

# STAAR Alternate 2

## Educator Guide



Information about the Texas Assessment Program can be found on the [Student Assessment](#) website.

**[Texas Educator Committees](#)**

The Texas Education Agency encourages highly qualified educators to apply to participate in educator committees for the Texas Assessment Program. Click the link or scan the QR code for more information.



# Table of Contents

- Resources..... 4**
- Overview ..... 5**
  - Participation Requirements.....6
- Test Design..... 8**
  - Test Materials.....8
  - Presentation Instructions .....9
  - Accommodations.....13
  - Student Response Modes.....14
  - Scoring .....16
- Alignment with State Curriculum..... 19**
  - TEKS Vertical Alignment .....21
  - Essence and Strand Statements .....21
  - TEKS Curriculum Framework.....21
- Training ..... 22**
- Test Results..... 23**

# Resources

- [Texas Assessment Program](#)
- [STAAR Alternate 2 Resources](#)
- [Assessments for Special Populations](#)
- [Test Administration Resources](#)
- [STAAR Alternate 2 Released Test Questions](#)
- [\*District and Campus Coordinator Resources\*](#)

# Overview

The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) Alternate 2 assessment is based on alternate academic standards and designed for those students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who receive special education services. Students must meet participation requirements to take this assessment, which was developed to meet the requirements of two federal acts: the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). ESSA requires that all students be assessed in specific grades and subjects throughout their academic careers, whereas IDEA requires that students with disabilities have access to the same curriculum standards as their nondisabled peers and that they be included in statewide assessments.

STAAR Alternate 2 is a standardized assessment administered individually to each eligible student. It is available for the same grades and subjects or courses assessed by STAAR.

A student's admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee must determine if the student meets the participation requirements for STAAR Alternate 2. If the ARD committee determines that a student meets all participation requirements, the student should be assessed with STAAR Alternate 2 in all subjects.

Students in grades 3–8 will take STAAR Alternate 2 assessments at their enrolled grade level. Students who take STAAR Alternate 2 should not take above grade-level assessments.

Students in grades 9–12 who are completing courses during the school year (August through July) that correspond to STAAR Alternate 2 end-of-course (EOC) assessments should participate in the spring administration of STAAR Alternate 2. For example, a student who completes a course in December that has a corresponding EOC assessment should take that EOC assessment the following spring.

<b>Grades 3–8 or End-of-Course</b>	<b>Subjects or Courses Assessed</b>
Grade 3	Mathematics and reading language arts (RLA)
Grade 4	Mathematics and RLA
Grade 5	Mathematics, RLA, and science
Grade 6	Mathematics and RLA
Grade 7	Mathematics and RLA
Grade 8	Mathematics, RLA, science, and social studies
End-of-course	Algebra I, English I, English II, Biology, and U.S. History

# Participation Requirements

All students enrolled in Texas public schools and open-enrollment charter schools, including virtual schools, who are receiving special education services are required by federal and state law to participate in the Texas Assessment Program by taking academic achievement assessments in specific grades and subjects. STAAR Alternate 2 is a statewide assessment that may be considered only for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. A student with the most significant cognitive disability is a student who exhibits significant intellectual and adaptive behavior deficits in his or her ability to plan, comprehend, and reason and who also indicates adaptive behavior deficits that limit his or her ability to apply social and practical skills (e.g., personal care, social problem-solving skills, dressing, eating, using money) across all life domains. The student requires extensive, direct, individualized instruction and needs substantial supports that are neither temporary nor specific to a particular content area.

The ARD committee should hold a meeting to determine assessment decisions either before the STAAR Alternate 2 testing window opens or, for decisions to be applied the following school year, at the end of the school year. The STAAR Alternate 2 participation requirements, available in English and Spanish on the [STAAR Alternate 2 Resources](#) web page, detail the ARD committee's responsibility for ensuring that a student is eligible for STAAR Alternate 2.

