



# TEXANS ADVOCATING FOR MEANINGFUL STUDENT ASSESSMENT

PRESS RELEASE

May 23, 2019

Texans Advocating for Meaningful Student Assessment (TAMSA)

Contact: Heather Sheffield, president of TAMSA

Mobile: (832) 474-3636

Email: [heather@heathersheffield.com](mailto:heather@heathersheffield.com)

TAMSA is encouraged with preliminary reports that standardized testing has been removed from HB3, the school finance bill. (awaiting confirmation) However, we are extremely concerned that several of the objectionable changes and others have been added to HB3906 as passed out of the Senate. None of these changes were made available for public testimony as the senate version was not available to the public prior to the public hearing.

In addition to the lack of transparency and public input, our concerns include:

1. Additional spending on standardized tests (\$100M this biennium; just under \$150M the next biennium)
2. Additional writing components (not federally required) for grades 3, 5, 6, and 8
3. Additional kindergarten reading assessment
4. Commissioner has sole authority to expand length of tests in section a-14
5. Amendment stating commissioner can break EOC up into multiple parts on multiple days
6. Adds a writing component to all 21 STAAR/EOC tests by requiring 25% of each test to be non-multiple-choice format
7. The readability study includes assessments in the 2019-2020 school year, even though the deadline to report is Dec 1, 2019

We don't know what any of this means and it should not be put into law without the engagement of important stakeholders such as parents, students, and educators. Matters of such importance should be vetted in public hearings not snuck into legislation in the dark of night.

We welcome an "assessment instrument study," but feel it should be overseen by the legislature, not the commissioner as that would be a conflict of interest.

**TAMSA urges Chairman Huberty and the House of Representatives to reject the senate changes and request a conference committee.**

---

*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.*

[www.tamsatx.org](http://www.tamsatx.org)