

ADMINISTRATION OF STAAR

Students take the STAAR grade 5 or 8 mathematics and reading assessments.

All eligible students should take the STAAR or STAAR Spanish mathematics and reading assessments at grade 5. All eligible students should take the STAAR mathematics and reading assessments at grade 8. SSI requirements apply only to students enrolled in grade 5 or 8 who are receiving on-grade-level instruction and taking on-grade-level mathematics and reading assessments. SSI requirements do not apply to students enrolled in grade 5 or 8 who are receiving above-grade-level instruction and taking a corresponding STAAR test. SSI requirements do not apply to students in grades other than grade 5 or 8 who are receiving above-grade-level instruction in grade 5 or 8 and taking the STAAR grade 5 or grade 8 assessments. This includes English learners (ELs) who take STAAR in English or Spanish, except those who qualify for an exemption as an unschooled asylee or refugee. For specific information about how the SSI requirements apply to ELs, mobile and migrant students, and students who are receiving special education services, refer to the “SSI Topics” section of this guide.

The district must provide appropriate accelerated instruction as warranted for students who are absent or otherwise do not have valid assessment results. If a student has missed an assessment opportunity, the district may administer a local assessment or an individual inventory or other diagnostic assessment to determine accelerated instruction needs.

Results

By law, schools must receive students’ STAAR results within 10 working days of receipt of the assessment materials by the testing contractor or within 10 days of online test submissions. Refer to the [Calendar of Events](#) for specific dates for returning assessment materials and receiving results. Schools must return assessment materials on schedule to receive results on the date specified.

When results are received, students will be in one of two groups:

- those who were successful meeting the required score
- those who were not successful meeting the required score, were absent on the date of administration, or did not submit an assessment that could be scored

Notification

School notifies parents of student's failure and provisions for accelerated instruction—the time, date, and type of accelerated instruction to be provided.

Districts must notify parents within five working days of receipt of the results that their child was unsuccessful on the STAAR assessment. To the extent possible, all notifications should be in the language spoken most often in the home. Sample letters in English and Spanish can be found on the [Student Success Initiative](#) webpage. Districts or campuses may attach a cover letter with this sample notification or design a letter that is written in a style more consistent with their own correspondence with parents. For documentation purposes, a copy of this notification should be maintained in the student's permanent record file.

Required Accelerated Instruction

In the notice to parents, campus personnel must outline the intervention plan for accelerated instruction that would best address the individual student's demonstrated mathematics and/or reading weaknesses. For students receiving special education services, the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee must determine appropriate accelerated instruction. This decision should be documented in the student's individualized education program (IEP) through an ARD committee meeting. Decisions regarding accelerated instruction for ELs must take into account the students' stage of second language acquisition and should be made in consultation with the students' Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC). As specified in [TEC §28.0211\(c\)](#), group-administered accelerated instruction may not have a ratio of more than 10 students to each teacher. This instruction may be conducted within the school day or after school; however, each school district and charter school will be responsible for providing transportation to eligible students required to attend acceleration programs if these programs occur outside of regular school hours.

As outlined in the rules, accelerated instruction shall be based on but not limited to the following:

- assessment of specific student needs
- research-based instructional practices
- use of a variety of instructional models

School personnel should monitor each student's progress during accelerated instruction.

. . . District Checklist for the Administration of STAAR

- Administer the STAAR mathematics and reading assessments to eligible students.
- Districts will receive results beginning on the date listed on the Calendar of Events as On-Demand Data File Available in Assessment Management System.
- Notify parents of results within five working days of receiving results from testing contractor.
- Document notification in students' permanent record files.
- Develop and implement intervention plans for accelerated instruction for students who were not successful.
- Ensure that instructional-group size requirements are met.
- Monitor and document student progress.

SSI Topics

This section provides specific program information organized by subject matter. It includes the following subsections:

- Requirements for Special Populations
- Mobile and Migrant Students
- Accelerated Instruction
- Parent Notification

REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Students Receiving Special Education Services

Students participating in STAAR Alternate 2 are not subject to SSI requirements.

Students receiving special education services who take STAAR are subject to SSI requirements. However, if a student who receives special education services was not successful on a state assessment, the ARD committee will make all decisions involving accelerated instruction.

The role of the ARD committee in making decisions about students subject to SSI requirements is described in TEC §28.0211(i) and (i-1) and in 19 TAC §101.2003(d). Thus, a student receiving special education services enrolled in grade 5 or 8 who does not perform satisfactorily on the mathematics and reading assessment instruments is subject to accelerated instruction in the manner determined by the student's ARD committee.

