

State and National Assessments, 2015-2016

Robert Mount, Ph.D., Karen Byers, M.S., Fred Washington, M.A.,
Jorge Aguirre, B.A., Rafael Fontalvo, B.A., Jose Alonzo,
Jillian Heintzman, MSE, & Charlenta Govan, Ed.D.

EA16-210-4

At-a-Glance

State and National Assessments (SNA) coordinates the training, administration, distribution and processing of all state-, national-, and district-mandated criterion- and norm-referenced testing in the Dallas ISD. These tests include *TAKS*, *STAAR*, *STAAR A*, *STAAR Spanish*, *STAAR L*, *STAAR Alt 2*, *STAAR End-of-Course (EOC)*, *Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS)*, *TerraNova/Supera*, *IPT*, and *Stanford 10*. In addition, SNA supports magnet school testing, *NAEP/TUDA*, and the acquisition of *Credit by Examination (CBE)* and *Credit by Examination for Acceleration (CEFA)*.

SNA is also responsible for assisting with Test Security. In this capacity, SNA is responsible for assisting with training Campus Testing Coordinators (CTCs), monitoring test administrations, and reporting testing irregularities to the proper authorities [Texas Education Agency (TEA), Human Capital Management, and Professional Standards Office].

State-Mandated Assessments

TEA requires students to be assessed in grades 3-12 to determine academic skill levels and progress made during a given school year. Grades 3-8 were administered the *STAAR*, while students grades 9-12 were administered the *STAAR EOC*. Students enrolled in high school prior to the 2012-2013 school year were required to pass 4 core subtests on the *Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)*.

At grades 5 and 8, students had two opportunities to test; one administration in March and one administration in May. During each administration, students were assessed in reading and math in both English and Spanish. The third administration was canceled by the Texas Commissioner of Education due to test administration errors associated with the new vendor (Educational Testing Services).

At grades 9-12, students had three opportunities to test (December 2015, spring 2016 and July 2016).

NCLB mandates an annual English-language proficiency assessment of ELLs in grades K-12 in four language domains (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). The Texas Education Agency (TEA) developed the *Texas English Language Proficiency*

Assessment System (TELPAS) to assess English language learners' (ELLs) in these domains.

The following presents an overview of the number of state mandated tests administered in the Dallas ISD:

- Across grades 3-8, more than 76,000 students took *STAAR* Reading, more than 68,000 took *STAAR* Math, and at grades 4 & 7, more than 21,000 took *STAAR* Writing in English and Spanish.
- At grades 5 and 8, more than 21,000 students took the *STAAR* Science test, and about 9,000 students at grade 8 took *STAAR* Social Studies.
- At grades 5 and 8, a total of 17,901 students took *STAAR* Reading in English and 4,153 students took *STAAR* Reading in Spanish during the first administration and 6,052 students tested in English and 1,281 tested in Spanish during the second administration
- At grades 5 and 8, a total of 21,850 students took *STAAR* Math in English and 173 students took *STAAR* Math in Spanish during the first administration and 7,388 students tested in English and 134 tested in *Spanish* during the second administration. These totals include students who tested above grade level (2,427).
- More than 68,000 students took the *STAAR EOC*, with more than 9,000 total tested in each of the following subjects: Algebra I, Biology, English I, English II, and U.S. History.
- Across grades 11 and 12, a total of 49 students took the *Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Exit Retest*.
- A total of 59,263 students were rated on the *TELPAS* with a majority rated beginning at grades 1-3, while those rated intermediate, advanced, and advanced high were in grades 2-12.

TerraNova Third Edition Norm-Referenced Assessments at Grades K-2

For 2015-2016, the district transitioned to *TerraNova/Supera* for the norm-referenced assessments at grades K-2. The *TerraNova* is an English-language standardized norm-referenced

achievement test. The *Supera* is the Spanish version of the test.

Across grades K-2, a total of 58,376 tests were administered with the *TerraNova* (20,618 in reading, and 37,758 in mathematics), while 17,645 administered with the *Supera* (17,491 in *Supera* Reading, and 154 in *Supera* Math).

