

STAAR Calculator Policy

Calculators are required for the following State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) tests: **grade 8 mathematics, grade 8 science, Algebra I, and Biology.**

Calculators are not permitted for students taking the STAAR grades 3–7 mathematics assessments or the STAAR grade 5 science assessment unless the student meets the eligibility criteria. Information regarding calculators as a designated support for students with disabilities can be found on the Accommodation Resources webpage.

Requirement for STAAR Grade 8 Mathematics and Algebra I

Districts must ensure that each student has a graphing calculator to use when taking the STAAR grade 8 mathematics or Algebra I assessments. Students must have a graphing calculator throughout the entire test for both paper and online versions. Districts may satisfy this requirement by providing students with any of the following types of calculating devices: a handheld graphing calculator, a graphing calculator application, or the graphing calculator tool included in the Test Delivery System (TDS).

Requirement for STAAR Grade 8 Science and Biology

Districts must ensure that students have access to a calculator with basic (i.e., four-function) capability when taking the STAAR grade 8 science and Biology assessments. Scientific or graphing calculators are allowed but are not required. There should be at least one calculator for every five students taking the grade 8 science and Biology assessments, whether online or on paper. If calculators are shared during the test, the calculator memory must be cleared after each student uses it. Districts may satisfy this requirement by providing students with any of the following types of calculating devices: a handheld calculator, a calculator application, or the calculator tools included in TDS.

Additional Information About Calculators

The district may provide calculating devices, or students may bring them from home. Students should be provided the same type of calculation device they use routinely in classwork. Providing an unfamiliar calculation device on the day of the state assessment may hinder rather than aid the student. Students may have more than one calculation device during the assessment.



For handheld calculators, all memory must be cleared to factory default both before and after testing. Any programs or applications must be removed or disabled before testing. Districts should be aware that some programs or applications include resources that could aid students during testing. Students must be monitored closely to ensure that these resources are not accessed during the test. If included on the device, the following functions must be disabled during testing: geometry functions; graphing implicit equations and inequalities; graphing inequalities (calculator/application automatically interprets the inequality symbol); and functions that automatically calculate mean absolute deviation. Contact the manufacturer for assistance with preparing calculators and graphing applications for use during testing.

For calculator applications, all Internet capabilities must be disabled on the device. In addition, the calculator application being used must be locked down (in kiosk mode) to prevent the use of other applications during testing. Districts should be aware that some calculator applications include resources that could aid students during testing. Students must be monitored closely to ensure that these resources are not accessed during the test. If included in the application, the following functions must be disabled during testing: geometry functions; graphing implicit equations and inequalities; graphing inequalities (calculator/application automatically interprets the inequality symbol); and functions that automatically calculate mean absolute deviation.

The use of a calculating device on STAAR should not replace the teaching of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). If a student uses a particular calculator during classroom instruction, it is important to be aware of any device functions that could compromise teaching the associated skills. As such, district and school personnel should give careful consideration before recommending the use of these devices for the assessment. Districts should be aware that some calculators and applications include resources that could aid students during testing. Students must be monitored closely to ensure that these resources are not accessed during the test.

Calculation devices with a computer algebra system (CAS) are not allowed unless the CAS is disabled. Calculation applications on smartphones are also not allowed.