According to TEC §28.0211(i-2), no later than September 1 of each school year, a school district must notify the parent or person standing in parental relation to a student enrolled in the district's special education program of the options of the ARD committee for students who fail to perform satisfactorily on the grades 5 and 8 mathematics and reading assessments.

Districts are encouraged to carefully weigh the individual needs of students with disabilities as they consider decisions pertaining to the procedures outlined in this guide. For the students described above, an ARD committee must make decisions regarding appropriate assessment, accelerated instruction, and grade placement based on a student's individual educational needs.

The following information provides a general description of how the SSI requirements affect students receiving special education services who take the STAAR grade 5 or 8 assessments.

- If the student passes the assessment, the ARD committee considers the student's IEP and local policy when determining grade advancement.
- If the student does not pass the assessment, the ARD committee must determine just as they do with students in other grades 1) how the student will participate in accelerated instruction and 2) whether the student will be promoted or retained based upon the ARD committee determination that the student has made sufficient progress in the measurable academic goals in the student's IEP.

Guidance Related to an Agreement to Amend an IEP

The following is an excerpt from the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) regulations and may be used as guidance in determining when an ARD committee needs to convene to make decisions required by the SSI. The annual ARD committee meeting, eligibility determinations, changes of placement, and manifestation determination reviews may not be conducted through the amendment without a meeting process. In addition, TEC §28.0211(i) and (i-1) require an ARD committee to meet for a student who has not performed successfully on STAAR. During the meeting, the ARD committee must determine how the student will participate in accelerated instruction and whether the student will be promoted or retained. These determinations may not be conducted through the amendment without a meeting process. For questions related to this law, contact the TEA Division of Special Populations at 512-463-9414.

34 CFR, Sec. 300.324 Development, review, and revision of IEP (excerpt).

(a) Development of IEP.

(4) Agreement. (i) In making changes to a child's IEP after the annual IEP Team meeting for a school year, the parent of a child with a disability and the public agency may agree not to convene an IEP Team meeting for the purposes of making those changes, and instead may develop a written document to amend or modify the child's current IEP.

(ii) If changes are made to the child's IEP in accordance with paragraph (a)(4)(i) of this section, the public agency must ensure that the child's IEP Team is informed of those changes.

(5) Consolidation of IEP Team meetings. To the extent possible, the public agency must encourage the consolidation of reevaluation meetings for the child and other IEP Team meetings for the child.

(6) Amendments. Changes to the IEP may be made either by the entire IEP Team at an IEP Team meeting, or as provided in paragraph (a)(4) of this section, by amending the IEP rather than by redrafting the entire IEP. Upon request, a parent must be provided with a revised copy of the IEP with the amendments incorporated.

Students with Dyslexia or Related Disorders

SSI requirements apply to students who do not receive special education services but have dyslexia or related disorders. Districts should carefully review all information relating to allowable and nonallowable accessibility features for STAAR to ensure that students with dyslexia or related disorders receive appropriate accommodations when taking a state assessment.

TEC §28.021(b), Student Advancement, requires that districts consider students' potential for achievement or proficiency in the addressed subjects when making assessment decisions about students with dyslexia.

The district must ensure that accelerated instruction decisions are made on an individual basis. Dyslexia should be considered in this review as well as in the development of the AIP for the next school year.

English Learners (ELs)

LPACs are responsible for determining the appropriate assessments for ELs in accordance with the policies and procedures delineated in the *LPAC Decisions Educator Guide*, which can be found on the [LPAC Resources](#) webpage. ELs, except for those who qualify for an exemption as an unschooled asylee or refugee, are subject to SSI requirements in grades 5 and 8.

ELs who qualify as unschooled asylees or refugees in their first year in U.S. schools may be granted an exemption from testing by the LPAC. ELs in these situations are not subject to SSI requirements in the content areas for which the LPAC has determined that they are exempt from testing. See the LPAC Resources webpage for specific information regarding these exemptions. ELs who qualify as unschooled asylees or refugees with two or more years in U.S. schools, or who are not granted an exemption from testing by the LPAC in their first year in U.S. schools, are subject to SSI requirements.

If an EL was not successful on the assessments required under the SSI, the district, in consultation with a member of the student's LPAC, will prescribe accelerated instruction and determine an AIP for the upcoming school year.

