STAAR Accessibility
Educator Guide

2022–2023
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Understanding STAAR Accessibility

The goal of STAAR and STAAR Spanish accessibility is to ensure that each student can interact appropriately with the content, presentation, and response modes of the state assessments. In order to meet this goal, STAAR accessibility features and designated supports are designed to allow all test takers to demonstrate their knowledge of the content being tested without the format of the assessment, the non-tested language, or the type of response needed to answer the questions being barriers. The various accessibility features and designated supports made available on STAAR online and paper assessments are also designed to be the same as or similar to the designated supports commonly used during classroom instruction.

Accessibility Within the STAAR Program

For STAAR and STAAR Spanish, accessibility falls into three categories: accessibility features, locally-approved designated supports, and designated supports requiring Texas Education Agency (TEA) approval. It is important to refer to the individual designated support policy documents in the Accessibility section of the Coordinator Resources for comprehensive information about the procedures and materials within each of these categories.

Accessibility Features

Accessibility features may be provided to students based on their needs. In general, these procedures and materials are available to any student who regularly benefits from their use during instruction; however, a student cannot be required to use them during a state assessment. District or campus testing coordinators are responsible for ensuring that test administrators understand the proper implementation of these procedures and use of these materials. In some cases, a student may need to complete the test in a separate setting in order to eliminate distractions to other students and to ensure that the security and confidentiality of the test are maintained.

Locally-Approved Designated Supports

Locally-approved designated supports include designated supports that may be made available without TEA approval to students who meet eligibility criteria. The decision should be based on the eligibility criteria and aimed at addressing a student’s consistent academic struggle in a specific area even after intensive instruction and remediation. Eligibility is determined by the appropriate team of people at the campus level as indicated in each policy document. The decision to use a designated support during a state assessment should be made on an individual student basis and should take into consideration the student’s needs and whether the student routinely receives that designated support during classroom instruction and classroom testing. This does not mean that the designated support must be used every day during instruction. Routine accommodation, or designated support use, as defined by TEA, means that:

- the student has used the support often enough during classroom instruction and testing that the student can use it independently during the state assessment (independent use is applicable to some designated supports [e.g., Calculation Aids]
but may not be to others [e.g., Oral Administration]); and

- the designated support has been proven to be effective in meeting the student’s specific needs as evidenced by student scores or teacher observations with and without designated support use.

**Designated Supports Requiring TEA Approval**

For designated supports requiring TEA approval, districts must submit an Accommodation Request Form through the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) under the Administration and Security Forms module. Accommodation Request Forms must be submitted to TEA in a timely manner to allow committee members the ability to process and review requests, as well as to communicate to districts the appropriate procedures for administering a TEA-approved designated support. Requests should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the individual student’s testing window. For circumstances that require a designated support request but occur after this time (e.g., newly enrolled student; medical emergency; updated admission, review, and dismissal [ARD] committee decision), the district coordinator should contact the Student Assessment Division at 512-463-9536 and ask to speak to a member of the Accommodations Task Force for further instructions. This type of support must be documented in the student’s paperwork as “pending TEA approval.”
Considering Paper Versus Online

A student should be designated as eligible for a special paper administration of an online assessment only if a required accommodation documented in the student’s individualized education program (IEP), individual accommodation plan (IAP), or section 504 plan paperwork cannot be delivered in an online format. Careful consideration should be given to whether the paper mode offers the necessary supports to allow the student to successfully demonstrate their understanding of the tested content. If the student has previous experience receiving instruction or taking assessments online (e.g., STAAR Interims), it may be more appropriate to maintain consistency by providing the student with an online administration.

Some supports, such as Mathematics Manipulatives or Oral/Signed Administration, can be provided to students taking either an online or paper test.

Due consideration should be given to the mode in which various designated supports can be offered. A mathematics or science braille test can be provided only with a paper form; however, a reading language arts (RLA) or social studies braille test can be provided online using a refreshable braille display.

Content and language supports are embedded online supports. Paper versions of these designated supports are available for students who cannot access computers or technology.

