ARD Committee Training for the 2014-15 Texas Assessment Program
The ARD committee reviews the student's PLAAFP and instructional goals and determines how the student accesses the grade-level/course curriculum (TEKS).

**With or without accommodations**
- STAAR®

**With accommodations and meet eligibility criteria**
- STAAR® SOA or STAAR® Accommodated

**Through prerequisite skills and meet participation requirements**
- STAAR® Alternate2

*This is not dependent on student receiving modified instruction.*

*Adapted from ARDC training 2013-2014.*
What does “access” mean?
Access = a means of approach...
how a teacher exposes a student to the grade-level/course TEKS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Focus</th>
<th>Access Method</th>
<th>Instructional Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STAAR®/STAAR® SOA/STAAR® Accommodated*</td>
<td>Instruction covers all of the required curriculum</td>
<td><strong>Accommodations</strong>&lt;br&gt;*This is not dependent on student receiving modified instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAAR ® Alternate2</td>
<td>Individualized instruction that exposes the student to selected knowledge and skills statements through aligned student expectations from earlier grades</td>
<td><strong>Prerequisite skills</strong> linked to grade-level/ course curriculum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Adapted from ARDC training 2013-2014.
In the case of an ELL with a disability, the decision should be made by the applicable group (RtI Committee, 504 Committee, ARD Committee) in conjunction with the student’s LPAC.

*ARF – Accommodation Request Form

Until Type 2 accommodations are approved by TEA, all paperwork should read “pending TEA approval.”

Be sure to check the eligibility criteria as well as the assessments on which the accommodation(s) may be used. PDFs of each accommodation can be found on TEA’s website or by clicking here.

Created by Erin Kelts
What should an ARD committee know prior to making an assessment decision for a student?

ARD committees must understand:

• What state assessments are required and available
• Assessed TEKS and/or ELPS
• Participation requirements for specific assessments
• Design and format of each state assessment
• Accommodation policies for the STAAR® programs

*Adapted from ARDC training 2013-2014.
Remember that the PLAAFP drives the rest of the IEP – consider if the needs indicated in the PLAAFP justify the accommodations that are being recommended.

There MUST be a direct and consistent correlation between the PLAAFP, goals, supports and the testing decision!
What should an ARD committee consider first when making assessment decisions?

• Participation in the general assessment should be the first consideration when determining the appropriate assessment for a student receiving special education services.

  General assessment = STAAR®

• Most students receiving special education services in Texas are assessed with the general assessment, with or without accommodations. Students should be challenged with the most rigorous assessment possible.

*Adapted from ARDC training 2013-2014.*
The First Consideration = The General Assessment

ARD committees must determine whether the general assessment is the most appropriate by:

- Reviewing the student’s present level of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP)
  - The PLAAFP should provide the committee members with a clear understanding of the student’s performance in the grade-level/course TEKS, including strengths, current areas of need, and accommodations, modifications, or supports used.

*Adapted from ARDC training 2013-2014.
The First Consideration = The General Assessment

ARD committees must determine whether the general assessment is the most appropriate by:

• Reviewing the student’s **instructional plan**
  • This is the basis for making appropriate assessment decisions.
  • The ARD committee must have a clear understanding of how the student will access the grade-level/course curriculum, including accommodations, modifications, or supports needed.

*Adapted from ARDC training 2013-2014.*
What should be documented in the student’s IEP when considering the general assessment?

- If STAAR®, with or without accommodations, is appropriate for a student, the ARD committee must document this decision and the testing accommodations the student will receive.
  - Documented testing accommodations must be consistent with state accommodation policies.
    - It is important to note that there are different accommodation policies for the STAAR® and TAKS programs
    - Refer to the Accommodations Resources webpage. [http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/accommodations/](http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/accommodations/)
    - For accommodations that require TEA approval through submission of an Accommodation Request Form*, document “pending TEA approval.”

*Open January, 2015
[http://tea.texas.gov/Student_Testing_and_Accountability/Testing/Student_Assessment_Overview/Accommodation_Resources/2015_Accommodations_for_Students_with_Disabilities_Taking_State_Assessments/](http://tea.texas.gov/Student_Testing_and_Accountability/Testing/Student_Assessment_Overview/Accommodation_Resources/2015_Accommodations_for_Students_with_Disabilities_Taking_State_Assessments/)

*Adapted from ARDC training 2013-2014.
SSI: 2014-15 School Year

• There is no SSI for grades 5 & 8 Mathematics.

• The SSI manual will be updated to reflect STAAR® A as an assessment option.
STAAR®, with or without allowable or approved accommodations, should be the first consideration.

Allowable Accommodations

The decision to use an accommodation during a state assessment is made on an individual student basis and considers the needs of the student and whether the student routinely receives the accommodation during classroom instruction and testing.

*Adapted from ARDC training 2013-2014.*
Using Accommodations on State Assessment

http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/accommodations/
This section provides a general description of the accommodation.

This section lists the assessments the accommodation may be used on by eligible students.

This section lists the eligibility criteria that must be met in order for the student to use the accommodation on a state assessment.

This section describes who can make accommodation decisions for students, where to document these decisions, and what to record on the answer document.

This section describes the specific examples/types of the accommodation that may be used on the state assessment. Pay careful attention to this list because it is sometimes exhaustive.

This section outlines special instructions and considerations about the accommodation that educators must be aware of when making the decisions to use the accommodation and when administering the assessment with the accommodation.

