

# CHAPTER 18: TAKS TEST DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

As mandated by Senate Bill 103, the first administration of the new TAKS testing program will occur during the 2002-2003 school year and will include mathematics in Grades 3–11; reading in Grades 3–9; writing in Grades 4 and 7; English language arts in Grades 10 and 11; science in Grades 5, 10, and 11; and social studies in Grades 8, 10, and 11. To be eligible to receive a diploma from a Texas public high school, a student must pass all four Grade 11 exit level tests. The TAKS subjects and grade levels to be tested are in the chart below. A second chart gives information about the transition to TAKS as a graduation requirement for students who were in 9th and 10th grades during the 2001–2002 academic year.

## Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Senate Bill 103, as enrolled Implementation: 2003–2005

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
<b>ENGLISH-VERSION ASSESSMENT</b>									
Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading			
	Writing			Writing			English Language Arts	English Language Arts	
Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	
		Science					Science	Science	
					Social Studies		Social Studies	Social Studies	
<b>SPANISH-VERSION ASSESSMENT</b>									
Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading						
	Writing								
Math	Math	Math	Math						
		Science							
<b>READING PROFICIENCY TESTS IN ENGLISH FOR LEP STUDENTS</b>									
RPTE	RPTE		RPTE			RPTE			
<b>ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS</b>									
Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading			
	Writing			Writing			English Language Arts		
Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math		

Department of Curriculum, Assessment, & Technology, July 2001

**Implementation of Senate Bill 103**  
**Transition from TAAS to the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)**  
**Impact on Students Enrolled in Grade 9 and Grade 10 in 2001–2002**

School Year	10th Graders (2001–2002)	9th Graders (2001–2002)
2001–2002	Grade 10—Exit Level TAAS	Grade 9—No Statewide Testing
2002–2003	Grade 11—TAAS Retest (if necessary) First Administration of New Grade 11 Exit Level Assessment (TAKS) Not a Graduation Requirement	Grade 10—New Grade 10 Assessment (TAKS)
2003–2004	Grade 12—TAAS Retest (if necessary) Expected Graduation Year Senior TAAS Retest	Grade 11—New Exit Level Assessment (TAKS)—Graduation Requirement
2004–2005		Grade 12—New Exit Level Assessment Retest (TAKS) (if necessary) Expected Graduation Year

Department of Curriculum, Assessment, & Technology, July 2001

**OVERVIEW OF 2001–2002 ACTIVITIES**

The TAKS development and implementation process, which began in the summer of 1999, continued during the 2001–2002 academic year in preparation for the first live test administration in 2002–2003. In the summer and fall of 2001, both internal review committees and external educator committees reviewed test items for all TAKS subjects and grade levels. TAKS Information Booklets were posted on the TEA website in January 2002; printed copies were published and distributed later that spring. Field tests for all TAKS subject areas were conducted in spring 2002, and data review committees were convened in Austin during the summer to review field-test data. A plan for developing the passing standards for the TAKS was approved by the State Board of Education (SBOE) in January 2002, and standard setting committees were formed in preparation for the fall 2002 standard setting meetings. In late spring 2002, commissioner rules for the Student Success Initiative were published in the Texas Administrative Code.

## **TAKS TEST DEVELOPMENT FROM JANUARY 2000 TO JULY 2002**

### DEVELOPMENT OF ELIGIBLE OBJECTIVES

To implement Senate Bill 103, the Student Assessment and Curriculum and Professional Development Divisions of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) requested the input of educators and the general public to create a new statewide assessment program.

Committees of Texas educators met from January to March 2000 to review the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). For each targeted subject area and each grade level, committee members identified those student expectations that should be assessed in the new statewide assessment. Based on the feedback from these committees, TEA staff drafted preliminary assessment objectives for each targeted subject area for the Grade 11 test. These objectives represented strands of learning under which the TEKS student expectations were grouped.

