

DATE:	November 2, 2021
SUBJECT:	2022–2023 Transition to Online and Other State Summative Assessment Redesign Resources
CATEGORY:	Student Assessment
NEXT STEPS:	Please share with district and campus test administrators and other appropriate staff

The purpose of this correspondence is to inform superintendents, school system and campus administrators, and teachers about new resources related to the transition to online state summative assessments that will be implemented in the 2022–2023 school year, and to provide preliminary information related to the redesign of state summative assessments being implemented on the same timeline.

Transition to Online

House Bill (HB) 3261, enacted by the 87th Texas Legislature in 2021, requires state assessments to be administered online by the 2022–2023 school year. This transition will require nearly all students to be assessed online, with the exceptions of students taking the STAAR Alternate 2 assessment and students who require accommodations that cannot be provided online.

A [Transition to Online Assessments Feasibility Study](#) was conducted in 2020. The study examined national best practices in online assessments and included a statewide survey that was distributed to all Texas public school systems to gauge readiness for online testing. The study revealed that 70 percent of other states are already fully implementing online assessments and included a variety of lessons learned from those transitions. Seventy-five percent of local education agencies (LEAs) responded to the statewide survey, and the representation of urban and rural LEAs was proportional to state demographics. The study showed that school systems in Texas generally have the infrastructure in place to fully implement online testing and that a small investment in internet connectivity would be needed for a subset of primarily small and rural LEAs to upgrade their infrastructure. Overall, the study indicated that a two-year transition period is feasible, allowing educators and students time to increase familiarity and comfort with online testing. Key findings and the methodology of the online feasibility study is explained in the Transition to Online Assessments video found on the [STAAR Redesign web page](#). Additionally, independent of the feasibility study, the number of students that tested online significantly increased during the 2020–2021 school year, providing more insight into facilitating an effective transition to fully online summative assessments.

To support public school systems with this transition, TEA is launching a [Transition to Online Assessments Implementation Guide](#) that outlines prerequisites to online testing implementation (i.e., adequate network infrastructure, sufficient hardware, and up-to-date software) and provides next steps and resources to achieve the recommended minimums. The guide also includes additional criteria for a successful online implementation, next steps based on experiences from Texas public school systems that have already moved online, and links to resources and supports provided by the testing vendor and regional service centers.

Online Transition Grant

TEA will also be launching a \$4 million matching grant targeted at small and rural LEAs that need to increase their network infrastructure to meet online testing needs. The total grant amount is based off one-time infrastructure estimates determined through the online feasibility study. The grant will prioritize LEAs in need of last-mile fiber and/or internal connections in order to meet recommended bandwidth speeds, all of which are also E-Rate eligible. More information will be provided by early 2022.

Resources to Practice Online Assessment

Educators, students, and even families have many opportunities to familiarize themselves with the STAAR online testing platform ([TDS](#)):

- [STAAR Practice Tests](#) – available on www.texasassessment.gov, a resource open to the public that provides exposure to the testing tools and accommodations that increase equitable access for all students. Note: currently available practice tests are based on the current STAAR assessment design. Practice tests based on the redesigned state assessment will be available in 2022.
- [STAAR Interim Assessments](#) – free, optional, online tests for public school systems that mirror the summative blueprint and predict students’ performance on the STAAR.
- [Texas Formative Assessment Resource](#) (TFAR) – free, optional, online tool for educators to create and deliver quizzes, analyze results, and gain real-time feedback as learning occurs.

Overview of State Summative Assessment Redesign

In addition to transitioning to online assessments, House Bill (HB) 3906, enacted by the 86th Texas Legislature in 2019, requires significant changes to the design of the state summative assessment. TEA, working with a wide range of education stakeholders including the Assessment Education Advisory Committee, has been exploring the most instructionally supportive approach to implementing these changes. The redesign will be implemented in state assessments taken in the 2022–2023 school year. This redesign includes several components:

- Transitioning to online assessments which allows students to receive accommodations like those they get in the classroom and provides faster test results to support accelerated learning.
- Adding new non-multiple-choice questions that give students more ways to show their understanding and better reflect questions teachers ask in class.
- Eliminating standalone writing assessments for grades 4 and 7 beginning with the 2021–2022 school year, and in 2022–2023 adding writing to reading language arts (RLA) assessments for grades 3–8 to better support the interconnected way these subjects are taught.
- Incorporating more cross-curricular passages into RLA assessments so test questions reference topics that students have learned about in other classes.

The [STAAR Redesign web page](#) has been updated this week to include several other resources tied to the state summative assessment redesign:

- A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document that will be continually updated and will provide

- Updated RLA assessed curriculum documents to identify the reading and writing student expectations that will be eligible for assessment on the redesigned RLA tests.
- Preliminary blueprints that show the distribution of questions, points, and readiness and supporting standards across reporting categories on the redesigned tests. RLA blueprints also include test design information, including the number of passages, the reading load, and the genres eligible for assessment.

More Detailed Redesign Resources Coming Soon

TEA will continue to provide information and support to public school systems regarding the redesign of the state summative assessment. A set of detailed resources about new non-multiple-choice questions, including examples, will be available in early 2022. Full practice tests that reflect the redesigned state assessment will be available in Fall 2022.

State Summative Assessment Redesign Resource and Implementation Timeline

Date	Event
Nov 2021	<u>Resources</u> : Transition to online assessments
Winter 2021	<u>Resources</u> : Detailed resources about the state summative assessment redesign
Fall 2022	<u>Resources</u> : Full practice tests and additional supports
Dec 2022	<u>Implementation</u> : State summative assessments administered fully online for the first time (excluding STAAR Alternate 2 and students who cannot test online)
Spring 2023	<u>Implementation</u> : Fully redesigned state summative assessments administered for the first time

Please submit any questions regarding these resources or the state summative assessment redesign via the [Student Assessment Helpdesk](#).

Texas Education Agency
Student Assessment Division