Refer to the Special Administration of an Online Assessment section of the Coordinator Resources for more information.

Refer to the table on the following pages for more information on available accessibility features.
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<td>Language Supports</td>
<td>Signing Test Directions</td>
<td>Test administration directions can be signed to a student who is deaf or hard of hearing.</td>
<td>• A test administrator signs the test administration directions to a student who is deaf.</td>
<td>• A teacher who is not trained in administration procedures signs the test directions to a student who is deaf.</td>
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|                  | Translating Test Directions   | Test directions can be translated into the native language of an emergent bilingual (EB) student. | • A test administrator orally translates the test directions into Spanish for an EB student during the test administration.  
• A campus testing coordinator uses a translation program or app to access a written translation of the directions into another language before a test administration so that the translation can be verified as accurate.  
• A school district uses its resources and personnel to translate the test directions into the targeted language before a test administration and distributes the translations to the campuses where needed. | • The test directions are translated for a student who is proficient in English.  
• A teacher who is not trained in administration procedures orally translates the directions for an EB student. |
|                  | Bilingual Dictionary          | The use of a bilingual dictionary is allowed for mathematics, science, and social studies assessments. Bilingual dictionaries used in these cases should include only word-to-word translations. | • A student uses a hard copy word-to-word bilingual dictionary during a mathematics, science, or social studies assessment. | • A student uses a bilingual dictionary that contains pictures during a mathematics, science, or social studies assessment.  
• A student uses a bilingual dictionary with definitions and examples during an administration of a mathematics, science, or social studies assessment.  
• A student uses a bilingual dictionary app on a tablet during a mathematics, science, or social studies assessment. |
<p>| Reading Assistance| Reading or Signing Constructed-Response Items | A test administrator may read or sign an extended constructed-response item or a short constructed-response item to any student who requests it. | • A test administrator reads or signs the constructed-response item at a student’s request. | • A test administrator reads or signs the extended constructed-response item to the entire class. |</p>
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<td>Reading Assistance for Grade 3 Mathematics</td>
<td>A test administrator may read a word, phrase, or sentence in a test question or answer choice to any grade 3 student but only when asked to do so by the individual student.</td>
<td>• A test administrator reads a word to a student taking a grade 3 mathematics test from the student's computer screen. <strong>NOTE:</strong> This accessibility feature allows for an exception to the policy that requires test administrators not to look at students' computer screens.</td>
<td>• Text-to-speech (TTS) is turned on for a student taking the grade 3 mathematics test so the student can have reading assistance as needed. • A majority of the questions and answer choices are read aloud to a student at the student's request.</td>
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<td>Assistive Technology: Learning and Cognition Supports</td>
<td>Reading the Test Aloud</td>
<td>Students who use this accessibility feature are allowed to read the test aloud to themselves to facilitate comprehension.</td>
<td>• A student uses a whisper phone to read the test aloud to himself during an administration. • A student records herself reading the test material aloud. The recording is deleted after a test administration.</td>
<td>• A student in a testing room with other students reads the test aloud to himself.</td>
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<td>Blank Scratch Paper</td>
<td>Allows any medium that can be erased or destroyed to be used as scratch paper. When choosing the type of scratch paper, the student's intent must be considered. Special paper used to teach a method is not scratch paper and may be considered a graphic organizer.</td>
<td>• A student uses a dry erase board during a test administration to draw, write, and perform calculations. • A student uses patty paper during a mathematics test administration. • A student uses lined paper during a reading language arts (RLA) test administration and graph paper during a mathematics test administration. • A student uses blank scratch paper during a TELPAS administration. • A student uses a packet of 10 blank pages that are stapled together.</td>
<td>• A student uses paper with numbered boxes. • A student uses paper that is sectioned off into boxes or other shapes, such as a blank graphic organizer. • A student uses paper that has symbols or words on it.</td>
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<td>Sticky Notes</td>
<td>The sticky notes tool allows a student to add notes about a test question in the online test. A sticky note is accessed from the question where it was created.</td>
<td>• A student leaves a test question unanswered and uses the sticky notes tool to make notes about the question for later use.</td>
<td>• A student uses the sticky notes tool for notes that he wants to access on later test questions.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Notepad</td>
<td>The notepad tool allows a student to write notes that can be accessed from any page in the online test.</td>
<td>• A student uses the notepad tool to write down things she wants to remember throughout the test.</td>
<td>• A student uses the notepad tool to write her constructed response but does not transfer the response to the actual item.</td>
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| Assistive Technology: Hearing Supports| Amplification Devices | Amplification devices amplify sounds to louder levels.                      | • A student with autism who does not do well with headphones uses external speakers for TTS during a test administration.  
• A student with hearing aids that do not work with headphones uses external speakers for TTS during a test administration.  
• A student uses Bluetooth hearing aids that pair with the computer to amplify the TTS during a test administration.  