Surveys of draft objectives and their corresponding TEKS student expectations for Grade 11 exit level English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies were distributed for educator review and public input in May 2000. A total of 27,350 survey responses were tallied, reviewed, and analyzed by TEA. Based on responses received from across the state, TEA staff revised the Grade 11 draft objectives. TEA staff aligned the preliminary objectives for each tested subject at Grades 3–10 with the corresponding Grade 11 exit level objectives.

Another survey was conducted in fall 2000 to solicit feedback on the proposed objectives for all subject areas and grades tested, including a second Grade 11 survey. Each campus in the state received the appropriate grade-level surveys containing the proposed objectives and their corresponding TEKS student expectations for each tested subject. The high school-level surveys were also sent to over 50 Texas public colleges and universities to gather feedback from college faculty and administrators regarding the proposed objectives.

Public school campuses were asked to conduct meetings in which teachers, administrators, parents, and other interested community members reviewed and discussed the surveys. After reaching a consensus, each campus review committee indicated which TEKS student expectations should be added to or deleted from the objectives and whether each objective was essential to measure on a statewide assessment. The reviewers were also asked whether students would have had enough instruction in the TEKS student expectations by the spring of a school year to be adequately prepared to demonstrate understanding of the knowledge and skills under each objective. TEA received 56,951 campus survey response forms. Results were tallied, and summaries of narrative comments were compiled. In January and February 2002, this information was shared with educator committees for each grade level and subject area. Discussion at those meetings guided further refinement of the proposed objectives and student expectations. Additionally, a national panel of experts was convened under the auspices of ACHIEVE, Inc., to review the proposed objectives and make further recommendations. Booklets containing the finalized objectives were published in April 2001. In June 2001 the new assessment was named the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS).

## ITEM DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

Prototype TAKS items and item development guidelines for all the grade levels were developed in the fall of 2000 and shared with educator committees in January and February 2001. In spring and summer 2001, test items for all TAKS subject areas were submitted to TEA after compilation and review by test contractors Harcourt Educational Measurement and NCS Pearson. Committees made up of assessment and curriculum content area specialists from TEA reviewed the items in preparation for external educator reviews. From September to December 2001, external educator review committees were convened in Austin to review TAKS items for all subject areas and grade levels. Overall, 29 TAKS item review meetings were attended by 583 educators from around the state. The item development and review process for TAKS is similar to the process for the TAAS, SDAA, and RPTE programs. Additional information about the model for these educator item-review committee meetings is located in the Item Development and Review section of Chapter 2, TAAS Test Development.

## FIELD TESTING AND DATA REVIEW

Field tests for Grades 4 and 7 TAKS writing took place from January 28, 2002, to February 8, 2002. Field tests for TAKS mathematics, reading, English language arts, science, and social studies were administered April 22 through May 10, 2002. Approximately 2 million TAKS field-test booklets, including 407 distinct field-test forms, were distributed to districts and campuses around the state; most students were asked to complete one subject-area field test during one of the two field-test periods. In most TAKS subject areas, field-test booklet forms were spiraled with multiple forms being distributed to each classroom. Appendix 6 includes the 2001–2002 field-test schedule for TAKS and illustrates the number of field-test forms that were developed for each subject and grade level. The total number of field tests that were administered statewide for each test level is illustrated below.

Grade 3 Reading — 114,774	Grade 8 Mathematics — 65,469
Grade 3 Mathematics — 115,878	Grade 8 Social Studies — 74,478
Grade 4 Reading — 67,694	Grade 9 Reading — 125,217
Grade 4 Mathematics — 67,639	Grade 9 Mathematics — 114,274
Grade 4 Writing — 12,206	Grade 10 English Language Arts — 16,383
Grade 5 Reading — 67,044	Grade 10 Mathematics — 39,317
Grade 5 Mathematics — 68,840	Grade 10 Social Studies — 53,155
Grade 5 Science — 88,424	Grade 10 Science — 53,006
Grade 6 Reading — 99,913	Grade 11 English Language Arts — 5,532
Grade 6 Mathematics — 106,068	Grade 11 Mathematics — 40,251
Grade 7 Reading — 68,743	Grade 11 Social Studies — 40,414
Grade 7 Mathematics — 67,870	Grade 11 Science — 39,198
Grade 7 Writing — 16,383	
Grade 8 Reading — 64,706	Total 1,692,876

