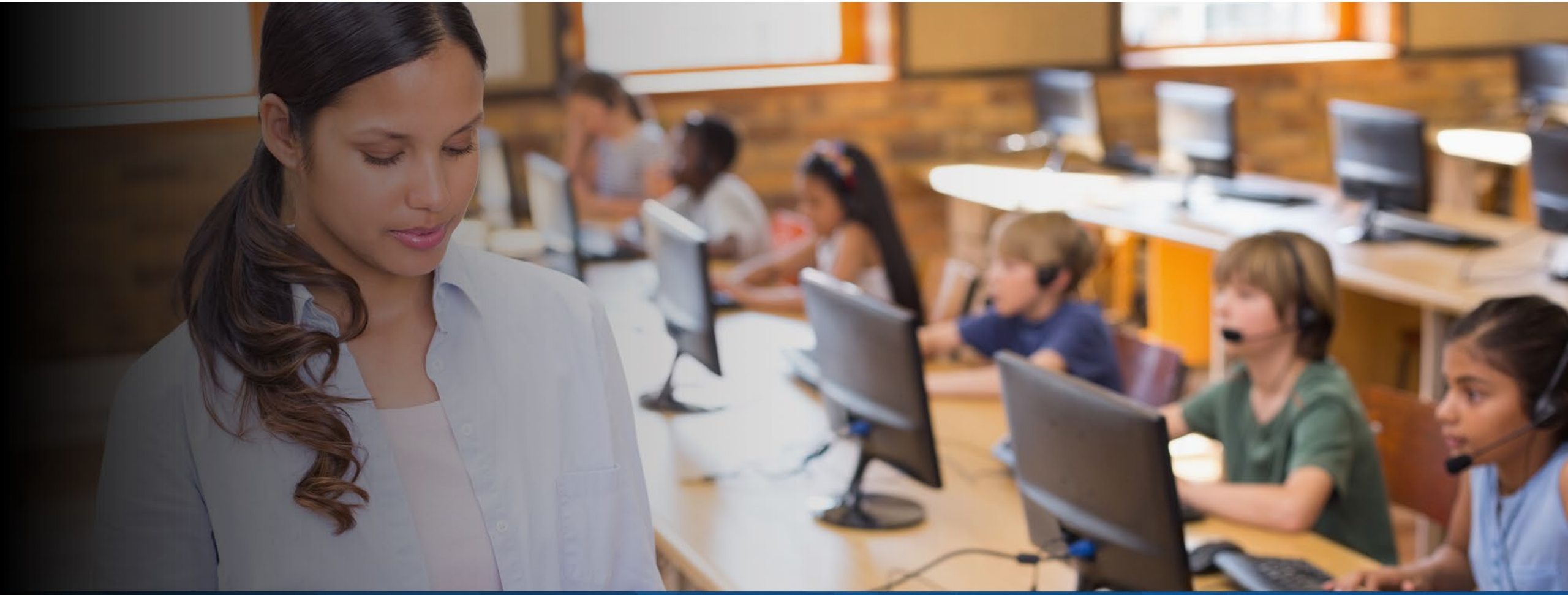


TEA's Optional Assessment Programs

Thank you for joining us today!

Karen Mayton, M.Ed.

Director of Strategic Initiatives & Operations

Student Assessment Division

Texas Education Agency

Donna Wise, M.Ed.

Strategic Initiatives Manager

Student Assessment Division

Texas Education Agency

Dr. Laquita McMillon

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

Student Assessment Division

Texas Education Agency

Jamie Kwan

Strategy & Operations Manager

Student Assessment Division

Texas Education Agency

Optional Assessments Agenda

- TFAR — Texas Formative Assessment Resource (TFAR)
- Inter — STAAR Interim Assessments
- TTAP — Texas Through-year Assessment Pilot (TTAP)

Why are assessments important?

Assessments are **tools that provide meaningful information to guide instruction** – before, during, and after. They provide educators and parents meaningful information to support strong teaching and guide students to their full potential.

A **balanced assessment system** is an assessment system that intentionally makes use of diagnostic, formative, interim, and summative assessment practices.

Each type of assessment provides data for a specific purpose; therefore, the time of administration is related to the instructional cycle

Balanced Assessment System

Different types of assessments provide different data at various times during the year to support instruction

1. Diagnostic

What: A test measuring student knowledge and skills on any variety of student expectations

When: Prior to new instructional cycle or school year

Why: To inform instructional plans and curriculum to meet the needs of individual students

Example: Beginning of the year assessments

2. Formative

What: Ongoing process of measuring student performance on specific student expectations

When: Often, throughout the year

Why: To inform instructional choices, student supports, and updates to planning within existing curricular structures

Example: Curricular-embedded tests administered via TFAR, and unit assessments included within high quality instructional materials

3. Interim

What: Measure student performance and understanding against grade-level standards

When: At check-points a few of times a year

Why: To monitor progress, predict summative performance, and guide student groupings for differentiation

Example: STAAR Interim Assessments

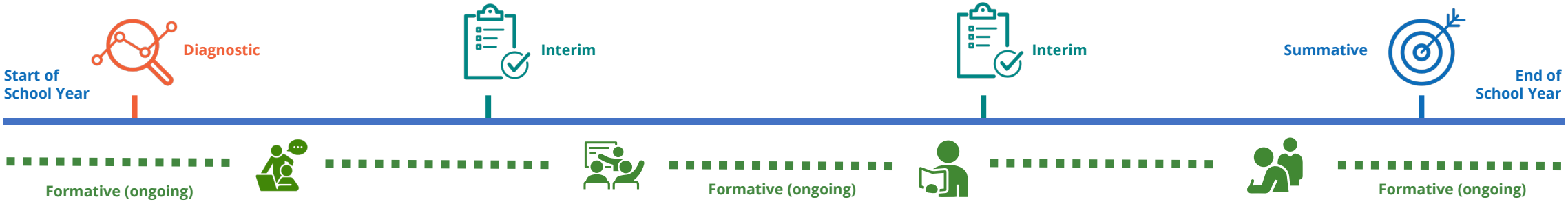
4. Summative

What: Measure student mastery of a broad span of student expectations

When: At the end of an instructional cycle or school year

Why: Campuses and districts use data to determine effectiveness of their programs, report summative mastery, and inform future planning

Example: STAAR, STAAR Alternate 2, TELPAS, and TELPAS Alternate



Diagnostic Assessments

We'll start today's conversation at the beginning, with diagnostic assessments

1. Diagnostic

What: A test measuring student knowledge and skills on any variety of student expectations

When: Prior to new instructional cycle or school year

Why: To inform instructional plans and curriculum to meet the needs of individual students

Example: Beginning of the year assessments

2. Formative

What: Ongoing process of measuring student performance on specific student expectations

When: Often, throughout the year

Why: To inform instructional choices, student supports, and updates to planning within existing curricular structures