Prior to reviewing the eligibility criteria for STAAR Alternate 2, the ARD committee must understand all assessment options, including the characteristics of each assessment and the potential implications of each assessment choice.

If STAAR Alternate 2 is being considered, the ARD committee must review the participation requirements against the supporting documentation within the student's individualized education program (IEP), such as the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP), to determine eligibility. If it is determined that the student meets the participation requirements for STAAR Alternate 2, the STAAR Alternate 2 Participation Requirements form and supporting IEP documentation may serve as the required IEP statement under 19 Texas Administrative Code [§89.1055\(b\)](#) and must be available for review during cyclical and targeted monitoring.

Step I of the STAAR Alternate 2 participation requirements form includes questions to determine whether the STAAR Alternate 2 participation requirements need to be reviewed in full by the ARD committee. Step II of the form includes the eight eligibility criteria that should be reviewed for any student with a significant cognitive disability requiring the student to access the grade-level Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) through prerequisite skills, which are TEKS student expectations from earlier grades. Evidence for each Column 2 answer must be documented, and evidence for a cognitive disability must be based on the assessment data provided by an assessment specialist. If the answer to the final question is "Yes," the ARD committee must discuss and initial the assurances in Step III of the form and complete the student's grade-level testing information in Step IV.

If the ARD committee determines that a student meets all eight criteria of the participation requirements, the student should be assessed with STAAR Alternate 2 in all subjects assessed at their grade level, if the student is in grades 3–8, or in each corresponding course which the

student is completing during the school year (August through July), if the student is in high school. For more information, refer to the [STAAR Alternate 2 Resources](#) web page.

Once an ARD committee has determined a student to be eligible to take STAAR Alternate 2 and the STAAR Alternate 2 Participation Requirements form has been completed, the ARD committee determines and documents the accommodations the student needs. The test administrator will determine the accommodations that will be used for a specific assessment based on the documented accommodations in the student's IEP and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) guidelines for allowable accommodations for STAAR Alternate 2.

In rare circumstances a student's ARD committee might determine prior to the administration of the assessment that the student will not participate in STAAR Alternate 2 because the student meets the eligibility criteria for a medical exception or no authentic academic response (NAAR). For both exceptions, the ARD committee reviews educational records and eligibility requirements.

## **Medical Exception**

Students who are medically fragile and cannot attend to or tolerate any academic interaction may qualify for a medical exception under certain circumstances. To determine eligibility, the ARD committee reviews medical and educational records and uses the information in the STAAR Alternate 2 and TELPAS Alternate Medical Exception Eligibility Requirements form on the STAAR Alternate 2 Resources web page. The decision must be documented in the student's IEP along with evidence to support the determination.

## **No Authentic Academic Response**

For students who are not able to respond authentically to any verbal, visual, or tactile stimuli during academic instruction due to level of cognition, the ARD committee uses the information in the STAAR Alternate 2 and TELPAS Alternate No Authentic Academic Response Eligibility Requirements form on the STAAR Alternate 2 Resources web page to determine if the student is eligible for a NAAR exception.

# Test Design

Each STAAR Alternate 2 test question measures a targeted prerequisite skill. A cluster of four questions tests a common skill or concept at varying levels of difficulty. Five clusters make up a test form of 20 base test questions. Test forms also typically include one field-test cluster. The question clusters have the following characteristics:

- The range of abilities of students taking the assessment is factored in across all questions within a cluster.
- The four questions are scaffolded based on the grade level of the prerequisite skill, the difficulty of the skill, and what the student is being asked to do.
- Each cluster is written to align with a single essence or strand statement.
- The question types within a cluster vary in difficulty, with the first always the easiest and the last the most cognitively complex.
- The cluster design requires the student to make five concept transitions.

## Test Materials

The STAAR Alternate 2 test materials include:

- secure test instructions, with scripted language and guidelines for how to administer the test and score each question;
- the STAAR Alternate 2 Scoring Document, located in the back of the secure test instructions;
- one test booklet per student, containing color stimulus images and text needed for the student to select answers; and
- one set of image cards per regular-print or large-print booklet.

