

Item 15:

Discussion of the Science of Teaching Reading Transition and Test Development Updates

DISCUSSION

SUMMARY: This item provides the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) an update on the Science of Teaching Reading (STR) examination requirement transition and upcoming educator certification test development.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: The statutory authority for the classroom teacher class certificate structure is Texas Education Code (TEC), §§21.003(a), 21.031, and 21.041(b)(1), (2), and (4), 21.041(c), 21.044(a), 21.0441, 21.0418(a).

FUTURE ACTION EXPECTED: Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff anticipates presenting an update on educator certification test development to the Board at each SBEC meeting.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND JUSTIFICATION: This item provides an update on the plan to communicate to the field the House Bill (HB) 3, 86th Texas Legislature, 2019 requirement that all educators that teach any grade level from prekindergarten through grade six demonstrate proficiency in the science of teaching reading on a certification examination beginning January 1, 2021. In addition, the item provides an update regarding upcoming test development dates. The updated assessments are a part of the teacher certification redesign plan that was discussed with the Board at the August 2018 work session and the October and December 2018 SBEC meetings to improve the quality and consistency of newly certified teachers.

STR Transition Plan

House Bill (HB) 3, 86th Texas Legislature, 2019, requires that all educators that teach any grade level from prekindergarten through grade six demonstrate proficiency in the science of teaching reading on a certification examination beginning January 1, 2021. TEA staff has provided the Board with regular updates since the July 2019 SBEC work session regarding the STR examination as a part the comprehensive test development timeline.

Since the STR legislative requirement was enacted, TEA staff have actively communicated with the field regarding the associated timelines and requirements for educator preparation programs and teacher candidates. In addition, TEA staff have provided resources to support educator preparation programs in aligning their curriculum for impacted certification fields to the Science of Teaching Reading standards. The certification fields impacted are:

- Core Subjects with Science of Teaching Reading: Early Childhood–Grade 6
- Core Subjects with Science of Teaching Reading: Grades 4–8
- English Language Arts and Reading with Science of Teaching Reading: Grades 4–8, and
- English Language Arts and Reading/Social Studies with Science of Teaching Reading: Grades 4–8

Included in those efforts is a requirement that all EPPs indicate their ability and readiness to successfully prepare candidates for certification in those impacted certification fields. EPPs that choose not to prepare candidates in these fields that require successful completion of the STR exam will be removed from the ability to certify candidates in these areas.

A timeline of TEA staff communication related to the STR transition can be found in Attachment I. Given the COVID-19 disaster, all new communication efforts related to the STR transition have paused and have shifted to provide support and guidance related to the disaster to the field.

An overview of the STR transition communication plan can be found in Attachment II.

Test Development

Staff is actively working to update the current content pedagogy tests to increase their rigor and relevance and to ensure alignment with the current Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). A summary of the anticipated first operational dates of the new assessments are in the table below.

The Physical Education (257) assessment has been delayed from a September 1, 2021 operational launch to ensure alignment with the revised TEKS, which are still under development by the State Board of Education (SBOE).

January 1, 2021	September 1, 2021	January 1, 2022	TBD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC–3 Content (292) • Science of Teaching Reading (293) • Educational Diagnostician (253) • Early Childhood–Grade 6 Core Subjects (391) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Counselor (252) • Trade and Industrial Education PPR (370) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language Arts and Reading 4–8 (217) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language Arts and Reading 7–12 • ESL Supplemental • Bilingual Education Supplemental • BTLPT–Spanish • Bilingual Spanish • Special Education and related assessments • Health (258) • Physical Education (257)

PUBLIC AND STUDENT BENEFIT: The public and student benefit anticipated as a result of the recommendations and assessments would be more rigorous, relevant, and reliable requirements for the preparation, certification, and testing of classroom teachers upon entry into the profession, and retention of these qualified professionals for years to come.

Staff Members Responsible:

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Attachments:

- I. Science of Teaching Reading Transition Communication Timeline
- II. Science of Teaching Reading Transition Communication Plan

ATTACHMENT I**STR Transition Communication Timeline:
Implementation of the STR Exam as a Requirement of HB 3**