• A frequency modulated (FM) system is used to amplify TTS during a test administration. | • A student uses external speakers to amplify TTS in a testing room with other students. |
| Assistive Technology: Visual Supports | Color Settings        | Color settings for online tests and colored overlays for paper tests are used by some students to improve the processing of visual information. | • A student uses the color settings drop-down menu in the online test to change the color of the screen and text.  
• A student uses a colored overlay during a paper test administration. | • A student uses a colored overlay that has boxes, text, or symbols on it. |
|                                       | Line Reader           | The line reader tool for online tests and blank place markers for paper tests focus attention on one line at a time and assist with tracking while reading. | • A student uses the line reader tool to highlight a line of text she is reading during an online test administration.  
• A student uses a blank place marker to track what she is reading during a paper test administration. | • A student uses a ruler or other straight edge with markings or symbols. |
|                                       | Zoom Feature          | The zoom feature for online tests and magnifying devices for paper tests enlarge the test content. | • A student uses the zoom in or zoom out buttons in the online test to enlarge or reduce the size of the screen.  
• A student uses a magnifier during a paper test administration. | • A student is given a magnifier that he has never before used in class. |
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| Highlighters and Colored Pencils                    | Highlighters, colored pencils, or any other tool that can help focus attention on text may be used. | - A student uses the highlighter tool during an online test administration.  
- A student uses a highlighter or colored pencil during a paper test administration. | - A student who does not normally use highlighters in class is told to use them for specific testing strategies. |
| Large Mouse Pointer                                 | The large mouse pointer feature allows a student to choose 11 different size and color options for the online test. | - A student chooses an extra-large green mouse pointer on the Choose Settings screen before starting an online test. | - A student who does not need visual supports is required to use a large mouse pointer. |
| Projection Devices                                  | Projection devices enlarge the test content. | - A computer is connected to a larger monitor or television with an HDMI cable so a student can see the test.  
- A CCTV is used during a paper administration.  
- A student's test is projected onto a wall or screen to enlarge the test. | - A student's test is enlarged using a projection device in a testing room with other students. |
| Assistive Technology: Focus and Attention Supports  | Tools to Minimize Distractions or Maintain Focus | Tools that minimize distractions or help a student maintain focus are allowed during a test administration as long as test security is maintained. | - A student uses a stress ball or fidget device during a test administration.  
- A student uses noise-reducing headphones during a test administration.  
- A student places his phone or other device on his desk to listen to instrumental music using headphones or Bluetooth earbuds. Because the phone is on the student's desk, the test administrator is able to monitor phone use. | - A student uses her phone to listen to music but the school does not verify that she is listening to only instrumental music.  
- A test administrator plays instrumental music to the entire testing room.  
- A student uses her phone to listen to instrumental music but also uses the phone to text, take pictures, or search the Internet. |
<p>| Assistive Technology: Applications                  | Permissive Mode | Permissive Mode allows a student to use non-embedded assistive technology to complete tests in the Secure Browser application. | - A student who regularly uses a predictive text application during classroom assignments is allowed to use the same application with permissive mode as part of an approved designated support during a test administration. | - A student with Permissive Mode turned on uses an Internet browser to access supports. |
| Use of an Electronic Device to Monitor a Health Condition | A student's electronic device may be used to monitor a health condition. Test security must be maintained. | - During a test administration, a student places her mobile phone on her desk to monitor her glucose levels through an app on the phone. Because the phone is | - A student is allowed to keep his mobile phone in his backpack and take it out periodically to monitor his glucose levels through an app. |</p>
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| Setting Supports | Individual Test Administration | A student receives an individual test administration with a test administrator. | • An individual student is paired with one test administrator during a test administration to minimize distractions for that student.  
• An individual student who uses a projection device is paired with one test administrator in a separate setting to minimize distractions to other students. | • An individual student sits at a desk in the front of a large testing room so that a test administrator can help the student as needed. |
|                 | Small Group Administration | Students are tested in small groups that mirror classroom testing situations based on individual student needs. | • Students who regularly receive small group administrations in the classroom are given the STAAR or TELPAS test together in a separate session away from the other students in the class. The total number of students in this group is less than the number of students in their regular classroom setting for that subject. | • Students who are regularly tested in a small group of 7 students during classroom testing are put in a group of 20 students for the STAAR administration.  
• Students are tested in a group that is larger than their regular class size for that subject. |
| Timing Supports | Reminding Students to Stay on Task | The test administrator may remind students to stay on task during a test administration. | • A test administrator reminds a student who is staring off into the distance to get back to work on the test. | • A test administrator helps a student with a test question that the student is stuck on so that he can help the student move on.  
• A student uses a timer or other tool reserved for the Individualized Structured Reminders designated support without being eligible for that support.  
• A test administrator reminds students to use their testing strategies. |