From TEA Accommodations Training
Pay attention that there may be multiple eligibly criteria
(In this case, 3 criteria; meets at least one of the following)

Key words: inclusive, meets all, meets at least, and, etc.
Using Accommodations on State Assessment

If you are recommending accommodations for students to use on state assessment, be prepared to show data, documentation, work samples and justification as to why a student should use the accommodation.

As well, it must be properly documented in their IEP, 504 plan, LEP documentation, etc.
Standardized Oral Administration (SOA) for the STAAR®

TEA is offering Standardized oral administration for the STAAR® program as an online option for oral administration. The option is available statewide to eligible students in the following grades and subjects:

- grade 4 reading and mathematics (English only)
- grade 5 science (English only)
- grade 6 reading and mathematics
- grade 7 reading and mathematics
- grade 8 science and social studies

The SOA forms feature a text-to-speech panel that students can use to hear selected text in test questions, answer choices, and graphics similar to the way it is on the traditional oral administration of a paper assessment.

*From TEA SOA Resources*
Standardized Oral Administration (SOA) for the STAAR®

The online tool through which SOA is delivered allows a student to independently select and change his or her level of reading support during the test administration. SOA should only be administered to an eligible student for whom the appropriateness of this type of oral administration has been discussed and documented.

*From TEA SOA Resources*
Standardized Oral Administration (SOA) for the STAAR®

It is recommended that the students complete the STAAR® SOA online tutorial (SOA webpage) prior to test administration. This tutorial allows students to become familiar with the tools available to them during the online SOA test session.

http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/SOA/

*From TEA SOA Resources*
Oral/Signed Admin

A student may use this accommodation if he or she

• routinely and effectively uses this accommodation during classroom instruction and testing, and

• meets at least one of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special Education</th>
<th>Section 504</th>
<th>General Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>identified with dyslexia or a related disorder per TEC §38.003</td>
<td>identified with dyslexia or a related disorder per TEC §38.003</td>
<td>identified with dyslexia or a related disorder per TEC §38.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evidence of reading difficulties</td>
<td>evidence of reading difficulties</td>
<td>evidence of reading difficulties</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Does not have to denote in IEP that the student will be taking the SOA version... just that they have to be OA eligible

*From TEA SOA Resources
TEC §38.003

(1) "Dyslexia" means a disorder of constitutional origin manifested by a difficulty in learning to read, write, or spell, despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence, and sociocultural opportunity.

(2) "Related disorders" includes disorders similar to or related to dyslexia, such as developmental auditory imperception, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling disability.

*From STAAR Accommodations Training October, 2014*
See the SOA Resources page for additional information:

http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/soa/

Standardized Oral Administration

TEA is offering Standardized oral administration for the STAAR program as an online option for oral administration. The option is available statewide to eligible students in the following grades and subjects:

• grade 4 reading and mathematics (English only)
• grade 5 science (English only)
• grade 6 reading and mathematics
• grade 7 reading and mathematics
• grade 8 science and social studies

The SOA forms feature a text-to-speech panel that students can use to hear selected text in test questions, answer choices, and graphics similar to the way it is on the traditional oral administration of a paper assessment. To set up and manage online SOA test sessions, campus coordinators and test administrators must follow the instructions in the User's Guide for the Texas Assessment Management System and in the appropriate STAAR test administrator manual.

Preparation for Administration
What should be documented in the student’s IEP when considering the general assessment?

• If the STAAR assessment with accommodations, is not appropriate for a student, the ARD committee must review the eligibility requirements for STAAR® A.
Introduction to STAAR® A

• STAAR® A will be the **same** as STAAR® in the following ways:
  • Same passing standards
  • Same time limits
  • Same assessed curriculum
  • Same test blueprint
  • Same progress measures

• STAAR® A will be **different** than STAAR® in the following ways:
  • No field test questions
  • Online administration
  • Embedded accommodations and accessibility features

*From STAAR Accommodations Training October, 2014*
STAAR® A Eligibility Requirements
Eligibility Requirements

If a student cannot access STAAR® with or without allowable accommodations, he or she must be receiving the following services in order to consider STAAR® A:

• Students with identified disabilities who are receiving special education services
• Students identified with dyslexia or a related disorder (as defined in Texas Education Code §38.003) and are receiving Section 504 services

A student may take STAAR® in some subjects and STAAR® A in other subjects, depending on eligibility.
# STAAR® A Accommodations Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Embedded Accommodations</th>
<th>Accessibility Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answer Eliminator</td>
<td>Pop-ups</td>
<td>Text-to-Speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlighter</td>
<td>Rollovers</td>
<td>Zoom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eraser</td>
<td>Blank Graphic Organizers</td>
<td>Color and Contrast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pencil</td>
<td>Writing Checklists</td>
<td>Place Marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notepad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dot Tool*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line Tool*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruler*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculator*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference Materials*</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These tools are subject-specific and only appear in subject tests where they are relevant.*
STAAR® A Accommodations Guidelines

http://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=25769817490&menu_id=793
Eligibility Requirements

STAAR® Accommodated

• The STAAR® A Eligibility Requirements are state-required documentation forms that must be completed and included in the IEP.

• This form is retained locally.
State-Required Documentation Forms

• For STAAR® A, the district personnel completing the form needs to be identified by name on the form, along with his or her position.

• The district personnel named in the form is responsible for making sure the ARD committee discusses each section.