During the field-test administration window, a survey was distributed to a small sample of teachers to determine approximately how long it took students to complete the field tests. The survey also asked for student and teacher comments about the testing process and test administration procedures. The survey data will be used in the development of test administration materials and guidelines.

Educator reviews of TAKS field-test data took place in Austin in June and July of 2002. A representative sample of 453 educators from around the state participated in a total of 29 TAKS data-review meetings. Committee participants were shown a newly developed video explaining the data-review process for TAKS. Psychometricians from NCS Pearson and Harcourt Educational Measurement attended each meeting to assist participants with the data-review process. The field-testing and data-review process for the TAKS testing program is modeled on the process used for the TAAS testing program. For more information see the Field Testing and Data Review Section of Chapter 2, TAAS Test Development.

## STANDARD SETTING ACTIVITIES

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) made up of nationally recognized educational testing experts was assembled in 2001 to advise the agency and the State Board of Education (SBOE) regarding the development of a plan for setting the performance standards for TAKS. In January 2002 the SBOE adopted a plan authorizing a series of research and training activities to ensure that the board would be fully informed prior to establishing standards that meet the needs of Texas. On May 23, 2002, a standard setting advisory committee of state policy makers and stakeholders was convened to recommend labels and corresponding descriptors for the performance levels on TAKS. On July 18, 2002, the TAC presented the SBOE with information about the data required to make standard setting decisions.

One element of the standard setting plan was the formation of broad-based standard setting panels made up of stakeholders, such as teachers, administrators, community and business leaders, parents, and others. In spring 2002, a request for nominations for these panels was sent to superintendents, SBOE members, and state legislators. The request for nominations was also open to the general public through a posting on the TEA website. In summer 2002, letters were mailed to 825 people inviting them to participate in one of 25 subject-area standard setting meetings scheduled for August and September 2002. After receiving training in standard setting procedures, each subject area panel made recommendations to the SBOE regarding passing and performance standards for the TAKS.

## STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVE

The Student Success Initiative (SSI) includes three initiatives that together provide a system of academic support to help ensure achievement on grade level in reading and mathematics so that every student can succeed throughout his or her school career. These three initiatives are the Reading Initiative at Grades K–4, the Mathematics Initiative at Grades 5–9, and the grade advancement requirements in reading at Grade 3 and in reading and mathematics as Grades 5 and 8.

The grade advancement portion of the SSI is the result of a state law (TEC §28.0211) that was passed by the Texas Legislature in 1999. The new passing requirements for the statewide assessment program will be phased in. Beginning in the 2002–2003 school year, students at Grade 3 will be required to pass the TAKS reading assessment to advance to the fourth grade. In the 2004–2005 school year, Grade 5 students will be required to pass the TAKS reading and mathematics tests, and this requirement will extend to Grade 8 students in the 2007–2008 school year. The law specifies that a student may advance to the next grade level only by passing these tests or by unanimous decision of his or her grade placement committee that the student is likely to perform at grade level after accelerated instruction.

On March 8, 2002, a proposed draft of commissioner rules for the Student Success Initiative was published in the Texas Register for educator and public review and input. The agency received a wide range of concerns and comments during the rule-development process. After the comments were compiled, public comments and the corresponding agency responses were organized by code section and, when applicable, by the issue addressed, and published on the TEA website. On May 26, 2002, Commissioner's Rules for the Student Success Initiative were adopted as Section 101, Subchapter BB of the Texas Administrative Code (See Appendix 2).

