



# Jourdanton ISD

## STAAR Redesign and Its Impact to A-F School Ratings

This past school year, students across the state of Texas were given a redesigned State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) exam. The biggest change was how students took the test. Instead of pen and paper, it was given online in a digital format with students using electronic devices. On top of that, the changes included the addition of 14 question types and written responses across all grade levels and content.

These changes alone are significant, but when combined with the anticipated changes to the state's accountability ratings and the A-F letter grade which is assigned to each campus, they play a key role in explaining a district's grade. Currently, elementary and middle school achievement scores are based on student STAAR performance, while high school achievement is measured in three areas: student's readiness for college or career, STAAR assessments and graduation rates.

While the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has proposed changes to the A-F grading criteria that could impact Comal ISD and individual campus letter grades, it recently delayed the release of the ratings by a month and has not finalized the grading criteria. Read the latest [TEA press release here](#).

The 2023 proposed accountability plan includes increased cut score expectations from the previous year when looking at both growth and high school College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) requirements.

It is important to note that Comal ISD teachers and students adapted and prepared for these new additions and will continue to strive to focus on academic and student growth.

## STAAR Redesign Review

Administered only online to students in the third grade through high school.

Included written responses on all assessments: reading language arts (RLA), science and social studies.

Added 14 new interactive question types in all content areas, reducing the number of multiple-choice questions which previously had been the common question type.



## Challenges with STAAR Redesign

Students as young as 8, in the third grade, faced the following challenges when it came to taking their first STAAR test this past year:

- Becoming familiar with online testing and the device on which to take the test,
- Typing responses while formulating sentences and paragraphs,
- Working within a timeframe, and
- Looking back and forth between computer/device and resources.

## STAAR 2.0

In 2019 HB 3906 created transformative changes for this year's STAAR assessment, 2022-2023 school year. A few of those major changes include online testing for students in grades 3 through high school, the addition of writing for Reading Language Arts (RLA) assessments for grades 3-8 and a 75 percent cap on multiple choice questions.

For the first time our students in grades 3-12 took all STAAR assessments online vs. paper/pencil," explains Krista Moffatt, Comal ISD assistant superintendent. "This year the assessments introduced 14 new test item types. In addition, written responses were included across content areas and grade levels and our accountability methodology was altered to include increased expectations. These factors may impact our overall A-F ratings."

## What To Expect From 2023 A-F Ratings

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) oversees the state's accountability ratings and assigns A-F letter grades for elementary and middle schools based on the scores they earn for STAAR performance. High Schools are evaluated in three areas: students' readiness for college or career, STAAR assessments and graduation rates.

## Changes

- New rules were expected to be finalized from TEA in August but will not be finalized until October/ November and will raise the minimum college, career and military readiness (CCMR) score required for each letter grade.
- The CCMR score accounts for 40 percent of a high school's overall score. STAAR tests also count 40 percent and graduation rates count 20 percent.
- In addition, TEA is changing the way that individual campus scores are combined for the district as a whole.
- Both changes are expected to result in lower letter grades for the same student performance as in past years.

## Statewide Concern Regarding 2023 Accountability Ratings

In March, nearly 250 school districts asked Texas Governor Greg Abbott and the Education Commissioner Mike Morath to pause the new [CCMR grading system](#). In particular, the districts expressed concern that TEA plans to apply the new CCMR grades retroactively to students who graduated in May 2022, long after schools could affect their performance.

**CCMR changes:** From 2017-2022, if 60 percent of graduates from a high school were found to achieve CCMR, the school received a score of 90, which earned an A from the TEA.

Under the new rules, the same CCMR achievement rate will only earn a 67 – a grade of D. To earn an A, 88 percent of a high school’s graduates will need to achieve CCMR – a 47 percent increase in grading standards.

**District score changes:** From 2017-22, a school district’s score – and corresponding letter grade – was calculated by combining all student scores, as if the district were one big school.

Under the new rules, the district rating for 2023 will instead be a compilation of the scores earned by each campus in the district.

Each school will contribute a percentage of the district’s rating based on the size of the school.

**Bottom line:** A school or district could achieve the exact same level of success as in prior years but receive a much lower letter grade from TEA.