ELs Receiving Special Education Services

For ELs who are receiving special education services, the ARD committee in conjunction with the LPAC makes the final decisions about assessment and grade placement so that issues related to both the student's disability and language proficiency are carefully considered.

MOBILE AND MIGRANT STUDENTS

Mobile Students

Student mobility within and across school districts is a significant challenge to effective implementation of the SSI requirements. Continuity in understanding and addressing a student's needs for grade-level academic achievement requires effective coordination and communication across schools and districts. Schools must ensure sufficient documentation of student progress with regard to accelerated instruction and assessment history, as well as any other pertinent documentation.

According to [19 TAC §101.2003](#), any student who is enrolled at the time of a STAAR assessment is required to take the assessment. There is no minimum period of enrollment before administering the assessments. Under 19 TAC §101.2003(b), an eligible student who enrolls in a school district or charter school after the date of the administration must be given a local assessment and access to required accelerated instruction.

When a student moves from one Texas public school district to another after the administration of an assessment required under the SSI, the receiving district is responsible for reviewing the student's records and, if applicable, providing appropriate accelerated instruction. The receiving district must coordinate with the previous district in regard to assessment history and accelerated instruction.

Students who transfer directly from one Texas public school district or charter school to another in an SSI year are subject to SSI requirements. This includes students who transfer between grades.

Out-of-state or private/home-school students who enroll after the completion of an SSI school year are not subject to the requirements of the SSI for that school year. Districts must continue to decide on grade placements as a local responsibility. Based on local policy, the district may choose to honor or to reject the placement decision of the other state or nonpublic school with or without the administration of an assessment to make the placement decision.

Migrant Students

Students identified as migrant are required to be assessed if they are enrolled during the time of assessment, with the exception of certain qualifying unschooled asylee or refugee ELs. A migrant student who withdraws from a Texas public school during the school year of a grade-advancement assessment is not subject to SSI requirements unless the student re-enrolls during that school year and meets other eligibility requirements. Moreover, according to [19 TAC §101.2007\(h\)](#), any student who has been promoted upon completion of a school year in another state (or in a nonpublic school) may be enrolled in that grade without regard to that student being successful on an SSI assessment. This rule applies to many migrant students.

An eligible student who enrolls after the date of the administration of the grade-advancement assessment must be given a local assessment and access to required accelerated instruction.

Informed and continuous communication among all parties involved is critical to the migrant student's academic success. Districts may wish to keep in contact with migrant service coordinators to effectively communicate and address migrant students' needs.

ACCELERATED INSTRUCTION

Policy Requirements

[TEC §28.0211\(a-1\)](#) requires accelerated instruction be provided to a student in the applicable subject whenever the student was not successful on a state assessment for grades 3–8. The type of accelerated instruction is a local decision that should be based on individual student needs. Accelerated instruction may require participation of the student before or after normal school hours and may include participation at times of the year outside normal school operations. Each school district and charter school will be responsible for providing transportation to eligible students required to attend acceleration programs if these programs occur outside of regular school hours. Accelerated instruction is subject to state compulsory attendance laws as specified by [TEC §25.085\(d\)\(3\)](#), which requires a student enrolled in a school district to participate in “an accelerated instruction program to which the student is assigned under Section 28.0211.”

According to TEC §28.0211(c) and [19 TAC §101.2006\(e\)\(1\)](#), a 10:1 (or lower) student-to-teacher ratio is required when providing accelerated instruction in a pull-out group. This applies to any period of time in which accelerated instruction is being provided in response to the requirements stated in TEC §28.0211, including summer school. The ratio is not applicable for the student’s entire instructional day. The 10:1 ratio applies only to students receiving accelerated instruction as a result of not meeting the passing standard on the mathematics or reading assessment in grade 5 or 8.

When a student was not successful or was absent for the assessment, the district must provide accelerated instruction. For students who are absent for an assessment required by the SSI, the district may choose to administer a local or other diagnostic assessment to determine accelerated instruction needs.

The district is required to create an AIP for the next school year for each student who was not successful on a grade-advancement assessment. This AIP must be designed to enable the student to perform at the appropriate grade level by the conclusion of the next school year. During the school year, the student should be monitored to ensure that he or she is making progress toward this goal. The district should provide interim progress reports to the parent as well as the opportunity for parent consultation with the teacher and principal as needed.

