

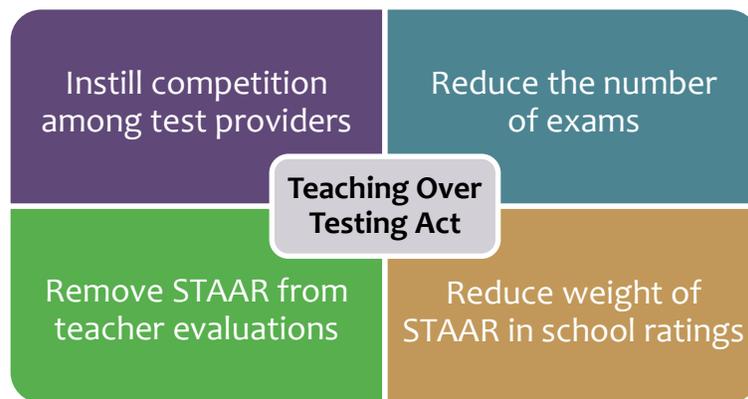
About the Teaching Over Testing Act

If there's anything Texans can agree on, it's that standardized testing plays too big a role in our schools.

The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) costs \$300 million in taxpayer dollars per four-year contract with ETS — a contract ETS bungled — but the financial cost is not the only problem. Students and educators are stressed, and rightfully so. Preparing for and taking the 22 STAAR exams required by state law steals valuable classroom time from the children we are preparing to become the next leaders of our state and nation.

Simply put, STAAR places an unfair burden on our students, our teachers, our school districts, and our taxpayers.

The Teaching Over Testing Act, House Bill 1333 by Rep. Jason Isaac, will accomplish four critical reforms designed to reduce the impact of standardized testing on our schools:



1. Instill competition among test providers:

Allow districts to use STAAR or any nationally normed standardized test that complies with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (*not Common Core, which remains illegal in Texas*). It's a basic law of economics: The more options are available, the lower the costs and the higher the quality.

2. Reduce the number of exams:

The Every Student Succeeds Act, which replaced No Child Left Behind, requires 7 reading tests, 7 math tests, and 3 science tests over the course of a student's public school career. This is sufficient to determine whether students master basic subjects.

A TEA survey suggests that 78 to 91% favor decreasing the number of state assessments.

3. Remove STAAR from teacher evaluations:

Standardized tests are one important metric of student success, but TEA's survey indicates the majority of Texans "strongly oppose" tying teacher evaluations to test scores. Standardized tests are only one component of a student's education, and not all teachers teach STAAR subjects, making the evaluations unequal.

4. Reduce weight of STAAR in A-F ratings:

STAAR scores currently account for 55% of schools' ratings. While there's value to comparing scores, they are only one measure of educational quality. HB 1333 proposes reducing STAAR from 55% to 25% of ratings and increasing the weight of dropout rates, parental involvement, and health and wellness to compensate.

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