State and National Assessments, 2014-2015

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At-a-Glance

State and National Assessments (SNA) coordinates the administration, distribution and processing of all state-, national- and district-mandated criterion- and norm-referenced testing in the Dallas ISD. These tests include TAKS, STAAR, STAAR A, STAAR Spanish, STAAR L, STAAR Alt 2, STAAR End-of-Course (EOC), Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS), ITBS/Logramos, WMLS-R and Stanford 10. In addition, SNA supports Magnet School Testing, NAEP/TUDA, and the acquisition of Credit by Examination (CBE) and Credit by Examination for Acceleration (CEFA). STAAR A online and STAAR Alt 2 are new assessments that were added to STAAR program during the 2014-15 school year. STAAR A is essentially the same as STAAR except all allowable accommodations are embedded on the screen. STAAR Alt 2 is a revised version of STAAR Alt that allows the test administrator to input students' responses online.

SNA is also responsible for Test Security. In this capacity, SNA is responsible for training Campus Testing Coordinators, monitoring test administrations, and reporting testing irregularities to the proper authorities (Texas Education Agency (TEA), Human Capital Management and Professional Standards Office). The following provides a summary of testing activities handled by State and National Assessments:

During the fall semester of 2014-15 school year, the Dallas ISD Board of Education approved and appropriated funding for the assignment of five Districtwide Testing Coordinators to Evaluation and Assessment. Each coordinator was assigned to one of five Divisions to provide training, support, and oversight of all testing related activities at all schools in each Division. These activities included: development of Campus Testing Coordinator selection criteria; development of a Principal Testing Checklist of activities to be implemented before, during, and after a test administration; development of a Campus Test Security Plan Rubric; provision of online and face-to-face training for Campus Test Coordinators on the Texas Assessment Management Systems; coordination and setup of online and paper/pencil test administrations; investigation of testing irregularities; assisting Campus Test Coordinators, principals, and parents with the lookup and interpretation of TAKS, STAAR, and TELPAS results; and the development of Dallas ISD's Performance-Based Monitoring Student Assessment Validation Report.

State-Mandated Assessments

The graduating class of 2013-14 was the last group of students required to meet State standards for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). The Texas Education Agency (TEA) replaced the TAKS with the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR™) at grades 3-12. House Bill 5 (HB 5) reduced the number of End-of-Course (EOC) exams required for graduation from a Texas public school from 12 to 5. Senate Bill 149 (SB 149), instituted during the spring of 2015, changed the requirements of HB 5 so that students can earn a high school diploma by passing a minimum of three EOCs.

The following presents an overview of the number of state mandated tests administered in the Dallas ISD:

- Across grades 11 and 12, a total of 310 students took the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Exit Retest.
- Across grades 3-8, more than 70,000 students took STAAR Reading, 67,585 took STAAR Math, and at grades 4 & 7, about 23,000 took STAAR Writing.
- At grades 5, 12,123 students took STAAR Reading, 373 took STAR A, 11,582 took STAAR and 1,168 took STAAR Alt 2. These results include retesters.
- At grade 8, 10,890 students took STAAR Reading (587 took STAAR A, 10,175 took
STAAR and 128 took STAAR Alt 2). These results include retesters.

- At grades 5 and 8, about 25,000 students took the STAAR Science test, and at grade 8, about 11,000 students took the STAAR Social Studies test.
- A total of 64,503 students took the STAAR/EOC with more than 12,000 tested in each of the following subjects: Algebra I, Biology, English I, and English II.
- A total of 59,932 students were rated on the TELPAS in grades 2-12.
- At grades K-2, 62,116 students took the ITBS (21,927 took reading and 40,189 took math), while 18,427 took the Logramos Reading and 115 took Logramos Math.

