

# State and District Assessments

## Participation in State/District Assessments

Decisions regarding assessments are made by the ARD Committee and should be based on the instruction the student is receiving and the accommodations/modifications the student requires in order to be successful. Assessment decisions should not be made solely on the disability category or placement.

The IEP must include a statement of any individual appropriate and allowable accommodations in the administration of state-wide assessment instruments or district-wide assessments of student achievement (if the district administers such optional assessments) that are necessary to measure academic achievement and functional performance of the child on the assessments.

The ARD committee will select accommodations that are appropriate to the needs of each student and that accurately reflect student achievement. Accommodations for functional performance will not be addressed if the assessment does not address functional performance. In selecting accommodations, the ARD Committee will consider the conditions under which a student learns best in a normal learning environment, including levels of support, and presentation of material (auditory, visual, etc.).

The ARD Committee should also include in the IEP, if appropriate, documentation regarding a student's current interpersonal skills level and preferred functional communication system/modes (i.e., sign, oral language, picture exchange system, etc.) when considering alternate assessments and accommodations.

If the ARD Committee determines that the student will not participate in a general state-wide assessment or district-wide assessment of student achievement (or part of an assessment), the IEP must include a statement of:

- Why the child cannot participate in the regular assessment
- Why the alternate assessment selected is appropriate for the child
- In making decisions regarding assessments, the ARD Committee should annually review the student's current information to determine the student's present level of functioning
- Determine how the student receives TEKS instruction and the student's level of performance on the grade-level curriculum for his/her enrolled grade level
- Determine the appropriate assessment for the student
- Document the appropriate assessment and all allowable or approved accommodations that the student will need during testing

Prior to selecting an assessment instrument, the student's ARD Committee must be knowledgeable regarding all assessment options, including the characteristics of each assessment and the potential implications of each assessment choice.

The following guidelines must be considered when selecting statewide assessment instruments:

## **STAAR Alternate 2**

If STAAR Alternate 2 is being considered, the student's ARD Committee must Complete the STAAR Alternate 2 Participation Requirements. All requirements must be met for the student to be eligible to take the STAAR Alternate 2 assessment.

**NOTE:** High school students are required to participate in all STAAR Alternate 2 assessments at some time during high school. The ARD Committee should determine which courses and corresponding assessments will be taken in any given year.

### **No Authentic Academic Response Eligibility Requirements**

If the ARD Committee has determined that a student meets the eligibility requirements for STAAR Alternate 2 and the student is being considered for a No Authentic Academic Response (NAAR) designation, the ARD Committee must ensure that the NAAR designation is documented in his/her IEP.

### **Medical Exception Eligibility Requirements**

Students qualifying for a medical exception will not be required to participate in the administration of STAAR Alternate 2 for any course or subject for which they are enrolled in the current year. A score code of 'M' must be recorded for all tests the student would have taken. The ARD Committee must ensure the eligibility for a medical exception is documented in the student's IEP.

Please refer to the STAAR Alternate 2 Educator Guide located on the TEA website for additional information.

<https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/testing/staar-alternate/staar-alternate-2-resources>

## **STAAR**

The STAAR is the state assessment for all students accessing the grade-level TEKS curriculum with or without allowable accommodations. Information regarding currently allowable accommodations is available on the TEA student assessment website.

The student's ARD Committee must ensure that the testing accommodations the student will use are documented in the student's IEP.

### **Accelerated Instruction**

For students in grades 5 and 8 who fail to perform satisfactorily on STAAR reading and mathematics assessments, the ARD student's Committee will determine how the student will participate in an accelerated instruction program.

For students receiving special education services, the ARD Committee serves as the grade placement committee and determines the accelerated instruction plan. When determining the type of accelerated instruction needed, the ARD Committee must compare a student's test results with his or her IEP to make sure areas of weakness identified on the test align with the goals and objectives in the IEP. A continuation of the student's current IEP goals and areas of need may be an appropriate type of accelerated instruction. CFISD may address the accelerated instruction plan by amending the IEP to identify interventions, if the parent is in agreement.

**NOTE:** An ARD Committee meeting must be convened if the accelerated instruction plan involves a change in the IEP or placement.

### Intensive Program of Instruction

CFISD offers an intensive program of instruction to a student who does not perform satisfactorily on a statewide assessment instrument, including an end-of-course assessment, or who is not likely to receive a high school diploma before the fifth school year following the student's enrollment in grade 9, as determined by the district.

The student's ARD Committee is responsible for designing a program that enables the student to attain a standard of growth based on his/her IEP.

### Student Success Initiative (SSI)

#### Student Success Initiative (SSI) Grade Advancement Requirements

The Student Success Initiative (SSI) consists of several components, including grade advancement requirements for reading and mathematics for students in grades 5 and 8. Students who are assessed using STAAR are subject to SSI grade advancement requirements. Students assessed through STAAR Alternate 2 are not subject to SSI grade advancement requirements because multiple testing opportunities are not included in the STAAR-Alternate 2 process. LEP-exempt students are not subject to SSI requirements. However, non-exempt English Language Learners taking STAAR, in English or Spanish are subject to SSI requirements.

Please reference the Student Success Initiative Educator Guide located on the TEA website for additional information.

<https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/testing/student-assessment-overview/student-success-initiative>

### FITNESSGRAM

The FITNESSGRAM is a state required assessment that measures aerobic capacity, body composition, muscular strength, endurance and flexibility through the use of criterion-referenced standards specific to a student's age and gender.

A student receiving special education services should not be restricted from participating in the physical fitness assessment based solely on the student's eligibility for special education services. Some students with disabilities will require accommodations or modifications to the assessment based on the individual student's disability. These accommodations or modifications should be addressed by the student's ARD Committee.

A student can be completely or partially exempted from the six test items required for assessment with the FITNESSGRAM assessment instrument based on the conditions of their disability.

Only students who meet the following requirements must be restricted from participation:

Permanent Restriction: A member of the healing arts licensed to practice in Texas must provide the school written documentation concerning the nature of the impairment and the expectations for physical activity for the student

Temporary Restriction: A member of the healing arts licensed to practice in Texas must provide written documentation concerning the nature of the temporary impairment and the expected amount of time for recovery.

The healing arts includes any system, treatment, operation, diagnosis, prescription or practice to ascertain, cure, relieve adjust or correct a human disease, injury or unhealthy or abnormal

physical or mental condition. A person who uses his/her name on a written professional identification, including a sign, pamphlet, stationery or letterhead or a person who uses his/her signature as a professional identification, shall designate the healing art the person is licensed to practice. These designations include a person who is licensed by one of the following entities:

- Texas State Board of Medical Examiners and holds a doctor of
- medicine or a doctor of osteopathy degree
- State Board of Dental Examiners
- Texas State Board of Chiropractic Examiners
- Texas Optometry Board
- Texas State Board of Pediatric Medicine