*These examples are not an exhaustive list of allowable and non-allowable uses.
Online Accessibility Features

Accessibility features are available to all students taking STAAR and STAAR Spanish tests. Some of these features are embedded in the online system, while others (e.g., individual test administration, general reminders to stay on task) are not. Students can practice using the online accessibility features by accessing STAAR Online Practice Tests. The following figures describe the accessibility features that are embedded in the online system and provide their associated icon. These features are available automatically on all STAAR assessments (i.e., mathematics, RLA, science, and social studies) and do not need to be activated in the online system.

Figure 1. Sticky Notes (available in English and Spanish)
Figure 2. Notepad (available in English and Spanish)

(1) Humans are naturally curious beings. (2) We are driven to search for new places to explore. (3) Given how many natural wonders have been discovered around the world, isn’t it amazing that there are still natural wonders to find? (4) In the year 2000, two miners in Mexico stumbled upon

Figure 3. Color Setting (available in English and Spanish)

Please note that the student cannot change the selected color setting after the test starts.
Figure 4. Line Reader (available in English and Spanish)

The student can use the Line Reader tool to highlight a selected line of text in a passage or question. The student can move the Line Reader to different lines using the cursor or the keyboard.

The Line Reader tool helps a student focus attention on a specific line of text. When the tool is selected, it appears orange as shown. To turn off the Line Reader tool, the student must select the tool again.

The narrator no longer wants to share a room with his younger brother.

from Playing the Field
by Janette Rallison

1. At home I continued to be a model son in order to persuade my parents I did, indeed, need a room of my own. That night after dinner while I cleared off the table and Mom put things in the dishwasher, I asked her, “Did you and Dad talk about moving Kirk out of my room?”

2. “Well, we talked about moving you into the office.”

Figure 5. Zoom (available in English and Spanish)

The student can select the Zoom Out button on the top of the screen to reduce the size of the text and images displayed on the screen.

The student can select the Zoom In button on the top of the screen to enlarge the size of the text and images displayed on the screen.
Figure 6. Highlight Selection/Reset Highlighting (available in English and Spanish)

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

The narrator no longer wants to share a room with his younger brother.

from Playing the Field
by Janette Rallison

1. At home I continued to be a model son in order to persuade my parents I did, indeed, need a room of my own. That night after dinner while I cleared off the table and Mom put things in the dishwasher, I asked her, "Did you and Dad talk about moving Kirk out of my room?"

2. "Well, we talked about moving you into the office."

