



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

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Governor Abbott Waives Grade Promotion Requirements For 2020-2021 STAAR Testing

AUSTIN - Governor Greg Abbott today announced that the grade promotion requirement related to the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) test for students in grades 5 and 8 has been waived for the upcoming school year. Typically, school systems must take into account a student's score on the STAAR test to determine whether the student can be promoted to the next grade level. The traditional A-F rating system will remain in place, albeit with certain adjustments due to COVID-19.

Typically, students enrolled in grades 5 and 8 are required to re-take a STAAR test late in the school year, and sometimes again in the summer, if they do not meet grade level when taken during the spring. With this waiver, there will only be one administration of the STAAR grades 5 and 8 mathematics and reading assessments for the 2020-21 school year. The test will be administered in May to coincide with the administration of other STAAR grades 3-8 assessments.

"As always, our goal is to provide a high quality education for every Texas student," said Governor Abbott. "This will be a uniquely challenging school year, therefore, this year is about providing students every opportunity to overcome the disruptions caused by COVID-19. By waiving these promotion requirements, we are providing greater flexibility for students and teachers, while at the same time ensuring that Texas students continue to receive a great education — which we will continue to measure with high quality assessments."

"Parents deserve to know how well their children have learned grade level knowledge and skills in reading and math, especially in a time when education has been substantially disrupted," said Texas Education Commissioner Mike Morath. "And educators use this valuable information to make adjustments to support students the following year. But there is no benefit to our children by requiring them to repeat a year based on a single test score given the disruptions of COVID, so we are waiving the grade promotion requirements from STAAR this year for our students."

"Parents rightfully expect our schools to continue to meet a high bar and it is critically important that teachers and parents know how each child is progressing and whether or not they need additional help. A-F ratings will provide us with important information about school performance and, while we won't use the STAAR test to determine promotions, it will continue to provide us with assessment data that we need. We face some unprecedented

challenges in the upcoming year, but we must continue to keep our schools accountable and on track," said Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick.

"During a time of great uncertainty, one thing is indisputable — we cannot allow an entire generation of Texas students to be disadvantaged by the unprecedented disruptions this pandemic has caused in our education system. Not only will this approach do a great deal to reduce the 'high-stakes' burden of testing in a school year already complicated by this pandemic, it will hold schools accountable for providing a high quality education while equipping teachers and parents with the information they need to make certain students are learning and remain on the path to educational success," said House Speaker Dennis Bonnen.

"During these unprecedented times, with the State's support, our schools should do everything they can to provide a quality education for our students. I also agree with Governor Abbott that our students should not be penalized by circumstances beyond their control, while recognizing the assessment itself provides important insight to grade level achievement in a new learning environment," said Senator Larry Taylor.

"With this waiver, we are ensuring that the success of Texas students remains the focus of this school year. These unprecedented times have brought much upheaval to these students' lives and this is one thing we can do at the State level to help ease them back into their educational routines while still ensuring the institutions of education remain accountable," stated Chairman of the House Public Education Committee, Dan Huberty.

To learn more, visit TEA's FAQ guide on the [Texas Assessment Program](#).

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