Example: Curricular-embedded tests administered via TFAR, and unit assessments included within high quality instructional materials

3. Interim

What: Measure student performance and understanding against grade-level standards

When: At check-points a few of times a year

Why: To monitor progress, predict summative performance, and guide student groupings for differentiation

Example: STAAR Interim Assessments

4. Summative

What: Measure student mastery of a broad span of student expectations

When: At the end of an instructional cycle or school year

Why: Campuses and districts use data to determine effectiveness of their programs, report summative mastery, and inform future planning

Example: STAAR, STAAR Alternate 2, TELPAS, and TELPAS Alternate

What diagnostic assessment can and cannot do

Purpose	What it Can tell you	What it can Not tell you
Determine individuals' strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills prior to instruction Determine whether a student is at-risk and what broad misconceptions they may have coming into an instructional cycle to inform planning for interventions and holistic supports Determine which students may benefit from further diagnostic assessment, targeted instruction, or intensive intervention	If a student is on grade level at the beginning of the year If a student is at risk If a student has mastered prerequisites for a unit or lesson	If a student has mastered a certain student expectation If a student shows growth in learning How a student will perform after instruction

Texas Formative Assessment Resource (TFAR)

TTAP

House Bill 3906 addresses several assessment components, one of which is to create an Integrated Formative Assessment Pilot

Overview:

House Bill (HB) 3906 requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to develop a pilot program in which participating school districts administer integrated formative assessments.
Any participation by districts is optional and does not eliminate a district's obligation to administer the STAAR test.

Purposes:

Create a pilot assessment to inform teaching decisions and improve instructional supports

Create a pilot assessment that can potentially replace the current summative

Because summative and formative assessments serve two different purposes, there are two separate initiatives created to fulfill the law

Texas Formative Assessment Resource TFAR
(launched fall 2020)

An **optional, free** tool to supplement and support existing district resources and formative assessment practices, **unrelated to accountability**

Texas Through-year Assessment Pilot
(optional, small-scale pilot launched in 2022-23)

A **multi-part, through-year** assessment pilot that aims to generate a cumulative score similar to STAAR and **someday potentially replace STAAR as Texas's summative assessment**

TFAR

Formative assessments target specific standards and are administered frequently throughout the year

1. Diagnostic

What: A test measuring student knowledge and skills on any variety of student expectations

When: Prior to new instructional cycle or school year

Why: To inform instructional plans and curriculum to meet the needs of individual students

Example: Beginning of the year assessments

2. Formative

What: Ongoing process of measuring student performance on specific student expectations

When: Often, throughout the year

Why: To inform instructional choices, student supports, and updates to planning within existing curricular structures

Example: Curricular-embedded tests administered via TFAR, and unit assessments included within high quality instructional materials

3. Interim

What: Measure student performance and understanding against grade-level standards

When: At check-points a few of times a year

Why: To monitor progress, predict summative performance, and guide student groupings for differentiation

Example: STAAR Interim Assessments

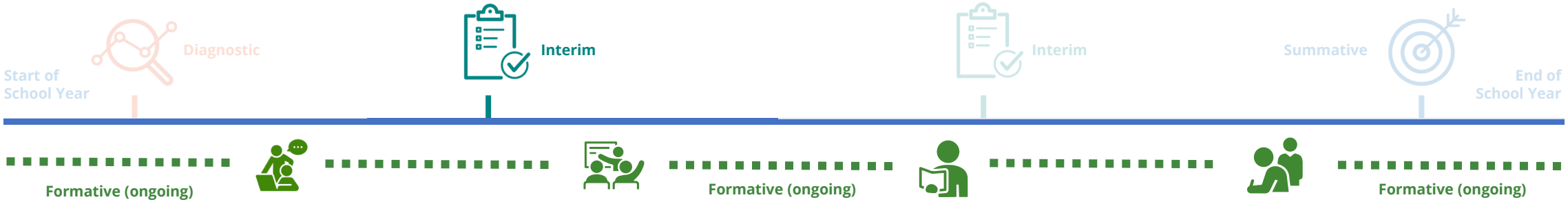
4. Summative

What: Measure student mastery of a broad span of student expectations

When: At the end of an instructional cycle or school year

Why: Campuses and districts use data to determine effectiveness of their programs, report summative mastery, and inform future planning

Example: STAAR, STAAR Alternate 2, TELPAS, and TELPAS Alternate



TFAR

What formative assessments can and cannot do

Purpose	What it Can tell you	What it can Not tell you
Serve as an assessment **for** learning, not **of** learning (e.g., check for understanding) Evaluate mastery of specific standards; assessments are deep and narrow Collect detailed information that can be used to improve instruction and determine what small-scale adjustments need to occur in the classroom Track student learning while it's happening	If a student mastered a particular standard/concept If and where student misunderstanding occurred How students can be grouped for intervention	If a student has demonstrated growth from the beginning of the school year to the end If students are on track to achieving grade level proficiency or meeting end-of-year goals

TFAR

This school year, TEA is connecting with users to understand how TFAR is supporting current formative assessment practices

Tests built by this tool should be part of a broader set of classroom formative practices and should be used within a coherent instructional framework

TFAR is intended to support teachers in creating, administering, and analyzing…

- weekly or bi-weekly quizzes,
- warm-ups and exit tickets,
- aligned and connected with existing instructional plans, lessons, and curriculum

Given its limited item bank and data analysis and reporting functionality, TFAR is not meant to…

- provide independent practice,
- predict student performance on summative assessments,
- exist separate from a coherent instructional framework or curriculum

TFAR

TFAR has four main features, making it a versatile tool to support any district's formative assessment practices

Texas Formative Assessment Resource (TFAR)

TEKS-Aligned Item Bank

Access new item type samplers and thousands of released STAAR items and unreleased STAAR-like items

Item and Test Creation

Create tests using items from TEKS-aligned banks or by authoring your own test questions, including new items types