Designing Accelerated Instruction and AIPs Required for a Grade-Advancement Assessment

Accelerated instruction should begin as soon as possible after a district has been notified that a student was not successful on a grade-advancement assessment. Students in grade 5 or 8 who are identified as being at risk of not passing a STAAR SSI assessment should receive accelerated instruction throughout the school year, plus further accelerated instruction after the assessment opportunity. It is important to note that this instruction should build on any accelerated instruction the student has received prior to STAAR.

Neither the law nor the rules specify the amount of time to be provided for the accelerated instruction. To support the SSI requirements, the law and the commissioner's rules provide districts and charter schools with flexibility to determine on an individual student basis the appropriate form, content, and timing of the accelerated instruction. The policy governing accelerated instruction is intended to allow districts flexibility to meet individual student needs. Although students' instructional needs may vary, all students deserve qualified professional delivery of instruction by highly trained educators. Therefore, a component of the SSI is training for classroom teachers in frequent and ongoing assessment and instructional strategies to meet the full spectrum of students' needs. The coordination of regular instruction and accelerated instruction both before and after the STAAR administration is strongly recommended.

Teachers who provide accelerated mathematics instruction should have full state certification in the mathematics grade. Teachers who provide accelerated reading instruction should have full state certification in the reading grade.

A student, who is not successful on a grade-advancement assessment and who is promoted to the next grade level, must be assigned to a teacher who has full state certification to teach that subject and grade.

In designing an AIP, the district should use a student's STAAR results and other performance data, such as previous diagnostic tests, classroom assessments, grades, teacher observation, and academic progress reports, to build a program that enhances the instruction the student has already received in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). In addition, a district should employ best instructional practices as identified through current scientific research. A district may obtain and implement these practices with technical assistance from regional education service centers (ESCs).

Identifying At-Risk Students

School personnel should use results from previous STAAR assessments and other diagnostic tools as the primary criteria for identifying students who are struggling in reading. The Texas Middle School Fluency Assessment (TMSFA) is available to help identify students at risk in reading and can be found on the [Texas Gateway](#) website. Additional considerations may include performance on district-created progress-monitoring tools, classroom assessments, teacher observation, progress reports, and report cards.

Accelerated Instruction

Districts may find additional support in addressing the needs of a diverse student population by attending professional development (PD) training at each of the regional ESCs or by completing online PD courses offered through the [Texas Gateway](#) website. TEKS-based training is currently available for K–12 educators in the four core content areas—English language arts and reading, mathematics, science, and social studies—and all TEKS-based training addresses differentiated instruction.

Mathematics Instruction

Resources and information for teachers who work with students identified as being at risk in mathematics can be found on the Curriculum Standards and Student Support Division's [Mathematics](#) webpage. These materials will assist teachers in implementing TEKS-based instruction in mathematics.

State-developed interim assessments that align with the mathematics TEKS are available at no cost to districts and charter schools. These assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics, Spanish grades 3–5 mathematics, and Algebra I are available through the STAAR Online Testing Platform for the 2020–2021 school year. Information and resources regarding this assessment tool can be found on the [State-Developed STAAR Interim Assessments](#) webpage.

The Texas: Algebra Ready (TXAR) initiative exists to increase the preparedness of students to be successful and pass assessments in algebra. This initiative provides districts with free access to the Elementary Students in Texas: Algebra Ready (ESTAR) and Middle School Students in Texas: Algebra Ready (MSTAR) Universal Screeners and Diagnostic Assessments, which are formative assessment systems administered to students in grades 2–8 to support instructional decisions. The content of the ESTAR and MSTAR Universal Screeners is based on algebra-readiness skills as identified in the Texas Response to Curriculum Focal Points. Results can help teachers identify students who are in need of additional instructional support in their development of knowledge and skills that relate directly to algebra readiness. The ESTAR and MSTAR Diagnostic Assessments, designed to follow the ESTAR and MSTAR Universal Screeners, are administered to identify why students are struggling with algebra-related core instruction and to provide information that can be used to plan supplemental instruction.

Online professional development modules are available to assist teachers and administrators with the ESTAR and MSTAR assessment systems. In addition to the TXAR PD opportunities, K–12 teachers may participate in online modules for the mathematics TEKS. All of the mathematics professional development modules can be found both on the [Texas Math Support Center](#) and the [Texas Gateway](#) websites. Additional online resources include Supporting Information documents, Texas Response to Curriculum Focal Points, Vertical Alignment Charts, and the Interactive Mathematics Glossary. These resources are also available on the Texas Gateway.

