

# CHAPTER 7: TEST ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES

## Overview

During the 2006–2007 school year, the English-version TAKS/TAKS–I was administered to approximately 2,880,000 students; the Spanish-version TAKS/TAKS–I to approximately 54,000 students; SDAA II to approximately 240,000 students; and TELPAS to approximately 650,000 students.

Districts administered the TAKS/TAKS–I tests to eligible examinees as indicated below.

### Fall—2006

October: English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies retests at exit level (in online and paper formats)

### Spring/Summer—2007

February: Writing at grades 4 and 7 English and grade 4 (Spanish version)  
Reading at grades 3, 5, and 9 (grade 9 in online and paper formats)  
English and grades 3 and 5 (Spanish version)  
ELA at grade 10 (grade 10 in online and paper formats) and at exit level\*  
ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies retests at exit level

April: Mathematics at grades 3–10 (grades 7–10 in online and paper formats) and at exit level\* English and grades 3–6 (Spanish version)  
Reading at grades 4, 6, 7, and 8 (grades 7 and 8 in online and paper formats) English and grades 4 and 6 (Spanish version)  
Reading retests at grades 3 and 5 English and grades 3 and 5 (Spanish version)  
Science at grades 5\*, 8\*, 10\* (grades 8 and 10 in online and paper versions), and at exit level\* and grade 5 (Spanish version)\*  
Social Studies at grades 8\*, 10\* (grades 8 and 10 in online and paper formats), and at exit level\*  
ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies retests at exit level

May: Mathematics retest at grade 5 English and grade 5 (Spanish version)

June: Reading retests at grades 3 and 5 English and grades 3 and 5 (Spanish version)

Mathematics retest at grade 5 English and grade 5 (Spanish version)

July: ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies retests at exit level (online and paper)

\* TAKS–I was administered at this grade and subject.

In February 2007, SDAA II writing tests were administered to students enrolled at grades 4, 7, and 10. SDAA II reading tests were administered at grade 9, and SDAA II ELA tests were administered at grade 10. In April SDAA II mathematics tests were administered at grades 3–10, and SDAA II reading tests were administered at grades 3–8.

TAKS–I measured the academic progress of students receiving special education services in the state-mandated Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum on or near grade level. In February 2007 the TAKS–I ELA test was administered at the exit level. In April TAKS–I tests were administered in science at grades 5, 8, 10, and exit level, grade 5 science (Spanish version), grades 8, 10, and exit level social studies, and mathematics at the exit level.

For Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS), Reading Proficiency Tests in English (RPTE) assessments were administered at grades 3–12 in March, along with a grade 2 RPTE II online/paper field test, and Texas Observation Protocols (TOP) at grades K–12.

Districts administered the TAAS exit level writing, mathematics, and reading retests in October 2006 and in February, April, and July 2007. The calendar for the 2006–2007 test administrations can be found in the *2007 District and Campus Coordinator Manual*. This manual can be accessed at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/resources/techdig07/index.html>.

## Training and Materials

Test administration procedures must be followed exactly so that all individuals eligible for testing have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their academic achievement. To meet this goal, TEA develops and provides instruction to train all testing personnel across the state on test administration procedures. Each year preparation for test administration begins with a training session for testing coordinators and other personnel from each of the 20 regional education service centers (ESCs) as well as district testing coordinators from some of the state’s largest districts. Using information and materials provided in the TEA training session, the ESC regional testing coordinators train the district coordinators in their respective regions. District coordinators train campus testing coordinators, who are responsible for training campus test administrators.

For each test administration in the 2006–2007 school year, ESC personnel and district coordinators were provided with a district testing coordinator packet, which contained the information and materials necessary for overseeing test administrations including district and campus coordinator and test administrator manuals that provided an overview of the statewide testing program. Separate packets and manuals were provided for TAKS/TAKS–I, TELPAS, SDAA II, and TAAS exit level.