The major components of the grade advancement portion of the SSI include

- informal and formal assessment of student needs;
- corresponding early intervention activities that address those needs;
- research-based instructional programs;
- additional targeted accelerated instruction informed by assessment data;
- three opportunities to take TAKS Grade 3 reading;
- a district-determined alternate assessment option on the third opportunity;
- a grade placement committee that consists of the principal, teacher, and parent; this committee may promote a student who does not pass the test after three opportunities if it finds, by unanimous decision and in accordance with local standards, that the student is likely to succeed at the next grade with further accelerated instruction; and
- individual accelerated education plans for the next year for every student who does not pass the required state test after three opportunities.

The Student Assessment website at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/> is the main portal for resources and links that pertain specifically to SSI-grade advancement requirements. This website includes links to other agency websites such as the Reading Initiative and Math Initiative at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/studentsuccess/>.

The diagram below illustrates the impact of Senate Bill 4 on students enrolled in Grade 2 and Grade 3 in 2001–2002.

**Impact of Senate Bill 4 on Students Enrolled  
in Grade 2 and Grade 3 in 2001–2002**

School Year	Second Graders (2001–2002)	Third Graders (2001–2002)
2001–2002	Grade 2—No statewide testing	Grade 3—TAKS reading and mathematics
2002–2003	Grade 3—TAKS reading and mathematics <b>Reading Assessment = Promotion Requirement</b>	Grade 4—TAKS reading, writing, and mathematics
2003–2004	Grade 4—TAKS reading, writing, and mathematics	Grade 5—TAKS reading, mathematics, and science
2004–2005	Grade 5—TAKS reading, mathematics, and science <b>Reading and Mathematics Assessments = Promotion Requirements</b>	Grade 6—TAKS reading and mathematics
2005–2006	Grade 6—TAKS reading and mathematics	Grade 7—TAKS reading, writing, and mathematics
2006–2007	Grade 7—TAKS reading, writing, and mathematics	Grade 8—TAKS reading, mathematics, and social studies
2007–2008	Grade 8—TAKS reading, mathematics, and social studies <b>Reading and Mathematics Assessments = Promotion Requirements</b>	Grade 9—TAKS reading and mathematics

Department of Curriculum, Assessment, & Technology, October 2000

**HIGHER EDUCATION READINESS COMPONENT**

The TAKS testing program will, by law, include a higher education readiness component. Performance on the Grade 11 exit level mathematics and English language arts tests will be used to assess not only a student’s level of academic preparation for graduation from a Texas public high school but also the student’s readiness to enroll in an institution of higher education. A student who meets the Higher Education Readiness Component score on the exit level TAKS will be exempt from the requirements of the Texas Academic Skills Program (TASP), Section 51.306.

The Student Assessment Division of TEA convened a task force in the fall of 2000 to provide guidance regarding the implementation of the college readiness component as mandated by Senate Bill 103. In spring 2001, the task force developed a Higher Education Readiness Component Plan that includes a multi-faceted research approach designed to provide information about college readiness to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), which is responsible for determining a higher education readiness score on TAKS. The plan was initially presented to the Commissioner’s P-16 Council in July 2001, and in October 2001 the plan was approved for implementation.

The Higher Education Readiness Component Plan includes a contrasting groups study and a performance data correlation study. The contrasting groups study will examine the performance of high school juniors on the first administration of the exit level TAKS tests in 2003 as compared to the performance on the same TAKS assessments by a sample of second-semester college freshmen who have demonstrated college readiness through successful completion of their first-semester courses. The performance data correlation study will examine student performance on TAKS in relation to performance on three college readiness measures that are used statewide for making college readiness and placement decisions: TASP, ACT, and SAT I. The TAKS to TASP, TAKS to ACT, and TAKS to SAT I comparisons will incorporate data collected from Texas public high school juniors who take the exit level TAKS in spring 2003 and spring 2004.