Data Reporting

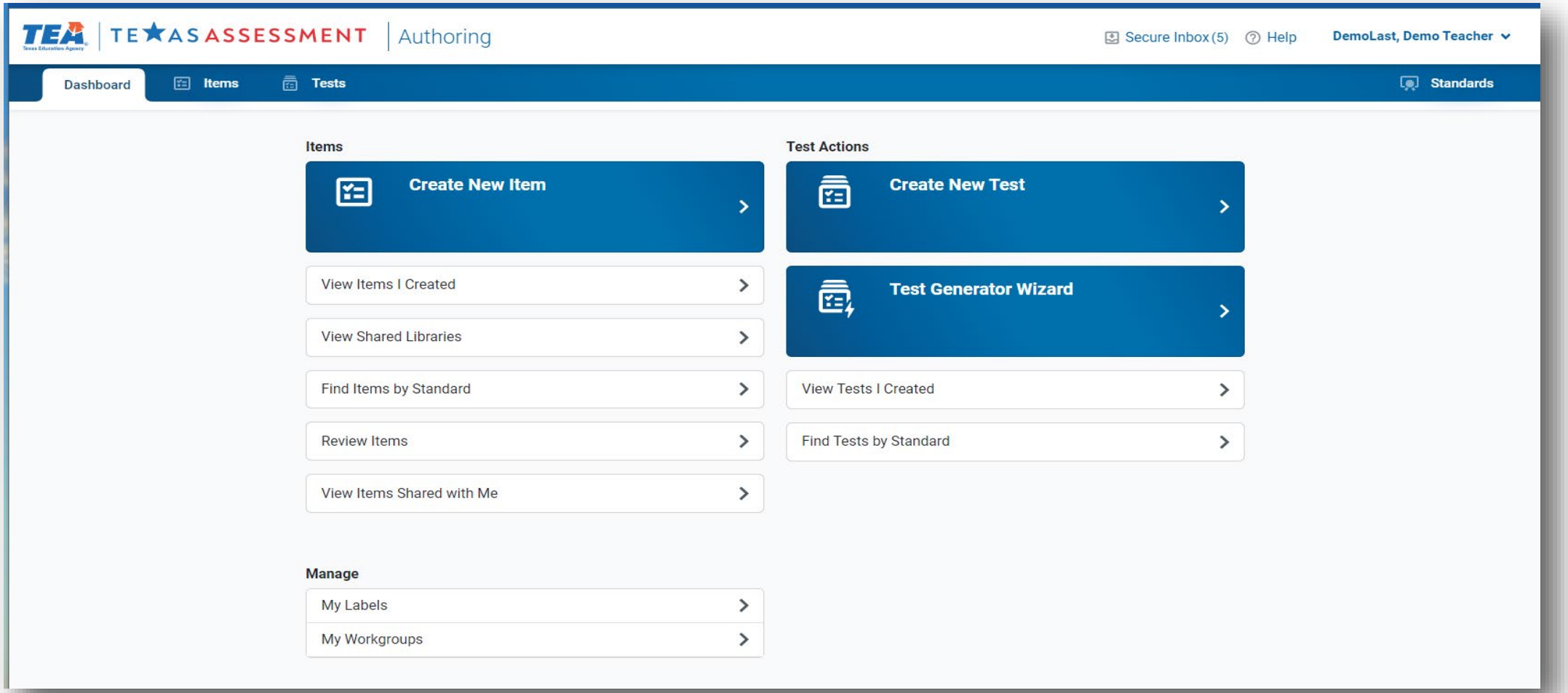
Analyze student-level, standard-level, and item-level data reports on the same platform that houses STAAR summative and interim data

Administration Platform

Administer formative assessments on the same online platform used to administer STAAR so that students can build familiarity

TFAR

TFAR is a free platform that allows teachers to create, administer, analyze, and share formative assessments



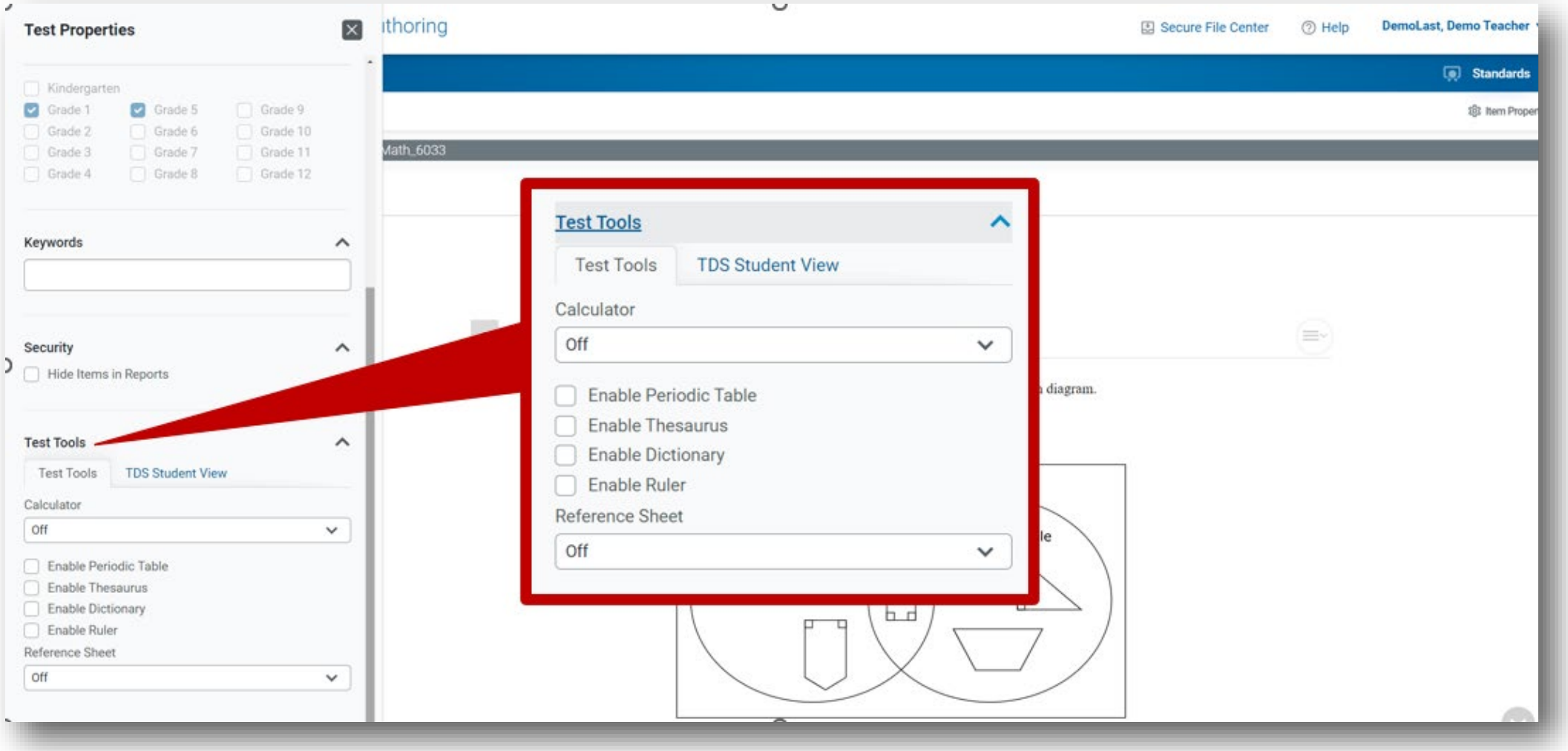
TFAR

The student experience within TFAR is determined by the NEW required selections prior to publishing

