

# Countdown for end of high school TAKS continues

## EOC exams to replace TAKS in 2011

The clock is ticking for the end of high school TAKS tests as this year's seventh-grade students will be the last group that must pass the state standardized test in order to graduate from high school. This makes current sixth-grade students the first group that will be required to take 12 End-of-Course (EOC) Exams beginning in 2011-2012.

When the 80<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature met last year, they passed Senate Bill 1031, which eliminated TAKS tests at the high school level replacing it with EOC exams, which are statewide finals given at the end of each course to provide an in-depth measure of comprehension and skill attainment. The EOC exams administered to high school students will be in the four core areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Each subject area will include three EOC exams that students will be required to take before graduating from high school.

Under the new law, CFISD students will be required to score at least a composite of 840, which is an average of 70 for each core subject area test. Students scoring below a 70 on any individual test will receive accelerated instruction and be given an opportunity to retake the test. However, students must attain a minimal EOC score of 60 on an individual test in order for it to count toward the cumulative number. The score a student earns on each exam will also count as 15 percent of a student's overall course grade.

According to state legislators, the implementation of EOC exams promotes college readiness by allowing a student to satisfy requirements based on a cumulative score of core subjects rather than a single pass/fail test like the TAKS test exams.

The new changes from Senate Bill 1031 will not apply to current students who have yet to pass the exit-level TAKS tests.

### End-of-Course Exam Facts

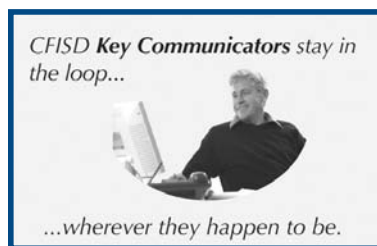
- Students will be required—at the state's expense—in grades 8, 10, 11 and/or 12 to complete a college preparatory test, which can include the PSAT, SAT and ACT exams.
- CFISD will be required to administer a nationally norm-referenced preliminary college preparation assessment (PSAT) to every eighth- and 10<sup>th</sup>-grade student each year.
- The Commissioner of Education will allow a student's satisfactory performance on an advanced placement (AP) test, international baccalaureate (IB) exam, SAT subject test or other rigorous assessments to satisfy the appropriate graduation requirement in lieu of the EOC test for that subject.
- Students not enrolled in a class will not be required to take the EOC exam for that course.
- By Sept. 1, 2008, each district must provide information to TEA regarding its ability to administer EOC tests by computer because assessments must be developed so that testing can be administered on a computer.

## Key Communicators stay informed with latest district news

In an effort to enhance and expand the district's comprehensive and interactive communication plan, patrons are encouraged to subscribe to be a CFISD key communicator.

As a key communicator, district supporters will receive *Key Communicator Letters* from Dr. David Anthony, superintendent of schools, which provides information on the most current issues impacting the district.

The most recent *Key Communicator Letters* from Dr. Anthony included



graduation and the last day of school, state funding, TAKS testing dates and Bond 2007. With information provided in the *Key Communicator Letters*, subscribers can inform other community members of the latest district news and also encourage them to stay informed by regularly visiting the district website at [www.cfid.net](http://www.cfid.net), listening to district podcasts posted online, reading *Inside Cypress-Fairbanks ISD* and school newsletters, watching CFTV programs on Comcast Cable Channel 16 and CFTV Online.

Interested patrons can subscribe to be a key communicator via email, by visiting the Quick Links drop-down menu on the district homepage and selecting *Key Communicator*.

## Communication services available for parents via district website

*Additional communication services available via the district website include podcasting, Parent Internet Viewer (PIV), CFTV Online, and online publications.*

*The district website, which averages more than 10 million hits per month, provides extensive and timely information to parents and community members. The site also includes increased homepage access to CFTV programs and an available Google search bar on every page.*

*Advancement in digital technology has paved the way for the district to increase effectiveness of the delivery of information about our students, staff, schools and district. The website is just one of many modes of helpful communication that the district offers.*

### CFISD Podcast

**Podcasting:** Podcasting is one of the district's latest electronic media implementations. Using audio podcasts in the form of press releases—highlighting district news, student and staff honors and achievements—podcasting provides a new way to deliver information to the CFISD community via the district's website. The CFISD Communication podcasts can be downloaded through a free subscription then transferred to an iPod or other portable media player. Specific instructions are provided on the website. Since launching this effort in April 2007 the district has posted more than 350 podcasts for both community members and media to enjoy.

**Parent Internet Viewer (PIV): Grades Online:** Parents of students in grades 3-12 have access to their students' grades online through PIV posted on each campus website. This application allows parents to view their student's grades, attendance (grades 6-12) and assignment information via the internet. The PIV is a secure system and requires a student's ID number and password assigned by the district. At any time, parents can view current grade information as well as information from previous marking periods. For more information, visit the Quick Links drop-down menu on the district homepage and select PIV – Online Grade Viewer.

**Event Notification System:** The Event Notification System (ENS) promotes more efficient emergency and non-emergency communication, especially after school hours. The system increases school-to-home communication regarding both routine and emergency information. The ENS has the capacity to generate a large number of phone calls to parents and/or employees in a short amount of time and inform them of important district or school information. Calling capacity ranges from 6,000 to 60,000 calls per hour, depending upon the urgency level. Calls from the district are typically of an emergency nature. The system can also deliver the messages in English and/or Spanish when necessary.

**CFTV Online/ CFTV Channel 16:** Video-streamed broadcasts are posted on CFTV Online and aired on CFTV Comcast Cable Channel 16. CFTV offers live and pre-recorded programming produced by students and staff including Board meetings, high school graduations, the District News Show, Homework Hotline, Video News Releases, Bond Money at Work, Conversations with the Superintendent and a bulletin board packed with up-to-date information. The district website has incorporated CFTV video on-demand into its new design to allow visitors the flexibility of accessing their programs of choice from the homepage.



**District Publications:** CFISD provides more than 30 publications including the *INSIDE Cypress-Fairbanks* newspaper, which is published six times a year in print or electronically to inform citizens about district programs, accomplishments and policies. Other publications that provide important district information include the Profile, District Goals and Priorities, State of the District, Board of Education, Pocket Facts, District Map and District Calendar. Publications are available in both print and electronic formats.

For more information on parental communication services, please contact the Communication Department, 10300 Jones Road, Houston, Texas, 77065, or call 281-807-8939.