## Test Security

Maintaining test security is an important consideration throughout the test administration process. As defined by the Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 39, Subchapter B, TAKS, TAKS–I, SDAA II, TELPAS, TAAS, and EOC are secure testing programs. In addition, any field tests for the TAKS, TAKS–I, SDAA II, TELPAS, and EOC programs are also secure. All test materials must be handled in strict accordance with the instructions contained in test and program administration materials. Each person with access to test materials must maintain and preserve the security and confidential integrity of the TAKS, TAKS–I, SDAA II, TELPAS,

TAAS, and EOC tests. All district and campus personnel who handle secure test materials are required to complete an Oath of Test Security and Confidential Integrity.

Pearson Educational Measurement (PEM) assigns secure test booklets to districts by unique nine-digit bar-coded security numbers. Districts complete and return answer document packing lists with their test materials to help PEM determine whether any student answer documents are missing. PEM compares bar-code scan files of returned test booklets with test booklet distribution files to determine whether all secure materials have been returned from each campus and district. Districts are responsible for ensuring the confidential integrity of all test materials and their secure return. PEM contacts any district with missing test booklets. During the 2006–2007 school year, PEM scanned approximately 8.5 million TAKS/TAKS–I test booklets, 1.5 million SDAA II test booklets, 670,000 RPTE test booklets, and 10,000 TAAS exit level test booklets returned by districts to ensure that all secure test booklets were accounted for. In addition, PEM scanned more than 650,000 TAKS/TAKS–I field-test booklets. See Chapter 8: Test Security in Texas for more information.

## Testing Accommodations

A testing accommodation is a change to the testing environment to assist a student with special needs so that assessment can mirror instruction as much as possible without invalidating test results. District and campus testing coordinators are responsible for communicating information about testing accommodations to test administrators and other interested stakeholders. Information about testing accommodations is also included in the test administrator manuals.

The decision to use a particular accommodation with a student should be made on an individual basis and should take into consideration the needs of the student and whether the student routinely receives the accommodation in classroom instruction and testing. If a student receives special education services or Section 504 services, all accommodations must be documented in the student’s individualized education program (IEP) or individual accommodation plan (IAP).

The following guidelines for testing accommodations were in place for the 2006–2007 school year.

### Allowable Accommodations—TAKS

- Instructions given orally before or after the test may be either signed to an examinee who is deaf or hard of hearing, or translated into the native language of an examinee with limited English proficiency.
- At the request of a student, the writing prompt may be read aloud or signed, but no elaboration on the prompt may be provided.
- An examinee may place a colored overlay or a magnifying device over the test or use a blank place marker with the test and the answer document. Test booklets are secure documents and may not be photocopied onto colored paper without

advance written permission from TEA through the submission and approval of an Accommodation Request Form that states why the student cannot use an overlay. Blank answer documents, which do not contain secure information, may be copied onto colored paper; however, they must be transcribed verbatim onto a standard answer document for scoring.

- An examinee may be tested in a small group or receive an individual administration. In an individual administration the examinee may read aloud while working or read the test into a tape recorder during testing and play it back while working.
- An eligible examinee may use a large-print or braille version of the test.
- If an examinee has a temporary or permanent disabling condition that interferes with his or her ability to record machine-scorable responses and/or limits the ability to make notes or do computations in the test booklet, the examinee may respond orally to test items, mark responses in the test booklet, type responses, or record responses on a dry-erase board, chalkboard, or scratch paper. An individual administration may be necessary for this type of accommodation.
- An examinee may have a temporary or permanent disabling condition that interferes with his or her ability to write the composition or the responses to open-ended test items. In these circumstances the examinee may tape-record the responses or essay while composing and then play the tape back for the test administrator, noting spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Afterward, the examinee must be allowed to review the responses or essay and indicate where he or she would like to make corrections.
- An examinee may type the written composition or the responses to open-ended test items on a typewriter, portable word processor, or a computer but may not use features such as spell-check or the word predictability function. In addition, student responses may not be saved to a disk or hard drive.
- For accommodations not noted on this list, districts could submit an Accommodations Request Form to TEA for further consideration.