Image cards are provided for each question, and the images on the cards match the images in the student test booklet. The image cards serve to reduce the amount of preparation required of a test administrator and to eliminate the need to photocopy answer choices. While the use of the image cards is open to any STAAR Alternate 2 student and is not tied to any specific accommodation, the image cards may be used for accommodations such as:

- pairing images with text;
- raising or darkening the outline in images;
- providing images separately, one at a time; or
- isolating images or text until addressed.

STAAR Alternate 2 assessments should always be administered by presenting the student test booklet; the assessment cannot be given by presenting image cards only. Although test administrators are not required to use the image cards, when they do use them, they should make sure the item number code on the back of the card matches the question number to

ensure they are using the correct and corresponding materials. The image card stack includes a cover card that indicates the number of image cards.

District testing personnel have the option of ordering large-print student booklets if needed. There are no overages for large-print student booklets.

STAAR Alternate 2 is organized by test stimulus. An image card is provided for Stimulus "a" only when having the photo or illustration on a separate card could be useful to the student. An image card is always provided for each answer choice in Stimulus "b."

## Presentation Instructions

The following are examples of questions that show how the presentation instructions are scripted and what is expected of the student.

### Example of First Question in a Cluster

#### Presentation Instructions for Question 9

- Present Stimulus 9.
- Direct the student to each answer choice in Stimulus 9. **Communicate: This is the sun. It lights the sky during the day. This is the moon. It is the brightest object in the night sky.**
- Communicate: **Find what lights the sky during the day.**

#### Stimulus 9

The "find" statement is constant for all question types, but the word "find" can be substituted with the words "point to," "show me," "touch," or "tell me." The "find" statement can be changed to a question format: "What lights the sky during the day?"



The **boldfaced** statements in all question types (other than the "find" statement) are to be communicated to the student as written without paraphrasing, substituting vocabulary, or providing additional details.

- In the first question of the cluster, the student is presented with Stimulus "a" in the student test booklet.
- The answer is provided to the student through the bold print in the presentation instructions and modeled by the teacher.
- The student's correct response shows that he or she has followed the explanation and can locate what is requested from what was just presented.
- The student may be asked to locate an answer from one boxed image or from multiple images where other details must be eliminated in order to find what is requested.
- The difficulty of the first question varies from cluster to cluster depending on the amount of detail in the test stimulus.

- The first question establishes the context for the skill or concept that will be continued throughout the cluster.

### Example of Second Question in a Cluster

#### Presentation Instructions for Question 10

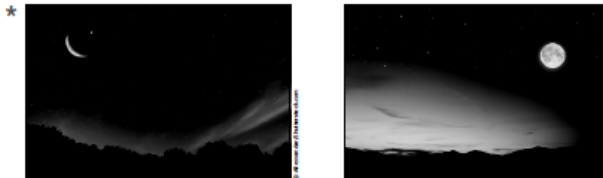
- *Present* Stimulus 10a and 10b. *Communicate:* The moon appears to look different each night as it goes through several phases.
- *Direct* the student to the crescent moon and then the full moon in Stimulus 10a. *Communicate:* **This is a crescent moon. This is a full moon.**
- *Direct* the student to each answer choice in Stimulus 10b. *Communicate:* **This is one phase of the moon. This is another phase of the moon.**
- *Communicate:* **Find the crescent moon.**

Stimulus 10a



Options for *present*, *direct*, and *communicate* are provided in the secure test instructions. The test administrator will use the option most appropriate for the student.

Stimulus 10b



The asterisk in the secure test instructions indicates the correct answer.

- The student is presented with Stimulus "a."
- The test instructions allow the "find" statement to be read before or after the answer choices depending on the needs of the student. The test administrator makes this decision based on his or her knowledge of the student.
- The student's correct response shows that he or she is able to locate what is requested by matching pictures or by making a conceptual connection from Stimulus "a" to Stimulus "b."
- The difficulty of the second question varies from cluster to cluster and depends on whether the "find" statement is asking for a picture-to-picture match, picture-to-word match, or a conceptual match.