IDEA Language Proficiency Tests (IPT) and Stanford 10 Assessments of ELL Students

School districts are required to identify ELL students in grades Pre-K-12 through the use of a home language survey. Students identified as having a language other than English were assessed with the *IDEA Language Proficiency Tests (IPT)*. Students in grades Pre-K-12 who were new to the district and spoke a language other than English were assessed with the *IPT* and placed in an appropriate instructional program within four weeks of enrollment. Students in grades 2-12 who scored ≥ 4 on the *IPT* were assessed with *Stanford 10*.

A total of 39,167 *IPT* tests were administered (26,967 on the English version and 12,200 on the Spanish version) and 991 with the *Stanford 10*.

Magnet School Application Process and Assessment Results

State and National Assessments administered the *ITBS/Logramos* or *Stanford 10* to students who did not have norm- or criterion-referenced achievement test scores from the previous school year in order to apply to the Dallas ISD magnet program. Specifically, these services were provided to students who were applying for admission to the district's vanguards, academies, and magnet high schools who met the following criteria: (1) currently enrolled in private, parochial, or other schools (grades K-10), and (2) currently enrolled Dallas ISD students (grades 1-2 and 9-11). Out-of-district students were required to provide a \$100.00 money order or cashier's check made payable to the Dallas Independent School District, while in-district students tested free. A total of 209 students were tested for admission into the magnet program in the 2015-2016 school year (71 with *ITBS*, 9 with *Logramos* and 129 with *Stanford 10*).

The *Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)* is an instrument used by selected district vanguards, academies, and magnet high schools for additional screening of applicants. It is a nonverbal test of general ability commonly used to identify gifted children. SNA provided *NNAT* test booklets, answer documents, and score results for campus officials. A total of 653 students at 5 magnet schools were tested. The highest number of students tested (246) were at grade 3.

The *Math Pre-Assessment* was developed by the Region IV Education Service Center. It is used in addition to other assessments to fulfill the requirement needs for entry into 6 requested magnet school campuses at their discretion. SNA printed the test booklets, answer documents, and scored the results. A total of 1,236 students were tested, with the highest number tested (993) at grade 5.

The *Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA)* is a computer administered assessment used to provide evidence of college readiness or identify deficiencies in reading, writing, and/or mathematics. It was administered at 2 magnet high school campuses via *Accuplacer*. SNA's responsibility was to purchase assessment credits such that assessment capabilities would be readily available at campuses.

Credit by Examination for Acceleration and Credit by Examination with ACP Results

Tests used for *Credit by Examination for Acceleration (CEFA)* was developed by Texas Tech University to assess mastery of the TEKS for students in grades 1-12 (EHDB LOCAL & EHDC LOCAL). *CEFA* is a means by which high-achieving elementary students may advance one grade level by passing all four tests in the common core areas (language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies), while middle and high school students may be awarded course credit. The *Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS)* was used to determine acceleration for students in kindergarten.

Students had to meet the following passing standards to accelerate or gain course credit:

- Kindergarten students had to score at or above the 70th percentile on the *ITBS* Reading and Math test to advance to the next grade.
- Elementary school students had to achieve a mastery score of 80% in all four common core areas (language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies) to advance to the next grade.
- Middle and high school students had to achieve a mastery score of 80% in each subject area tested to receive course credit.
- Middle and high school students with prior instruction in the course taken had to achieve a mastery score of 70% in each subject area tested to receive course credit.

The following results were observed:

- Fourteen students were tested for acceleration at the Kindergarten level with 60% scoring at or above the 70th percentile.
- At the elementary level, 8 students were tested for acceleration with 3 students scoring $\geq 80\%$ mastery in all core areas (reading, math, science,

and social studies).

- At the middle and high school levels, more than 1,800 tests were taken for course credit with passing rates of 71% and 80%, respectively.

Credit-by-Examination with Assessment of Course Performance (CBEwACP) is another means by which students entering the Dallas ISD from home-study or non-accredited schools may receive course credit(s). Students who entered the district in the second semester of grade 9 or in either semester (1st or 2nd) of grades 10-12, were eligible to submit an application for CBEwACP.

A total of 303 tests were taken for CBEwACP (2 elementary, 34 middle school, and 267 high school) with 139 (46%) students receiving course credit.

CTC Survey Results

The Dallas ISD Board of Trustees requested a special survey of campus staff serving as CTCs to determine the amount of time these employees spent working on test administration activities (STAAR, ACP, TELPAS, etc.). The findings were needed to provide helpful information used in making decisions about future CTC staffing concerns.