### **Nonallowable Accommodations—TAKS**

- A student may not receive any reading assistance on TAKS, with the exception of grade 3 mathematics administrations, LAT administrations, or reading administrations involving dyslexia bundled accommodations.
- Students may not receive any level of oral administration support for the writing, reading, or ELA tests except for reading aloud the writing prompt upon student request, providing specific bundled accommodations on the reading test to students in grades 3–8 who are identified with dyslexia, or providing oral reading assistance to eligible students during LAT administrations.
- The examinee may not use foreign-language reference materials except as authorized during LAT administrations.

- Students may not use a calculator on the mathematics tests at grades 3–8 or on the science tests at grade 5 and 8.
- Test items and reading/writing selections must not be translated, except as authorized during LAT administrations.
- Test questions, answer choices, selections, and writing prompts may not be rephrased or clarified except as authorized during LAT administrations.
- Other accommodations that would invalidate the test are prohibited.

## **Linguistically Accommodated Testing (LAT)**

TEA has implemented a linguistically accommodated testing (LAT) assessment process for students who by state law meet the criteria for a limited English proficient (LEP) exemption from the TAKS mathematics and/or reading/English language tests in grades 3–8 and 10. This alternative assessment process was instituted to meet NCLB requirements for including exempted recent immigrant LEP students in federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) accountability measures. LAT administrations were implemented in spring 2005 for mathematics and spring 2007 for reading/English language arts.

The federal English language learners (ELL) assessment requirements differ slightly for mathematics versus reading/English language arts. All LEP-exempt recent immigrants are required to participate in LAT administrations of mathematics in AYP grades. For reading/English language arts, however, first-year LEP-exempt immigrants may take just the reading component of TELPAS. Other LEP-exempt recent immigrants must take both TELPAS reading and LAT reading/English language arts assessments in AYP grades.

The linguistic accommodations used in LAT administrations are designed to help students better understand the language used on the tests so that the students can better demonstrate whether they have learned the required knowledge and skills. The particular accommodations selected are required to be consistent with the accommodations used in a student's routine instruction and testing. Prior to the spring assessment, the language proficiency assessment committee (LPAC) and subject-area teacher, in coordination with the testing coordinator, meet to determine and document the appropriate linguistic accommodations for each eligible student.

Allowable accommodations for LAT mathematics include linguistic simplification, reading assistance, bilingual dictionaries, bilingual glossaries, oral translation, and use of Spanish-version and English-version tests side by side. Secure LAT linguistic simplification guides are provided to test administrators for use with the linguistic simplification accommodation. These guides provide suggested linguistic simplifications and delineate which subject-area terms may not be simplified. The accommodations made during LAT administrations must not include explanations, definitions, pictures, gestures, or examples related to mathematics terminology, concepts, or skills assessed since such assistance would invalidate the test results.

Allowable accommodations for LAT reading/ELA administrations of TAKS and SDAA II include bilingual dictionaries, English dictionaries, reading aloud a word or phrase, reading aloud the entire test item, oral translation of a word or phrase, and clarification of a word or phrase. During LAT reading administrations students must not be provided any direct or indirect assistance or reinforcement that identifies or aids in the identification of the correct response to a test item.

Students taking LAT administrations are also eligible to receive accommodations allowable for TAKS if they qualify based on other special needs. More information about LAT accommodations may be found in the test administration manuals and the TEA publication, *LPAC Decision-Making Process for the Texas Assessment Program (Grades 3–12)*. Both publications can be found online at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/resources/techdig07/index.html>.

LAT test administrators and testing coordinators receive test administration training through a training-of-trainers model. The training includes annotated examples of appropriate LAT accommodations using released mathematics and reading/English language arts test material.

In accordance with federal testing regulations, although the subject area of science will not yet be required for AYP accountability, states will be required to assess recent immigrant ELLs in the subject area of science by the 2007–2008 school year. In fulfillment of this requirement, LAT administrations of the grades 5, 8, and 10 science tests will be implemented beginning in the 2007–2008 school year.

