

DATE:	August 8, 2019
SUBJECT:	Reading Language Arts (RLA) Assessment Transition
CATEGORY:	Assessment Information
NEXT STEPS:	Share with appropriate RLA and assessment staff

Instruction in the [revised kindergarten-grade 8 2017 RLA Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills \(TEKS\)](#) will begin with the 2019-2020 school year. A **two-year RLA assessment transition** for the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) will include only items that assess overlap content in both the old 2009 and revised 2017 standards.

This transition timeline will allow educators to adjust instruction to integrate reading, writing, listening and speaking as required in the 2017 standards before students are assessed on all new or revised content.

The following table outlines implementation of the 2017 RLA TEKS and related assessments.

School Year	Grades 3-8	End-of-Course (EOC)
2019–2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement 2017 RLA TEKS Assess only overlap standards* Field test new and overlap standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement 2009 RLA TEKS Assess only 2009 standards Field test overlap standards*
2020–2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement 2017 RLA TEKS Assess only overlap standards* Field test only 2017 standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement 2017 RLA TEKS Assess only overlap standards* Field test only 2017 standards
2021–2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement 2017 RLA TEKS Assess only 2017 standards Field test 2017 standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement 2017 RLA TEKS Assess only 2017 standards Field test 2017 standards

* Overlap standards are those that are included in both the 2009 RLA TEKS and the 2017 RLA TEKS.

This transition also supports implementation of changes to the STAAR program made by House Bill (HB) 3906 of the 86th Legislative Session.

Assessment of Writing and Federal Accountability

HB 3906 eliminates the stand-alone writing assessments for grades 4 and 7 beginning with the 2021–2022 school year. However, state statute continues to require that all students be assessed in any other subject and grade required by federal law. Of particular relevance is the federal requirement to assess the full breadth of the reading language arts curriculum, which includes writing. The transition timeline outlined above supports implementation of revised assessments aligned to the 2017 RLA TEKS and assessment of the full breadth of the curriculum all at once.

Grades 4 and 7 writing assessments will remain unchanged for the 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 school years. During this time, new writing items that assess revising and editing will be field tested in the reading assessments at grades 3–8. These items will be embedded in the assessments and

will have no accountability measure. Additionally, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) will provide examples of writing items for grades 3, 5, 6 and 8 to help educators prepare students for the new item types.

Assessed Curriculum and Blueprints

In fall 2019, TEA will solicit input from educators regarding the assessed curriculum related to the 2017 RLA TEKS and draft blueprints for assessment of the 2017 TEKS. TEA will also solicit feedback from educators on the most effective ways to assess the 2017 RLA TEKS including selection of grade-level appropriate passages and ways to more authentically assess writing. Educators will also be asked to provide feedback on implementation of the statutorily required limitation on multiple choice items on the state assessment.

Assessed curriculum and blueprint information for assessment of the 2017 RLA TEKS is expected to be finalized and made available in early 2020.

Standard setting will occur once for grades 3–high school. Standards will first be set with EOCs and will then cascade down to the lower grades.

Impact on Interim Assessments

The STAAR interim reading assessment is a free, optional online tool for school districts and open-enrollment charter schools that provides actionable data to help educators monitor progress and predict student performance on the STAAR. Interim assessments include items developed with Texas teachers and STAAR summative test items from previous years and are field tested and fully aligned to the TEKS.

In order to ensure interim assessments will continue to reflect the summative STAAR for reading language arts, there will be only one opportunity available for grades 3–8 reading and Spanish grades 3–5 reading during the 2019–2020 school year. This is due to the fact that only overlap standards will be assessed in grades 3–8 at this time. For more information on STAAR interim assessments, testing windows, and related training webinars go to <https://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/IA/>.

Impact on Accountability

The modeling used to set the five-year benchmarks for A-F accountability was based on 2016–2017 data. Implementation of standard setting for the grades 3–8 and EOC assessments in 2022 will align with the commissioner’s commitment to maintain the same targets and cut points for at least five years.

During the TEKS transition, grades 3–8 reading, grades 4 and 7 writing, and English I and English II EOC assessment results will be included in calculations for 2020 and 2021 accountability. Accountability advisory groups will provide the commissioner with recommendations on potential unforeseen consequences.

Before adding writing items to the reading assessments in 2022 accountability, TEA will provide districts and charter schools with modeled data to gauge possible accountability outcomes.

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