	Test Tools Tab	TDS View Tab
Pause Rule	20-Minute Pause	8-Hour Pause
Skipping /Flagging Items	Not available	Available
TIDE Accommodations	TTS and Auto TTS for Teacher Authored tests (Computer will read everything including stimulus)	Students' TIDE accommodations with STAAR Released items only (*TTS, Auto TTS, CLS, STT, Co:Writer, ASL)*
Reference Sheets, Calculator, Ruler	Manually Selected	Manually Selected
ECR/SCR Text Box and Version Control	No set size / Version Saving	1750 characters / Version Saving
Dictionary, Thesaurus, Periodic Table	Manually Selected	Manually Selected
Highlighter, Line Reader, Zoom, Flag, Note Pad, Stickie Notes, Graphing Overlay	Available	Available

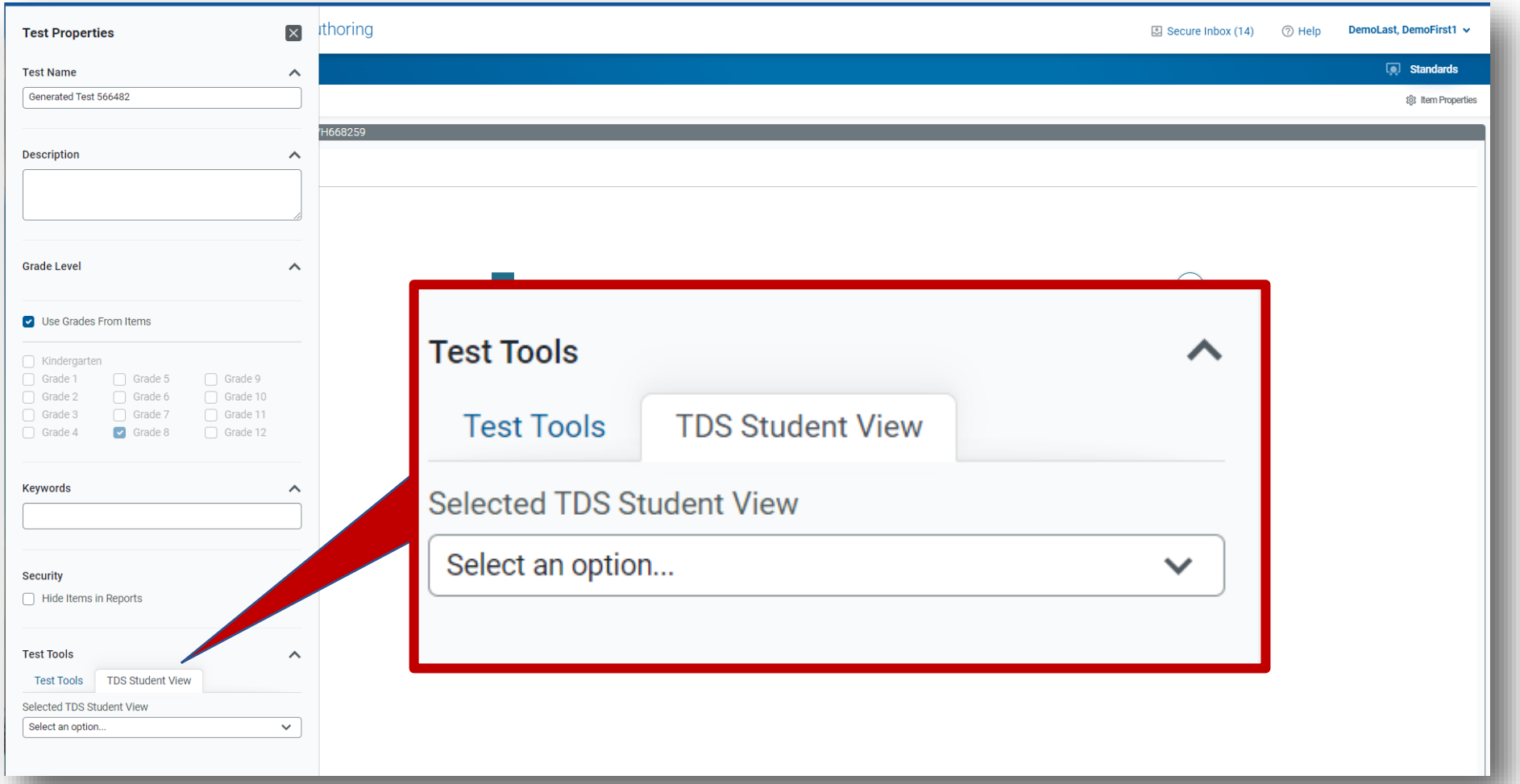
TFAR

The new Test Tools tab under Test Properties enables resources and specific test tools available to all students



TFAR

The new TDS Student View tab selections connect the test to the preset TIDE accommodation attributes