## **Educational Materials Required for Testing—TAKS**

### **Dictionaries and Thesauruses**

English-language dictionaries and thesauruses must be provided to examinees for

- the written composition portion of the grade 7 writing test,
- the entire grade 9 reading test, and
- the reading and written composition portion of the grade 10 and exit level English language arts (ELA) tests.

There must be at least one dictionary for every five examinees; it is also recommended that there be one thesaurus for every five examinees, if possible. Examinees may also use a combination dictionary/thesaurus. An English as a second language (ESL) dictionary, which uses simple English and pictures to define words, may be provided for limited English proficient (LEP) students.

Examinees may not use a dictionary or thesaurus on the revising and editing portion of either the grade 7 writing test or the grade 10 and exit level ELA tests. The grade 7 writing test and the ELA tests contain two sealed sections; the first section contains the written composition portion (grade 7) or the written composition and reading portion (grade 10 and exit level), and

the second sealed section contains the revising and editing portion. After an examinee completes the first sealed section, the test administrator will collect the examinee's dictionary and thesaurus. The examinee may then break the seal on the second sealed section and begin the revising and editing portion of the test.

## **Calculators**

For the mathematics tests at grades 9 and 10 and at exit level, districts must provide each examinee with a graphing calculator for the entire administration. Students may use their own calculators instead of those provided by the district. Any kind of graphing calculator may be used except one with a typewriter-style keypad (known as QWERTY) or one that includes a computer algebra system (CAS). Handheld minicomputers, personal digital assistants (PDAs), or laptop computers may not be used. All types of memory, including standard memory, RAM, ROM, and flash ROM, must be cleared to factory default both before and after testing. In addition, any programs or applications must be removed or disabled prior to the test administration.

Calculators may also be used on the grade 10 and exit level science tests. Examinees must have access to four-function, scientific, or graphing calculators. Again, students may use their own calculators instead of those provided by the district. There must be at least one calculator for every five examinees. Examinees may share calculators on the science tests. However, a calculator's memory must be cleared after each examinee uses it. The guidelines for types of graphing calculators, clearing of memory, and removal of programs and applications for the science tests are the same as those listed for mathematics.

## **Dyslexia Accommodations—TAKS Reading**

In spring 2004 a study was conducted to evaluate the effects of a series of accommodations on the performance of elementary students who have been identified with dyslexia on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) reading test. This study focused on three accommodations that might benefit these students on the TAKS reading test:

- orally reading all proper nouns associated with each passage before students began individual reading
- orally reading all questions and answer choices to students
- extending the testing time over a two-day period

These three accommodations were "bundled," meaning the accommodations listed above were provided together. The purpose of the study was not to determine which accommodation was most effective but whether these bundled accommodations leveled the playing field for students who have been identified with dyslexia or who have difficulty reading words in isolation, allowing them to demonstrate their best reading performance without invalidating the test as an accurate measure of reading comprehension.

The three bundled accommodations were first available in spring 2006 for students in grades 3, 4, and 5 who met the eligibility requirements below. These accommodations were used to administer both English and Spanish version TAKS reading tests, including all three SSI tests at

grades 3 and 5. In spring 2006 an additional study was conducted to evaluate the effects of a bundled accommodation package for older students with dyslexia on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). In order to determine whether a bundle of accommodations shown to be effective with third graders was also effective with older students, an accommodated assessment was administered to students in grades 7 and 11 who were in dyslexia or special education programs. In the grade 7 study, test administrators administered the reading test in three formats: with all three accommodations as a “bundled” package, with the first two accommodations only, or in the standard manner. In grade 11, the test was administered with all three accommodations as a “bundled” package or in the standard manner. Study results at grade 7 supported extending the bundled accommodations (including the administration over two days) to students in middle school who show clear evidence of decoding problems. Study results at grade 11 were not clear and indicated that more research is needed on accommodations for high school students. See Appendix 7 in the *2005–2006 Technical Digest* for more information about the study. This digest can be found online at [http://k12testing.tx.ncspearson.com/tx\\_dist\\_publ.htm](http://k12testing.tx.ncspearson.com/tx_dist_publ.htm). Beginning in spring 2007 the three bundled accommodations were available for eligible students in grades 6, 7, and 8 as well as students in grades 3, 4, and 5 who met the eligibility requirements below.

