



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 20, 2012

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**TISD APPROVES DEFERMENT OF
15% END-OF-COURSE ASSESSMENT RULE**

Texarkana, TX – During their Tuesday, March 20, 2012 regular session, the Texarkana Independent School District Board of Trustees approved the deferment of implementing the 15% End-of-Course grading requirement for the 2011-12 school year.

House Bill 3, passed by the 81st Texas Legislature, charged the Texas Education Agency (TEA) with developing the new State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) program which replaced the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). The STAAR program, for grades 3-8, continues to assess the same subjects and grades that are currently assessed on TAKS. However, at the high school level, grade-specific assessments are being replaced with 12 end-of-course (EOC) assessments in Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology, Chemistry, English I, English II, English III, Geometry, Physics, World Geography, World History and U.S. History.

Additionally, the Texas Education Code 28.0216 asked that school districts adopt a policy that requires a student's performance on EOC assessments to account for 15% of the student's final grade for the course.

Discussions at the state level during the past two months have led to additional considerations regarding local policies concerning STAAR program implementation. State-wide concerns from school districts and parents led to the Texas House of Representatives Committee on Public Education to draft a letter to Commissioner Robert Scott stating that under the legislatively-mandated Transition Plan, the Commissioner has the authority to defer portions of legislation during the new state assessment program implementation.

With this authorization, on February 17, Commissioner Scott officially notified school districts that he will modify the HB 3 Transition Plan, giving school districts the ability to defer the statutory provision that requires performance on an EOC assessment to count as 15% of a student's final course grade.

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“We believe that the TEA and Commissioner Scott have made a good move in putting kids first and allowing school districts to opt out of the 15% rule for the current school year,” commented Autumn Thomas, Deputy Superintendent. “This was the first time in Texas history that state exam testing would count as a grade for students. Because it affects the lives of students, careful consideration to the implementation of this policy should be reviewed so that it is fair and equitable,” Thomas continued.

TISD will now move forward with their waiver request to TEA. Once approved, the 15% EOC assessment rule will be lifted for the 2011-12 school year, but students will continue to be required to take the assessment and achieve a Satisfactory average score to be eligible for academic promotion.

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