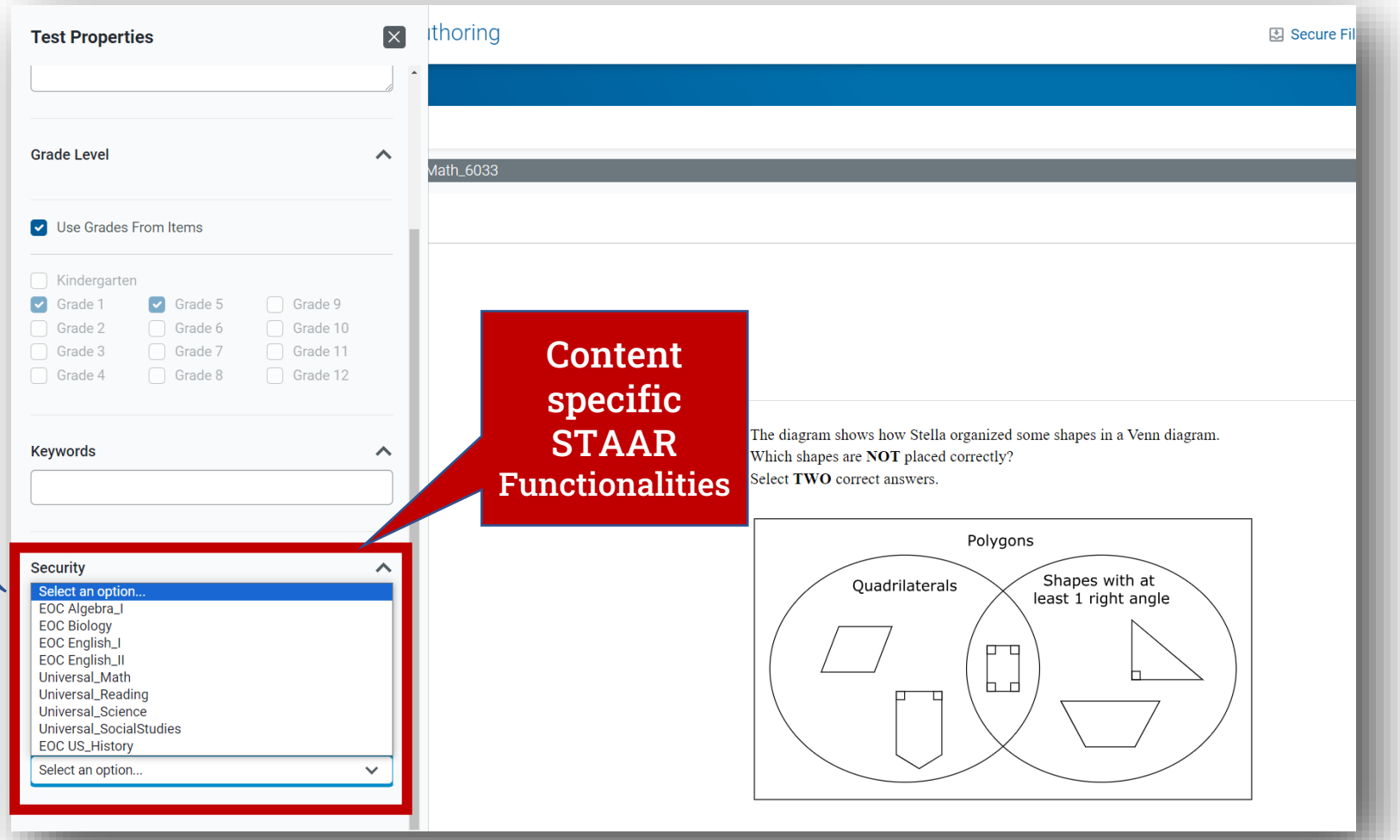


TFAR

The selectable STAAR templates enable students to receive TIDE accommodations and STAAR functionality and resources

Subject Specific Templates connects to TIDE attribute column

Content specific STAAR Functionalities



STAAR Interim Assessments

Inter

Interim assessment measure student performance at specific times during the year

1. Diagnostic

What: A test measuring student knowledge and skills on any variety of student expectations

When: Prior to new instructional cycle or school year

Why: To inform instructional plans and curriculum to meet the needs of individual students

Example: Beginning of the year assessments

2. Formative

What: Ongoing process of measuring student performance on specific student expectations

When: Often, throughout the year

Why: To inform instructional choices, student supports, and updates to planning within existing curricular structures

Example: Curricular-embedded tests administered via TFAR, and unit assessments included within high quality instructional materials

3. Interim

What: Measure student performance and understanding against grade-level standards

When: At check-points a few of times a year

Why: To monitor progress, predict summative performance, and guide student groupings for differentiation

Example: STAAR Interim Assessments

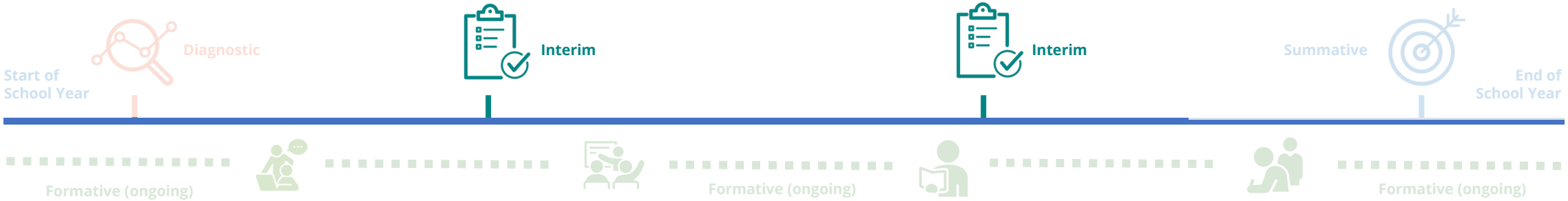
4. Summative

What: Measure student mastery of a broad span of student expectations

When: At the end of an instructional cycle or school year

Why: Campuses and districts use data to determine effectiveness of their programs, report summative mastery, and inform future planning

Example: STAAR, STAAR Alternate 2, TELPAS, and TELPAS Alternate



Inter

What are STAAR Interim Assessments?

- Tool that provides actionable data to do the following:
  - Guide student grouping for differentiation
  - Identify areas for additional support
  - Predict student performance on summative assessments
- Administered through TDS
- Not tied to accountability
- Developed with a shortened version of the STAAR blueprint
- Requires students to be registered in TIDE
- Results reported in CRS

Inter

What STAAR Interim Assessments are and what they are not

Interim assessments ARE:

- A benchmarking instrument
- A way to monitor academic progress
- A tool to guide student grouping for differentiation

Interim assessments are NOT:

- A formative assessment tool designed to provide standards-level performance data
- An item bank intended for building classroom quizzes or assignments

Inter

How interim data compares with other assessment sources

- Reporting category level performance is the lowest level of data that teachers should be using for comparison
- Focus on areas taught so far in the school year
-
- Teachers should have a number of formative data sources that can serve as points of comparison
- It is also helpful to refer to student performance last year (math only)

Inter

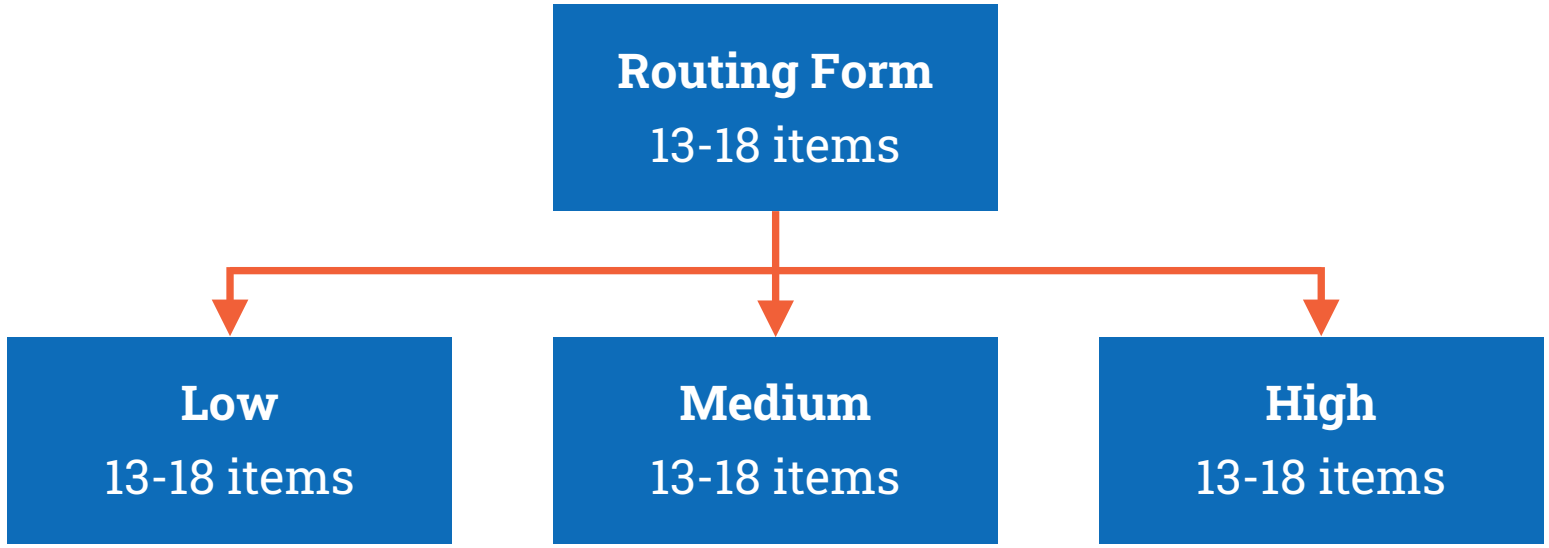
Interim assessments are administered over three windows