The Highlighter tool allows a student to highlight selected text. After selecting the text to be highlighted, the student can open the Context Menu by right-clicking or by selecting the Context Menu icon. The student then selects the Highlight Selection option and the highlight color to be used.

To remove highlighting from specific text, the student can select the required text and select the Remove Highlight option. To remove all highlighting on the page, the student can select the Reset Highlighting option.

Figure 7. Mouse Pointers (available in English and Spanish)

The student can open the Large Mouse Pointer drop-down menu on the Choose settings page to select from eleven different options. When the student selects a mouse pointer option, the option is displayed on the screen for the student to preview. If the student wishes to apply the selected mouse pointer, the student selects the Select button.

Please note that the student cannot change the selected mouse pointer option after the test starts.
Online Designated Supports

Designated supports are available to students who meet the eligibility criteria as determined and documented by the appropriate team at the local level. Some of these designated supports are embedded in the online system, while others are not. More specific information can be found in the individual policy documents in the Accessibility section of the Coordinator Resources.

Non-embedded designated supports may be made available to students testing online as well as to those testing on paper. The test administrator will provide the supports to the student on test day. For example, a student needing supplemental aids will need to use the type of assistance he or she uses in the classroom (e.g., grade-appropriate grammar and mechanics rules, mnemonic devices), since supplemental aids are not embedded into the online system.

Some designated supports are also available as embedded online designated supports. For example, a student needing reading support can receive an oral or signed administration of the test using TTS or American Sign Language (ASL) videos.

Content and language supports are available as embedded online designated supports. Content and language supports have designated supports in the form of pop-ups, rollovers, supplementary materials, and prereading text. To receive these supports, a student must test online. The delivery of an online test offers an opportunity to provide these types of supports in a standardized way to students who use similar designated supports in the classroom and find the test to be the most appropriate and accessible for them. These supports are applied only to particular passages and test questions based on expert judgments about which designated supports are likely to make a question more accessible to students.

Students should practice using the online designated supports by accessing STAAR Online Practice Tests. The following figures describe the embedded designated supports in the online testing system.
Figure 8. Calculator (available in English and Spanish)

As a designated support, the Calculator tool is a four-function calculator that a student can use for mathematics and science calculations.

To open the Calculator tool, the student selects Calculator from the Global Tools menu. It must be set up as a designated support in TIDE for grades 3–7.

The student can drag the Calculator tool to different parts of the test page using the Calculator header.

$2.09
$3.09
$3.72
$4.08
Figure 9. Text-to-speech (available in English and Spanish)

NOTE: TTS uses the local device's native accessibility voice packs. Please make sure that a Spanish voice pack has been activated and tested prior to the administration of an assessment with Spanish TTS.
**Figure 10. Text-to-speech (available in English and Spanish)**

For students who have a text-to-speech designated support, a System Settings icon is displayed on each test page. When the student selects the icon, the System Settings menu is displayed, and a gray shield is placed over the entire page.

The student can use the sliders to adjust the volume, pitch, and rate in which the text is read aloud. To apply the selected settings, the student selects the Ok button. To revert to the original settings, the student selects the Cancel button.

Districts should test the device’s audio settings prior to launching the application to ensure that the sound is on and working as expected.

**Figure 11. Auto Text-to-speech (available in English and Spanish)**

For a student who has an Auto TTS designated support, the test content on the page is pre-read to the student when the student first accesses a page.

A gray shield appears at the top of the test page, and a student cannot perform any action apart from pausing the test until the text is read in its entirety. Text is highlighted as it is read.
Figure 11a. Auto Text-to-speech (available in English and Spanish) which includes the 5 second countdown timer

On each page of the test, a five second timer appears at the top, counting down to when Auto TTS will begin reading that page’s content. Auto TTS only reads the content of a test page the first time a student accesses it.

Figure 12. Speech-to-text (available in English and Spanish for constructed-response questions only)

For students eligible for the speech-to-text tool, they can select the Microphone icon to activate the speech-to-text functionality. When speech-to-text is enabled, all other text editing tools are unavailable. To edit or insert text manually, students can disable speech-to-text, point the cursor to the desired location where manual edits are to be applied, and use text editor tools as needed.

