Curriculum Update

June 2014

The mission of the Texas Education Agency is to provide leadership, guidance, and resources to help schools meet the educational needs of all students.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills Update

Languages Other Than English – In April 2014, the State Board of Education (SBOE) gave final approval to the revised languages other than English (LOTE) Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The SBOE directed TEA staff to facilitate the development of separate TEKS for classical languages. Once published in the *Texas Register*, the revised LOTE TEKS will be available online at http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter114/index.html and will be noted with "Adopted 2014" in the title.

The revised LOTE TEKS are expected to be implemented in the 2016-2017 school year, with the exception of the Special Topics in Language and Culture course. The Special Topics in Language and Culture course, which may be substituted for the second LOTE credit requirement by students who have earned one credit in LOTE but are deemed unlikely to complete the second credit, will be implemented beginning with the 2014-2015 school year. Other new LOTE courses cannot be used to satisfy LOTE requirements or to earn LOTE credit toward graduation until the revised LOTE TEKS are implemented in 2016-2017. Questions related to the revised fine arts TEKS may be directed to Jessica Snyder, special projects manager, at jessica.snyder@tea.state.tx.us.

Career and Technical Education – The SBOE has begun the process for the review and revision of the career and technical education (CTE) TEKS. SBOE-appointed committees were recently announced and they will begin working on recommendations for revisions to the CTE TEKS this summer. For updates and information related to the CTE TEKS review process, please visit the CTE TEKS webpage at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=25769807883.

Early College High School

Commissioner of Education Michael Williams announced final approval of 43 Early College High School (ECHS) designations for the 2014-2015 school year. With these designations, Texas will become home to 108 ECHS campuses across the state.

Early college high schools are innovative high schools that allow students least likely to attend college an opportunity to earn a high school diploma and either an associate degree or at least 60 college credit hours toward a baccalaureate degree. Under this model, an ECHS provides dual credit at no cost to students; offers rigorous instruction and accelerated courses; provides academic and social support services to help students succeed; increases college readiness; and reduces barriers to college access.

A school district or charter school that has obtained an ECHS designation from the TEA is allowed to enroll students in more than two dual credit courses per semester and enroll freshman or sophomore students in dual credit coursework. For information about the ECHS program, please contact Laura Gaines by telephone at (512) 463-9581 or email at laura.gaines@tea.state.tx.us.

House Bill 5

The Curriculum Division has created a webpage to provide updates and information related to changes to the graduation requirements that resulted from House Bill (HB) 5. The webpage provides resources such as a general overview of the Foundation High School Program, the graduation programs side by side, and FAQs related to different aspects of the legislation. Please visit the HB 5 webpage at www.tea.state.tx.us/graduation-requirements/hb5.aspx.

The Early Childhood Data System

The Early Childhood Data System (ECDS), formerly known as the Kindergarten Readiness System, is a new state reporting feature in the Texas Student Data System. The ECDS is used to collect early childhood data in order to inform school districts, communities, and early childhood programs about the effectiveness of prekindergarten programs to prepare children for success in kindergarten under Texas Education Code, §29.161. TEA is introducing ECDS in a two-phased approach. In phase one, kindergarten data will be submitted June 1 - July 31, 2014; in phase two, prekindergarten data will be submitted August 1 - October 31, 2014. For more information, you may contact Howard Morrison by telephone at (512) 463-9581 or email at howard.morrison@tea.state.tx.us.

Important Dates

July 16 - 18, 2014	State Board of Education Meeting
July 29 - 30, 2014	Title III ELL Symposium
August 25 - Oct 3, 2014	Fall ESTAR/MSTAR Universal Screener Window
Sept 2 - Oct 9, 2014	Fall MSTAR Diagnostic Assessment Window
Sept 17 - 19, 2014	State Board of Education Meeting
Jan 7 - Feb 10, 2015	Winter ESTAR/MSTAR Universal Screener Window
Jan 14 - Feb 20, 2014	Winter MSTAR Diagnostic Assessment Window

MATHEMATICS ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Course Development – At the direction of the State Board of Education (SBOE), TEA is currently working with a group of mathematics educators and experts in the field of mathematics to develop two new math courses for high school credit: Algebraic Reasoning and Statistics. The writing team is drafting essential knowledge and skills to present for SBOE consideration. Drafts of the recommendations for Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for these courses will be available for public comment this fall. Final approval of TEKS for these courses is expected in January 2015, with implementation in the 2015-2016 school year.