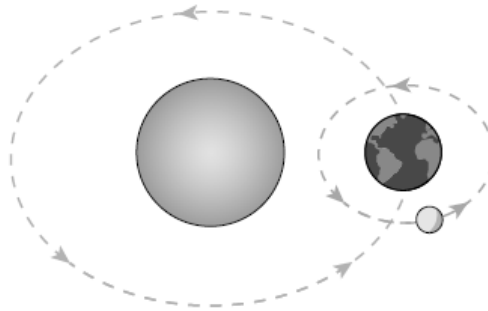
## Example of Third Question in a Cluster

### Presentation Instructions for Question 11

- Present Stimulus 11a and 11b.
- Direct the student to Stimulus 11a. *Communicate:* This model shows the sun, Earth, and the moon.
- Direct the student to each answer choice in Stimulus 11b. *Communicate* the text in each answer choice.
- *Communicate:* Find the statement that describes the relationship between the sun, Earth, and the moon.

---

#### Stimulus 11a



#### Stimulus 11b

The sun orbits Earth, while the moon orbits the sun.

Earth orbits the moon, while the sun orbits Earth.

\* Earth orbits the sun, while the moon orbits Earth.

For all question types, the student can respond to the “find” statement in any response mode that clearly communicates the preferred answer choice to the test administrator. Examples of response modes are described in the Student Response Modes section of this guide.

- 
- The student is presented with Stimulus “a.”
  - The answer choices are usually provided in Stimulus “b” and may be read before or after the “find” statement is given.
  - The student’s correct response shows that he or she is able to locate the correct answer from three choices.
  - In the third item in the cluster, the student may be asked to integrate multiple pieces of information.
  - The difficulty of the third question varies from cluster to cluster.

## Example of Fourth Question in a Cluster

### Presentation Instructions for Question 12

- *Present* Stimulus 12a and 12b.
- *Direct* the student to Stimulus 12a. *Communicate*: Earth has a day and night cycle.
- *Direct* the student to each answer choice in Stimulus 12b. *Communicate* the information in each answer choice.
- *Communicate*: Find what causes the day and night cycle.

---

#### Stimulus 12a



#### Stimulus 12b

\* Earth rotates on its axis once every 24 hours.

The moon orbits Earth once every 27 days.

Earth orbits the sun once every 365 days.

- 
- The student is presented with Stimulus “a,” which continues the skill presented in the previous three questions but extends the concept with new information.
  - The answer choices are usually provided in Stimulus “b” and may be read before or after the “find” statement is given.
  - The student’s correct response shows that he or she is able to locate the correct answer from answer choices by understanding what is being presented in Stimulus “a” and applying knowledge to locate what is requested in the “find” statement.
  - The fourth item in the cluster may require the student to do multistep problem solving.
  - The difficulty of the fourth question varies from cluster to cluster and depends on whether the student is being asked to compare information, evaluate a detailed stimulus, make an inference, or draw a conclusion.

TEA has released additional test questions as well as complete test forms for test administrators to become more familiar with the test format, practice the presentation instructions with students, and determine options for students to access stimulus images presented in the test questions. STAAR Alternate 2 released tests can be found on the [STAAR Alternate 2 Released Test Questions](#) web page.

## Accommodations

TEA defines accommodations as changes to materials or procedures that enable students to participate meaningfully in learning and testing. It is critical that students with disabilities be provided access to the assessment through careful use of accommodations wherever appropriate. The accommodations must:

- maintain the integrity of the assessment,
- avoid leading to or providing the student a direct answer,
- be used routinely in instruction,
- reflect the student’s learning styles, and
- allow a student to respond using a mode that is appropriate for the student.

Accommodations may be used only if they meet the criteria above and are listed in the student’s IEP. The chart below shows allowable accommodations for STAAR Alternate 2 along with additional guidelines on how some accommodations should be applied.