Window	Dates	Optional Administration	Tests Administered
1	Nov 6, 2023 – Dec 19, 2023	November*	First test for math and RLA
2	Nov 6, 2023 – Apr 5, 2024	After most content has been taught	All science and social studies
3	Jan 16, 2024 – Apr 5, 2024	February*	Second test for math and RLA

**While TEA recommends testing in November and February, schools should consider their local scope and sequence when administering an interim assessment.*

Inter

The multi-stage adaptive design of math and RLA interims allows for shorter tests without sacrificing reliability



- Allows for shorter tests to minimize the disruption to instructional time
- Matches students with more appropriate items based on their demonstrated ability

Inter

Accommodations on interim assessments mirror what students will experience on STAAR

TTS and Content and Language Supports	Refreshable Braille	Paper Braille*	Paper*
• All tests in English • Grades 3-5 in Spanish	• Grades 3–8 reading • Grade 8 social studies • English I, English II • U.S. History	• All tests • Delivered to district	• All tests • Delivered online

**While schools do not need to have an ARD to offer interim accommodations, paper and braille tests should only be requested for students with disabilities that prohibit them from interacting with a regular online assessment.*

Texas Through-year Assessment Pilot (TTAP)

TTAP

House Bill 3906 addresses several assessment components, one of which is to create an Integrated Formative Assessment Pilot

Overview:

House Bill (HB) 3906 requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to develop a pilot program in which participating school districts administer integrated formative assessments.
Any participation by districts is optional and does not eliminate a district's obligation to administer the STAAR test.

Purposes:

Create a pilot assessment to inform teaching decisions and improve instructional supports

Create a pilot assessment that can potentially replace the current summative

TTAP

Because summative and formative assessments serve two different purposes, there are two separate initiatives created to fulfill the law

Texas Formative Assessment Resource TFAR
(launched fall 2020)

An **optional, free** tool to supplement and support existing district resources and formative assessment practices, **unrelated to accountability**

Texas Through-year Assessment Pilot
(optional, small-scale pilot launched in 2022-23)

A **multi-part, through-year** assessment pilot that aims to generate a cumulative score similar to STAAR and **someday potentially replace STAAR as Texas's summative assessment**

TTAP

A through-year assessment combines interim and summative tests into a progress monitoring system that also produces a summative score

1. Diagnostic

What: A test measuring student knowledge and skills on any variety of student expectations

When: Prior to new instructional cycle or school year

Why: To inform instructional plans and curriculum to meet the needs of individual students

Example: Beginning of the year assessments

2. Formative

What: Ongoing process of measuring student performance on specific student expectations

When: Often, throughout the year

Why: To inform instructional choices, student supports, and updates to planning within existing curricular structures

Example: Curricular-embedded tests administered via TFAR, and unit assessments included within high quality instructional materials

3. Interim

What: Measure student performance and understanding against grade-level standards

When: At check-points a few of times a year

Why: To monitor progress, predict summative performance, and guide student groupings for differentiation

Example: STAAR Interim Assessments

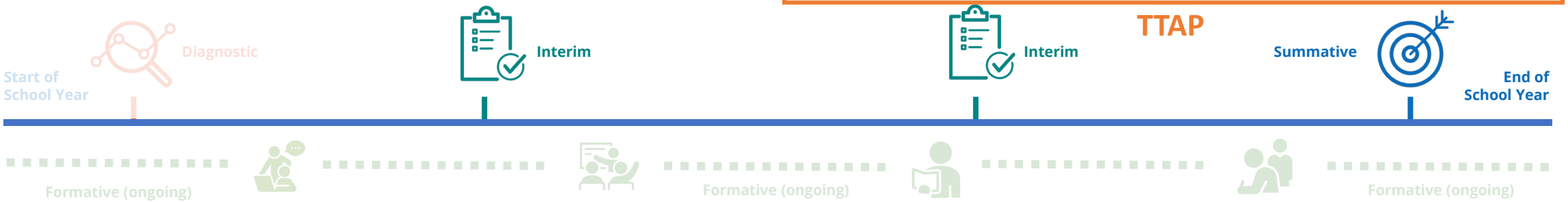
4. Summative

What: Measure student mastery of a broad span of student expectations

When: At the end of an instructional cycle or school year

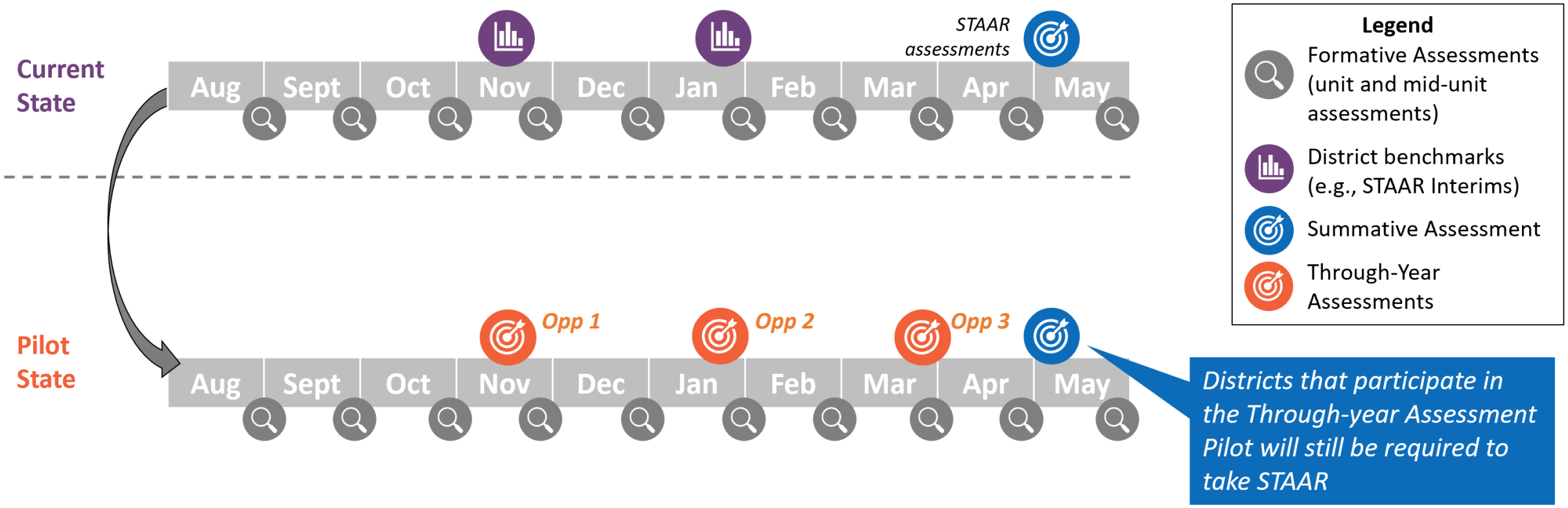
Why: Campuses and districts use data to determine effectiveness of their programs, report summative mastery, and inform future planning

