

Guidance on State Assessments

Spring 2020 School Closures

Administering assessments at the conclusion of each year and course is incredibly important for gathering information about our students, but it can also be a significant source of confusion and angst for educators and families alike during times of necessary school closures. Tennessee has a full suite of assessments, including state summative exams, exams for students with disabilities and English learners, and college and career readiness exams.

Some of these assessments are created and administered by the department, while others are administered by third party vendors or state consortiums. Please visit the [Assessment FAQ](#) page for more information. For each test, there are different steps that a district can and should take if they have closures that will affect their ability to administer a test during the testing window. For each test, we have points of contact at the department who can help to navigate how to problem-solve administration issues. You may also send your questions to DT.Support@tn.gov and your assessment questions will be routed to the best team member.

Frequently Asked Questions

Question	Answer
Which tests will be cancelled or waived?	TDOE will <u>not</u> be administering any required assessments for the 19-20 school year, including TCAP, MSAA, TCAP-Alt, WIDA, or EOC tests. TDOE has submitted a waiver to the US Department of Education to remove all assessment-related requirements for one year, and the state legislature has provided similar relief by waiving state statute.
What if we already started WIDA?	Most districts have already completed and submitted WIDA. While nothing from these assessments will be used for accountability purposes, scores from exams that were successfully administered prior to the suspension of instruction can and should be used by districts to inform decisions and classifications, and provide support for EL students.
If tests are not required, but we would like to offer them anyway, what do we do?	By request, TDOE will provide optional assessments that can be printed, used, and graded by districts who choose to administer them. As these are optional, they will not have testing windows or state-level supervision or administration. They would be for districts to use at their discretion. The timeline for these resources will be communicated in the upcoming weeks.

Question	Answer
Will we get shipped materials?	No, districts will <u>not</u> receive materials for assessments whose windows have not yet opened. The department has worked closely with our administration vendor, Pearson, to halt all shipments of materials for TCAP grades 3-8, end- of-course, and grade 2 exams. Additional orders for Alternate exams will <u>not</u> be processed or shipped at this time. Pearson will securely store all materials until our assessment window opens to lessen burden on schools and districts and ensure test security.
What do we do with assessment materials that we already have?	Districts that already had WIDA, MSAA, and TCAP-Alt materials on site need to collect, inventory, re-box, and re-secure these materials on site, following guidance in the Building Testing Coordinator Guide and Test Security Manual. Additional information has been shared via email with district testing coordinators and special education supervisors on their respective listservs.
How does this impact grading for students?	Spring 2020 assessment results will not be required to factor into student grades for the 2019-20 school year. Districts who administer optional assessments <u>and</u> have results that benefit students may elect to include those results in their student grades. Additional information on graduation requirements and grading will come from the State Board of Education.
Is there guidance on whether to graduate students without EOCs?	The state board determines graduation requirements; however, students are not currently required to complete an EOC to receive credit for a course. At this point, districts should work to allow students to graduate without summative assessments, including the required college entrance exam (ACT/SAT). The state board, in partnership with the department, will be crafting updated guidance, policies, and rules to this effect.
What are schools and districts required to do to maintain testing paperwork?	District testing coordinators will receive notification of next steps with regards to storing and/or returning materials that they have received this spring. Required documents for Test Security trainings that have been received at the local level through test security trainings should be kept for the TCAP-Alt administration if the district began testing prior to closing. A copy of returned shipments (e.g., inventory and shipping receipts) should be kept for one year.
What will happen for students enrolled in AP classes? Will they still have a chance to earn credit?	<p>College Board is working on providing more information about this. Students may have opportunities to test at later dates and/or test remotely. The department will work closely with the College Board and local districts to make every effort possible to ensure students have an opportunity to earn credit for Advanced Placement courses in which they have been enrolled during the 2019-20 school year. The department will share information with districts as we receive it.</p> <p>The longer-term implications for EPSOs and the Ready Graduate indicator will be evaluated when we more fully understand the scope and impact of the current crisis.</p>

