

March 3, 2020

To ESC and District Testing Coordinator Addressed:

This communication is to inform you that an amended version of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), [§101.4002](#), State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness End-of-Course Substitute Assessments, is now effective as of February 23, 2020.

The adopted rule requires a student who chooses to use a substitute assessment to meet graduation requirements to take the corresponding State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) end-of-course (EOC) assessment *at least once* for federal testing and accountability purposes. Based on public comment, the proposed requirement to take an EOC assessment *prior to* using a substitute assessment for graduation purposes was removed.

The changes to the rule do not affect students who were enrolled in courses prior to the 2019–2020 school year and used the substitute assessment option to meet graduation requirements. These students have satisfied their testing and graduation requirements for those courses.

A student who is currently enrolled in a high school course that has an associated EOC assessment during the 2019–2020 school year and has used a qualifying score on a substitute assessment prior to February 23, 2020, to meet graduation requirements may participate in the EOC assessment but is not required to test based on the previous version of the rule. If the student chooses not to test, districts will need to mark these students' tests to be scored ("S" score code) for accountability purposes.

A student who is enrolled in a high school course that has an associated EOC assessment during the 2019–2020 school year and chooses to use a qualifying score on a substitute assessment starting February 23, 2020, should take the corresponding EOC assessment when completing the course. If the student chooses not to test, the test needs to be marked to be scored ("S" score code). Using the score codes "A" (Absent) or "O" (Other) for students who use substitute assessments will not meet districts' participation requirements for federal accountability; districts will continue to receive test documents until a scored test document is submitted. Once a student's test has been marked to be scored ("S" score code), retest documents for a student who chooses to use a qualifying score on a substitute assessment can be voided.

As a reminder, "A" and "O" score codes will be counted as non-participants for a district's participation calculations for federal accountability. Similarly, a score code of "S" resulting from a blank test will be counted as "Did Not Meet Grade Level" for a district's performance calculations.

To assist districts in making appropriate decisions regarding STAAR substitute assessments, a new resource has been created. The [STAAR Substitute Assessments Flowchart](#) was designed as a companion document to TAC, §101.4002, to address eligibility questions.

For questions about substitute assessments, contact the Student Assessment Division at (512) 463-9536 or studentassessment@tea.texas.gov. For questions about accountability, contact the Performance Reporting Division at (512) 463-9704 or performance.reporting@tea.texas.gov.

Texas Education Agency
Student Assessment Division
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