Reading Instruction

Resources and information for teachers who work with students identified as being at risk in reading may be accessed through the Curriculum Standards and Student Support Division's [English Language Arts and Reading](#) webpage. Resources to assist with identifying dyslexia and providing services to students with dyslexia can be found on the [Dyslexia and Related Disorders](#) webpage. English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies teachers in grades 6–8 have access to the Texas Adolescent Literacy Academies (TALA). The Tier I academy provides PD in scientifically based reading instruction (SBRI) for all adolescent readers. The Tiers II and III academies (designed specifically for ELA teachers) provide instructions on how to administer the Texas Middle School Fluency Assessment (TMSFA), how to interpret results of the TMSFA, and how to provide appropriate reading interventions for struggling adolescent readers. The Tiers I, II, and III academies are available in face-to-face and online formats. Information about the academies is available through all regional ESCs. Information about the online courses can be found on the [Texas Gateway](#) website.

State-developed interim assessments that align with the current language arts and reading TEKS are available at no cost to districts and charter schools. These assessments in grades 3–8 reading, Spanish grades 3–5 reading, English I, and English II are available through the STAAR Online Testing Platform for the 2020–2021 school year. Information and resources regarding this assessment tool can be found on the [State-Developed STAAR Interim Assessments](#) webpage.

PARENT NOTIFICATION

Districts must inform the parents of every child about the overall requirements of the law regarding the SSI grade advancement. [19 TAC §101.2009](#) states:

In order to provide timely and full notification of assessment requirements for advancement at certain grades, the superintendent of each school district and chief administrative officer of each charter school shall be responsible for

1. notifying each student and his or her parent in writing no later than the beginning of the student's first-grade year or no later than the beginning of the student's kindergarten year, for students attending kindergarten in a public school, of the assessment and accelerated instruction requirements for grade advancement as specified in the [TEC §28.0211](#);
2. notifying each student in grades 1–8 who is new to the school district or charter school and his or her parent in writing of the assessment and accelerated instruction requirements for grade advancement; and
3. notifying each student required to take the grade-advancement assessment of the dates, times, and locations of testing.

Parents should also be notified at the beginning of a grade-advancement year. To assist with notification, the agency has developed a brochure, *Prepare for Success—A Parent Guide to the Student Success Initiative at Grades 5 and 8*. This brochure can be found on the [Student Success Initiative](#) webpage and includes all SSI requirements.

Early Notification for At-Risk Students

Parents whose children may be at risk for reading failure based on the results of the early reading instruments given in K–2 must be notified under the SSI as mandated by TEC §28.006. TEC §28.006(g) requires schools to notify parents of all K–2 students of the early reading instrument results and to notify the parents of K–2 students identified as being at risk for reading difficulties, including dyslexia, about placement in an accelerated reading program.

The commissioner's rules also address early notification. This notification applies to students entering grades 5 and 8. 19 TAC §101.2009(b), Notice to Parents, requires school districts to provide early notice to parents of students identified to be at risk of failure on the administration of an assessment in a SSI grade. The district must provide this notice before the end of the school year preceding the grade-advancement requirements, and the superintendent must establish the instruments/procedures used to identify students at risk of failing a SSI assessment. The notice to parent must also include accelerated instruction participation requirements.

Parent Notification

Districts must inform the parents of every child in grades 5 and 8 about the SSI requirements of the law at the beginning of the school year ([19 TAC §101.2009](#)).

Districts must also provide early notice to parents of students identified in a preceding grade to be at risk of failure on the administration of an assessment required for grade advancement. This notice shall include accelerated instruction participation requirements and be provided before the end of the school year preceding the grade advancement requirements.

Districts must establish procedures to notify the parent of a student who has failed to demonstrate proficiency on the administration of a grade advancement assessment. This notice must include the student's assessment results and the required accelerated instruction to which the student has been assigned under [19 TAC §101.2006](#). In addition, the notice should encourage parents to meet immediately with the student's teacher to outline mutual responsibilities to support the student during accelerated instruction.

Sample Notification Forms and Letters

Sample letters that districts may use to meet parental notification requirements about SSI requirements can be found on the [Student Success Initiative](#) webpage. These materials cover the scope of required notices and forms related to the SSI requirements in a format that facilitates downloading and editing for local use. The materials are provided in both English and Spanish to help districts meet the requirement of a good-faith effort to provide parent notifications in the parent's native language. Optional forms are also provided.

The SSI Activities Timeline includes a listing of the sample forms for required and optional notification organized by SSI activity and date.

TE★AS ASSESSMENT