

February 22, 2012

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESSED:

SUBJECT: 15 Percent Grade Deferral

This letter serves as the official notification that I am modifying the Texas Education Agency's House Bill 3 Transition Plan. The modification gives public school districts and charter schools the ability to defer implementation of the statutory provision that requires performance on an end-of-course assessment to count as 15 percent of a student's final course grade. The deferral applies only to the 15 percent grading requirement in Chapter 39 of the Texas Education Code and will affect only the 2011-2012 school year. For this school year, the ultimate decision whether to include state-required end-of-course examination scores as part of course grades will be determined locally by school districts and charter schools.

The law still requires students who are first entering the ninth grade in the 2011-2012 school year to achieve a cumulative score on the end-of-course assessments to complete their graduation requirements. Districts and charter schools choosing to defer implementation of the 15 percent requirement for the 2011-2012 school year should notify TEA of that decision.

Giving school districts and charter schools the local option to use end-of-course assessment performance to calculate the course grade should help reduce some of the confusion and provide a smoother transition to the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). To take advantage of this deferral, the superintendent or another district-level administrator authorized by the superintendent should notify the agency of that local decision by sending a brief email to the following email address: commissioner@tea.state.tx.us. **Please provide this notification no later than May 1, 2012.** This is a one-year deferral only and will not apply in the 2012-2013 school year.

I remain committed to the STAAR assessment program, rigorous public school accountability, and to implementing the reforms in Senate Bill 1031 from the 80th Legislative Session and House Bill 3 from the 81st Legislative Session. The new assessment system will be better for students and educators, and will better ensure Texas students are ready for postsecondary success.

Sincerely,

Robert Scott

Commissioner of Education

Fwd: STAAR Policy Alert: Option to Defer the 15 Percent Provision

Subject: Fwd: STAAR Policy Alert: Option to Defer the 15 Percent Provision
From: jcox@waskomisd.net
Date: Thu, 23 Feb 2012 14:29:04 -0500
To: smusick@waskomisd.net

Subject: STAAR Policy Alert: Option to Defer the 15 Percent Provision
From: Policy Service <Policy.Service@tasb.org>
Date: Thu, 23 Feb 2012 18:04:06 +0000
To: Policy Service <Policy.Service@tasb.org>



To: District Superintendent and Policy Contact
From: TASB Policy Service
Date: February 23, 2012

STAAR Policy Alert: Option to Defer the 15 Percent Provision

Background

As part of the new State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) program, Education Code 39.023(c) requires districts to have local board policy stating that an end-of-course (EOC) assessment counts as 15 percent of a student's final course grade. TEA's resource page on STAAR is available at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/staar/>. In implementing this 15 percent requirement, districts revised up to three local policies: EI(LOCAL) addressing partial credit for courses with an EOC assessment; EIA(LOCAL) addressing grading and retakes for EOC assessments; and EIC(LOCAL) addressing rank calculations and EOC assessments.

Recent Developments

On February 17, 2012, Commissioner of Education Robert Scott announced that he is modifying the Transition Plan to give school districts the ability to defer implementation of the statutory provision that requires performance on an end-of-course (EOC) assessment to count as 15 percent of a student's final grade.

Each district will need to decide whether to defer the 15 percent provision. Districts that decide to defer the 15 percent provision may do so only for the 2011–12 school year and must notify TEA of that decision by **February 23, 2012**. The superintendent or another district-level administrator authorized by the superintendent must notify TEA of the district's decision by sending a brief email to the commissioner at: commissioner@tea.state.tx.us. See TEA's To the Administrator Addressed Letter dated February 22, 2012.

At this point, the requirement in Education Code 39.023(c) for districts to have local board policy stating that an EOC assessment score counts as 15 percent of the final course grade is still in place for the 2011–12 school year.

year. However, given the number of legislators that have indicated a desire to change the current provisions on EOC assessments, a legislative change seems likely during the 83rd Legislative Session affect whether districts are required to count EOC assessments as 15 percent of a student's grade for 2012–13 school year.

Local Policy Decisions

The impact of Commissioner Scott's decision on your district's local policies will depend on what act your board has already taken regarding EOC assessments and the 15 percent provision.

- If your district has adopted policy on EOC assessments and the 15 percent provision and does not defer the 15 percent provision or make any other policy changes, no action is required. Please note however, that if you adopted policy before TEA's August 26, 2011, Question and Answer document, and have not yet revised your policy in response, you should contact your policy consultant.
- If your district has adopted policy on EOC assessments and decides to defer the 15 percent provision for the 2011–12 school year, the district has several options regarding the policies currently in place. (Keep in mind that although there is no requirement for a district to include a statement in policy reflecting that the district will defer the 15 percent provision, some type of board action will be necessary to document that current policy provisions will not apply this school year.)
 - The district could choose to adopt a resolution suspending the district's policies on the 15 percent provision for the 2011–12 school year. As mentioned above, this may affect multiple policies. Advantages of suspending rather than altering the district's current policies are that the district's current policy in place for the 2012–13 school year, for which a deferral is not available, and, if the law is changed in the next legislative session, the district will not need to take further action regarding the current board policy. A sample resolution is attached below.
 - Alternatively, the district could choose to delete all local policy on the 15 percent provision in anticipation of potential legislative changes during the 83rd Legislative Session. Again, this may require revisions to multiple policies.
- If your district has not yet adopted policy on EOC assessments and the 15 percent provision and decides to defer the 15 percent provision, you still need to consider how the district will implement the 15 percent provision for the 2012–13 school year, should the 83rd Legislature not change the law regarding EOC assessments. You could choose to adopt policy effective for the 2012–13 school year or wait to see what happens in the legislative session.

If your district wishes to make changes to any of its policies, please contact your policy consultant at 800-580-7529.

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD TO SUSPEND PORTIONS OF [adjust as necessary: EI(LOCAL), EIC(LOCAL)] FOR THE 2011–12 SCHOOL YEAR ONLY

WHEREAS, section 39.023(c) of the Texas Education Code requires a school district to adopt a policy that requires a student's performance on an end-of-course (EOC) assessment instrument to account for 15 percent of a student's final grade for the course.

WHEREAS, _____ SD local policy at [adjust as necessary: EI(LOCAL), EIA(LOCAL), and EIC(LC) includes provisions on EOC assessments to satisfy this statutory requirement and address other provisions related to how the district will implement this statutory requirement.

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of Education has given school districts the ability to defer implementation of the 2011–12 school year of the statutory provision that requires performance on an EOC assessment to be a certain percent of a student’s final course grade.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of _____ SD shall suspend for the remainder of the 2011–12 school year portions of the following codes: [Adjust codes, margin notes, and class rank below as appropriate.]

- EI(LOCAL), at EXCEPTION, addressing partial credit for a course in which an end-of-course assessment is required;
- EIA(LOCAL), at END-OF-COURSE ASSESSMENTS, requiring a student’s performance on an EOC assessment to count for 15 percent of a student’s final grade for the course and addressing related provisions regarding the 15 percent provision; and
- EIC(LOCAL), at END-OF COURSE ASSESSMENT SCORES, addressing EOC assessments and calculation of class rank.

Adopted this ____ day of _____, _____, by the Board of Trustees.

President

Secretary

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If you need assistance accessing any of the policy resources available through your myTASB account or if you would like to be removed from this list, please contact Susan Acevedo at susan.acevedo@tasb.org

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