Date	Action
June 11, 2019	TEA staff provides legislative update to educator preparation program professional organizations, including Texas Association of Community College Teacher Education Programs (TACCTEP), Texas Association of Certification Officers (TACO), Texas Coordinators for Teacher Certification Testing (TCTCT), Texas Directors of Field Experiences (TDFE), and Texas Association of Teacher Educators (TxATE) Summer Meeting
July 12, 2019	TEA discusses the science of teaching reading requirements and implications with SBEC's Educator Preparation Advisory Committee (EPAC), including a deep dive on reading with Dr. Jennifer Schnakenberg from the Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk
July 25, 2019	TEA staff provides legislative update to SBEC, including the requirements around the science of teaching reading
September 20, 2019	TEA staff updates EPAC about early literacy training for educator preparation programs and implementation timelines for new science of teaching reading assessments
October 4, 2019	TEA staff updates SBEC regarding the science of teaching reading rule changes and test development timeline
October 24, 2019	TEA staff updates Texas Association of School Personnel Administrators (TASPA) about updates to science of teaching reading rule changes
October 27, 2019	TEA staff provides a STR Application Deep Dive for preparation programs
October 29, 2019	TEA staff provides updates to Consortium of State Organizations for Texas Teacher Education (CSOTTE) regarding the science of teaching reading and associated timelines
October 30, 2019	TEA provides initial application and associated guidance for preparation programs to offer the science of teaching reading assessment
November 12, 2019	TEA staff provides a STR Application Scope and Sequence Deep Dive for preparation programs
November 18, 2019	TEA staff provides deep dive into substance and implications for different pathways regarding the science of teaching reading assessment for the EPAC.
November 21–22, 2019	Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) Training: Group 1, Session 1

Date	Action
December 6, 2019	TEA staff updates SBEC regarding the science of teaching reading rule changes and test development timeline
December 12, 2019	TEA provides a STR Application Performance Task Deep Dive for preparation programs
December 16–17, 2019	LETRS Training: Group 1, Session 2
December 18, 2019	TEA provides updated guidance via email around the science of teaching reading application and allowing programs to offer the science of teaching reading assessment without an application but with an attestation and updated curriculum.
January 20–21, 2020	LETRS Training: Group 2, Session 1
January 22–23, 2020	LETRS Training for Administrators
January 31, 2020	TEA staff presented to TACTE regarding the upcoming requirements for certification related to STR and the necessary timing for EPP recommendation of certificates
February 7, 2020	TEA staff provides deep dive into substance and implications for different pathways regarding the science of teaching reading assessment for the EPAC.
February 11–12, 2020	LETRS Training: Group 2, Session 2
February 20, 2020	TEA staff discusses with SBEC the replacement of the certification names for the HB 3 impacted certification fields to more clearly indicate the science of teaching reading requirement
March 5, 2020	TEA staff provides update to Data Working Group. The update includes requirements for certification related to STR and the necessary timing for EPP recommendation of certificates
March 13, 2020	Governor Abbott declares a state of disaster due to COVID-19.

ATTACHMENT II**STR Transition Communication Plan:
Implementation of the STR Exam as a Requirement of HB 3****Topic:** STR Implementation Requirements and Associated Timelines**Audience:** Educator preparation programs, candidates currently being prepared to educate students in EC–Grade 6, and Texas local education agencies (LEAs)**Communication Method:**

Method	Description
Direct email communication	Direct email communication regarding STR timelines and requirements distributed through applicable teacher candidate listservs and monthly email communication updates to educator preparation programs through TEA Email Blast.
Informational webinar series	Webinar series addressing STR transition requirements and timelines, guidance for programs and/or candidates, and frequently asked questions.
Timely updates to the TEA Standards and Testing website	Dedicated website page including all communication updates, access to recorded webinars, and timely Frequently Asked Questions documents.
Professional Organization updates	Timely updates related to the STR timelines and requirements through professional organization communication channels and convenings.
LEA updates	Timely updates related to the STR timelines, requirements, and staffing implications through LEA communication channels and convenings.
SBEC updates	Regular updates related to the STR timeline and requirements
EPAC updates and discussion	Regular updates related to the STR timeline and requirements and opportunities for feedback and questions related to preparation program implementation.

Topic: STR Exam Specifications and Curriculum Alignment**Audience:** Educator preparation programs**Communication Methods:**

Method	Description
LETRS Training	Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) training series offered to all educator preparation programs to provide foundational context regarding the science of teaching reading to inform curriculum development.

Method	Description
Webinar series	Training series focused on alignment of curriculum with Science of Teaching Reading standards and associated examination requirements.
Timely updates to the TEA Standards and Testing website	Dedicated website page including posting of the standards, test framework, and additional relevant examination resources.
Professional Organization updates	Resources and guidance related to the STR transition through professional organization communication channels and convenings.
SBEC updates	Regular updates related to the STR communication timeline.
EPAC updates and discussion	Regular updates regarding resources and supports related to STR curriculum alignment and opportunities for feedback and questions related to preparation program implementation