

DATE:	June 24, 2021
SUBJECT:	Optional Assessment Resources for the 2021–22 School Year
CATEGORY:	Student Assessment
NEXT STEPS:	Share with Appropriate Staff

The purpose of this communication is to inform superintendents and administrators at the local educational agency (LEA) and campus levels about the optional assessment resources available to LEAs during the 2021–22 school year. These include the beginning-of-year (BOY) assessments, the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) Interim Assessments, and the Texas Formative Assessment Resource (TFAR).

Beginning-of-Year Assessments

To provide educators with the data they need to develop appropriate instructional plans to address gaps in student learning, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) will again offer optional BOY assessments during the 2021–22 school year.

The BOY assessments have been built using released STAAR test questions. While the optional BOY assessments will be administered in early fall 2021, they are designed to diagnose understanding of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) from the previous school year. Therefore, the BOY assessments should be administered to students in grades 4–12 based on their prior year enrolled grade level or course. TEA will not use data from the BOY assessments for any accountability purposes.

KEY DATES FOR BOY ASSESSMENTS	
July 31–October 8, 2021	LEAs register students
August 16–October 15, 2021	Test administration window

STAAR Interim Assessments

STAAR Interim Assessments, an optional online tool to help educators monitor progress and predict student performance on STAAR, will continue for the 2021–22 school year for all STAAR tested grades/subjects and courses. The windows for administering interim assessments have been adjusted to ensure the tests are administered at the appropriate time during the school year and that they provide accurate data to educators and parents.

KEY DATES FOR INTERIM ASSESSMENTS	
July 31, 2021–April 8, 2022	LEAs register students

September 7, 2021– December 17, 2021	Administration Window 1: grades 3–8 reading, Spanish grades 3–5 reading, grades 3–8 mathematics, Spanish grades 3–5 mathematics, Algebra I, English I, and English II
November 8, 2021–April 15, 2022	Administration Window 2: grade 5 science, Spanish grade 5 science, grade 8 science, grade 8 social studies, Biology, and U.S. History
January 10, 2022–April 15, 2022	Administration Window 3: grades 3–8 reading, Spanish grades 3–5 reading, grades 3–8 mathematics, Spanish grades 3–5 mathematics, Algebra I, English I, and English II

Texas Formative Assessment Resource

TEA will continue to offer TFAR during the 2021–22 school year. Based on stakeholder feedback, TFAR will be hosted on the same platform as STAAR and STAAR Interim Assessments.

TFAR is an optional, online tool used by educators to create formative assessments by writing or selecting items from an item bank aligned to the TEKS. Teachers will be able to analyze the results of these formative assessments to help inform instructional choices such as making immediate lesson plan adjustments or providing specific interventions for students at the level of individual standards.

TFAR is meant to supplement and support existing LEA resources and formative assessment practices. Quizzes built using this tool should be combined with a broader set of classroom formative practices that are part of a coherent instructional framework. Additional information regarding dates and updates to TFAR will be provided in the near future.

Summary of All Optional Assessment Resources for the 2021–22 School Year

BOY assessments, STAAR Interim Assessments, and TFAR are optional assessment resources that will be available to support LEAs and educators in the 2021–22 school year. A summary of these optional resources can be found below.

	DESCRIPTION	TIMING	PURPOSE
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Beginning-of-Year Assessments	Optional diagnostic assessments created in response to COVID-19	Once at the beginning of the school year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gauge where students are in their understanding of the TEKS as they begin the school year • Measure gaps in student learning arising from the COVID-19 disruption to instruction
STAAR Interim Assessments	Optional interim assessments that mirror the blueprint of STAAR	Once or twice a year: recommended in November and February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor student progress • Predict student performance on STAAR • Identify students for intervention
Texas Formative Assessment Resource (TFAR)	Optional, online tool consisting of a TEKS-aligned item bank, test-builder, and data reports	Frequently throughout the year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplement existing teacher formative assessment practices • Support teachers in building and administering classroom quizzes to inform and adjust instruction

For questions regarding any of these optional assessment resources, please contact TEA using the Student Assessment Division [Help Desk](#).

Texas Education Agency
Student Assessment Division