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| <b>DATE:</b>       | <b>October 23, 2025</b>              |
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>    | <b>Overview of House Bill 8</b>      |
| <b>CATEGORY:</b>   | <b>Assessment and Accountability</b> |
| <b>NEXT STEPS:</b> | <b>Share with appropriate staff</b>  |

House Bill 8 (HB 8), passed during the 89th Texas Legislature, 2nd Called Session (2025), and signed by Governor Abbott in September 2025, repeals and replaces the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) beginning with the 2027–28 school year. HB 8 also makes minor changes to the Texas Assessment Program this school year and revises several accountability requirements impacting the A–F accountability refresh that will occur for ratings issued in fall 2028. This correspondence from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) provides a high-level overview of HB 8’s assessment and A–F accountability provisions for Texas public school systems.

### Assessment Program Changes Effective with 2025–26 School Year

Four specific changes from HB 8 go into effect starting in December 2025.

#### Monday Testing

The policy stated in Texas Education Code (TEC) §39.023(c-3) that prohibits the administration of STAAR on the first Monday of each testing window has been repealed. STAAR assessments may now be administered on Monday of week 1 without the submission of a Monday testing notice. School systems continue to have the flexibility of scheduling assessments during two-week testing windows and may decide not to test on a Monday. TEA has updated the *District and Campus Coordinator Resources*, the *2025–26 STAAR Test Administrator Manual*, the 2025–26 and 2026–27 Student Assessment Testing Calendars, and the online version of the 2025–26 Calendar of Events to reflect this legislative change. These updated resources are available on the [Test Administration Resources](#) page of the TEA website.

#### Test Anxiety Mitigation

HB 8 amended TEC §39.0301(a-1) to require the commissioner to ensure that test administration procedures include instructions to help mitigate potential student test anxiety. To help put students at ease, starting this school year, TEA has updated the onscreen directions students read on their own and the directions that test administrators must read to students just prior to beginning a STAAR assessment. The new language is included in the updated *2025–26 STAAR Test Administrator Manual*. TEA will be exploring additional changes for the new assessment program that goes into effect in the 2027–28 school year.

#### Results Notification

HB 8 amended TEC §26.005 to require school systems to provide parents and guardians access to the [Texas Assessment Family Portal](#) through a local parent portal and to notify parents and guardians each time state assessment results are available. Resources on connecting local parent portals and setting up automated access emails are available on [The Family Portal](#) page of the *Coordinator Resources*. Communication templates and additional materials to help notify parents about assessment results are available on the [Log In & Learn More Tool Kit](#) page of the TEA website.

### Simplified Access to Results

TEC §26.005 was also amended to require TEA to provide parents and guardians with easy access to their child's state assessment results via the Texas Assessment Family Portal. TEA is in the process of updating the Family Portal login screen to comply with this requirement.

## **Assessment Program Changes Effective with 2027–28 School Year**

Starting with the 2027–28 school year, HB 8 will overhaul the Texas Assessment Program by replacing STAAR with a new instructionally supportive assessment program for Texas schools, referred to as the Student Success Tool (SST) in statute. The new program will include beginning-of-year (BOY), middle-of-year (MOY), and end-of-year (EOY) assessments for grades 3–8 and for Spanish grades 3–5. BOY and MOY assessments will be optional for end-of-course (EOC) assessments: Algebra I, Biology, English I, and U.S. History.

The English II EOC assessment is being eliminated, both in terms of the administration of the assessment and as a graduation requirement, beginning with the 2027–28 school year. **Note:** Students who are in the graduating classes of 2026 and 2027 still have the STAAR English II EOC assessment as part of their high school graduation requirements. More information on assessment graduation requirements for 2028 and beyond will be provided in the future.

The new assessment program will include the following requirements:

- Assessments must be shorter than STAAR assessments and must be designed to support accommodations for students who need them.
- The BOY and MOY assessments will be adaptive to allow for shorter assessments that provide the most useful student-level information. The EOY assessment will be static to ensure parents and teachers have full access to all released test questions each school year.
- Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are required to be assessed with EOY assessments in the same grades/subjects and courses listed above but will not participate in BOY or MOY assessments.
- In general, BOY assessments must be administered in September, MOY assessments in January and February, and EOY assessments in May. The writing section of the reading language arts (RLA) assessments, which includes open-ended questions, will be administered separately in April.
- Assessment results must be provided to school systems within two business days after the testing window closes.

Extensive outreach is being planned as the SST is being designed. HB 8 requires TEA to report a transition plan and status of the new assessment program to the legislature by February 15, 2027. The transition report will outline the development and implementation plan for the new program and must include feedback from parents, students, and teachers. The legislature will be able to evaluate the plan and make necessary adjustments during the 90th Texas Legislature in spring 2027 before the new assessment program is implemented in the 2027–28 school year. As design details are finalized, assessment blueprints and other details will be shared between now and the start of the 2027–28 school year.

## **Accountability Changes**

### Timelines

TEA must refresh the A–F accountability system every five years, with the next refresh taking effect in the 2027–28 school year. The agency must communicate accountability refresh rules two years in

advance and publish “What If” ratings for those two years. Rules for each accountability year (outside of a refresh year) must be published by July 15 before the school year starts.

#### Cut Scores

TEA must use a specific process for raising accountability cut scores; this requirement is designed to achieve a 15-year goal of positioning Texas among the top five states nationally on National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) performance and postsecondary readiness. TEA may not raise cut scores outside of the scheduled refresh cycle.

#### Legislative Participation

The accountability advisory committee (known as Texas Accountability Advisory Group, or TAAG) must include legislative staff, and accountability refresh rules must be communicated to the legislature before adoption. TEA must notify the legislature of any known statutory non-compliance issues (e.g., if A–F ratings are not issued by August 15).

#### College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR)

- Industry-based certifications (IBCs): TEA, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the Texas Workforce Commission must develop a list of IBCs that include high-wage and high-skill standards. The IBC list may only be updated in conjunction with the five-year A–F refresh cycle. IBCs removed from the list require a two-year advance notice and must have a phase-out period.
- Military readiness: Students can demonstrate military readiness in the CCMR component by completing a Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) program and achieving a passing score on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test. This change will be effective with the next accountability refresh in the 2027–28 school year.
- Prior-year CCMR indicator data: Similar to how a current-year CCMR data submission update opportunity is provided by TEA for accountability with the CCMR Verifier, TEA must provide a process for the submission of prior-year CCMR data for accountability purposes.
- Indicator weighting: CCMR indicators must be weighted based on their correlation with postsecondary success.

#### Other Indicators

- TEA must provide school systems with a process to submit specific local indicators for reporting purposes only.
- TEA must establish a grant program to support school systems in adopting a local accountability A–F campus rating system that differs from the state system.

#### Future Growth Measure

TEA must develop a through-year growth measure for the grade levels with required BOY and MOY assessments to be considered for a future A–F accountability refresh.

## **Questions**

TEA has produced a frequently asked questions (FAQ) document related to the implementation of HB 8 that is available at [89th Legislature Updates | Texas Education Agency](#). The FAQ document will be updated periodically as needed.

For questions about the assessment information in this correspondence, contact the [Student Assessment Help Desk](#). For questions about the accountability information, contact the Performance Reporting Division at [performance.reporting@tea.texas.gov](mailto:performance.reporting@tea.texas.gov).