

<b>ACTION REQUESTED</b>
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May 19, 2006

**TO THE SUPERINTENDENT ADDRESSED:**

As you may remember, in October 2000 your district participated in a survey that provided feedback on the skills proposed for inclusion in the new Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) program for all subjects and grade levels tested. Your input, as well as that of other educators across the state, was vital to the development of a high-quality assessment program. We are once again asking for your help.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is currently evaluating all the content eligible to be assessed on the TAKS mathematics tests at grades 3, 4, and 5 because of the refinements recently made to the elementary mathematics Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). These refinements, which were adopted by the State Board of Education in October 2005, include some TEKS student expectations that have been slightly modified or reworded for clarification and some TEKS student expectations that have been shifted within and among grades. However, many TEKS student expectations have not changed in any way. We are asking that you evaluate the entire TEKS curriculum for grades 3, 4, and 5 to determine which student expectations should be assessed on TAKS. Items assessing any new TEKS content would be field-tested beginning in 2008 and would be eligible for assessment **no earlier than** 2009. In the meantime, the TAKS mathematics tests at grades 3, 4, and 5 will continue to assess eligible TEKS content.

An online survey is being developed to obtain input as to whether the refined TEKS content should be assessed on TAKS mathematics tests at grades 3, 4, and 5. Printable copies of the survey are available on the TEA website. The survey will be available online August 1, 2006, through September 30, 2006. We are asking each campus to conduct at least one meeting with teachers, administrators, parents, and other interested community members to review and discuss this refined content. All elementary mathematics teachers as well as bilingual/English as a second language and special education teachers who work with students in mathematics at grades 3 through 5 should be involved in these meetings. Members of the campus-level planning committee required by Texas Education Code §11.251 should also be included. This review and discussion will serve as the basis for a campus recommendation on the proposed content. Finally, we ask that the online survey be completed by September 30, 2006. The survey will be available at <http://K12testing.tx.ncspearson.com/TEKSMathSurvey.htm>.

The survey should reflect the consensus of all educators and other stakeholders who attend the meeting(s) about the proposed additional content. If consensus is not reached, participants will need to vote on whether the content should be included on TAKS in whole or in part. If the consensus of the meeting participants is that the content is essential to measure but not in its entirety, please provide comments specifying the restrictions the participants recommend.

Additionally, this online survey addresses several other aspects of the TAKS mathematics tests at grades 3, 4, and 5. We are gathering input on the proposed inclusion of graph paper on the mathematics tests at grades 3, 4, and 5. We would also like input on suggested changes to the TAKS mathematics charts for grades 3, 4, and 5.

As superintendent, you are being asked to do the following:

- Decide how best to organize your district's campus meeting(s).
- Determine who should facilitate the meeting(s). Remember that the facilitator is responsible for reflecting the consensus of the meeting participants and ensuring that the survey reflects this consensus.
- Ensure that the survey is submitted by the September 30, 2006, deadline.

Feedback from Texas educators on these refined TEKS student expectations is crucial to the continued development of reliable, accurate, and fair mathematics tests that are closely linked to the curriculum and reflect sound classroom instruction. We very much appreciate your important contribution to this worthwhile goal.

If you have any questions, please contact the Student Assessment Division at (512) 463-9536.

Sincerely,

Lisa Chandler  
Director, Student Assessment

cc: District Test Coordinator  
Education Service Center Executive Directors  
Education Service Center Test Coordinators