



# TEXANS ADVOCATING FOR MEANINGFUL STUDENT ASSESSMENT

PRESS RELEASE  
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Texans Advocating for Meaningful Student Assessment (TAMSA)  
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In response to the recommendation from the Texas Commission on Public School Finance to tie funding of Texas public schools to performance of third graders on the STAAR reading exam, TAMSA conducted an online poll from January 13-20, 2019, with a single question: “Do you think the state should fund schools based on how students do on the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading STAAR?”

Over 2400 people responded – the vast majority in the first 24 hours – and overwhelmingly disagreed with attaching any school funding to a standardized test: **98% OPPOSED the recommendation.**

Hundreds of people left comments explaining their reasoning; no one who answered in favor to attaching funding to test results left a comment. Reasons ranged from overstressing 8-year-olds, disincentivizing high quality teachers from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classrooms, using a single data point for funding, and rewarding additional funds to schools that are already high achieving and punishing school that need funds to improve their instruction.\*

“We do not support adding an additional high stake to the STAAR test system. The state standardized tests are already overly punitive to students, as their performance can impact grade level promotion and graduation. Adding funding will force schools and districts to focus even more on test preparation in primary classrooms instead of literacy.” Heather Sheffield, President of TAMSA, said.

“We applaud the focus on early literacy, but suggest adding additional funds so districts can incorporate full-day PreK and enhanced literacy resources, especially in struggling schools, and not tying funding to a single data point.”

\* All comments can be viewed on the TAMSA Facebook page and Twitter feeds.

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*TAMSA is a statewide, grassroots organization comprised of parents and other community members concerned with the overemphasis on high stakes STAAR tests and the misallocation of hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to the tests that should be going to the classroom. Our mission is to improve public education in Texas through the use of meaningful and effective student assessments that allow for more productive classroom instruction and more efficient use of public funds.*