

**THE STAAR TEST**

**By law in the state of Texas are student required to take the STAAR test or can parents opt them out of the test?**

**Answer**

There is no specific provision in Texas law that allows parents to opt their children out of taking the STAAR test. According to the Texas Education Code 39.023(a), all public school students are required to be assessed with the appropriate level STAAR test. School districts do not have a choice whether to administer the STAAR tests to their students as it is mandated by state law.

While the Texas Education Code Chapter 26 on "Parental Rights and Responsibilities" allows parents to remove their child from a class or activity to avoid a test, it does not exempt the child from satisfying grade level or graduation requirements set by the school district and the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

 If a student misses school on STAAR testing days, they may be considered truant under the compulsory attendance laws, and parents may face consequences for contributing to non-attendance.  Even if a student attends but refuses to take the STAAR test, the test must still be scored by the TEA, which could impact the student's ability to graduate or require accelerated instruction.

The TEA has explicitly stated that "there is no parental opt-out for STAAR assessments" as federal and state laws require all eligible students to participate in the tests.[4](https://abc13.com/hisd-texas-education-agency-staar-testing-parents-opt-students-out-of-standardized-tests/13966025/) While some parents have attempted to opt their children out, the TEA maintains that school districts cannot honor such requests as it violates state testing requirements.

**What is the STAAR test and why is it important?**

**Answer**

The STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) test is a standardized test administered annually to public school students in Texas. It is important for the following reasons:

1. Measures student mastery of the state curriculum standards (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills or TEKS) in core subjects like reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. The tests assess whether students have learned the required knowledge and skills at each grade level.
2. Provides information to parents about their child's academic progress and readiness for the next grade level or high school graduation.  STAAR results indicate if a student has mastered grade-level content.
3. Allows educators and administrators to identify areas where students need additional instructional resources and support.  Test data helps target teaching efforts more effectively.
4. Holds schools and districts accountable for student achievement through the state's A-F rating system, which is largely based on STAAR scores.[2](https://www.texasaft.org/campaigns/respect/our-issues/standardized-testing/) Poor ratings can trigger interventions like state takeovers of underperforming schools.
5. Ensures Texas students are making acceptable progress towards postsecondary readiness, which is the state's goal for public education.  STAAR and end-of-course exams are aligned to measure this college/career readiness.
6. Provides a uniform, statewide measure of student learning that allows comparison across districts and demographic groups.  This transparency helps identify achievement gaps.

In essence, the STAAR test aims to maintain high academic standards, gauge student mastery of the state curriculum, and drive improvements in public education across Texas by holding students, teachers, and schools accountable for performance.

**What are the consequences of not taking the STAAR test as a student?**

**Answer**

Based on the provided search results, there are potential consequences for students who do not take the STAAR test in Texas:

1. Students may not be promoted to the next grade level if they do not pass the STAAR test for their current grade, especially in grades 5 and 8. However, the promotion law changed in 2021, allowing students to be promoted without passing STAAR if other criteria are met.
2. High school students are generally required to pass certain STAAR end-of-course exams (English II, Algebra I, Biology, U.S. History) to meet graduation requirements.  However, there are alternative options like substitute assessments or individual graduation committees (IGCs) that can allow students to graduate without passing all STAAR tests.
3. If a student is absent during the entire STAAR testing window, their test will be marked as "Absent" and not scored.  But if they attend and refuse to take the test, it will be scored with a zero, which could impact their ability to advance a grade level or graduate.
4. Schools with less than 95% participation in STAAR could face consequences like state takeover or closure due to accountability ratings heavily based on STAAR scores.  So student opt-outs may negatively impact a school's rating.
5. While STAAR scores are not used for some programs like magnet school admissions, poor scores could limit access to academic opportunities that consider standardized test performance.

However, the search results also indicate that an increasing number of parents are opting their children out of STAAR testing due to concerns about over testing, teaching to the test, and stress on students, despite the potential consequences.  Some view it as taking a moral stand against high-stakes testing policies.

**How do college’s view students who did not take the STAAR test?**

**Answer**

Based on the provided search results, colleges generally do not consider a student's performance or participation in the STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) tests for admissions decisions.

The key points are:

1. STAAR tests are state-mandated standardized tests in Texas designed to measure students' mastery of the state curriculum standards (TEKS). They are not used for college admissions purposes.
2. College admissions offices outside of Texas are likely unfamiliar with the STAAR tests, as they are specific to the Texas public education system.
3. STAAR scores are not included on student transcripts sent to colleges. The tests are intended for evaluating schools and districts, not individual students.
4. Some private schools in Texas do not even administer the STAAR tests at the high school level.
5. While a school's overall STAAR performance could theoretically impact how colleges view that school's academic rigor, an individual student's STAAR participation or scores do not directly factor into admissions decisions.

The consensus from the discussion forum is that colleges do not see or care about a student's STAAR test results when evaluating their application.  The tests are used for school accountability and assessing student grade-level readiness within the Texas public school system, not for college admissions criteria.

So, in summary, a student's decision to opt-out or not take the STAAR test would likely have no bearing on how colleges view their admissions application, as the STAAR is not assessment colleges consider for undergraduate admissions.