## Eligibility

In the spring 2007 administrations, student who met the following criteria were eligible to receive the set of three bundled accommodations on English and Spanish TAKS reading tests for grades 3–6 and English TAKS reading tests for grades 7 and 8.

- A student not receiving special education services had to be identified with dyslexia. A student receiving special education services had to either be identified with dyslexia or have a severe reading disability that exhibited the characteristics of dyslexia, causing the student to lack word-identification skills and to have difficulty reading words in isolation.
- The student had to routinely receive accommodations in classroom instruction and testing that addressed the difficulties he or she has reading words in isolation.

The test administrator must indicate that the student received the dyslexia bundled accommodation by marking the appropriate field on the front of the answer document.

## Authority for Decision

For a student with dyslexia not receiving special education services who met both criteria above, the decision to provide the bundled accommodations had to be made either by the student’s placement committee as required by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or by the committee of knowledgeable persons as outlined in *The Dyslexia Handbook*. This handbook can be found online at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/curriculum/elar/2007EnglishHandbook.pdf>. In both of these cases, the committee’s decision had to be documented in writing in accordance with district policies and procedures.

For a student receiving special education services who met both criteria above, the decision to provide the bundled accommodations had to be made by the student’s admission, review,

and dismissal (ARD) committee and documented in the student’s individualized education program (IEP).

## **Allowable Accommodations—TAKS–I**

A testing accommodation is a change to the testing environment to assist a student who receives special education services so that assessment mirrors instruction as much as possible without invalidating test results. The ARD committee must make and document the decision to allow any accommodations. (Only students served by special education are eligible to take TAKS–I.)

The ARD committee should consider

- the needs of the student, and
- whether the student routinely receives the accommodation in instruction and testing.

With the exception of the nonallowable accommodations listed below, accommodations documented in the individualized education program (IEP) that are necessary to address the student’s instructional needs based on his or her disability but do not invalidate the assessment may be used. All accommodations must be documented in the student’s IEP.

## **Nonallowable Accommodations—TAKS–I**

The following accommodations are nonallowable because they would invalidate the test results:

- The test administrator may not provide any direct or indirect assistance or reinforcement that identifies or aids in the identification of the correct response to an item.
- Test questions, answer choices, and the writing prompt may not be translated (except in sign language), rephrased, or clarified.
- The student may not have the number of answer choices for an item reduced.
- The TAKS–I ELA test (with the exception of the writing prompt) may not be read aloud to students.
- Test booklets are secure documents and may not be photocopied onto colored paper without advance written permission from TEA through the submission and approval of an Accommodation Request Form that states why the student cannot use an overlay. Answer documents, which are not secure, may be copied onto colored paper; however, they must be transcribed verbatim onto a standard document for scoring. After transcription, color copies of answer documents must be destroyed.
- Other accommodations that would invalidate the test are prohibited.

## **Allowable Accommodations—SDAA II**

The ARD committee must make and document the decision to allow any accommodations. The ARD committee should consider

- the needs of the student, and
- whether the student routinely receives the accommodation in instruction and testing.

With the exception of the nonallowable accommodations listed below, accommodations documented in the individualized education program (IEP) that are necessary to address the student's instructional needs based on his or her disability but do not invalidate the assessment may be used. All accommodations must be documented in the student's IEP.

## **Nonallowable Accommodations—SDAA II**

- The test administrator may not provide any direct or indirect assistance or reinforcement that identifies or aids in the identification of the correct response to an item.
- Test questions, answer choices, and the writing prompt may not be translated (except into sign language), rephrased, or clarified.
- The student may not have the number of answer choices for an item reduced.
- The reading, writing, and ELA tests (with the exception of the writing prompt) may not be read aloud to students at Instructional Levels 2–10.
- Test booklets are secure documents and may not be photocopied onto colored paper without advance written permission from TEA through the submission and approval of an Accommodations Request Form that states why the student cannot use an overlay. Blank answer documents, which do not contain secure information, may be copied onto colored paper; however, they must be transcribed verbatim onto a standard document for scoring. After transcription, color copies of answer documents must be destroyed.
- Other accommodations that would invalidate the test are prohibited.