<b>Allowable Accommodations</b>
<b>Color or highlight images or text.</b>
<b>Place color overlays on images or text.</b>
<b>Pair images or text with photographs, picture representations, or real objects of the same content.</b> Photographs, pictures, or real objects must be as close to the original as possible.
<b>Attach textured materials to images or text.</b>
<b>Demonstrate concepts or relationships in images or text.</b>
<b>Raise or darken the outline in images or text.</b>
<b>Enlarge images or text.</b> Magnification devices, photocopying, or computer magnification programs may be used.
<b>Add braille labels to images or provide text in braille.</b>

<b>Allowable Accommodations</b>
<b>Describe images for students with visual impairments.</b> Descriptions of images may include only details of what can be seen in the images without comments about the overall impression of the image.
<b>Provide images or text on separate paper presented one at a time.</b> Images must be presented in the same order or configuration as they appear in the test booklet.
<b>Cover or isolate images or text until addressed.</b>
<b>Use routine picture representations for key words in verbal directions to the student.</b> Only what is visually presented, stated in text, or supplied in the secure test instructions may be provided.
<b>Use calculator, manipulatives, or math tools to arrive at a response.</b> These include fraction pieces, geometric shapes, number lines, number charts, money, base-ten blocks, and counters.
<b>Reread sections of the text.</b> Follow the guidelines in the Presentation Instructions section of the <i>STAAR Alternate 2 Test Administrator Manual</i> for guidance on repeating presentation instructions and rereading sections of the text.
<b>Provide structured reminders.</b> These include personal timers, token systems, color-coded or handwritten reminders, or visual schedules.
<b>Translate presentation instructions.</b> Note that only presentation instructions may be translated. Test content must not be translated.

Photocopying secure materials may be necessary to provide students access to some allowable accommodations. These allowable accommodations must be documented in the student’s IEP, and test administrators are required to follow the photocopying guidelines in the *STAAR Alternate 2 Test Administrator Manual* to maintain the security and integrity of the assessment.

The accommodations used during the administration must be recorded in the scoring document and then entered in the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE). The bolded information in the presentation instructions can be stated, signed, translated into any other language routinely used with the student in instruction, provided in written form, or paired with tactile or picture symbols. Note that only presentation instructions may be translated. Test content must not be translated. The translation of presentation instructions in any of these ways must be noted on the scoring document and entered in TIDE.

Contact the TEA Student Assessment Division for guidance if a student needs accommodations that are not listed. Accommodations other than those described must be approved by TEA.

# Student Response Modes

Student responses during a STAAR Alternate 2 test administration may be verbal, physical, or visual as appropriate for the student at the time of testing. Test administrators do not predetermine response modes; any response mode will be deemed acceptable for the communicated directive. The critical issue is not how the student responds but that the student clearly communicates the preferred answer choice to the test administrator.

The table below shows examples of verbal, physical, and visual responses.

## Verbal Responses

### Student may respond by:

- verbal statement, including word approximations;
- communicating "yes" or "no" when presented answer choices one at a time and asked, "Is this the ...?";
- forming responses with the assistance of a communication device with preprogrammed answer choices or programmed student vocabulary;
- use of an output device to indicate the answer when each answer choice is presented individually;
- vocalizing positively or negatively to indicate the answer when each answer choice is presented individually;
- making a negative vocalization to indicate an unmatched object;
- describing the location of the answer; or
- responding with a letter, number, or color name if answer choices are so labeled.

## Physical Responses

### Student may respond by:

- pointing to, reaching for, or touching an answer;
- highlighting, coloring, circling, or otherwise marking a response;
- nodding, smiling, or gesturing to indicate "yes" or "no" when presented answer choices one at a time and asked, "Is this the...?";
- manipulating words, sentences, or sections of a recreated answer choice;
- using calculators, manipulatives, or math tools (fraction pieces, geometric shapes, number lines, counting charts, money, base-ten blocks, counters) to arrive at and display an answer;
- writing or typing responses with or without the use of adaptive writing equipment;
- signing a response;

- formulating a response using a choice board;
- isolating answer choices in a section organizer, such as a calendar box or tub;
- nodding or gesturing toward the answer; or
- placing a flag on the answer.