• The district personnel who completes these forms should be a member of the ARD committee (e.g., special education teacher, ARD facilitator, administrator). These forms should be completed during the ARD committee meeting when assessment decisions are made.
Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to participate in STAAR® A, the answer to all of the eligibility statements on page one of the eligibility requirements must be “Yes.”

If the answer to any of these eligibility questions is “No,” the student is not eligible to participate in that assessment and must participate in one of the other state assessments.
Step I: Review the Eligibility Criteria for STAAR® A

- The ARD committee must be able to check these two eligibility statements in order for the assessment to be considered appropriate for a student.

**Step I: Indicate Eligible Services** Indicate the service the student is receiving. If a student is not receiving either of these services, the student is not eligible to participate in STAAR A and must take one of the other state assessments.

- The student has an identified disability and is receiving special education services.
- The student is identified with dyslexia or a related disorder as defined in Texas Education Code (TEC) §38.003, and is receiving Section 504 services.
Step II: Review Eligibility Criteria for **STAAR® A**

The ARD or Section 504 committee (in conjunction with the LPAC if the student is an ELL) must circle the subject(s) for which STAAR A is being considered and check the accommodation(s) the student routinely receives in the classroom for that subject. If a particular subject is not applicable, circle NA. **To be eligible to participate in STAAR A in a particular subject, TWO OR MORE accommodations must be checked in that subject.** If fewer than two accommodations are checked, the student is not eligible to participate in STAAR® A in that subject.
Step II: Review Eligibility Criteria for STAAR® A

- A list of testing accommodations consistent with the state accommodation policies is posted on the TEA Resources webpage.
- In order to make appropriate accommodation decisions from year to year, their effectiveness should be assessed.
  - Collect data on how the student performs with and without the accommodation.
  - Make available to the student a variety of instructional strategies to see which are most effective.
- Students taking STAAR® A may be receiving instruction in any setting (e.g., inclusion, resource, self-contained) or for any amount of time.

  ARD committee decisions should be based only on the educational needs of a student.
Step II: Review Eligibility Criteria for STAAR® A

It is not appropriate to make an assessment decision simply because a student passed or failed a previous state assessment.

*Example:* If a student achieved Satisfactory Academic Performance on STAAR® Alternate at Complexity Level 3 in the past, this does not necessarily mean that the student should now take STAAR®. Other factors must be considered.

*Example:* If a student received an Unsatisfactory Academic Performance on STAAR® Modified in the past, it does not automatically mean that the student should now take STAAR® A or STAAR® Alternate 2. Students must meet eligibility criteria for STAAR® A or the participation requirements for STAAR® Alternate 2.
Step III: Summarize Assessment Decisions for STAAR® A

- The ARD or Section 504 committee (in conjunction with the LPAC if the student is an ELL) should indicate the STAAR® A test(s) the student will take for the school year under consideration. This form must be included in the student’s IEP or IAP to serve as the required documentation of the state academic achievement decision.

- Additional testing accommodations may be allowed and must be documented in the student’s paperwork as well. Refer to the Accommodation Triangle on the TEA Student Assessment website for more information.

Indicate the STAAR A tests the student will take for the school year under consideration.

- Reading Grade ___
- Writing Grade ___
- English I
- English II
- Mathematics Grade ___
- Algebra I
- Science Grade ___
- U.S. History
- Biology
- Social Studies Grade 8
See the STAAR® A Resources page for additional information:

http://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=25769817490&menu_id=793
For Additional Information:

Participation Requirements
Participation Requirements

STAAR® Alternate 2

- The STAAR® Alternate 2 Participation Requirements are state-required documentation forms that must be completed and included in the IEP.
- This form is retained locally.
State-Required Documentation Forms

• For STAAR® Alternate, the district personnel completing the form needs to be identified by name on the form, along with his or her position.

• The district personnel named in the form is responsible for making sure the ARD committee discusses each section.

• The district personnel who completes these forms should be a member of the ARD committee (e.g., special education teacher, ARD facilitator, administrator). These forms should be completed during the ARD committee meeting when assessment decisions are made.
Participation Requirements

• To be eligible to participate in STAAR® Alternate 2, the answer to all of the eligibility questions on page one of the participation requirements must be “Yes.”

• If the answer to any of these eligibility questions is “No,” the student is not eligible to participate in that assessment and must participate in one of the other state assessments.
Step I: Review the Eligibility Criteria for STAAR® Alternate 2

- Eligibility is considered for all assessed subjects in the student’s enrolled grade or all assessed courses the student is enrolled in.
- If the student is eligible to take STAAR® Alternate 2, then he/she must take this assessment for all subjects/courses. Mixing assessments is not allowed.
Step I: Review the Eligibility Criteria for STAAR® Alternate 2

• The ARD committee must answer “Yes” to these four eligibility questions in order for the assessment to be considered appropriate for a student.
  • Does the student have a **significant cognitive disability**?
  • Does the student require **specialized supports** to access the grade-level curriculum and environment?
  • Does the student require **intensive, individualized instruction** in a **variety of instructional settings**?
  • Does the student access and participate in the grade-level TEKS through **prerequisite skills**?
Step I: Review the Eligibility Criteria for STAAR® Alternate 2

• The ARD committee must review each of the four questions and circle YES or NO.

• Each “Yes” answer requires a justification that contains evidence that the student meets the criteria. The recorded justification does not have to be referenced by IEP page numbers, but should be based on quantifiable evidence.

**ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

1. **Does the student have a significant cognitive disability?**

   A significant cognitive disability is determined by the ARD committee and must be based on evaluation information performed by a qualified evaluation team. The significant cognitive disability must affect the student’s intellectual potential and be documented as such in the student’s individualized education program (IEP). A student with a significant cognitive disability has limited potential to reach grade-level expectations; whereas, a student with a learning disability has the potential to reach grade-level expectations, but has difficulty doing so due to his or her disability.

   **Justification:** Based on PLAAFP; narrative/anecdotal; not just IEP page/section number
Eligibility Criteria – Question 1

1. Does the student have a significant cognitive disability?

- Yes
- No

- A significant cognitive disability is determined by the ARD committee and must be based on evaluation information performed by a qualified evaluation team.

- The disability must affect the student’s intellectual potential and be documented in the student’s IEP.

- A student with a significant cognitive disability has limited potential to reach grade-level expectations.

- While a student with a learning disability may have academic challenges, he or she has the intellectual potential to reach grade-level expectations and, therefore, is not eligible to take STAAR Alternate 2.

**Justification (Example):** Based on Amy’s most current FIE, her full scale IQ falls well below 70 indicating a limitation in intellectual functioning. Adaptive behavior scales indicate significant deficits in the following domains: self-care, socialization, and communication skills. The team agrees that she meets the eligibility criteria for STAAR Alternate 2 as a student with an intellectual disability.
Eligibility Criteria – Question 2

2. Does the student require specialized supports to access the grade-level curriculum and environment? **Yes**  **No**

• Federal regulations mandate that all students have access to and be assessed on grade-level curriculum.

• To access the grade-level curriculum, a student with a significant cognitive disability needs specialized academic instruction.

• Additionally, a student eligible for STAAR Alternate 2 requires support throughout the day in areas such as communicating needs, navigating the classroom or school building, eating lunch, negotiating social situations, and/or taking care of personal needs.

**Justification (Example):** Amy has difficulty attending to tasks and requires numerous redirections to stay focused. When in a large group for instruction, Amy is easily distracted and does not process language well. Her expressive language delays make it difficult for Amy to express her needs in a large group. Because of this, Amy requires specialized instruction in a small group setting for academic skills. Amy’s weak language skills also make it difficult for her to respond appropriately in social situations; therefore, she requires assistance during nonacademic school activities. Amy requires assistance to perform all self-care skills.
3. Does the student require intensive, individualized instruction in a variety of instructional settings?  

Yes  
No

• The student needs specialized academic instruction and techniques over a period of time to learn and retain information.

• Instruction in a variety of settings is required in order for the student to transfer skills (generalize).

**Justification (Example):** Amy’s short attention span and distractibility require her to need numerous repetitions and drill in order to retain knowledge. Additionally, she acquires and retains knowledge best when skills are taught in the setting or situation in which the skill naturally occurs. For example, to address a social studies prerequisite skill involving economics, Amy was more successful in purchasing an item in the school store rather than in a classroom simulation.
Eligibility Criteria – Question 4

4. Does the student access and participate in the grade-level TEKS through prerequisite skills?

- Access to the grade-level curriculum is mandated by the federal government.
- A student with a significant cognitive disability requires access to the TEKS through prerequisite skills.
- Prerequisite skills are student expectations from previous grades that are linked to the grade-level curriculum.

**Justification (Example):** Although Amy shows relative strengths in the areas of math calculation and math reasoning, she is performing skills that are several grade levels behind her grade 8 peers in all academic areas. Her access to the grade-level TEKS is through prerequisite skills.
Instructional Terms List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 3 Reading</th>
<th>Grade 4 Reading</th>
<th>Grade 5 Reading</th>
<th>Grade 6 Reading</th>
<th>Grade 7 Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nouns: long, short</td>
<td>main idea/supporting details</td>
<td>photograph</td>
<td>article</td>
<td>character: feelings, traits, motivations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consonants</td>
<td>captions</td>
<td>fiction/nonfiction</td>
<td>events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suffix/prefix</td>
<td>evidence from text</td>
<td>illustration</td>
<td>true/false</td>
<td>sequence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>noun/verb</td>
<td>alphabetize</td>
<td>information/entertain</td>
<td>folklore</td>
<td>logical order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>antonym/opposite</td>
<td>table of contents</td>
<td>adjective</td>
<td>fairy tale</td>
<td>plot/problem/solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contractions</td>
<td>glossary</td>
<td>website</td>
<td>procedural text: steps, directions</td>
<td>predict/prediction: clues, confirmation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>text</td>
<td>meaning for the word</td>
<td>supports</td>
<td>stability/may/mind</td>
<td>inference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phrase</td>
<td>heading</td>
<td>topic</td>
<td>poems/poetry, rhyme, line</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infographic</td>
<td>setting</td>
<td>Jessica</td>
<td>beverages/paper, rhyme, line</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In addition to the prerequisite skills, there are instructional terms that students will need exposure to during instruction. A list has been added to each Curriculum Framework document and includes the terms for all the essence statements and not just the ones selected for a given administration.
- Students need to become familiar with these terms as the student is developmentally able to comprehend the content.
- Students in higher grades need to also know the terms presented in earlier grades.
- These lists can be found at the beginning of each framework.
There are also universal terms that students will need exposure to that are common to the presentation instructions across subjects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>completes</th>
<th>probably</th>
<th>activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>best</td>
<td>stem</td>
<td>benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mainly</td>
<td>symbol</td>
<td>value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>correct</td>
<td>beginning</td>
<td>relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pair</td>
<td>conclusion</td>
<td>true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>describe</td>
<td>statement</td>
<td>graphic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>represents</td>
<td>missing</td>
<td>find</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If “Yes” is indicated for all of the eligibility questions for STAAR Alternate 2, the ARD committee must discuss the assurances in Step II, and the district personnel completing the form must initial each one after it is discussed.
Step II: Discuss Assurances for STAAR® Alternate 2

Under 34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §300.320(a)(6) and 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC)§89.1055, if the ARD committee determines that the student will take STAAR Alternate 2, the IEP must provide a statement of why the student cannot participate in the general assessment (STAAR) with or without allowable accommodations, and why the alternate assessment is appropriate for the student, including that all of the eligibility criteria are met.