Example: STAAR, STAAR Alternate 2, TELPAS, and TELPAS Alternate



TTAP

TTAP is designed to replace locally adopted benchmarking assessments during the school year



TTAP

What **Opportunity 1 and 2** can and cannot do

Purposes	What it CAN tell you	What it can NOT tell you
• Acts as dipstick to track progress toward end-of-year learning goals (1-3 times a year); assessments are wide and shallow • Gain a bird's-eye view of student progress (i.e., growth, predictions) • Determine if students are accessing the right level of rigor in the classroom	• If a student is on track towards end of year goals • If a student might need instructional intervention (more formative information needed)	• If a student mastered a particular standard/concept • If and where student misunderstanding occurred

These are the roles of formative assessments

TTAP

What Opportunity 3 can and cannot do

Purposes	What it CAN tell you	What it can NOT tell you
• Assess long-term retention of student learning • Gauge if the combination of curricular and instructional delivery was effective over the course of the year • Benchmark performance across classroom, schools, and districts	• If a student has met end-of-year, or end-of-unit, learning expectations • If a student is on grade level	• If a student is on track in the middle of the learning cycle • If a student mastered a particular standard/concept • If and where student misunderstanding occurred

TTAP

We first launched this optional, small-scale pilot in SY22-23; it requires multiple years of piloting to assess its feasibility

A through-year assessment model has many benefits…

- Provides **more timely and frequent feedback** that can be used help with monitoring students progress before they move on to the next grade or class
- Offers **multiple opportunities for students** to show what they've learned
- Allows for **in-year growth** information

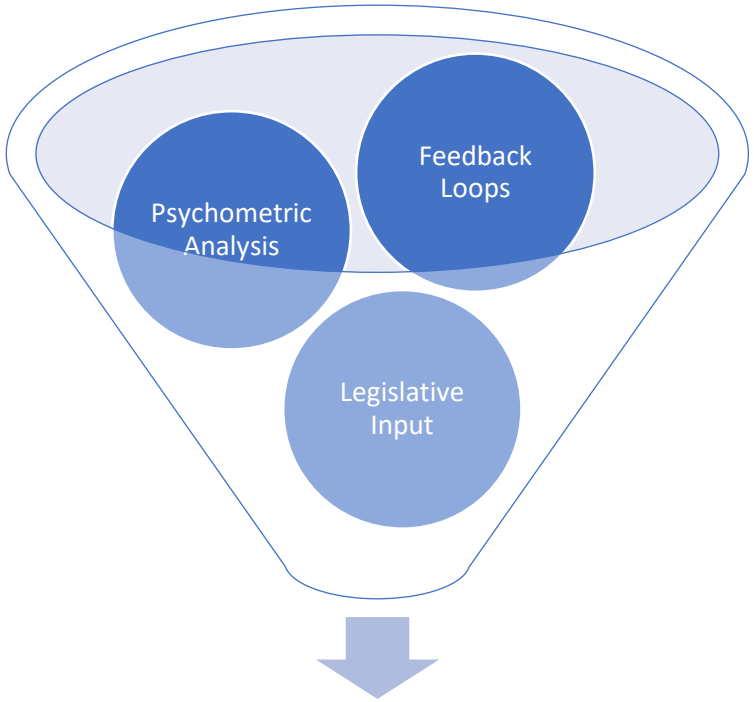
…but is still relatively new and innovative

- **Only a handful states** have implemented a model that isn't a traditional end-of-year summative
- Texas will need to address **technical questions** around design, administration, and scoring specific to local context
- Pilot will be rolled out over **multiple years** prior to potential adoption

All pilot participation is optional; no new testing requirements, and no requirement for district participation

TTAP

Data gathered throughout pilot years from our district participants will inform TTAP's feasibility to replace STAAR



Feasibility to replace STAAR with Through-year model

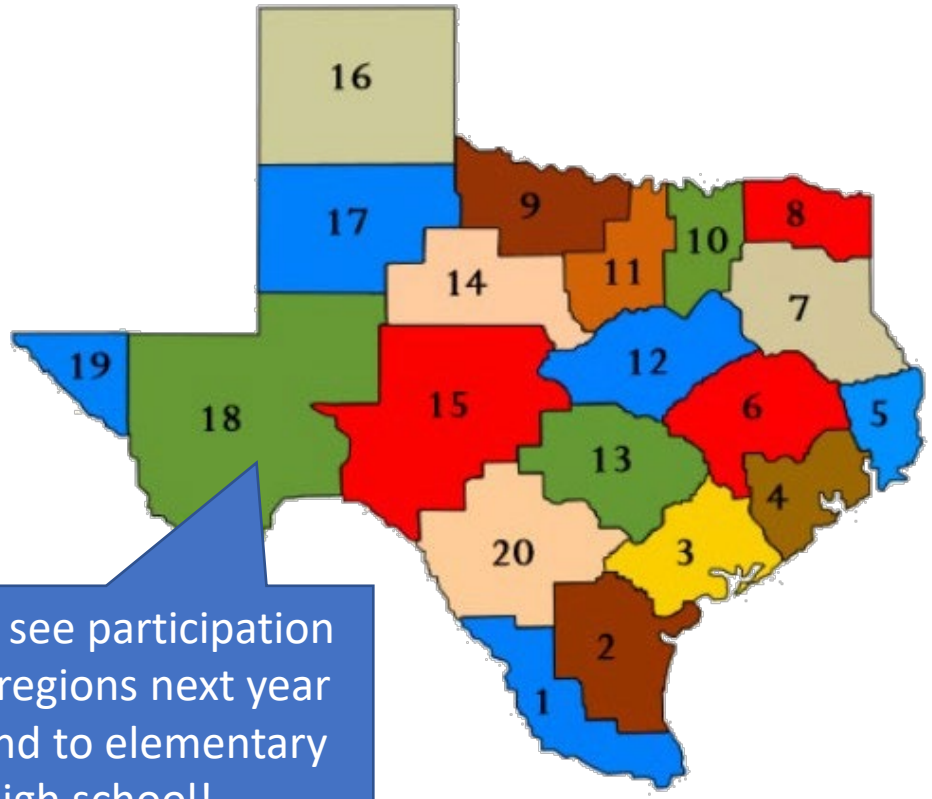
Feedback Loops: Teacher/Admin Surveys, TTAP Advisory Committee, Student Surveys, TTAP Site Visits