## **Allowable Accommodations—RPTE**

The decision to use a particular accommodation with a student should be made on an individual basis and should take into consideration both the needs of the student and whether the student routinely receives the accommodation in classroom instruction and testing. If a student receives special education services, all accommodations must be documented in the student's IEP.

- Instructions given orally before or after the test may be either signed to a student who is deaf or hearing impaired or translated into the student's native language.

- A student may place a colored overlay or a magnifying device over the test or use a blank place marker with the test and answer document. Test booklets are secure documents and may not be photocopied onto colored paper without advance written permission from TEA through the submission and approval of an Accommodation Request Form that states why the student cannot use an overlay. Blank answer documents, which do not contain secure information, may be copied onto colored paper; however, they must be transcribed verbatim onto a standard answer document for scoring.
- A student may be tested in a small group or receive an individual administration. In an individual administration the student may read aloud while working or may read the test into a tape recorder during testing and play it back while working.
- A student with a visual impairment may use a large-print version of the test. No braille tests are available.
- If a student has a temporary or permanent disabling condition that interferes with his or her ability to record machine-scorable responses, the student may respond orally to test items or mark responses in the test booklet. The test administrator must record these responses verbatim on a scorable test booklet or answer document.

### **Nonallowable Accommodations—RPTE**

- The student may not receive any reading assistance.
- The student may not use English-language or foreign-language reference materials.
- Test items and reading selections must not be translated.
- Test questions, answer choices, and selections may not be rephrased or clarified.
- Other accommodations that would invalidate the test are prohibited.

### **Allowable Accommodations—TAAS Exit Level**

The decision to use a particular accommodation with a student should be made on an individual basis and should take into consideration both the needs of the student and whether the student routinely receives the accommodation in classroom instruction and testing. Any student may be considered for an accommodation. If a student receives special education services, all accommodations must be documented in the student's IEP.

- Instructions given orally before or after the test may be either signed to an examinee who is deaf or hearing impaired, or translated into the native language of an examinee with limited English proficiency.
- The writing prompt may be signed to an examinee who is deaf or hearing impaired, but no elaboration on the prompt may be provided.
- An examinee may place a colored overlay over the test or use a blank place marker with the test and answer document.

- An examinee may be tested in a small group or receive an individual administration. In an individual administration, the examinee may read aloud while working or read the test into a tape recorder during testing and play it back while working.
- An examinee may use a large-print or braille version of the test.
- An examinee may have a temporary or permanent disabling condition that interferes with his or her ability to write the composition. In these circumstances the examinee may tape-record the essay while composing it and then play it back for the test administrator, noting spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Afterward the examinee must be allowed to read over the composition and indicate where he or she would like to make corrections.
- An examinee may type the written composition on a typewriter or on a computer but may not use the computer's spell-check feature or the word predictability function and may not save the document. The composition must be transcribed verbatim onto a standard answer document for scoring.

### **Nonallowable Accommodations—TAAS Exit Level**

- The examinee may not receive any reading assistance on the writing or reading tests. Examinees who are identified as having a disability that affects their reading may qualify for an oral administration of the mathematics test.
- The examinee may not use English-language or foreign-language reference materials.
- The examinee may not use a calculator, slide rule, or mathematics chart other than the chart that is provided with the testing materials.
- Test items must not be translated. This includes reading and writing selections.
- Test questions, answer choices, selections, and writing prompts may not be rephrased or clarified.
- Other accommodations that would invalidate the test are prohibited.

## **Oral Administration**

### **Eligibility**

A test administrator may read aloud or sign the test questions and answer choices for mathematics, science, and/or social studies tests to

- an eligible examinee identified as having a disability that affects the examinee's reading and who regularly receives this accommodation in the classroom, or
- an examinee who is deaf or hearing impaired and whose IEP requires the signing of daily instruction.