When an alternate assessment is selected, IDEA and The Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process require ARD committees to document in the IEP:

• A statement of why the student cannot participate in the general assessment, with or without allowable accommodations, AND...

• A statement of why an alternate assessment is appropriate for the student, including evidence from the IEP that confirms that the answer to each of the questions for STAAR® Alternate 2 is “Yes”
Step II: Discuss Assurances for STAAR® Alternate 2

A list of testing accommodations consistent with the state accommodation policies posted on the TEA Resources webpage for STAAR® Alternate 2.

• In order to make appropriate accommodation decisions from year to year, their effectiveness should be assessed.

• Collect data on how the student performs with and without the accommodation.

• Make available to the student a variety of instructional strategies to see which are most effective.
## Allowable Accommodations for STAAR Alternate 2

### Accommodations to the Two-dimensional Stimulus Images

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allowable Accommodation</th>
<th>Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Color or highlight stimulus images or answer choices</td>
<td>The accommodation must be presented uniformly so that the correct answer is not emphasized over the other choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place color overlays on images or text</td>
<td>If using cards, the answer choices must be placed in the same order (top/lef; middle/middle; bottom/right).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photocopy and cut out stimulus images from the test booklet (can be affixed to appropriate presentation media, e.g., easels, poster board, card stock, etc.)</td>
<td>All demonstrations must include only what was presented in the stimulus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair images or text in student’s booklet with photographs of the same objects, real objects of the same content, or picture representations</td>
<td>If photographs or real objects are placed over images, each answer choice must have a photograph or real object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attach textured materials to images in the student’s booklet</td>
<td>Any replacements, photographs, or objects must be as close to the original as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate concepts or relationships in images</td>
<td>Description of images can only include details of what can be seen in the image without comments about the overall impression of the image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise or darken the outline of drawings in stimulus images</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enlarge images with magnification devices, photocopying, or computer magnification programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add braille labels to images or provide text in braille</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe images for students with visual impairments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Accommodations to Limit Number of Images Shown at One Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allowable Accommodation</th>
<th>Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide stimulus on cards presented one at a time</td>
<td>All images must be presented in the same order or configuration as shown in the STAAR Alternate Student Booklet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover or isolate each image until it is addressed</td>
<td>All cover-up techniques must be uniformly applied to all images within an item</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Accommodations to Language Used in the Test Administration Instructions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allowable Accommodation</th>
<th>Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use routine picture representations for key words in verbal directions to the student</td>
<td>With the exception of words of encouragement, no additional information other than what is visually presented, stated in text, or supplied in the STAAR Alternate Administrator Instructions can be provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reread sections of the text as requested by the student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All accommodations should be applied by the test administrator in accordance with the accommodations outlined in the student’s IEP. Accommodations should be provided only when needed for student accessibility to the testing materials. If a student needs additional accommodations beyond what is described on this chart, contact TEA for guidance.

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It is not appropriate to make an assessment decision simply because a student passed or failed a previous state assessment.

• **Example:** If a student achieved Satisfactory Academic Performance on STAAR® Alternate at Complexity Level 3 in the past, this does not necessarily mean that the student should now take STAAR®. Other factors must be considered.

• **Example:** If a student received an Unsatisfactory Academic Performance on STAAR® Modified in the past, it does not automatically mean that the student should now take STAAR® A or STAAR® Alternate 2. Students must meet eligibility criteria for STAAR® A or the participation requirements for STAAR® Alternate 2.
Step II: Discuss Assurances for STAAR® Alternate 2

The decision to administer STAAR Alternate 2 is made by the ARD committee, not administratively based on federal accountability requirements which limit the number of students taking an alternate assessment who can be counted as proficient in Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) performance calculations. Although STAAR Alternate 2 is intended for a small number of students, the proficiency cap does not limit the number of students receiving special education services who may take the alternate assessment.

• ARD committee decisions should be based only on the educational needs of a student.
• If a student meets the participation requirements for STAAR® Alternate 2, then he or she should be administered that assessment.
Step II: Discuss Assurances for STAAR Alternate® 2

The decision to administer STAAR Alternate 2 is based on the student’s educational need and the instruction the student is receiving. This decision is not based solely on the student’s disability category and is not based on the student’s racial or economic background, excessive or extended absences, or amount of time or location of service delivery.

- Only students with significant cognitive disabilities are eligible to take STAAR® Alternate 2 and all four eligibility questions must be answered “Yes.”
- Students taking STAAR® Alternate 2 may be receiving instruction in any setting (e.g., inclusion, resource, self-contained) or for any amount of time.
Step II: Discuss Assurances for STAAR® Alternate 2

Initial the one that applies:

For a student in elementary or middle school, the ARD committee understands that instructional and assessment decisions made now may impact a student’s graduation options when he or she is in high school.

