



NEWS

Texas
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U.S. Department of Education announces that Texas is first state to have its modified standards, assessments approved

AUSTIN – The U.S. Department of Education has announced that Texas is the first state to have approved modified academic achievement standards and modified assessments for reading/English language arts, mathematics and science.

The department approved the use of Texas' alternate assessments called the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills-Alternate (TAKS-Alt) and TAKS-Modified (TAKS-M) to determine whether students receiving special education services are meeting annual performance goals under No Child Left Behind.

These new variations of the TAKS test for students with disabilities will be one of the assessments used to determine federal ratings.

"We are pleased that the department has fully approved our standards and assessment system," Commissioner of Education Robert Scott said. He noted that the department previously approved the use of English and Spanish versions of TAKS and the Linguistically Accommodated Test (LAT).

With this final approval, federal ratings for schools and districts under Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) will be based on the reading/ELA and mathematics results for grades 3–8 and 10 from the TAKS, TAKS (Accommodated), TAKS–M and TAKS–Alt assessments.

TAKS (Accommodated) is an on grade-level TAKS that contains some modifications, such as the elimination of field test items. Most students with disabilities who need some testing modifications take TAKS (Accommodated). TAKS-M, which is also an on grade-level test, has additional modifications such as fewer items and fewer answer choices. The exam called TAKS-Alt is given to students who have significant cognitive disabilities.

"Texas schools have responded to the challenge of assessing more students with disabilities on grade level, and we will continue improving academic achievement for students receiving special education services," said Commissioner Scott.

Preliminary AYP results for schools and districts will be released on the Texas Education Agency Web site on Aug. 6.

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