

Texas Higher Education  
COORDINATING BOARD  
**P-16 INITIATIVES**

*P. O. Box 12788, Austin, Texas 78711*

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**MEMORANDUM**

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Date: June 25, 2012

To: Texas Public Institutions of Higher Education

From: Judith G. Lored

The purpose of this memorandum is to update Texas public institutions of higher education (IHE) on the status of the new Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Assessment and the Coordinating Board's timeline for implementation.

As you may recall, House Bill 1244, 82nd Texas Legislature (2011), amended the Texas Success Initiative, Texas Education Code §51.3062(f), in two specific ways:

1. Provided the Coordinating Board with the authority to prescribe a single standard or set of standards for assessments each public IHE must use to assess the readiness of students to perform freshman-level academic coursework; and
2. Repealed the authority of IHEs to adopt more stringent standards than those set by the Coordinating Board, effective with the 2013-2014 academic year.

To address the requirement for a single standard or set of standards, the Coordinating Board approved the issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a new TSI assessment instrument or set of instruments, for placement and diagnostics, that would classify students either college ready or, if not college ready, into developmental or Adult Basic Education (ABE) levels in reading, writing, and mathematics. At a minimum, the new TSI assessment(s) was required to include the following:

- Content items aligned with Critical TEKS (developed by public and higher education faculty to be used as the basis for the new STAAR End-of-Course assessments), STAAR End-of-Course assessments in English III and Algebra II, the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards, and the National Reporting System (NRS) Educational Functioning Level Descriptors (EFLD) ABE standards;
- Diagnostic profile for students not college ready;
- Computer-adaptive testing with immediate results;
- Psychometric and technical quality;
- Accommodations for disabilities;
- Resources for faculty, staff, and students to address demonstrated deficiencies; and
- Cost not exceeding \$11 per complete assessment including diagnostic profiles (\$3 reading, \$3 mathematics, \$5 writing and essay) at no cost to the Coordinating Board.

Based on the rigorous evaluation process which included subject matter experts from IHEs as well as external assessment experts, the evaluators unanimously recommended to the Coordinating Board staff that a no-cost contract be awarded to The College Board. The Commissioner recommended to the Coordinating Board that a contract be extended to The College Board which was approved by the Coordinating Board at its April 25, 2012 meeting.

To achieve the requirement in HB 1244 that institutions no longer be allowed to set higher standards on TSI assessment(s) beginning with the 2013-2014 academic year, the effective date for use of the new TSI Assessment and the standards to be established by the Coordinating Board for reading, writing, and mathematics shall be **no later than an IHE's fall 2013 first day of classes**.

After this date, no other assessment, which includes the Texas Higher Education Assessment<sup>®</sup>, ACCUPLACER<sup>®</sup>, ASSET<sup>®</sup>, or Compass<sup>®</sup> assessments, can be used to determine college readiness for TSI purposes. Prior to this date, all currently approved assessments and their cut-scores, whether state minimum scores or more stringent scores set by an IHE, may be used to determine college readiness for TSI purposes. If a student **enrolls** any time after the IHE's first day of classes in fall 2013, the student must test/retest using the new TSI Assessment.

So that you and your staff are aware of the schedule for standard-setting and other important activities associated with the implementation of the new TSI Assessment, we have provided a timeline as an attachment.

We know that you have been awaiting additional information about the new TSI Assessment to determine how your institution will need to prepare for its implementation. We appreciate your patience as we work out details and hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions about the new TSI Assessment or changes to the use of the currently approved assessments, please contact Dr. Suzanne Morales-Vale, Director of Developmental and Adult Education, at [Suzanne.Morales-Vale@theccb.state.tx.us](mailto:Suzanne.Morales-Vale@theccb.state.tx.us).

## **Attachment to New TSI Assessment Update Letter**

### **Timeline**

**June 22, 2012**

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), in coordination with The College Board, will use the following timeline to guide the implementation process for the new TSI Assessment and its corresponding cut-score standard.

- May-June 2012  
research team      Item Review Team facilitated by The College Board's
  - Subject-matter experts at all levels
  - Review each content item to ensure required alignments
- Fall 2012      IHE Field Testing
- January-February 2013  
research team      Standard Setting Team facilitated by The College Board's
  - Subject-matter, assessment, and psychometrician experts
  - Review of field test data to determine single standard
- March 2013      The College Board presents recommendation for new cut-score standard to the Coordinating Board's Closing the Gaps Committee
- April 2013      CB presents recommendation for new cut-score standard to the THECB Board
- April 2013      TSI rules are revised to reflect changes in TSI Statute
- May-July 2013      The College Board Conducts IHE training
- August 1, 2013      New TSI Assessment and corresponding cut-score standard is ready for full implementation