Test administrators should ensure that the microphone on the device used for testing is turned on and configured properly, prior to launching a test that includes constructed-response items.
Figure 13: Speech-to-text (available in English and Spanish for constructed-response questions only)

- When the Microphone icon is selected, the icon appears highlighted indicating that speech-to-text has been activated.
- Students should speak clearly and at a normal volume and pace. As the student speaks, the words are transcribed into the text response area. While the text is being transcribed, dots appear in the text response area to indicate that the transcription is in process.

Figure 14. ASL Videos (available in English)

- Students who have ASL as a designated support can watch videos that translate test content into ASL.
- To view ASL videos, the student opens the Context Menu by right-clicking or by selecting the Context Menu icon and then selecting the American Sign Language option.
Figure 15. ASL Videos (available in English)

The student can play, pause, and replay ASL videos.

The student can go back and review specific chapters or parts of the video (e.g., answer choices) as needed, by selecting the chapter number from the list or clicking that chapter in the progress bar.

The student can maximize the window and then reset it back to the default size by selecting the 'Maximize/Minimize' icon.

The student can adjust the video speed, turn on or turn off closed captioning using the 'CC' button, and adjust the volume as necessary.

The student can use the resize handle to resize the window.
Figure 16. Rollovers (available in English and Spanish)

While cleaning his room, Paul found 7 cents on his desk, 98 cents under his bed, and 2 dollars and 4 cents in his closet. What was the total amount of money Paul found?

- $2.09
- $3.09
- $3.72
- $4.08

For students who are eligible for content and language supports, certain test questions include a small Rollover arrow pointing towards words or phrases. Clicking this arrow opens a rollover containing simplified text.

Figure 17. Rollovers (available in English and Spanish)

The list shows different amounts of money Paul found when he cleaned his room:

- 7 cents
- 98 cents
- 2 dollars and 4 cents

What was the total amount of money Paul found?

- $2.09
- $3.09
- $3.72
- $4.08

A rollover covers the original text. Clicking the Rollover arrow again closes the rollover.

For students who have a text-to-speech accommodation, text in the rollover can be read aloud. To listen to the rollover, the student opens the Context Menu by right-clicking or by selecting the Context Menu icon and then selecting the Speak Question option.
Figure 18. Pop-ups (available in English and Spanish)

For students who are eligible for content and language supports, certain words and phrases appear with a border around them. This indicates that a pop-up containing simplified text is available for the word or phrase.

When a pop-up is selected, a window appears next to the bordered text. Clicking the X icon closes the window.

The student can drag the window to different parts of the test page using the header.

The student can use the resize handle to resize the window.

For students who have a text-to-speech designated support, the Speak icon will appear in all pop-ups. This student can click the icon to hear the text in the pop-up read aloud. If the Speak icon has a line going through it, it indicates that text-to-speech is not available.

Figure 19. Spelling Assistance (available in English and Spanish)

If a student is eligible for spelling assistance, a Spell Check button is provided.

When the student selects the Spell Check button, the word or words that are misspelled are underlined and appear in a different color. The student can select the underlined word to view suggestions for replacements and select a word from the list.
Figure 20. Refreshable Braille Display (available on English versions of grades 3–8 RLA, grade 8 social studies, English I, English II, and U.S. History only)

The student can click the Streamline toggle on the Choose Settings page and then click the Select button to enable streamline mode.
Figure 20a. Refreshable Braille Display (available on English versions of grades 3–8 RLA, grade 8 social studies, English I, English II, and U.S. History only)

NOTE: Refreshable Braille Display will not function with all the supported devices used for testing. Refer to the Minimum System Requirements for supported systems and requirements.
Additional Information on Content and Language Supports

Content and Language Supports Guidelines

These designated supports are available on STAAR and STAAR Spanish tests in the form of pop-ups, rollovers, prereading text, and supplementary materials. Although STAAR Spanish uses the same guidelines for content and language supports as the English version, some of the accommodations in the pop-ups and rollovers may not be identical due to linguistic differences.

