

High School Testing Program Guide

STAAR™

What are STAAR end-of-course exams?

STAAR stands for State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness. High school students must take and pass certain required courses and the end-of-course exams for those courses. The assessments are based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, the state curriculum standards. The end-of-course exams are designed to ensure that students are learning the specific course material and are prepared to succeed in college and/or careers.

Who is required to take STAAR in high school?

Students who entered the ninth grade in the 2011–2012 school year or later must pass five STAAR end-of-course tests to graduate from a Texas public high school. Those students' end-of-course tests are:

- English I
- Algebra I
- U.S. History
- English II
- Biology

How are the tests administered?

Each test can be taken either on paper or online. Students have four hours to complete the Algebra I, Biology and U.S. History tests. They have five hours each to complete the English I and II exams, which are combined reading and writing tests. Special accommodations are available to some students who receive special education services.

How often are end-of-course tests administered?

Each test is given three times a year to provide multiple testing opportunities for those who don't pass an assessment on the initial attempt.

How is STAAR changing in 2014?

Beginning in spring 2014, the English I and II reading and writing assessments will be combined into a single test that will be given on one day, rather than two. Students are no longer required to pass end-of-course exams in English III, Algebra II, geometry, chemistry, physics, world geography, and world history.

Will a student who receives special education services take the STAAR?

The admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee for a student who receives special education services will determine whether that student will take STAAR, STAAR Modified, or STAAR Alternate.

What happens if a student completes the course but does not pass the test?

If a student passes the course but does not pass the end-of-course assessment, the student may take the test again. However, a student is not required to retake a course just because he or she failed the assessment. A school is required to provide accelerated instruction to each student who does not show satisfactory performance on STAAR.

What if a student took one of these courses with a required end-of-course assessment in middle school?

If a student took an end-of-course assessment in grade 8 or below and passed, then the student is not required to retake the test in high school. For example, if an eighth-grade student took Algebra I in middle school, took the Algebra I end-of-course exam and passed both the course and the test, they do not retake the test in high school. The end-of-course exam(s) taken and passed in middle school will count towards the student's state testing requirement for graduation.

Where can a student find more information about the changes to STAAR?

The latest information about STAAR can be found on the Texas Education Agency website at www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/staar/.