Question	Answer
<p>Will students still have an opportunity to take the ACT this year? If so, when? If not, what are the implications of this?</p>	<p>We are currently working with ACT to explore possible options, including the current planned state testing date of April 21. We will communicate more information in the coming weeks. At this time, we are working with ACT and anticipate offering additional testing dates.</p> <p>At a minimum, juniors who are not able to test later this spring or summer will be able to utilize the October Senior Retake day. This option will be available for students who successfully tested in the spring or summer and students that will be testing for the first time in the fall.</p>
<p>Will standards setting still occur?</p>	<p>Standards setting will not be completed for tests that were not administered in the spring. To ensure validity and reliability of our assessments, the department will not conduct standard setting using results of the fall administration window alone, as the tested population of students during this window is not representative of our state as a whole. The department will communicate with districts about future plans for assessments and standard setting activities as they are finalized.</p>
<p>The department is currently recruiting educators to join assessment committees, like Standard Setting, Item Review, and Passage Review. Will these committee meetings still take place?</p>	<p>Educators having access to high quality assessment items, including those for diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments, will be even more important when students return to school after an interruption in instruction. To support the development of these tools, the department is continuing work on item development. We need the perspectives of Tennessee educators in this work. Committees such as Item Review and Passage Review will still occur as anticipated through this spring, summer, and fall of 2020. We expect these committees may need to meet and conduct their work virtually, dependent upon guidance from local, state, and federal health officials. Currently, the application for these committees is still open and educators are still encouraged to apply. Notifications for selection will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.</p> <p>Standard Setting will not be completed this summer, as a full spring administration of the test is not anticipated. Educators who applied for standard setting committees will not need to re-apply in the future, as their information will be kept on file. The department will reach out to interested educators, as well as conduct another round of recruitment, in advance of the standard setting expected to occur after a full administration of our science and social studies assessments next school year.</p>

Question	Answer
How will this impact school and district assessments in the 2020-2021 school year?	Understanding student proficiency of our state standards, including learning where they may need additional support, is even more important after an extended interruption in instruction. We expect that achievement gaps we see among certain student groups may be widened in this situation and administering an assessment aligned with our state standards is important to determining the best support for all of our students. For this reason and at this point, we expect to administer TCAP normally in 2020-21 in order to gather important data to move forward as a state. Additionally, the department is still working to develop and implement formative testing opportunities, aligned to our state standards, for districts to use as a supplement to summative assessments.
Will TDOE provide a diagnostic or some other assessment instrument for use in 2020-21, knowing districts will not have summative results in advance of the school year?	Yes. The department will develop standards-aligned formative assessments and utilize past TCAP assessments as optional resources for districts to use. These opportunities can measure current student proficiency at the beginning of the year and provide schools with information on necessary areas for remediation. Districts are encouraged to use locally-selected tools to gauge students' progress toward mastery of the standards and make instructional decisions to allow for informed decision-making and instruction.
Will we administer EOC assessments online in the Fall of 2020?	Despite a successful online verification test, the Department is waiting until the full scope of the pandemic is understood before making this decision.

Additional Resources

Assessment Team Contacts

Name	Contact Information	Topics
Casey Haugner-Wrenn Assistant Commissioner	Casey.Haugner@tn.gov 615-290-2864	Policy, Budget, Equity, Strategic Planning
Denette Kolbe Senior Director of Assessment Logistics	Denette.Kolbe@tn.gov 615-330-3741	Assessment Logistics Management, TCAP Administration, Visibility Tool, PearsonAccess ^{Next}
Grace Franklin Director of Assessment Program Management	Grace.Franklin@tn.gov (615) 354 3122	Assessment Events, TCAP Educator Opportunities
Mark Jackson Director of TCAP Customer Experience	Mark.Jackson@tn.gov 615-770-1061	Test Security, DTC/BTC Training Requirements, Materials Shipping and Returns

Name	Contact Information	Topics
Nancy Williams Special Pops Coordinator	Nancy.E.Williams@tn.gov 615-795-7981	WIDA, MSAA, TCAP-Alt Assessment Questions, Accommodations & Accessibilities
Stephanie Israel Logistics Manager	Stephanie.Israel@tn.gov	Assistance with Visibility Tool, Manual Guidance, User Acceptance Testing Process
Philip Jacobs NAEP and ACT Coordinator	Philip.Jacobs@tn.gov 615-351-1146	ACT Testing NAEP Testing
Clay Sanders Director of Development	Christopher.C.Sanders@tn.gov 615-308-9298	Assessment Development Math Assessment Questions Social Studies Assessment Questions
Erin Jones TCAP Development Coordinator	Erin.Jones@tn.gov 629-221-0118	Science Assessment Questions
Sandy Qualls TCAP Development Coordinator	Sandy.Qualls@tn.gov 615-232-4375	ELA Assessment Questions

Reference Documents

- [Building Testing Coordinator Guidebook and Test Administrator Manual](#)
- [TCAP-Alt Material Return Instructions](#)
- [Scheduling Guidance Inclement Weather](#)
- [Tennessee Test Security Manual](#)
- [Scheduling for Assessment Provisioning](#)
- [2020-21 Assessment Calendar](#)
- [ACT Guidance and Resources](#)

Important Links

- [TN Department of Education COVID-19 Update Webpage](#)
- [Assessment Logistics LiveBinder](#)
- [Assessment Development LiveBinder](#)
- [DTC Newsletter Signup](#)
- [TN Department of Education Assessment Webpage](#)