

## Questions to ask your legislator

**Why is Texas squandering taxpayer money on state-mandated standardized tests that create unnecessary barriers to high school graduation and fail to prepare our children for postsecondary education? Did you know:**

- Texas is spending over \$1.2 B dollars for testing (2000-2015) which equates to \$2 spent EVERY SECOND of every day for 15 years (most districts spend under \$2 for lunch for a hungry student) OR \$50,400 every 7 hours = 3 teachers per day or 1277 teachers per year every year.
- High-stakes testing is not preparing our students for postsecondary education. Our students' SAT scores have not improved over the past 15 years. Moreover, only 21.9% of Texas students complete any postsecondary certificate or degree, and that number drops to 12% for underserved minority students (per a recent Houston Endowment-funded study).
- With STAAR, Texas requires its students to pass more than four times the average number of tests to graduate than do other states that require exit exams. Only 25 states require students to pass exit exams to graduate from high school.
- 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 members, other parents, neighbors, and colleagues to:

- **join** our email list via our website at [www.TAMSATX.org](http://www.TAMSATX.org)
- **like** us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/tamsatx](http://www.facebook.com/tamsatx)
- **follow** us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/TAMSATX](http://www.twitter.com/TAMSATX)

Let the leadership of the Texas Legislature and TEA know that over-testing needs to stop now. Please ask them to stop the wasteful expenditures on high stakes testing and allow for more productive classroom instruction time. Share your personal stories with your elected representatives and education leaders, and let them know we must address this issue in the current legislative session.

TAMSA continues to meet with legislators and other interest groups regarding the need for change. We will post updates and news on our website, Facebook page, and Twitter account.



## Applying common sense to student testing



TAMSA is comprised of concerned parents and community members who are working 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.

## Join us and let your voice be heard

Visit us online: [www.TAMSATX.org](http://www.TAMSATX.org)  
Follow us on Twitter: @TAMSATX  
Like our Facebook Page: TAMSA

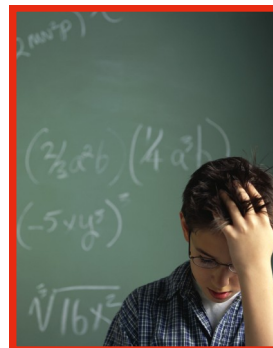
## Eliminate over-testing and under-investing in Texas students

**TAMSA believes nationally normed tests provide better student assessment than expensive state-designed exams.**

Using nationally-normed tests allows a true comparison of our students' academic performance to that of students across the nation. Additionally, these tests cannot be taught to, the results cannot be manipulated for political gain, they are less expensive than custom-designed state tests, and are nationally recognized. Many colleges already rely on national tests, such as ACT or SAT, for admission consideration, but no college requires STAAR test results. Thirteen states already use ACT or SAT tests for high school assessment of college and career readiness.



**If Texas continues to require STAAR End of Course (EOC) exams, TAMSA advocates for the following changes to the current system.**



**Reinstate local control of grades by eliminating the requirement that EOC exam scores count for 15% of a students' final grades.** Grades are a matter of local control. Standardized test scores have never before been included in Texas student grades.

**Provide more productive classroom instruction time by requiring no more than 2 or 3 EOC exams to graduate.** STAAR requires 15 tests in grades 9-12 to be passed and counted in grades for students on the recommended and distinguished plans. This requirement is far more burdensome than in any other state in the country; Texas students must pass more than four times the average number of tests to graduate than students in other states that require exit exams; 25 states do not require their students to pass any exit exam.

**Remove barriers to postsecondary education by eliminating the performance level requirements on English III and Algebra II EOC exams.** Under current law, failure to meet these performance requirements forces students to the minimum plan diploma, which will not allow them to be admitted to any public four year university in Texas.

**Remove a barrier to graduation by making the Cumulative Score requirement optional.** Reducing the required number of EOCs to graduate should eliminate the cumulative score issue. This requirement should only be retained as a safety net, not as a bar to graduation.



**These high-stakes tests create unnecessary barriers to graduation, take valuable classroom instruction time, and divert significant public funding to a for-profit testing company instead of the classroom. Further, students who fail to meet these high-stakes are barred from admission to Texas public four year universities and colleges. In addition to its economic costs, STAAR imposes other significant costs: teaching to the test, numerous benchmarks and practice tests, remediation classes replacing electives, and students asking "please tell me the right answer" instead of investigating possible answers for themselves.**