

## STAAR debuts

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### STAAR to replace TAKS

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## State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness

AUSTIN – Commissioner of Education Robert Scott announced today that the next generation of student tests will be called the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness or STAAR.

STAAR will replace the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), which is the criterion-reference assessment program that has been in place since 2003.

The STAAR name, pronounced the same as star, will be used for the 12 end-of-course assessments mandated by SB 1031 in 2007 and the new grade 3-8 assessments mandated by HB 3 in the 2009 legislative session.

The new tests will be used beginning in the 2011-2012 school year. Students in the graduating Class of 2015, who are currently in seventh grade, will be the first students who must meet the end-of-course testing requirements, as well as pass their classes, in order to earn a diploma.

The new tests will be significantly more rigorous than previous tests and will measure a child's performance, as well as academic growth.

The grade 3-8 STAAR tests in reading and mathematics, by law, must be linked from grade to grade to performance expectations for the English III and Algebra II end-of-course assessments.

During a speech at the Texas Association of School Administrators' Midwinter Conference in Austin, Scott also said the last TAKS-based school accountability ratings will be issued in 2011. Ratings will be suspended in 2012 while a new accountability system is developed.

The new state rating system will debut in 2013.

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### **History of the Texas testing program**

***Texas Assessment of Basic Skills (TABS)***– First state-mandated test, in use from 1980-1985, administered to students in grades 3, 5 and 9 in reading, mathematics and writing.

***Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS)*** – In use from 1986-1990, tested reading, mathematics and writing in grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11; first state test students were required to pass to earn a diploma.

***Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS)*** – In use from 1990-2002, tested reading, mathematics and writing, ultimately given to students in grades 3-8 and 10, additionally science and social studies tested at eighth grade, Spanish-language tests available for students in grades 3-6, four end-of-course exams provide optional method for meeting graduation requirements.

***Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)*** – In use from 2003 to present, assesses mathematics, reading, writing, English language arts, science and social studies, students tested in grades 3-11; promotion tied to test results for students in grades 3, 5 and 8; graduation requirements expanded to include English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.