Only students served by special education or Section 504 or who have been identified as having dyslexia may receive an oral administration. Any student taking TAKS–I may receive an oral administration.

## Authority for Decision

A student who meets the eligibility criteria may receive an oral administration. The decision to provide an oral administration to a student receiving special education services should be made by the student's admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee and must be documented in the student's IEP. For a student not in special education, this determination rests with the student's placement committee required by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and must be documented in the student's individual accommodation plan (IAP); or the student's committee of knowledgeable persons as outlined in *The Dyslexia Handbook* and must be documented in writing in accordance with district policies and procedures.

For the TAKS and TAKS-I programs, the oral administration is available only for the mathematics, science, and social studies tests. It is not available for the English language arts, reading, and writing tests. For the TAAS program, the oral administration is available only for the mathematics test. It is not available for the reading or writing tests.

The test administrator must indicate that the student received an oral administration by completing the appropriate code in the "OA" (oral administration) field on the front of the TAKS, TAKS-I, or TAAS answer document. When this field is marked, the oral administration will be noted on the student's performance report.

For the SDAA II program, an oral administration is available only for the mathematics test. It is not available for the reading, writing, or ELA tests. Instructional Levels K, 1, and 2 of the SDAA II mathematics test are specifically designed to be read aloud to students. IEP documentation of oral administration is not required for these instructional levels.

## Students with Visual Impairments

Large-print test booklets are available for all TAKS (LAT included), TAKS-I, SDAA II, and RPTE operational administrations.

Braille test booklets are only available for

- TAKS operational administrations;
- TAAS operational administrations; and
- operational administrations of SDAA II writing at Instructional Levels 3/4–8/9, reading at Instructional Levels 2–9, ELA at Instructional Level 10, and mathematics at Instructional Levels K–10.

Braille test booklets are not available for TAKS-I, LAT, or RPTE administrations.

Test administrators receive instructions for testing visually impaired students with braille or large-print test booklets. Districts are instructed to indicate on the answer document whether a student used a large-print or braille version of a test.

## ARD- and LEP-Exempt Students

Assessment requirements for LEP students and students receiving special education services are outlined in the Texas Education Code. During the 2006–2007 school year, a student receiving special education services was administered state-developed criterion-referenced

(TAKS/TAKS–I or SDAA II) tests unless the student’s ARD committee determined that these tests were an inappropriate measure of the student’s educational progress, as outlined in the student’s IEP. Each student receiving special education services exempted from SDAA II was required to participate in a TEKS-based locally determined alternate assessment, as determined by the student’s ARD committee. Appropriate alternate assessments included but were not limited to released TAKS tests or locally selected assessments. Beginning in spring 2007 a functional LDAA was no longer an option for any student. A student formally tested with a functional LDAA was required to participate in TAKS–Alt field testing for all tested subjects for the student’s enrolled grade if the student met the participation criteria.

During the 2006–2007 school year, LEP students in grades 3 through 10 were required to take the TAKS tests unless they were recent immigrants and eligible for a LEP exemption. To fulfill federal NCLB requirements, these students were included in federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reporting through their participation in RPTE (LEP-exempt first year immigrants only; reading/ELA subject area only) or linguistically accommodated administrations of TAKS or SDAA II reading or English language arts and linguistically accommodated test administrations of TAKS mathematics. Texas rules and test administration procedures require exemption decisions to be based on clearly defined criteria and made on an individual student basis. Immigrant LEP students enrolled in U.S. schools for three years or less are eligible for an exemption only if they meet specific exemption criteria related to their language proficiency and schooling outside the United States. Language proficiency assessment committees (LPACs) are responsible for determining the appropriate assessment options for LEP students using the procedures delineated in the TEA publication titled *LPAC Decision-Making Process for the Texas Assessment Program*.

