

April 6, 2021

Subject: Technical Difficulties with the April 2021 STAAR Online Tests

To the ESC and District Testing Coordinator Addressed:

The purpose of this communication is to provide additional information related to the online testing issue that occurred on April 6, 2021 during the administration of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) grade 4 writing, grade 7 writing, and English I online tests.

As of the time this communication is sent, districts can plan to resume online testing the morning of April 7, 2021. TEA will notify districts before 5:00 a.m. (CT) on April 7th if the situation changes. For the foreseeable future, the dictionary functionality in the online platform will be disabled. Please make handheld dictionaries available for students to use during testing. TEA will continue to evaluate the effect of these technical difficulties and provide additional guidance, if needed.

The STAAR results this year are for learning and recovery. Districts and campuses will use STAAR to identify learning gaps. State and district leaders will use the results to ensure the schools and students in greatest need receive resources for recovery.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. When can students resume online testing?

Based on the flexibility already built into the online testing window, students impacted by the online testing disruption may resume online testing at any time during the five weeks scheduled for the April administration.

2. Can students testing online be switched to a paper test?

Yes, students who were scheduled to test online who began testing or who have not yet begun their online test may be moved to a paper test. However, it is recommended that students who have started their online test continue with their test online to avoid transcribing any answers that the student recorded in the online system. In addition, students who require specific accommodations that are provided online should continue to test online.

For students who started the online test and then are moved to a paper test, their online test should be marked as *Do Not Report*. For students who have not started the online test but are moved to a paper test, their online tests will be automatically voided at the close of the online testing window unless a score code is applied.

3. What should we do with online tests for students who are not able to complete the test?

If a student is not able to complete the online test during the five-week testing window (regardless of whether the student is an in-person learner or a remote learner), the district must determine whether the student's score code should be "O" for Other or "S" for Score.

4. Can students use the same test ticket that was issued for April 6th?

Yes, whether students began their test or had not yet begun the test, they may use the same test ticket that was issued for April 6th. No new test tickets are required for any students who resume testing or are moved to a test session later in the testing window.

- 5. Will students be able to resume testing where they left off and will their answers be saved?**
Yes, students' answers that have been entered into the online system will be saved. This includes partial written responses that the student began (even if the student resumes testing in a different week within the five-week window). In addition, the questions previously responded to by students on April 6th will not be locked when students resume testing.
- 6. For students who resume testing, will the testing time start over?**
No, for students who started the test and were not able to complete the test on April 6th, test administrators should have an estimate of the amount of time a student used. Then, the district should provide the remaining test time for the student to complete the test when they resume testing. For example, if a student was testing for about 30 minutes before being logged out of the test session, then the student should be provided with 3½ hours to complete the test when they resume testing. If a student was not able to log in and begin the test on April 6th, that student should be provided with the full 4 hours to test.
- 7. If students began their written response on scratch paper on April 6th, can the students use their scratch paper when they resume testing?**
Yes, if a student took notes or started a rough draft on scratch paper, the student may use his or her scratch paper when the test is resumed. However, it is important to ensure that the scratch paper is clearly identified as belonging to that student.

If you have questions about the information in this communication, submit your inquiries to TEA using the [Student Assessment Help Desk](#).

Texas Education Agency
Student Assessment Division
(512) 463-9536