Student Assessment News – The Student Assessment Division has recently posted important information related to state assessments in mathematics. The new assessment information is available in the links below.

- State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Testing Requirements for Middle School Students Taking Accelerated Mathematics Instruction Beyond Algebra I
- State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Transition to New Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Mathematics

For more information on the state math assessments, please contact the Student Assessment Division by telephone at 512-463-9536 or email at student.assessment@tea.state.tx.us.

Texas Literacy Initiative

The Texas Literacy Initiative (TLI) is completing the third year of the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) federal grant. The focus of the TLI is the implementation of a comprehensive literacy plan supporting learners age 0 through grade 12. The comprehensive literacy plan for Texas has been named the Texas State Literacy Plan (TSLP). The goal of the TSLP is to ensure every Texas child is strategically prepared for the literacy demands of college and/or career by high school graduation.

Texas was selected by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) to host a meeting earlier this month to share progress made in this grant. This meeting focused on improving learning outcomes through coordination and collaboration to ensure a coherent approach to literacy. Arlington Independent School District (ISD), Bastrop ISD, Brownsville ISD, El Paso ISD, La Vega ISD, Manor ISD, and Taylor ISD were selected to share effective district practices that impact student literacy progress. The audience included representatives from Louisiana, Montana, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Guam, American Samoa, Common Wealth of Northern Mariana Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands, Bureau of Indian Education, and the USDE.

TLI continues to develop online courses to support the TSLP and plans to make all materials, resources, and courses available to Texas educators by fall 2016. For more information about TLI and to download the TSLP, please visit http://www.tea.state.tx.us/literacy/tli.

News from the Instructional Materials and Educational Technology Division

Instructional materials for social studies, grades K–12; social studies (Spanish), grades K–5; math, grades 9-12; and fine arts, grades K–12, are under consideration for adoption by the State Board of Education. The materials will be reviewed this summer by panels of educators, parents, business and industry representatives, and employers to determine the extent to which they address the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The adoption of these materials is scheduled to occur in November 2014, and the materials are scheduled to be available for use beginning in the 2015–2016 school year. More information is available on the TEA website.

ESTAR/MSTAR
Elementary/Middle-School Students in Texas: Algebra Ready

ESTAR/MSTAR Universal Screener

The Elementary-School Students in Texas: Algebra Ready (ESTAR) and Middle-School Students in Texas: Algebra Ready (MSTAR) Universal Screeners are designed to help teachers determine if students in grades 2-4 (ESTAR) and 5-8 (MSTAR) are in need of additional instructional support in order to develop the skills to meet expectations in algebra. The students' results can be used to guide instructional decisions. The MSTAR Universal Screener is currently undergoing revisions to align the assessment with the revised math Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), which will be implemented in 2014-2015.

The 2014-2015 Administration Windows for the ESTAR/MSTAR Universal Screener have been scheduled as follows:
- Fall: August 25, 2014 - October 3, 2014
- Winter: January 7, 2015 - February 10, 2015
- Spring: April 6, 2015 - May 8, 2015

ESTAR/MSTAR Diagnostic Assessments

The ESTAR/MSTAR Diagnostic Assessments are designed to provide a next step for Response to Intervention (RTI) Implementation. The Diagnostic Assessments are administered to students identified as being in need of additional support.

The ESTAR/MSTAR Diagnostic Assessments are designed to help teachers understand why students are struggling.
- Fall: September 2, 2013 - October 9, 2014 (MSTAR only)
- Winter: January 14, 2015 - February 20, 2015 (MSTAR only)
- Spring: April 13, 2015 - May 15, 2015

ESTAR Diagnostic Assessments Pilot

TEA will conduct a pilot in fall 2014; participating districts and schools will administer an assessment of 25-36 questions in an online format to each participating student. Student responses will not be scored, rather data will be gathered to determine the validity of the items.