Psychometric Analysis: Assessment data gathered across all three tests will inform psychometric studies that inform TTAP's comparability to the STAAR, and help optimize the through-year design

Legislative Input: Every even-numbered year, TEA will create a report for the State Legislature to share progress and other updates on the pilot

TTAP

This coming spring, TEA will be recruiting for additional districts with expanded test titles for the 2024-25 school year!



We hope to see participation from all 20 regions next year as we expand to elementary and high school!

See more on our webpage.

SY23-24 PARTICIPANTS

- **19 out of 20 regions**
- **93 LEAs**
  - 44 rural
  - 21 town
  - 13 suburban
  - 15 urban
- **56K students**
  - Grade 5 Science: 17K
  - Grade 6 Math: 9K
  - Grade 7 Math: 8K
  - Grade 8 Social Studies: 23K

Making connections across TFAR, STAAR Interims, and TTAP

1. Diagnostic

What: A test measuring student knowledge and skills on any variety of student expectations

When: Prior to new instructional cycle or school year

Why: To inform instructional plans and curriculum to meet the needs of individual students

Example: Beginning of the year assessments

2. Formative

What: Ongoing process of measuring student performance on specific student expectations

When: Often, throughout the year

Why: To inform instructional choices, student supports, and updates to planning within existing curricular structures

Example: Curricular-embedded tests administered via TFAR, and unit assessments included within high quality instructional materials

3. Interim

What: Measure student performance and understanding against grade-level standards

When: At check-points a few of times a year

Why: To monitor progress, predict summative performance, and guide student groupings for differentiation

Example: STAAR Interim Assessments

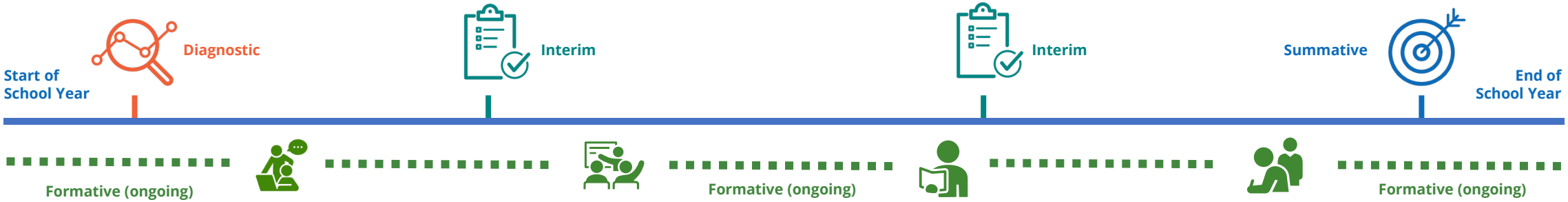
4. Summative

What: Measure student mastery of a broad span of student expectations

When: At the end of an instructional cycle or school year

Why: Campuses and districts use data to determine effectiveness of their programs, report summative mastery, and inform future planning

Example: STAAR, STAAR Alternate 2, TELPAS, and TELPAS Alternate



Because each assessment tool serves a specific purpose, we remind teachers that connecting back to formative data will be crucial

Formatives play the role of gathering detailed data on student learning at the standards level

Formative Data

STAAR Interims or TTAP Data

Interims/TTAP takes a snapshot of overall student learning and proficiency

Full picture of student learning

Combined, both assessment types fulfill their specific role in a balanced assessment system; **Interims/TTAP lacks full utility if teachers do not connect back to the formative data** collected after each testing opportunity

When individual STAAR Interims or TTAP performance is strong, no additional next steps are required

When things are going to plan for each student, stick with your curriculum and road map planned for this period of time.

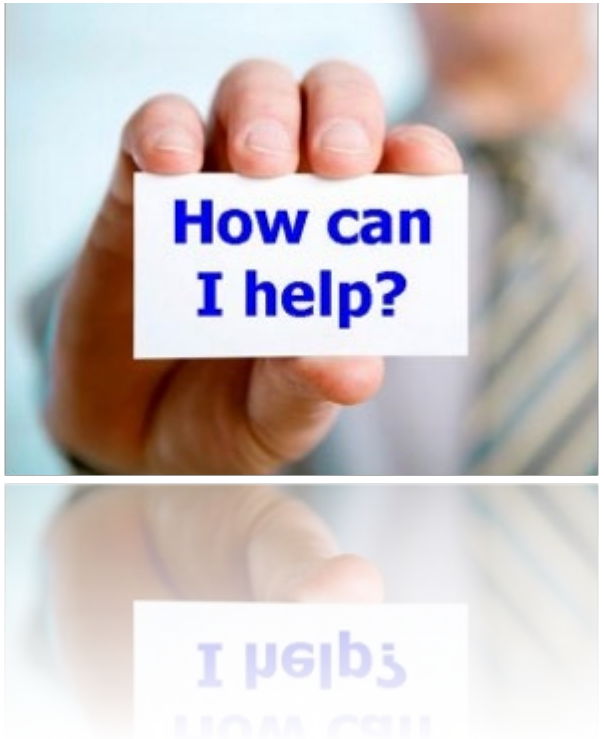
Continuous use of formative assessments during the year will set up the foundations for the next interim in January/February.

When low Interims/TTAP performance does not align with formative data, there are some questions to ask to get to the root issue

Probing Questions	Root Issue	Classroom Shifts Needed
Is the rigor high enough in my classroom?	Formative assessment-related issue; Standards taught and/or formative assessments are not rigorous enough or are not on grade-level	Increase the rigor and access examples, ensure that formative assessments are asking "why" not just "what"
Are students getting enough exposure?	Students working with lower-level items need more instances of exposure to certain concepts and in different settings; advanced students would need less exposure	Track standard level exposure
Are students acquainted with testing structures?	Issue with not getting enough practice on the online testing platform and/or being acquainted with accessibility features	Increase opportunities to use testing platform (e.g., TFAR)

TEA Contact Information

For more information on optional assessments, please contact:



- Student Assessment Help Desk
- (512) 463-9536
- https://tea.Texas.gov/student.assessment/
- TTAP@tea.Texas.gov

Thank you!