**Iowa Test of Basic Skill (ITBS) Norm-Referenced Assessments at Grades K-2**

The ITBS is an English-language standardized norm-referenced achievement test. The Logramos is the Spanish version of the test. These tests were administered to students in grades K-2 to fulfill three main purposes:

- Obtain information for supporting instructional decisions,
- Report individual progress to students and their parents, and
- Evaluate the progress of groups of students.

Across grades K-2, a total of 80,658 students were tested with the ITBS (21,927 in reading, and 40,189 in mathematics), and 18,542 with the Logramos (18,427 in reading, and 115 in mathematics). Of the 80,658 students tested, 40,408 took multiple exams.

**Woodcock Munoz Language Survey and Stanford 10 Assessments of LEP Students**

School districts are required to identify LEP students in grades PK-12 through the use of a home language survey. Students identified as having a language other than English were assessed with the Woodcock-Munoz Language Survey. Students who scored ≥4 were then assessed with the Stanford 10, a norm-referenced achievement test. A total of 36,076 students were assessed with the WMLS (25,287 on the English version and 10,789 on the Spanish version) and 1,289 with the Stanford 10. Of those tested with the Stanford 10, approximately 600 were exiting students at grades 11 and 12.

**Magnet School Application Process and Assessment Results**

State and National Assessments administered the ITBS/Logramos or Stanford 10 to students who did not have norm- or criterion-referenced achievement test scores from the previous school year. Specifically, these services were provided to students who were applying for admission to the District's Academies (elementary), Vanguards (middle), and Magnet High Schools who met the following criteria: (1) currently enrolled in private, parochial, or other schools (grades K-10), and (2) currently enrolled Dallas ISD students (grades K-2 and 7-10).

Out-of-district students were required to provide a $100.00 money order or cashier's check made payable to the Dallas Independent School District, while district students tested free.

Students with previous STAAR results were not allowed to take a norm-referenced test as a substitute for STAAR results. This change in admission criteria resulted in a large decrease in the number of students tested for admission into the Magnet Program. A total of 218 students were tested for admission into the Magnet Program in 2014-15 (80 with ITBS, 21 with Logramos and 117 with Stanford 10) compared to 439 tested in 2013-14 (234 with ITBS, 47 with Logramos and 158 with Stanford 10).

**Credit by Examination for Acceleration and Credit by Examination with ACP Results**

Credit by Examination for Acceleration (CEFA) was developed by Texas Tech University to assess mastery of the TEKS for students in grades 1-12 (EHDB LOCAL & EHDC LOCAL). It is a means by which high-achieving elementary students may advance one grade level by passing all four tests in the common core areas (language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies), while middle and high school students may be awarded course credit. The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) was used to determine acceleration for students in kindergarten.

Students had to meet the following passing standards to accelerate or gain course credit:
• Kindergarten students had to score at or above the 70th percentile on the ITBS Reading and Math test to advance to the next grade.

• Elementary school students had to achieve a mastery score of 80% in all four common core areas (Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies) to advance to the next grade.

• Middle and high school students had to achieve a mastery score of 80% in each subject area tested to receive course credit.

• At the Kindergarten level, 10 students were tested with 2 (20%) scoring at or above the 70th percentile in both reading and math.

The following results were observed:

• At the elementary level, 11 students were tested and 2 students at grade 1 achieving a passing score of 80% mastery or above on all four subtests.

• At the middle and high school levels, more than 1,888 students were tested with passing rates of 84% and 75%, respectively.

Credit-by-Examination with Assessment of Course Performance (CBEwACP) is another means by which students entering the Dallas ISD from home-study or non-accredited schools may receive course credit(s). Students who entered the district in the second semester of grade 9 or in either semester (1st or 2nd) of grades 10-12, were eligible to submit an application for CBEwACP. A total of 429 students were tested (57 elementary, 50 middle school, and 322 high school) with 155 students (36%) receiving course credit. Of those tested at each school level, 35% (20) received course credit at the elementary level, 34% (17) at the middle school level, and 37% (118) at the high school level.