ESTAR/MSTAR Assessment Training Opportunities

Training to assist teachers to administer and use the Universal Screener and the MSTAR Diagnostic Assessments effectively is currently available through Project Share.
- ESTAR/MSTAR Universal Screener
  http://www.epsilen.com/crs/13205959
- TEA ESTAR/MSTAR Learning Progressions
  http://www.epsilen.com/crs/14257272
- TEA ESTAR and MSTAR Diagnostic Assessments
  http://www.epsilen.com/crs/14257273

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The ESTAR/MSTAR tools can be accessed through the Project Share Gateway at www.projectsharetexas.org. For more information, training, or assistance related to the ESTAR/MSTAR Universal Screeners and ESTAR/MSTAR Diagnostic Assessments, please contact your regional education service center or Project Share support at mathtx@esc13.net or 1-855-462-8489.

TxVSN
Texas Virtual School Network

Texas Virtual School Network Provides Strategy to Meet New Graduation Requirements

The TEA's Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) can serve as an important resource for districts in meeting the new graduation requirements resulting from House Bill 5. Additionally, the TxVSN can assist schools in meeting the individual academic and scheduling needs of their students. The TxVSN statewide course catalog offers a wide variety of quality, TEKS-aligned high school, Advanced Placement®, and dual credit courses. All TxVSN courses are taught by Texas-certified teachers who have been trained in best practices in delivering online instruction. Additional course titles will continue to be added to the TxVSN course catalog. Additional information can be found at www.txvsn.org. The TxVSN Help Desk is available at 866-938-9876.

Funding for TxVSN Courses

Districts may earn Foundation School Program (FSP) funding for a student enrolled in a grades 9 through 12 course offered through the TxVSN statewide course catalog. Unlike students in the traditional classroom setting, students enrolled in a TxVSN course are not required to be physically present on the campus during instruction to be eligible to generate FSP. Instead, for a TxVSN course to generate FSP funds, the student must successfully complete the course regardless of where the student is while receiving instruction. Students may take a combination of TxVSN courses in a virtual or traditional school setting to generate FSP funding. Additional information about attendance reporting for students in TxVSN courses is available in Section 12.2 of the current Student Attendance and Accounting Handbook.

Districts may use a variety of funds to pay for TxVSN courses, including FSP funds; the Instructional Materials Allotment (IMA); federal and state grant and program funds, including title funds, according to the rules of those grants and programs; and local funds. For information about funding for TxVSN courses, please contact Kate Loughrey, statewide coordinator for TxVSN, by telephone at (512) 463-9581 or email at kate.loughrey@tea.state.tx.us.

English I for Speakers of Other Languages and English II for Speakers of Other Languages

Students identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) who are at the beginning or intermediate level of English language proficiency, as defined by 19 Texas Administrative Code, §74.4(d), relating to English Language Proficiency Standards, may be enrolled in English I for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL I) and in English II for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL II).

LEP students who successfully complete ESOL I and ESOL II have satisfied the English I and English II graduation requirements. Students who take ESOL I and/or ESOL II to satisfy their English I and/or English II requirement(s) are required to take the English I and/or English II EOC exam(s) as part of their graduation requirements.

2014 Title III English Language Learners Symposium

The 2014 Title III English Language Learners (ELL) Symposium, Roadmap to ELL Success, is taking place July 29 - 30, 2014, at the Austin Convention Center in Austin, Texas. The Symposium is open to all Title III, Part A, Limited English Proficiency subgrantees. This statewide professional development event is designed to address current issues related to ensuring English language proficiency and academic success for the state's ELLs. Workshop sessions will be provided for elementary and secondary educators and administrators who serve ELLs. Registration is $150 before May 30, 2014, and $175 after May 30, 2014.

For additional information, please visit www.title3.esc2.net or contact Melissa Morin, Education Service Center Region 2, by telephone at (361) 561-8416 or email at melissa.morin@esc2.net.

INNOVATIVE COURSES

The Texas Administrative Code, §74.27, Innovative Courses and Programs, allows districts to offer state-approved innovative courses to enable students to master knowledge, skills, and competencies not included in the essential knowledge and skills of the required curriculum. With the approval of the local board of trustees, school districts and charter schools may offer any state-approved innovative course for state elective credit. No application is required for a district or school to offer an approved innovative course.