For a student taking end-of-course assessments, the student is enrolled in a course being considered for STAAR Alternate 2 that has a Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) course number indicating that the coursework is accessed through prerequisite skills.
Step II: Discuss Assurances for STAAR® Alternate 2

Students are only eligible to take STAAR® Alternate 2 if they are accessing the curriculum through prerequisite skills linked to the grade-level curriculum.

For high school students, these courses are denoted by a special PEIMS code.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicate the alternate high school courses and PEIMS course numbers the student will be enrolled in this school year.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ English I Alternate 03220107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Algebra I Alternate 03100507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Biology Alternate 03010207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ U.S. History Alternate 03340107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ English II Alternate 03220207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step III: Summarize Assessment Decisions for STAAR® Alternate 2

- The ARD committee should indicate the subject(s) or course(s) in which the student is enrolled and for which STAAR® Alternate 2 assessments will be given.

- The student will take STAAR® Alternate 2 for all required subjects or enrolled high school courses.
Medical Exception

Students that are medically fragile and cannot attend to or tolerate any academic interaction can qualify for a medical exception for the following circumstances:

• The student is in the final stages of a terminal or degenerative illness.
• The student is receiving extensive short-term medical treatment due to a medical emergency or serious injury in an accident.
• The student is unable to interact with peers or staff without risk of infection or contamination to himself/herself or others.
• The student is receiving non-academic homebound services due to medical issues and does not receive academic instruction.
At least one of the specific medical conditions listed should describe the medical condition of the student.

The ARD committee must discuss the three assurances and initial them after they are discussed.

The medical exception should be documented in the student’s IEP and this form included in the IEP.

Students are not required to participate in the administration of STAAR Alternate 2 for any courses or subjects for which they are enrolled in for the current year.

A score code of “M” must be recorded for all tests the student would have taken.
No Authentic Academic Response (NAAR)

Students who are not able to respond authentically to any verbal, visual, or tactile stimuli during academic instruction due to level of cognition rather than a medical condition can qualify for a NAAR exception if one of the two following student descriptions is evident:

1. Because of multiple impairments, the student is unable to receive information during instruction and assessment. For example, the student may have a combination of visual, auditory, and/or tactile impairments.

2. The student is consistently unable to provide an authentic academic response during instruction. His or her behavior may be described by one or more of the following characterizations:

   does not show any observable reaction to a specific stimuli
   exhibits only startle responses
   tracks or fixates on objects at random and not for a purpose
   moves or responds only to internal stimuli
   vocalizes intermittently regardless of changes in the environment
One “Yes” will need to be circled on the form.

The ARD committee must discuss the two assurances and initial them after they are discussed.

The NAAR designation should be documented in the student’s IEP and this form included in the IEP.

Students are not required to participate in the administration of STAAR Alternate 2 for any courses or subjects for which they are enrolled in for the current year.

A score code of “N” must be recorded for all tests the student would have taken.
ME, NAAR, & ACCOUNTABILITY

• Is there a limit to the number of students that can be ME or NAAR in a campus/district?
  • No set percentage, however high percentages may draw attention
    • Complete all necessary paperwork and considerations

• How will NAAR impact campuses for accountability?
  • (M and N) codes will be treated like an O code for participation, but not for performance.
  • Scoring standard has not been set. (Anticipated date is May, 2015.)
See the STAAR® Alternate 2 Resources page for additional information:

For Additional Information:

Assessment Decisions for ELLs Receiving Special Education Services
Assessment Decisions for ELLs Receiving Special Education Services

• ELLs receiving special education services may be administered any assessment depending on whether they meet the participation requirements
  • STAAR
  • STAAR Spanish
  • STAAR L
  • STAAR Alternate

• Chapter 101 of the TAC requires the LPAC to work in conjunction with the ARD committee to make assessment decisions for these students

• The collaboration helps ensure that factors related to disabling conditions and second language acquisition are both carefully considered

From TEA Student Assessment Division “Training on the LPAC Decision-Making Process for the Texas Assessment Program”
STAAR® A and STAAR® Alternate

• Important: ELLs participate in these assessments only on the basis of their disability, not second language acquisition

• The LPAC’s involvement in assessment decision-making for ELLs served by special education should help ensure that ELL participation in these assessments is appropriate

Adapted From TEA Student Assessment Division “Training on the LPAC Decision-Making Process for the Texas Assessment Program”
English Proficiency Exit Criteria

Process for Considering Special Exit Criteria from Bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) Services Under 19 TAC §89.1225(k)¹

2014–2015 School Year
Grades 1–12

Under Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §89.1225(h), districts are required to use the exit criteria represented in the chart titled 2014-2015 English Proficiency Exit Criteria Chart found at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=4098 to exit English language learners (ELLs) from bilingual/ESL programs. The exit criteria under TAC §89.1225(h) apply to the vast majority of ELLs who receive special education services. In rare cases, an ELL receiving special education services may qualify to be exited using criteria permitted under TAC §89.1225(k), which give special consideration to an ELL for whom assessments and/or standards under TAC §89.1225(h) are not appropriate because of the nature of a student’s particular disabling condition.

This document outlines the process to follow when considering whether a student qualifies to exit using the criteria authorized by TAC §89.1225(k).

### English Proficiency Exit Criteria

#### 2014–2015 English Proficiency Exit Criteria Chart

At the end of the school year, a district may transfer (exit, reclassify, transition) an English language learner out of a bilingual or ESL education program for the first time or a subsequent time if the student is able to participate equally in a regular all-English instruction program as determined by satisfactory performance in all three assessment areas below and the results of a subjective teacher evaluation.

