

# C&I Update F.A.Q.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

Q: What would be appropriate for TAKS-M students on a checkpoint test?

A: A special education student's IEP will indicate the appropriate modifications which can be different for each student. Teachers should have copies of these for each student. Curriculum Checkpoint accommodations may be applied by special education or classroom teachers, whichever setting is indicated as appropriate by the student's IEP. Every student is expected to receive instruction on their enrolled grade level. Below is a link to the T.E.A. webpage with additional information on special education assessment:

[http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index3.aspx?id=3632&menu\\_id3=793](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index3.aspx?id=3632&menu_id3=793)

Q: What are your procedures for special education students in regard to DMAC?

A: Special education students are included in DMAC under the teacher of record. DMAC does provide for disaggregation according to sub-groups: special education included.

Q: Would it be possible to have a copy of all core tests and keys copied and sent to the Grand Central Station lab after they have been approved by administration, after the review deadline? It has been difficult getting these materials in the lab in a timely fashion. Many times we don't see the test until it walks in the door and are panicking to help provide needed accommodations for our special education students.

A: After final review, C&I will notify Principals, Department Chairs/Grade Level Leads and GCS teachers that the Curriculum Checkpoints are ready to be printed. Copies of the assessments can be provided to GCS by core subject area designees.

## GENERAL

Q: Can you put this powerpoint on the TM website for future reference?

A: The powerpoint will be placed on the Instruction page on the school website, along with the Local Assessment Calendar.

Q: Did the grading policy change?

A: Please see the Instructional Handbook (within the Student Handbook), link below:

[http://www.tmsd.esc2.net/StudentHandbook2009-2010\(Board%20Approved\).pdf](http://www.tmsd.esc2.net/StudentHandbook2009-2010(Board%20Approved).pdf); for additional information (SB 2033): [http://www.tasb.org/issues/legislative/reports/2009-05-08/public\\_ed.html](http://www.tasb.org/issues/legislative/reports/2009-05-08/public_ed.html).

Q: Have you heard anything about Texas diverting away from evaluating a student's TAKS 'score' and moving in a direction of reviewing the student's growth?

A: Texas has implemented TPM (Texas Projection Measure). This statistical model will project a student's success on TAKS. Students in grade 3 and 4 are projected to grade 5. Students in grades 5, 6, 7 are projected to grade 8. Students in Grades 8, 9 and 10 are projected to the Exit Level test. This information is vital to our accountability and student success, everyone should become familiar with this new model:

[http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index3.aspx?id=3688&menu\\_id3=793](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index3.aspx?id=3688&menu_id3=793)

## **CURRICULUM CHECKPOINTS**

Q: Can a question be testing a SE or TEKS and not TAKS?

A: Test items can test a SE or TEKS that is not tested on TAKS. TAKS tests do not always test all TEKS or SE's. Curriculum Checkpoints assess all Student Expectations taught.

Q: Can we give a semester assessment in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Six Weeks instead of a Grading Period Curriculum Checkpoint?

A: Yes. With the approval from your Principal, Semester assessments can be administered in lieu of a six weeks checkpoint. The semester assessment would follow the same requirements of the Checkpoints (copies of assessments and keys should be submitted for review); data will be placed on DMAC.

Q: Do we administer four tests in two days?

A: Turn-around time for the data used to drive intersession instruction requires the timely administration and scoring of these checkpoints. These tests are not intended to be time consuming. In secondary levels, they should require only one class period. In the elementary levels, not more than an hour should be needed for each checkpoint. Additionally, the state requires school districts to minimize the number of instructional days used for the administration of local assessments. For additional information: <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/taa/studassmt091008.html>

Q: When an assessment is "rejected" could C&I given us assistance for test items so we're not just guessing?

A: After review of a Curriculum Checkpoint, if revisions need to be made, communication between C&I and teachers will include specific suggestions for resolution. Most of the time, revisions were needed due to alignment issues or the absence of depth and complexity.

Q: With Kindergarten testing each semester, how will this work? Will this be used as a grade for the child or is it more used for district information? Kinder students might not remember what they learned in July/August when we test them in December and subjects like science do not spiral as much as other subjects like math.

A: C&I will advise Kindergarten teachers on which SEs will need to be tested. The purpose of data is to provide explicit evidence of learning in order to prescriptively teach students. All assessment is to be used in this way. The nature of

assessment should be diagnostic and most useful for the classroom teacher, never for just district information. Applying a grade is discretionary and is the decision of the campus Principal.