CTC Survey Results

The Department of State and National Assessments provided a total of 96 training sessions on test security and test administration procedures. To determine the quality of training, Campus Test Coordinators (CTCs) were asked to complete an online survey at the end of the school year. Counselors and classroom teachers who were not part of the Teacher Excellent Initiative (TEI) were used as CTCs.

A total of 310 (of 454) Campus and Assistant Campus Test Coordinators responded to the survey, resulting in a 68% response rate. Figure 1 shows the percent of respondents by school level. The majority of respondents were from elementary campuses (76%) and 11% were from both middle and high school campuses, respectively. Figure 2 shows the years of experience of CTCs responding to the survey. Forty-four percent (44%) of the respondents indicated that they were new CTCs, while 17% had 1-2 years of experience, 14% had 3-5 years of experience, and 23% had more than 5 years of experience.

Figure 1: Number and percent of Campus Test Coordinators responding to the CTC survey by school level.

Figure 2: Number and percent of Campus Test Coordinators responding to the survey by years of experience.

Twelve (12) additional questions on the survey used a Likert type response scale that ranged from 1-9 (1=Strongly Disagree to 9=Strongly Agree). More than 90% of the CTCs strongly agreed that the presenter was knowledgeable, emphasized how to use information in a school setting, and met training objectives. More than 98% of the respondents strongly agreed that the support provided by the Districtwide Test Coordinators was helpful and that they were knowledgeable about test security and test administration procedures.
Test Monitor Trainings

State and National Assessments trained Test Monitors to ensure proper test administration and security procedures were being followed during each test administration. At the end of each observation, test monitors were required to complete a number of observation forms documenting all aspects of the testing environment and testing irregularities, if observed. A total of 218 test monitors were trained to monitor 207 schools 2 to 3 times during each testing window. School assignments were done through an online self-selection process.

Testing Irregularities

Testing irregularities fell into two distinct categories, Procedural and Serious. Procedural irregularities are less severe and most common. They typically involved minor deviations in testing procedures such as uncovered instructional displays or hall monitors not effectively monitoring bathroom breaks. Serious irregularities constitute severe violations of test security and/or confidentiality that may result in the involvement of the TEA’s Educator Certification and Standards Division for consideration of disciplinary action (including suspension or revocation of educator certification credentials). A total of 237 testing irregularities were reported to State and National Assessments (234 Procedural and 3 Serious). This represents a 12% decrease in the number of Procedural irregularities observed in 2013-14. The majority of Procedural irregularities were associated with the administration of the STAAR at grades 3-8. All Serious irregularities were forwarded to the Professional Standards Office.

Assessments of Course Performance (ACP) Accountability Process

Assessments of Course Performance (ACPs) are locally developed secure tests that are used in grades K-12. From year to year, about 60% of the items on the tests are recycled; therefore 100% of all tests must be returned or the integrity and security of the tests are jeopardized. To address this issue, SNA monitored the return of ACP test booklets to the Assessment Service Center.

From the spring 2014-15 testing session, a random sample of 25 schools was selected for accountability purposes (15 elementary, 5 middle, and 5 high schools).

A total of 85,161 test booklets were shipped to the 25 schools (41,069 shipped to elementary schools, 25,842 shipped to middle schools, and 18,250 shipped to high schools). All schools had return rates greater than 99%. Twelve (12) elementary, 4 middle, and 2 high schools had return rates of 100%.

Of the schools that retained test booklets, a total of 9 test booklets were retained across all elementary schools with no more than 4 test booklets retained at any given school. At the middle school level, 49 test booklets were retained (all at Long Middle School). At the high school level, 4 test booklets were retained. Of those, 2 were retained at South Oak Cliff, 1 at Samuel and 1 at Washington Arts.

Failure to return a single ACP test booklet jeopardizes the security of the ACP testing program. Follow-up phone calls, emails and scheduled visits by the Districtwide Testing Coordinators will be used to help recover missing test booklets. Findings from this report will be shared with School Leadership.