Pop-Ups

- Isolate specific information in a question that corresponds to each answer choice.
- Isolate specific text or information in a passage that is referenced in the question or answer choices.
- Isolate specific information in a graphic or list that is referenced in the question.
- Define literary terms.
- Apply an allowable supplemental aid (e.g., graphic organizer, place value chart, t-chart, graphic of a scientific concept, timeline, map) to specific questions or answer choices.
- Include the formula from the grade-specific reference material when the question specifies the measure or conversion to be performed.
- Direct student attention to parts of the grade-specific reference materials.
- Provide clarifying information for a graphic organizer, political cartoon, or map.
- Provide a visual representation in the passage, question, answer choices, or constructed-response items by adding graphics, photographs, or animations.
- Define or clarify construct-irrelevant words, phrases, and sentences using plain language, synonyms, definitions, examples, and consistent language.

Rollovers

- Provide a visual representation in the passage, question, answer choices, or constructed-response items by adding graphics, photographs, or animations.
- Define or clarify construct-irrelevant words, phrases, and sentences using plain language, synonyms, definitions, examples, and consistent language.
- Bullet or separate steps in a process (e.g., multi-step problem, sequence of events).
- Reword complex questions or answer choices to condense text.
- Reorganize and simplify historical excerpts.
Prereads

- Offer text before the reading and editing passages (for RLA, including English I and English II).

Supplementary Materials

- Include blank Punnett squares for Biology.
- Include writing checklists for RLA.

Classroom Designated Supports and the Link to Content and Language Supports

The use of designated supports occurs primarily during classroom instruction as educators use various instructional strategies to meet the student’s individual needs, thus allowing those students to maximize their academic potential. Content and language supports available for STAAR tests offer opportunities for students to access the required state assessments meaningfully.

To make designated support decisions for students, educators should have knowledge of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and how a student performs in relation to them. Educators should also collect and analyze data pertaining to the use and effectiveness of designated supports (e.g., assignment and test scores with and without the designated support, observational reports) so that informed educational decisions can be made for each student. By analyzing data, an educator can determine whether the designated support becomes inappropriate or unnecessary over time due to the student’s age or changing needs. Likewise, data can confirm for the educator that the student still struggles in certain areas and should continue to use the designated support.

Decisions about designated supports used during a statewide assessment should

- be made on an individual basis,
- consider the student’s needs, and
- be routinely and effectively used during classroom instruction and testing.

Although it is unlikely that students routinely use the computer-based content and language supports during classroom instruction, they may use variations of them as illustrated in the table on the following page. This list is not exhaustive; it includes examples of classroom designated supports that may correspond to the embedded content and language supports on STAAR.
### Classroom Designated Support Examples That Link to STAAR Content and Language Supports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teacher introduces a new book to a struggling reader prior to it being read aloud or independently. The topics discussed might include major concepts, difficult words, setting, characters, or prior knowledge of the subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher points out the meaning of a word in a dictionary or a synonym in a thesaurus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher isolates specific information to focus the student on the core concept being taught.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher acts out or has the students role-play newly introduced vocabulary or difficult concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher simplifies difficult vocabulary and then reformats complex word problems by bulleting or spacing out each step required to solve the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher provides the student with a specific supplemental aid (e.g., chart, table, graph, checklist, map, timeline) applicable to the question being posed, the assignment, or the task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher provides the formulas needed to solve a problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher provides visual aids (e.g., demonstrations, photographs, art) to identify people and places.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher provides visual aids (e.g., demonstrations, photographs, art) to define or clarify vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During classroom discussions, the teacher clarifies or rewords complex text or questions using simpler language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher directs the student (e.g., highlight, bold, point to, flag the information) to the specific parts of the passage, diagram, map, or figure that is being discussed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher presents parts of a complex concept one at a time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Educators, parents, and students must understand that designated supports provided during classroom instruction and testing might differ from designated supports allowed for use on state assessments. Instruction comes first and can be customized to meet each student’s needs. Unlike instruction, state assessments are standardized to provide a reliable comparison of outcomes across all test takers. Certain designated supports used in the classroom would invalidate the content being assessed or compromise the security and integrity of the state assessment. For this reason, not all designated supports suitable for instruction are allowed during state assessments. However, the policies for accessibility on
state assessments do not limit an educator’s ability to develop individualized materials and techniques to aid student learning.