## **DMAC**

Q: When will the data for 2009 TAKS scores be in DMAC?

A: The 2009 TAKS data is currently in DMAC. An update will occur after the first week of school to reflect new teacher/student rosters.

Q: If DMAC data shows a weakness in a grade level, will C&I do any type of instruction for our grade level?

A: The true purpose of data is to provide explicit evidence of learning in order to prescriptively teach students. DMAC data should be used in PLC meetings to drive daily instruction. If trends of weakness are identified, classroom instruction should be targeted to strengthen that skill/concept. C&I will offer support to any grade level/subject by providing research-based strategies and interventions.

Q: What are the exact answer choices on the DMAC answer documents?

A: On the green answer documents (grades K – 3) the answer choices for each item is A B C D E; these are called non-alternating answer choices. On the blue answer documents (grades 4 – 12) the answer choices “alternate” – A B C D E for all odd numbered questions, F G H J K for all even numbered questions; these are called alternating answer choices.

Q: Why is the student ID number the Social Security number?

A: Currently, the state uses the student’s Social Security number as their public school identification number. Tests like TAKS are tracked by this number. DMAC’s data link to the state requires the use of the same identification number. We are to protect that student information, just as we would any other. The answer documents are considered SECURE documents and should be stored properly to assure their confidentiality.

Q: Can DMAC provide a report of all students tested instead of by grade level?

A: Yes. DMAC training will be offered soon and we will demonstrate how to perform this data retrieval. If assistance is needed sooner, please let us know and we will walk you through the steps.

## **CSCOPE**

Q: Will kindergarten teachers be able to have the flexibility to shift some of the social studies/science units in CSCOPE to best meet needs of students? (ie: plants – spring, seasons in a more meaningful way for students)

A: To assure a viable, equitable, aligned curriculum our district will follow the scope and sequence and timeline contained in CSCOPE (YAGs, IFDs, VADs...).

Q: Are we following Saxon scope and sequence or CSCOPE? Do we have the latitude to “adjust” CSCOPE timeline?

Example: Could we teach a different Science Unit at the beginning of the year – Solar System – Erosion -...?

A: To assure a viable, equitable, aligned curriculum our district will follow the scope and sequence and timeline contained in CSCOPE (YAGs, IFDs, VADs...).

Q: When is CSCOPE going to be updated with the new ELA TEKS?

A: The update to all curriculum documents was made over the summer (June). These can be found on the CSCOPE homepage under the **NELA** subject tabs. Lessons utilizing the new ELAR TEKS will not be available until next school year.

## BENCHMARKS

Q: Why did you put the big ELA practice in January not November? The data from November allows us more time to adjust curriculum?

A: This date was chosen to accommodate the district-wide TAKS benchmark of ELA.

Q: Can we given a writing TAKS release test in October or November? We felt like this year we need to start earlier?

A: After reviewing the most updated State Assessment Calendar, this is a reasonable request. The writing TAKS is scheduled for March 2, 2010. The 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade writing TAKS benchmark will be rescheduled for December 2, 2009 (the Local Assessment Calendar will reflect this adjustment – please check online version).

Q: Why does 2<sup>nd</sup> grade have EOY (End-of-Year) Reading and not BOY (Beginning-of-Year) Reading?

A: The purpose of the EOY assessment is to be “TAKS-like” in nature in order to reveal readiness for third grade. It is not intended to show growth. Growth can be measure through TPRI, DRA and M-Class.

Q: Will we be provided curriculum materials that align with our EOY tests?

A: CSCOPE provides the alignment of all of the TEKS/SEs, even the new ELAR TEKS. The EOY Reading assessment scheduled for the of this school year, will be aligned to the new ELAR TEKS.

Q: Why does 2<sup>nd</sup> grade have Reading EOY but not any Curriculum Checkpoints throughout the year? How does that show growth?

A: The purpose of the EOY assessment is to be “TAKS-like” in nature in order to reveal readiness for third grade. It is not intended to show growth. Growth can be measured through TPRI, DRA and M-Class.

## **INTERSESSION**

Q: If intersession is only for Pre-K and K Bilingual students, what about 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students that are failing a six weeks? What are we doing for them?

A: Primary school offers many options for students in need of assistance. Tutorials will be offered after school. ARI and AMI funds will provide tutors during school hours. The RTI Tier system will provide explicit intervention for struggling students. By law, TMISD must offer a set number of days/weeks of Summer School instruction for Pre-K and K Bilingual students.