

Why is Texas squandering taxpayer money on state-mandated standardized tests that fail to prepare our children for post-secondary education?

Did you know?

- High-stakes testing is not preparing our students for post-secondary education. Our students' SAT scores have not improved over the past 15 years. Moreover, only 21.9% of Texas students complete any post-secondary certificate or degree, and that number drops to 12% for underserved minority students (per Houston Endowment funded study).
- Texas requires 3 more state-mandated, standardized tests in grades 3-8 than required federally.
- Only one other state requires more exit exams for high school graduation than Texas. 24 states do not require students to pass any exit exams to graduate.
- Texas requires 2 more state-mandated, standardized tests in grades 9-12 than required federally.
- Time spent on standardized testing is time lost to real learning. While we need to measure students' progress, standardized testing should not be the driving force in Texas education.

How can I help?

Please help spread the word by asking your family, friends, other parents, neighbors, and colleagues to:

- **Join** our email list via our website at www.TAMSATX.org
- **Like** us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/tamsatx
- **Follow** us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/TAMSATX

Let TEA and your elected officials know that over emphasis on custom-designed, state-mandated testing diverts significant public funding to a for-profit testing company instead of the classroom — and these tests take valuable, productive classroom instruction time. Share your personal stories with your elected representatives and education leaders.

TAMSA continues to meet with government agencies, superintendents, education organizations, business groups, community leaders and elected officials regarding the need for meaningful student assessment. We post updates and news on our website, Facebook page, and Twitter account.



Applying common sense to student testing



Texans Advocating for Meaningful Student Assessment, TAMSA, is comprised of concerned parents and community members who work to improve public education in Texas through the use of meaningful and effective student assessments, allowing more productive classroom instruction and more efficient use of public funds.

Join us and let your voice be heard
www.TAMSATX.org

Eliminate over-testing and under-investing in Texas students

During the 83rd Texas Legislative Session, TAMSA harnessed the political power of parents and other community members across the state to educate policy makers on its concerns with the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, STAAR, program and the critical need to reform it. House Bill 5 (HB5) is a comprehensive bill that reforms high school state-mandated standardized tests, graduation plans and school accountability. This legislation passed unanimously in both the Texas House and Senate and was signed into law by Governor Perry on June 10, 2013.



TAMSA understands the need to protect the progress made in HB5. Specifically, TAMSA advocates for the following:

Use state-mandated standardized testing for diagnostic purposes only

— to identify areas where students need additional support. Texas needs to eliminate all high-stakes testing and ensure that state-mandated exams are diagnostic, not punitive.

Support the implementation of HB5 — to ensure proper and timely implementation of this new law, including clarification of testing issues and oversight of the combined English End-Of-Course (EOC) exams.

Ensure the appropriate use of standardized testing for special education and disabled students, as well as a reasonable phase-in for English Language Learner (ELL) students — to prevent these students from being inappropriately subjected to punitive consequences of high-stakes tests. TAMSA supports the use of modified tests for disabled students; however, federal directive now requires states to transition away from these exams. TAMSA encourages efforts to promote awareness and participation in the ARD/special education process by parents of students with disabilities.

Reduce state-mandated testing in grades 3-8 — to alleviate the overemphasis on standardized tests (subject to federal law). The punitive, high-stakes tests in grades 5 and 8 need to be eliminated. Research has consistently demonstrated that grade retention does not improve student performance and, in fact, does more harm than good.



Ensure that no additional state-mandated tests are required in high school — to minimize the disruption of standardized testing in the classroom. HB5 allows for optional Algebra II and English III EOCs at the district's discretion. TAMSA opposes the use of these optional tests and advocates for districts to use a national norm-referenced test instead.

TAMSA believes national norm-referenced tests provide better student assessment than expensive custom-designed exams.

These tests (e.g. SAT/ACT) are proven and cannot be taught. "Passing rates" are not manipulated, and they are nationally recognized.



State-mandated standardized tests create unnecessary barriers in our public education system, take valuable classroom instruction time and divert significant public funding to a for-profit testing company instead of the classroom.