A total of 108 campus staff responded to the CTC survey. The majority of respondents (72%) were Assistant Principals (41%) followed by Librarians (31%). The majority of librarians and other district staff serving as CTCs were relatively new to the position with no more than 2 years of experience. Although there were similarities in the amounts of time librarians and other district personnel spent on testing activities per week during and after school hours, the amounts of time differed significantly depending on the test. The greatest amount of time spent on test administrations was associated with TELPAS Calibrations, TELPAS Online Testing, and TerraNova/Supera. The results indicated that librarians and other district personnel may be working more than 60+ hours per week when serving as CTCs, oftentimes without supplemental pay. This may be especially evident at campuses where there is no allocation or budget for CTCs in spite of state and federal accountability requirements.

Campus Testing Coordinator Trainings

The Department of State and National Assessments provided 34 training sessions on test administration and security procedures. There were three all day Introductory sessions in September, one for elementary, including *ACT School Day*, and two for middle schools session for *Exit TAKS/PSAT*. There were nine sessions pertaining to STAAR and three ETS/Pearson online training sessions. The January

overview was divided into two elementary, one middle, and one high school session combined. There was one high school *SAT School Day* session and nine TELPAS sessions. There was one *Advanced Placement* session for high schools and two *TerraNova/Supera* sessions for elementary schools. Two additional sessions were conducted to discuss the Student Survey.

Role of Districtwide Testing Coordinators

Five Districtwide Testing Coordinators were assigned various feeder patterns each to train, assist, and support CTCs with testing activities in association with the district's testing calendar. These activities included:

- assisting with training CTCs before each test administration on test procedures, test security, online testing setup, online test administration and completion, and quality control of paper and online test materials;
- providing functional planning expertise to campus and district personnel required to meet state testing timelines and district administered local testing timelines outlined on the district's testing calendar;
- working collaboratively with various departments including, but not limited to, special education, counseling, ESL/bilingual, and technology to ensure coherence and alignment of local, state, and national assessments;
- presenting best practices at the Texas Assessment Conference;
- assisting with summarizing testing activities and operations in interim reports, technical reports, and final reports; and
- making recommendations for improvement of operations.

ETS Administration Concerns

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) contracted with Education Testing Services (ETS) to administer STAAR assessments for the State of Texas on September 1, 2015. Along with this transition came a number of testing issues. There were six topics of concern; Confidential Student Records (CSRs), Inaccurate Data, File/Reports Updates, Pre-Codes, Online Testing, and Shipping. ETS was open to communications and made assertive efforts to make positive changes. Noticeable improvements were made between the December 2015 and Spring 2016 administrations. Improvements were also made with precodes, shipping, and reporting.

Test Monitor Training

State and National Assessments trained test monitors to ensure proper test administration and security procedures were being followed during each test administration. School assignments were done through an online self-selection process. At the end of each observation, test monitors were required to complete a number of observation forms documenting all aspects of the testing environment and testing irregularities, if observed. A total of 261 test monitors were trained to monitor 223 schools 2 to 3 times during each testing window.

Testing Irregularities

Testing irregularities fell into two distinct categories, procedural and serious. Procedural irregularities are less severe and most common. They typically involved minor deviations in testing procedures such as: students tested in the wrong language, students were administered an exam on an unauthorized day, or students not placing their answers on the correct section of the answer sheet. Serious irregularities constitute severe violations of test security and/or confidentiality that oftentimes resulted in the involvement of the TEA's Educator Certification and Standards Division for disciplinary action (including suspension or revocation of educator certification). If a serious testing irregularity was identified, the district's Test Security Officer worked collaboratively with the Professional Standards Office, Human Capital Management, principals, and/or Division Executive Directors to conduct further investigations.

A total of 291 testing irregularities were reported to State and National Assessments (288 procedural and 3 serious). The majority of procedural irregularities were associated with the administration of the STAAR at grades 3-8.

Assessment of Course Performance (ACP) Test Booklet Return Rate

A random sample of 15 elementary, 5 middle, and 5 high schools were chosen from across the district's feeder patterns for ACP test booklets return rates. A total of 63,850 test booklets (30,909 to elementary, 13,882 to middle, and 19,059 to high schools) were shipped with a return rate greater than 99% (<1% of the test booklets were retained on campuses).

For additional information see EA16-210-2, and also available at <http://www.dallasisd.org/page/888>.