Subject line: TAKS–M Writing/ELA Test Administration Manuals

February 23, 2010

TO REGIONAL AND DISTRICT TESTING COORDINATORS:

TEA has received several calls regarding the use of dictionaries and thesauruses during the reading and English language arts portions of the TAKS–M tests. Please read the clarifying information below and distribute to those staff members who are responsible for administering these tests.

Please see page 41 of the 2010 *TAKS–M General Test Administrator Manual* to determine when dictionaries and thesauruses are appropriate. This information is reproduced here:

Grade	Dictionary/Thesaurus Use for TAKS–M
7	**Writing**: Required for written composition only; not allowed for revising and editing section.
9	**Reading**: Required for entire test.
10	**ELA**: Required for reading and written composition only; not allowed for revising and editing section.
11	**ELA**: Required for reading and written composition only; not allowed for revising and editing section.

Note these policies regarding the use of dictionaries and thesauruses during testing:

- There must be at least one dictionary for every five students.
- It is recommended that there be one thesaurus for every five students, if possible.
- Students may use a combination dictionary/thesaurus for these assessments.
- An English as a second language (ESL) dictionary, which uses simple English and pictures to define words, may be provided to LEP students taking TAKS–M tests only when reference materials must be provided. (Provisions for use of foreign-language reference materials and ESL dictionaries differ for LAT administrations of TAKS–M. LAT information is found in Appendix A of the appropriate TAKS–M test administration directions.)
- Students taking a Braille version of a test may use electronic dictionaries and thesauruses only when reference materials must be provided.

Some test administration scripts do not say explicitly that students may use reference materials during the tests. However, at the beginning of each script for the tests indicated above, test administrators may say:

You may use a dictionary or a thesaurus for this part of the test.

We regret any inconvenience. If you have any questions about this information, you may contact the Student Assessment Division of the Texas Education Agency at (512) 463-9536.