

Testing of Special Populations

Assessments for Students Receiving Special Education Services

The STAAR program will include assessments for students receiving special education services. STAAR Modified and STAAR Alternate assessments will be available just as they were with the TAKS program. Beginning this fall for the 2011–2012 school year, STAAR Alternate will be the only alternate assessment offered for students with significant cognitive disabilities rather than continuing TAKS–Alt only for students in grades 10 and 11. STAAR Modified will cover all grades 3–8 and EOC with the exception of Algebra II, Chemistry or Physics. The new STAAR Modified assessments will reflect the same increased rigor and focus of the general assessments and now will include more rigorous item types. STAAR Alternate will incorporate a vertical alignment in the program's assessment tasks, and the high school assessment will move from grade-level assessments to course-based assessments.

Assessments for English Language Learners

With the development of the new STAAR program, all aspects of linguistic accommodations are being reviewed, including student eligibility criteria, grades and subjects included in the linguistically accommodated version of STAAR, known as STAAR L, and the types of accommodations that will be provided. Plans are being made for the development of computer-based linguistically-accommodated versions of STAAR for grades 3–8 and high school for the year 2013. Until then, STAAR L tests will be administered in paper mode only.

Please note that there are no changes to the current TELPAS program and associated policies for the 2011–2012 school year.

Dyslexia Accommodations

TEA is expanding testing policies to include high school students with dyslexia and other similar reading disabilities. Students will be allowed to take the STAAR English I, II, and III assessments as well as the grades 3–8 reading assessments with accommodations, such as the oral reading of item stems/answer options and extended time. These accommodations represent two of the three accommodations in the former dyslexia bundle. The only accommodation that will no longer be provided is the proper-nouns list.

Other Accommodations

TEA will be posting specific information and qualification requirements for all accommodations very soon.