LEP students are required to take the exit level assessment. However, a LEP student is allowed to postpone the initial administration of the test if the student is a recent immigrant enrolled in U.S. schools no more than 12 months before the administration of the exit level test for which the postponement is sought.

Exemptions on the basis of limited English proficiency are not permitted for TELPAS, since these assessments are designed specifically for LEP students. All LEP students participate in TELPAS, with the following exceptions:

- LEP students who arrive in the United States for the first time during the second semester of a school year are not required to take RPTE if their LPAC determines that they read virtually no English. These students are assigned a proficiency rating of Beginning and the minimum RPTE scale score, which will be their baseline score against which to measure growth in reading proficiency in future years.
- LEP students served by special education are not required to be assessed with TELPAS if their ARD committee exempts them on the basis that this type of assessment is inappropriate given the nature of their disability.

## **Make-Up Testing**

### **Background**

In 2003 TEA received numerous requests from district superintendents to institute make-up testing. Participation requirements for making Adequate Yearly Progress under the federal No Child Left Behind Act are stringent at 95%. These requirements are particularly challenging to meet at the high school level, but middle and elementary schools are also affected.

Although other changes, such as a refinement of the definition for participation rate that takes into account small numbers, did in part address superintendents' concerns, there was still a strong desire for make-up testing.

### **Spring 2007 Make-Up Testing**

For the 2006–2007 school year, make-up tests were allowed for the TAKS and SDAA II subject-area tests and grade levels that were included in the calculation of AYP. This policy change went into effect in the 2003–2004 school year and marked a significant departure from previous administration procedures that required, with few exceptions, all students in the same grade to take the same subject-area test at the same time. The intention of the policy change was to be responsive to the requirement of federal law without jeopardizing the integrity and validity of the Texas Student Assessment Program. Major features of the make-up test policy include the following:

- The tests involved were those included in the AYP calculation: reading at grades 3–8, English language arts at grade 10, and mathematics at grades 3–8 and grade 10. Spanish-version tests were also included.
- A separate test form for the grade 10 English language arts make-up test was administered on an assigned day (February 22, 2007).
- The regular testing schedule was maintained, with districts allowed to give make-up tests during the remainder of the week, including Saturday, only to those students who were absent on the regularly scheduled test administration day.
- No make-up tests were allowed for the writing, science, and social studies tests, or for any subject-area test at grade 9 and exit level. (Note: No TAKS-I tests were eligible for make-up testing.)

### **Out-of-District Testing**

For the summer TAKS assessments (grade 3 reading, grade 5 reading and mathematics, and exit level), students who are unable to retest at their home district's designated test site may test out of district. Enrolled out-of-district students are required to complete the out-of-district registration form, and exit level students must also present picture identification. For example, a student from Houston who spends the summer in Dallas and who wants to test in Dallas is required to register to test out of district. Out-of-district also applies to students who are part of the Texas Tech or University of Texas high school programs.

A campus or district must accommodate the request of an out-of-district student to participate in the third administration of a Student Success Initiative test (grade 3 reading and grade 5 reading and/or mathematics in 2006–2007) if that campus or district is testing one or more local students on the applicable test and if the student has registered in advance for out-of-district testing. A district may choose to test walk-in students or out-of-district students who register after the deadline, but the district is not required to do so.

## **Out-of-School Testing**

Individuals who have completed all graduation requirements, but have not passed all four sections of the exit level TAKS test (or, if applicable, all three sections of the TAAS exit level test) and who are no longer enrolled in a district may retake the appropriate sections each time the test is administered. Districts are required to publicize the designated dates, the precise location(s) and times of testing, and the actions out-of-school individuals interested in retesting must take to ensure access to the testing areas and to testing materials.

A district may select out-of-school testing site(s) within the district or collaborate with an education service center or neighboring district to test out-of-school examinees at an alternate testing site. Districts are provided with registration packets so that individuals who are no longer enrolled in school may register for the exit level test. Out-of-school examinees may register online or by mail. Registered individuals receive an admission letter informing them of the date, time, and location of testing. Test results are mailed to the individual and to the district from which he or she is eligible to receive a diploma.