For State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) English reading and English writing, the performance level for program exit is Level II (Satisfactory Academic Performance) or above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current School Year</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>6th</th>
<th>7th</th>
<th>8th</th>
<th>9th</th>
<th>10th</th>
<th>11th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral = Listening &amp; Speaking</td>
<td>Scored Fluent on English OLPT&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Scored Fluent on English OLPT&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Scored Fluent on English OLPT&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Scored Fluent on English OLPT&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Scored Fluent on English OLPT&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Scored Fluent on English OLPT&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Scored Fluent on English OLPT&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Scored Fluent on English OLPT&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Scored Fluent on English OLPT&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Scored Fluent on English OLPT&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Reading&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Norm-Referenced Standardized Achievement Test&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt; (Rdg./Lang.) 40th percentile or above</td>
<td>Norm-Referenced Standardized Achievement Test&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt; (Rdg./Lang.) 40th percentile or above</td>
<td>STAAR</td>
<td>STAAR</td>
<td>STAAR</td>
<td>STAAR</td>
<td>STAAR</td>
<td>STAAR</td>
<td>STAAR&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>STAAR&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>STAAR&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Writing&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Agency-Approved Writing Test&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Agency-Approved Writing Test&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Agency-Approved Writing Test&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>STAAR</td>
<td>Agency-Approved Writing Test&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Agency-Approved Writing Test&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>STAAR</td>
<td>Agency-Approved Writing Test&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>STAAR</td>
<td>Agency-Approved Writing Test&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective Teacher Evaluation</td>
<td>Assessments, anecdotal notes, portfolios, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1. 19 TAC §89.1225(h)
3. For STAAR, English reading and English writing refer to the grade-level tests in grades 3–8 and to the applicable end-of-course English I and II assessments.
4. Exception: Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) Reading and Writing Advanced High will be used for all students with the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) as their graduation requirement under state policy.

Note: LEP students may be exited only after the end of first grade based on 19 TAC §89.1225(i).

Note: LEP students for whom the LPAC has recommended linguistic accommodations on the STAAR reading or writing test may not be considered for exit.
See the STAAR ® L Resources page for additional information:

http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/ell/staarl/
Contact Information:

• The district testing coordinator is the primary contact when questions arise.

• TEA’s Student Assessment Division: Accommodation Task Force
  • 512-463-9536

• Accommodations Email:
  • Test.accommodations@tea.state.tx.us
Related Resources

http://tea.texas.gov/Student_Testing_and_Accountability/Testing/Student_Assessment_Overview/Accommodation_Resources/2015_Accommodations_for_Students_with_Disabilities_Taking_State_Assessments/
October 27, 2014

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESSED:

Subject: Assessment Participation Requirements for Students Receiving Special Education Services

Recent communication (9/21/14) from the Commissioner of Education regarding the elimination of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Modified; the availability of the online accommodated version of the general STAAR assessment, called STAAR A; and the implementation of the redesigned STAAR Alternate assessment, known as STAAR Alternate 2, provides an important opportunity for school districts to assure their admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committees carefully consider participation requirements when making decisions about the appropriate assessment for students receiving special education services. This assurance at the district level is also important given trends the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has observed over the last several years in meeting its obligation under federal law to evaluate districts’ use of alternative assessments.

During the former assessment system, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), districts initially reported fairly moderate rates of participation in TAKS-Alternate and TAKS-Modified by students receiving special education services. However, shortly before the TAKS assessments were phased out, some districts began to report significant increases in the rates of participation in both of these alternative assessments. These increases were particularly evident in two special education participation rate indicators reported through the Performance-Based Monitoring Analysis System (PBMAS). By the third year of the STAAR program, the state rate of students participating in the STAAR Alternate was nearly twice the rate of students participating in the TAKS-Alternate six years earlier, and the state rate of students participating in the STAAR Modified was approximately one-third higher. Districts subsequently evaluated by TEA monitors for their students’ participation in the STAAR Alternate or STAAR Modified were not always able to provide documented evidence in students’ Individualized education programs (IEPs) that the students’ present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, annual goals, and prerequisite skills or modified curriculum justified the administration of an alternative assessment.

As planning for the administration of the 2014-2015 state assessments begins, districts must ensure their ARD committees are aware that students can only be assessed with the redesigned alternate assessment, STAAR Alternate 2, if they meet ALL of the following participation requirements. The student must:

• have a significant cognitive disability;
• require specialized supports to access the grade-level curriculum;
• require intensive, individualized instruction, and
• access the grade-level Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) through prerequisite skills.

Please call the Student Assessment

Division, Associate Commissioner

Tanya Partridge, Associate Commissioner

Discussions, Director

10/27/14 Letter from TEA:
Assessment Participation Requirements for Students Receiving Special Education Services
Critical Information about Accommodations for Students with Disabilities taking State Assessments

This document outlines the appropriate use of accommodations for students with disabilities. For purposes of state assessments, students needing accommodations due to a disability include:

- students with an identified disability who receive special education services and meet established eligibility criteria for certain accommodations
- students with an identified disability who receive Section 504 services and meet established eligibility criteria for certain accommodations
- students with a disabling condition who do not receive special education or Section 504 services but meet established eligibility criteria for certain accommodations

For students who receive special education or Section 504 services, the decision to use accommodations during the state assessments is made by the ARD committee or Section 504 placement committee. In those rare instances where a student does not receive services but meets the eligibility criteria because of a disabling condition, the decision about using accommodations on the assessments is made by the appropriate team of people at the campus level, such as the Response to Intervention (RTI) team or student assistance team.

