

Alternative Assessments for Exit-Level TAKS

House Bill 25, passed by the 75th legislature, added Texas Education Code § 39.025 (d)-(e), which requires the Commissioner of Education to develop rules that designate one or more alternative nationally-recognized, norm-referenced assessments that eligible students may substitute for certain exit level Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) assessment required for graduation. A student is eligible under this new law if s/he enrolls after January 1 of the school year in which the student is otherwise eligible to graduate, and s/he enrolls as a current student (1) for the first time in a public school in this state or (2) after an absence of at least four years from any public school in this state. In addition, the legislation mandated that the commissioner establish a required performance level for these assessments that is at least as rigorous as the performance level for the exit-level TAKS for the same subject. An eligible student will be exempt from the exit-level TAKS assessments in each subject area in which the student has met the passing standard established by the commissioner on an approved alternative exit-level assessment.

The commissioner has adopted

- the SAT® verbal/critical reading and mathematics test and
- the ACT® English and mathematics tests

as the alternative assessments that eligible students may substitute for the TAKS exit level assessments in English language arts and mathematics beginning in the spring of 2006. The following passing standards are required to qualify to substitute for the corresponding exit-level TAKS:

SAT® verbal/critical reading test	at least 472
ACT® English test	at least 17.7
SAT® mathematics test	at least 461
ACT® mathematics test	at least 19.5

The student is responsible for providing an official copy of his/her scores from the alternative assessment to the school district. Each district is responsible for verifying a student's eligibility for the alternative exit-level assessment, validating the student's score, and determining whether the student met the required performance level.

An eligible student who has met the passing standard required by the commissioner on an alternative exit-level assessment in reading/English and/or mathematics has satisfied the exit-level testing requirement in the respective subject area. However, students are still required to pass the exit level science and social studies TAKS tests as well as satisfy all coursework requirements in order to be eligible to receive a Texas high school diploma

These rules were posted for public comment from February 3 – March 5, 2006. No comments were received during that period. Thus the rules as proposed are scheduled to become effective as early as April 2, 2006.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the Texas Education Agency Student Assessment Division at 512-463-9536.