### Visual Responses

#### Student may respond by:

- gazing, blinking, winking, or fixating on an answer choice.

## Scoring

The Student Action column of the scoring instructions describes exactly what the student must do for his or her response to be marked correct. The test administrator must refer to the scoring instructions for each question to determine how to proceed once the student has answered the “find” statement correctly or incorrectly. Each question has a unique set of scoring instructions. The following examples show scoring instructions for each question type.

### Example Scoring Instructions for First Question in a Cluster

Scoring Instructions		
Student Action		Test Administrator Action
If the student finds the sun,	➡	mark <b>A</b> for question 9 and move to question 10.
If the student does not find the sun,	➡	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• remove the stimulus;</li> <li>• wait at least five seconds; and</li> <li>• replicate the initial presentation instructions.</li> </ul>
After the five-second wait time, if the student finds the sun,	➡	mark <b>B</b> for question 9 and move to question 10.
After the five-second wait time, if the student does not find the sun,	➡	mark <b>C</b> for question 9 and move to question 10.

- Specific instructions are given for exactly what the student must find to get full credit for the question.
- If an incorrect response is given on the first attempt, the test administrator is directed to remove the stimulus, wait at least five seconds, and then repeat the initial presentation instructions for reduced credit.

- No extra assistance is allowed, because the answer is provided and modeled during the presentation.
- If the student does not find the correct answer on the second attempt, C is marked on the scoring document and the test administrator moves to the next test question.

### Example Scoring Instructions for Second Question in a Cluster

Scoring Instructions		
Student Action		Test Administrator Action
If the student finds the crescent moon in Stimulus 10b,	➡	mark <b>A</b> for question 10 and move to question 11.
If the student does not find the crescent moon in Stimulus 10b,	➡	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• model the desired student action by finding the crescent moon in Stimulus 10b and <i>communicate</i> <b>“This is the crescent moon”</b>; and</li> <li>• replicate the initial presentation instructions.</li> </ul>
After teacher modeling, if the student finds the crescent moon in Stimulus 10b,	➡	mark <b>B</b> for question 10 and move to question 11.
After teacher modeling, if the student does not find the crescent moon in Stimulus 10b,	➡	mark <b>C</b> for question 10 and move to question 11.

- If the student is not able to find the correct answer after the initial presentation, the test administrator must model the desired student action using the most likely way the student might respond, communicate the correct answer as stated in the test administrator action, and repeat the initial presentation instructions.
- Although the test administrator should model the student action using the response mode the student would most likely use to communicate the answer, it is not relevant whether the student uses the anticipated response mode.

### Example Scoring Instructions for Third Question in a Cluster

Scoring Instructions		
Student Action		Test Administrator Action
If the student finds “Earth orbits the sun, while the moon orbits Earth” in Stimulus 11b,	➡	mark <b>A</b> for question 11 and move to question 12.

### Scoring Instructions

<p>If the student does not find “Earth orbits the sun, while the moon orbits Earth” in Stimulus 11b,</p>	<p>➡</p>	<p>provide <b>one</b> of the allowable teacher assists to the student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have the student describe the image in Stimulus 11a. <b>OR</b></li> <li>• Have the student use classroom models. <b>OR</b></li> <li>• Demonstrate the action in each answer choice.</li> </ul> <p>Replicate the initial presentation instructions.</p>
<p>After the selected teacher assistance, if the student finds “Earth orbits the sun, while the moon orbits Earth” in Stimulus 11b,</p>	<p>➡</p>	<p>mark <b>B</b> for question 11 and move to question 12.</p>
<p>After the selected teacher assistance, if the student does not find “Earth orbits the sun, while the moon orbits Earth” in Stimulus 11b,</p>	<p>➡</p>	<p>mark <b>C</b> for question 11 and move to question 12.</p>