Understanding the basic principles of accommodations helps ensure their appropriate use in all educational settings.

Accommodations

- are changes to instructional materials, procedures, or techniques that allow a student with a disability to participate meaningfully in grade-level or course instruction
- should be effective in allowing a student access to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)
- must be individualized for each student
- are intended to reduce the effect of a student’s disability
- can change over the course of the school year or from year to year based on student needs
- might be appropriate for classroom use but might not be appropriate or allowed for use on a state assessment
- should be documented in the appropriate student paperwork
- should be evaluated regularly to determine effectiveness and to help plan for accommodations the student will need each year

- are not necessary for every student
- are not changes to the performance criteria of an assignment or assessment
- are not changes to the content being assessed and should not replace the teaching of subject-specific knowledge and skills as outlined in the TEKS
- should not be provided to an entire group of students, such as those in the same classroom or disability category, as a “one-size-fits-all” accommodation
- are not intended to provide an advantage to a student with a disability (e.g., increase a passing score to a higher score)
- should not be provided to a student without evidence of effectiveness from year to year

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Accommodations in Unexpected or Emergency Situations

Unexpected or emergency situations that necessitate the use of a testing accommodation may occur just prior to or on the day of the state assessment. For example, a student may arrive at school without his or her prescribed eyeglasses and need a large-print test booklet, or a student may have a broken arm and need his or her responses transcribed onto the answer document. When considering how to meet a student’s needs in these types of situations, student independence should be a priority. Testing coordinators should follow these steps when an unexpected or emergency situation arises just prior to or on the day of the state assessment.

**STEP 1:**
Consider test administration procedures and materials allowed for any student described in the Allowable Test Administration Procedures and Materials document on the Accommodation Resources webpage. If the student’s needs can be met by an allowable testing procedure or material, it should be made available to the student during testing. There is no need to contact TEA.

**STEP 2:**
If the student’s needs cannot be met using an allowable test administration procedure or material or the student requires additional support, review the Accommodation Triangle to see if a Type 1 accommodation can meet the student’s needs. Consideration should be given to accommodations that the student can independently use (e.g., for the student who does not have his/her prescribed eyeglasses, consider a projection device or a large-print test booklet prior to an oral administration by a test administrator). If the student’s needs can be met by a Type 1 accommodation, it should be made available to the student during testing. There is no need to contact TEA.

**STEP 3:**
If the student’s needs cannot be met with Step 1 or 2, review the Type 2 accommodations in the Accommodations Triangle. If a Type 2 accommodation will be needed, contact TEA’s Accommodations Task Force for permission and additional instructions.

In unexpected and emergency situations, there is no expectation that the student would have routinely received the procedure, material, or accommodation during classroom instruction and testing. However, it is recommended that the student (and test administrator, if applicable) be given the opportunity to practice using the accommodation prior to testing, if time permits.

After testing, if the student used a Type 1 or 2 accommodation, it should be recorded on the student’s answer document or in the Texas Assessment Management System for online administrations. In addition, the situation should be taken into consideration when interpreting test results. Be aware that the allowance of a testing accommodation in an unexpected or emergency situation applies to the current test administration only and does not transfer to subsequent test administrations.

For additional questions about testing accommodations in unexpected or emergency situations, contact a member of TEA’s Accommodations Task Force at (512) 463-9536.

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Accommodation Request Process for Type 2 Accommodations

Only Type 2 accommodations, which include Complex Transcribing, Photocopying Test Materials, Extra Day, Mathematics Scribe, and Other, require the submission of an Accommodation Request Form to TEA. The appropriate team of people at the campus level (e.g., ARD committee, Section 504 placement committee, RTI team, student assistance team) determines whether the student meets all of the specific eligibility criteria listed for the accommodation and, if so, submits an Accommodation Request Form to TEA. Do not submit an Accommodation Request Form if the student does not meet the specific eligibility criteria. Accommodation requests must be approved by TEA before a student can use the accommodation on a state assessment. The decision to use a Type 2 accommodation is recommended by the appropriate team at the campus level based on the eligibility criteria and is documented as “pending TEA approval.”

**Step 1: Determination of Student Eligibility for a Type 2 Accommodation**

The appropriate team of people at the campus level must consult the Accommodation Triangle to determine if the student meets the specific eligibility criteria for a particular Type 2 accommodation. The district testing coordinator is responsible for providing information about accommodations to campus testing coordinators and/or campus personnel, and is also the primary contact person for schools when questions arise.

**Step 2: Completion and Submission of the Online Accommodation Request Form**

If a student meets all specific eligibility criteria for a Type 2 accommodation, the appropriate person at the campus or district level, as determined by district policy, should complete the online Accommodation Request Form. When completing the form, the following guidelines should be followed. Only Accommodation Request Forms that adhere to these guidelines will be processed. All others will be deleted and the district will have to resubmit the form correctly.

- Confidential student information, such as a student’s first and last name, Social Security number, pages from an IEP, or medical documents, should NOT be included.
- A separate request form should be completed for each student needing an accommodation. Blanket requests for entire classrooms will NOT be accepted.
- The specific information below must be provided as the rationale on the Accommodation Request Form.