At the April meeting of the State Board of Education, the following innovative courses were renewed through the 2018-2019 school year:
- AVID I-IV
- Reconnecting Youth
- Student Leadership
- Teen Leadership

New innovative courses will be posted to the TEA website at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=6079 in the coming weeks. For more information, please contact Debbie Gonzales by telephone at (512) 463-9581 or email at debbie.gonzales@tea.state.tx.us.

Texas Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Incentive Program

Funding allocated to the Texas Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) Incentive Program by the 83rd Texas Legislature, 2013, will enable the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to fund the following two components for the 2013-2014 school year.

Test Fee Subsidies

TEA will provide a $30 test fee subsidy for each AP or IB exam taken by an eligible Texas public school student. Additional subsidies may be available from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). Please note that the USDE federal grant that provides additional test fee subsidies has not yet been awarded. If any additional subsidies become available, they will be announced via the AP/IB Incentive Program listserv upon the notification from the USDE. Each school with eligible AP exams must submit a copy of its AP exam invoice. To do so, please mail, fax, or email the State Copy of the Exam Invoice to Debbie Gonzales at 1701 N. Congress Avenue, Austin, TX, 78701; FAX (512) 463-8057; or email debbie.gonzales@tea.state.tx.us.

Teacher Training Reimbursements

TEA will fund teacher training reimbursements of up to $450 per eligible teacher who completes a TEA-approved AP/IB or pre-AP/pre-IB training. The amount of the teacher training reimbursement will be dependent upon the total number of eligible applicants and the amount of funding available after the payment of exam fee subsidies.

Additional AP/IP Incentive Program information may be found in the May 1, 2014 "To the Administrator Addressed" letter at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=25769810945.

District personnel with AP/IB program responsibilities may wish to join the AP/IB Incentives listserv in order to stay informed about program requirements and the latest incentive developments. To join the listserv, visit http://miller.tea.state.tx.us/list/ and select "AP-IB-Incentives" from the drop down menu.

New Professional Development Courses Available through Project Share

New professional development (PD) courses designed to introduce educators to the revised mathematics TEKS are now available through Project Share. To join, click on the link(s) provided below.

Course Title	Course Link	Course Developer
Introduction to Math TEKS Process Standards Courses	http://www.epsilen.com/crs/14289660	Texas Regional Collaboratives (TRC)
Math TEKS Process Standards, Grades K-2	http://www.epsilen.com/crs/14289335	TRC
Math TEKS Process Standards, Grades 3-5	http://www.epsilen.com/crs/14289336	TRC
Math TEKS Process Standards, Grades 6-8	http://www.epsilen.com/crs/14289340	TRC
Math TEKS Process Standards, Grades 9-12	http://www.epsilen.com/crs/14289342	TRC
Math TEKS Focal Areas, Grades K-2	http://www.epsilen.com/crs/14289347	TRC
Math TEKS Focal Areas, Grades 3-5	http://www.epsilen.com/crs/14289348	TRC
Math TEKS Focal Areas, Grades 6-8	http://www.epsilen.com/crs/14289353	TRC
Introduction to Revised Mathematics TEKS (2012) – Module 1, Grades K-8	http://www.epsilen.com/crs/14290678	ESC Region 13
Introduction to Revised Mathematics TEKS (2012) – Module 2, Grades K-8	http://www.epsilen.com/crs/14290679	ESC Region 13

A second PD series, *Write for Texas*, will be available for the 2014-2015 school year. The courses are designed to improve writing instruction across all content areas in the secondary grades. More information on how to participate in this new and timely PD will be shared during the summer through ESCs and TEA listservs. The following courses are in development:

1. Using Reading and Writing to Support Learning (all content areas, grades 6-12)
2. Writing Effective Sentences (all content areas, grades 6-12)
3. Teaching Expository and Persuasive Writing (all content areas, grades 6-12)
4. Teaching Narrative and Literary Writing (ELA, grades 6-9, but others may participate)

project Share
Knowledge knows no boundaries