Special Situations for Content and Language Supports

Because content and language supports are embedded designated supports presented in an online format, replicating these features in a paper or braille test version is not always possible. Technology-based supports enable most students to test online; however, in rare instances in which the use of an embedded support is not feasible, or if the administration of an online test is inappropriate due to a student’s particular disability, a student may be tested using a paper test booklet. Additional information can be found in the Special Administration of an Online Assessment section of the Coordinator Resources.

For students who take a braille test (including students who use the screen reader support for Refreshable Braille Displays) and are eligible for content and language supports, districts should ensure student eligibility is correctly marked in TIDE in order to receive a STAAR with Embedded Supports paper test booklet and place an order for braille materials in TIDE. Once materials are received, the test administrator will use the secure test instructions to provide access to the content and language supports in the specific test being administered. The secure test instructions will provide picture descriptions of content and language support images and graphics (e.g., charts, tables, graphs) that may be reproduced for accessibility (e.g., brailling graphics, pairing graphics with tactile symbols, texts, or objects, enlarging or projecting).

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing and eligible for oral or signed administrations and content and language supports must take STAAR online to access these embedded supports. However, since these students are unable to access the TTS function, a signed administration is allowed for those parts of the test that can be read aloud. ASL videos are offered as an online option for a signed administration.

ASL videos allow a student to independently select and change the level of signing support during the test administration by selecting chapters to review specific parts of the videos as needed. However, it is important to note that ASL videos are available only for test questions and revising passages in English and are not offered on Spanish tests or for content and language supports (e.g., pop-ups, rollovers). In these instances, test administrators may sign test content in the same way they do for paper tests. Test administrators should be trained using the STAAR Oral and Signed Administrations Educator Guide and should also read the specific guidelines for signing test content included in the General Instructions for Administering State Assessments to Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing section of the Coordinator Resources.
Planning for Testing

Careful review of the state accessibility policies is required so that students receive only those accessibility features and designated supports that are allowed or approved by TEA for use on state assessments. Coordinators, test administrators, and other campus personnel involved in state testing must consider the following questions related to ensuring accessibility for students on test day:

- Which students will receive accessibility features or designated supports on test day?
- What special arrangements need to be considered for students who will use accessibility features and designated supports on test day? For example, ensuring that calculators and other equipment have sufficient batteries or choosing separate settings for students who use certain supports requires advance planning.
- What staff training is needed to properly provide certain designated supports? For example, entering a student’s response into the Data Entry Interface (DEI) or providing an oral or signed administration of a paper test requires advance training.
- What campus and district procedures are in place to ensure test security, especially if the student is using technology as a support? Please refer to the Technology Guidelines for the Texas Assessment Program page and the Technology Use Guidelines Presentation in the Accessibility section of the Coordinator Resources.
- What procedure is in place and who is responsible for recording designated supports in TIDE?
- Have students had the opportunity to practice interacting with the tools and features in the Practice Test Site? It is important that students have used the online practice tests to become familiar with selecting answers, using the online tools, moving through the test, submitting the test, etc.
- What special arrangements need to be considered for students taking different versions of STAAR with different designated supports? For example, should students taking STAAR online without designated supports be grouped with students taking STAAR online with designated supports? Should students taking STAAR on paper and students taking STAAR online be grouped together?
- Are computers prepared for testing? Refer to the Setting Up TDS Workstations webpage.
- If your students are using the Refreshable Braille Display embedded online support, are the computers prepared for testing according to the guidelines laid out in the Setting Up TDS Workstations webpage?

For additional information, contact TEA using the Student Assessment Help Desk or call 512-463-9536.