

# Spring 2021 State Assessment Guidance

Date: February 25, 2021

The purpose of this Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) guidance is to provide Texas school districts and open-enrollment charter schools with information related to the spring and summer 2021 state assessments, including the April and June administrations of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR), the administration of STAAR Alternate 2, the administration of the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS), and the administration of TELPAS 3 (e)-3 (d) 2.3 (t).

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) will continue to evaluate the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic across the state and provide additional guidance for 2021 state assessments, if needed. Although state assessments will not be used for state or federal accountability purposes for the 2020-2021 school year, the state assessments will provide equitable baseline data necessary to determine actual learning loss during the COVID

However, there are no statutory consequences for school systems or campuses on students' performance on state assessments this year. For school systems and campuses, the A-F rating for the 2020-2021 school year has been paused. However, while accountability consequences for school systems have been paused for this school year, school systems may be subject to agency review if excessive absences for the assessment occur. More information on these policies is outlined in agency correspondence linked below:

- x [A-F Ratings Paused](#)

- x



- x Sufficient bandwidth must be ensured for all students who are testing online.
- x Answer documents should be grouped under the correct Campus and Group Identification Sheets

- x TELPAS Alternate 2 for medical exception (this decision should have been made prior to attempting to administer the assessment and requires documentation in the student's individualized education program)

9. What do I do if a student who is receiving remote instruction does not participate in the spring 2021 administrations?

For any eligible student receiving remote instruction who does not go to the campus or designated testing site to take a STAAR, STAAR Alternate 2, or TELPAS Assessment in spring 2021, the district should indicate "O" for other in the SCORE CODE field and "0" under column D in the AGENCY USE field. Students who are scheduled to take EOC assessments STAAR or STAAR Alternate 2 will be missing an opportunity to meet assessment graduation requirements.

10. What do I do if a student is required to quarantine during the district scheduled assessment day and is not able to test during the remainder of the testing window?

If a student is not able to take a STAAR, STAAR Alternate 2, TELPAS or TELPAS Alternate assessment during the allowable testing window due to COVID quarantine, then the student's test should be marked "A" for absent. There are extended testing windows this year to help reduce the likelihood that this situation occurs. For TELPAS Alternate this would mean a student is not able to complete all 40 Observable Behaviors. For STAAR Assessments only, the district may request a medical exclusion (for the district participation rate) at the end of the testing window.

11. I want to ensure social distancing on campuses during test administration, and as such believe I need to reduce the total number of students on campuses on scheduled testing days. Does my district have the ability to require students who are not scheduled to take an assessment to learn remotely on testing days?

For specific assessments, including STAAR, TELPAS Assessments, and certain college readiness assessments (SAT, PSAT, ACT, Aspire, and ISIA), if a district cannot assess all students during the district scheduled assessment days and comply with local health protocols the district can submit a waiver to require students who are not scheduled to take that assessment to learn remotely on a scheduled testing day. Districts should use other flexibility (e.g., extended windows) to ensure that this impacts the minimum number of students possible. Districts should have a communication plan in place to encourage as many students as normally remote as possible to participate in the assessment.

For students in grades 9-12, school systems already have access to this flexibility through the [40% Campus Hybrid Instruction for 9-12th Grade Students Waiver](#). For students in kindergarten through grade 8, school systems may apply for the [Hybrid Instruction During District-Scheduled Testing Days for K-8th Grade Students Waiver](#). These waivers are intended to allow school systems to establish a less-than-daily on-campus attendance schedule as the sole offering for students in one or more campuses of the district in order to reduce the number of individuals on a campus at any one time and increase the total number of students served in a campus setting in the district on testing days. For STAAR, this waiver should be limited to 10 days across the April and May STAAR administrations. For all other assessments,

subject to further review by TEA. In the event one of these testing days has already occurred,