In addition to these two major research components, the plan calls for the creation of a higher education focus group to help facilitate communication about the higher education component, provide assistance with the implementation of the plan, and advise the THECB as needed regarding research results. College and university faculty and administrators, public school personnel, and legislative education specialists were invited to the initial focus group meeting on March 20, 2002. A second meeting was held at THECB's Annual Recruitment and Retention Conference on June 19, 2002.

Scores that indicate higher education readiness on the exit level English language arts and mathematics TAKS will be established by THECB in January of 2004 and will be in place for the spring 2004 TAKS administration. The THECB will also determine a means for high school sophomores to gain permission to register for dual credit courses.

## INFORMATION BOOKLETS

Content area specialists from the Student Assessment and Curriculum Divisions at TEA developed TAKS Information Booklets for Grades 3–10, Grade 11 Exit Level, and Grades 3–6 Spanish during the summer and fall of 2001. The Information Booklets were published on the TEA website in January 2002, and printed copies were distributed to campuses, districts, and education service centers in April. Although the Information Booklets for each subject area contain some information unique to that subject, all booklets include

- information that clarifies how to read the TEKS;
- an overview of the subject within the context of TAKS;
- the objectives and TEKS student expectations that will be included on TAKS;
- the reasons each objective and its TEKS student expectations are critical to student learning and success;
- additional information about each objective that will help educators understand how it might be assessed on TAKS; and
- sample items, reading/writing selections, and prompts that show some of the ways objectives might be assessed.

Each TAKS information booklet includes more than one grade so that teachers are able to develop a broad perspective of the assessment. The following shows the grouping of grades/subjects within each booklet.

<b>Spanish Reading Grades 3–6</b>	<b>Spanish Writing Grade 4</b>	<b>Spanish Math Grades 3–6</b>	<b>Spanish Science Grade 5</b>
Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 3	Grade 5
Grade 4	Evaluation Form	Grade 4	Evaluation Form
Grade 5		Grade 5	
Grade 6		Grade 6	
Evaluation Form		Evaluation Form	

<b>Reading Grades 3–6</b>	<b>Reading Grades 5–8</b>	<b>Writing Grades 4 and 7</b>	<b>Reading Grade 9 &amp; ELA Grades 10 &amp; 11</b>
Grade 3	Grade 5	Grade 4	Grade 9
Grade 4	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 10
Grade 5	Grade 7	Evaluation Form	Grade 11
Grade 6	Grade 8		Evaluation Form
Evaluation Form	Evaluation Form		

<b>Mathematics Grades 3–6</b>	<b>Mathematics Grades 5–9</b>	<b>Mathematics Grades 8–11</b>	<b>Science Grades 5, 10, &amp; 11</b>	<b>Social Studies Grades 8, 10, &amp; 11</b>
Grade 3	Grade 5	Grade 8	Grade 5	Grade 8
Grade 4	Grade 6	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 10
Grade 5	Grade 7	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 11
Grade 6	Grade 8	Grade 11	Evaluation Form	Evaluation Form
Evaluation Form	Grade 9	Evaluation Form		
	Evaluation Form			

## STUDY GUIDES

In spring 2002, NCS Pearson contracted with Publisher's Resource Group (PRG), an Austin-based educational publications firm, to develop and produce study guides for all of the TAKS assessments. As with the TAAS study guides, the TAKS study guides are designed for those students who fail to meet the passing standard on one or more of the statewide assessments. The development process incorporates frequent review of content and layout by NCS Pearson and TEA Student Assessment Division staff. Toward the end of the development process, external educator committees will review the guides. Publication of the guides is scheduled for spring 2003.

## TIME LINE AND ADDITIONAL REFERENCE MATERIALS

A time line illustrating TAKS development and implementation activities from December 1999 to July 2002 is located in Appendix 13.

Additional information about the TAKS testing program is available on the TEA website at [www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/).