- If the student is not able to find the correct answer after the initial presentation, the test administrator must select one of the allowable teacher assists before repeating the presentation instructions. An assist must be provided after an incorrect response. Appropriate assists must be determined during the preview window prior to the administration of the test.
- While the assist must be the one that is most helpful to the student, it cannot have been provided as an accommodation during the initial presentation.
- The assist may be assigned to the student or the teacher. Assists that begin with “Have the student...” may only be performed by the student. Other assists may be performed by either the student or the test administrator.

### Example Scoring Instructions for Fourth Question in a Cluster

Scoring Instructions		
Student Action		Test Administrator Action
If the student finds "Earth rotates on its axis once every 24 hours" in Stimulus 12b,	➡	mark <b>A</b> for question 12 and move to question 13.
If the student does not find "Earth rotates on its axis once every 24 hours" in Stimulus 12b,	➡	replicate the initial presentation instructions.
After the teacher repeats the instructions, if the student finds "Earth rotates on its axis once every 24 hours" in Stimulus 12b,	➡	mark <b>B</b> for question 12 and move to question 13.
After the teacher repeats the instructions, if the student does not find "Earth rotates on its axis once every 24 hours" in Stimulus 12b,	➡	mark <b>C</b> for question 12 and move to question 13.

- If the student is not able to provide the correct answer after the initial presentation, the initial presentation instructions must be repeated.
- No other assistance is allowed, because the student must apply prior knowledge to answer the question.

# Alignment with State Curriculum

Alignment with the state curriculum is a critical requirement for STAAR Alternate 2. ESSA mandates that alternate assessments must be aligned with the state’s challenging academic content standards and academic achievement standards. Texas Education Code [§39.023](#) lists the grades, subjects, and courses to be tested in the Texas Assessment Program. In response to these requirements, TEA developed vertical alignment and curriculum framework documents designed to help ensure that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are able to access the grade-level TEKS. These documents help ensure that all students eligible to take an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards are assessed on curriculum linked to grade-level content. Through the processes illustrated below, TEA aligned the STAAR Alternate 2 assessment to the grade-level TEKS.

## Access to the Grade-Level TEKS Content Standards for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities

### TEKS

The TEKS identify what Texas students should know and be able to do at every grade and in every course in the required mathematics, RLA, science, and social studies curricula.



### TEKS Vertical Alignment for STAAR Alternate 2

The vertical alignment is a list of the assessable TEKS content standards from pre-kindergarten through high school for the required mathematics, RLA, science, and social studies curricula.



### Essence and Strand Statements

The essence statements summarize each mathematics, science, and social studies grade-level knowledge and skill. The strand statements summarize the RLA student expectations.



### TEKS Curriculum Framework for STAAR Alternate 2

The curriculum framework links the prerequisite skills to the specific knowledge and skills statements and student expectations for the mathematics, RLA, science, and social studies curricula.

## TEKS Vertical Alignment

To link STAAR Alternate 2 with the grade-level content standards assessed by STAAR, a curriculum review was conducted on the mathematics, RLA, science, and social studies TEKS in all tested grades and courses. A task force of content experts, curriculum specialists, and assessment specialists reviewed the TEKS and identified the STAAR reporting categories and knowledge and skills statements to be included for each grade, subject, and course. Following this review, a vertical alignment that provided a listing of the knowledge and skills statements and student expectations from the TEKS for prekindergarten through high school was developed. The student expectations provide access points to the general education curriculum by serving as prerequisite skills for STAAR Alternate 2. The prerequisite skills do not represent a scope and sequence, but, rather, a vertically aligned curriculum.

## Essence and Strand Statements

Before the curriculum framework documents for STAAR Alternate 2 were developed, each knowledge and skills statement and its corresponding student expectations for all reporting categories assessed by STAAR were summarized in an essence statement. These essence statements serve as the connection between the grade-level TEKS and STAAR Alternate 2 for mathematics, science, and social studies. For RLA, strand statements are used as the connectors between the grade-level standards and the tested prerequisite skills.

## TEKS Curriculum Framework

To further provide access to the content standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, the TEKS curriculum framework documents were developed for STAAR Alternate 2 using the TEKS vertical alignment documents. The curriculum framework documents also provide prerequisite skills that are linked to the grade-level TEKS content standards through the essence and strand statements to provide students with the most significant cognitive disabilities access to the grade-level TEKS curriculum.

The curriculum frameworks allow teachers to identify the appropriate access points in the form of prerequisite skills that link to the grade-level TEKS curriculum for each student. The TEKS curriculum framework documents for STAAR Alternate 2 contain the:

- STAAR reporting category or strand,
- knowledge and skills statements,
- essence or strand statements, and
- STAAR-tested student expectations.

The vertical alignment and curriculum framework documents serve as the foundation for developing questions for each grade and subject and were reviewed and approved by educator committees. The STAAR Alternate 2 TEKS alignment documents can be found on the [STAAR Alternate 2 Resources](#) web page.

# Training

Test administrators and other campus personnel participating in STAAR Alternate 2 administrations are required to be trained in test security and administration procedures. Training should be provided annually to ensure a standardized test administration and the best testing experience for Texas students. Annual training is especially important for understanding and implementing new or updated policies and procedures. It is imperative that all individuals participating in STAAR Alternate 2 administrations preserve the integrity of test content and student data through strict adherence to the instructions and procedures contained in the test administration manual. Lack of annual training typically results in testing incidents that may impact students' test scores, district and campus accountability ratings, and, ultimately, an educator's teaching certificate.

Trainings for STAAR Alternate 2 are posted in the Learning Management System (LMS), which can be accessed via the [Educators](#) page of the Texas Assessment website. There are technology- and system-specific recorded trainings as well as trainings focusing on an overview of STAAR Alternate 2 and eligibility requirements for student participation. Trainings include:

- STAAR Alternate 2 Overview and Eligibility
- Managing Secure Materials for the Texas Assessment Program
- Technology Requirements for the Texas Assessment Program
- The Centralized Reporting System Overview

District testing personnel who will administer STAAR Alternate 2 assessments should ensure that they have read not only this guide but also the applicable user guides and other resources listed in the table below to familiarize themselves with current testing guidelines and procedures.

Title	Audience
<a href="#"><i>Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) User Guide</i></a>	Testing Coordinators
<a href="#"><i>Response Entry (RE) User Guide</i></a>	Testing Coordinators and Classroom Teachers
<a href="#"><i>Centralized Reporting System (CRS) User Guide</i></a>	Testing Coordinators and Classroom Teachers

Additional training resources can be found on the [STAAR Alternate 2 Resources](#) web page.

# Test Results

Educators who have a roster association with students can access results for those students through the Centralized Reporting System (CRS). In CRS, educators can see performance information by assessment, reporting category, and test question.

STAAR Alternate 2 score reports include the individual performance levels achieved by students, scale scores, and the number of questions answered correctly within each reporting category for each of the assessed grades and content areas.

STAAR Alternate 2 report cards explain STAAR Alternate 2 results to parents and are available in the Family Portal. Detailed information about STAAR Alternate 2 report cards is provided on the [Texas Assessment](#) website.

The Research Portal contains assessment data for all Texas students who participated in statewide test administrations and can be used by educators, researchers, and the public to analyze state assessment results. The Research Portal can be accessed through the Texas Assessment website.

STAAR Alternate 2 results may be used in the following ways:

- to help parents monitor their child's progress
- to inform instructional planning for individual students
- to report performance to local school boards, school professionals, and the community
- to evaluate programs, resources, and staffing patterns
- to evaluate districts and campuses in a variety of state and federal accountability measures



TE★AS ASSESSMENT