Webinar Norms

- Please make sure to keep your microphones muted.
- Please send questions through theQ/A function. TEA is producing an FAQ document that will be posted soon.

Agenda

- STAAR Alternate 2 Overview

Webinar Goals

- Provide an overview of STAAR Alternate 2
- Provide an understanding of the United States Department of Education (USDE) Statewide 1% Waiver Denial
- Provide local education agencies (LEAs) with accurate information and available resources pertaining to the revised STAAR Alternate 2 Participation Requirements

What is STAAR Alternate 2?

The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) Alternate 2 is

- an assessment based on prerequisite skills of the enrolled grade-level state curriculum standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS);
- designed to meet the needs of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities; and
-

Who is assessed with STAAR Alternate 2?

- Only students who meet the Texas Education Agency (TEA) definition of a student with the most significant cognitive disability may be assessed with STAAR Alternate 2 and who are enrolled in:
  - grades 3–8 or
  - specific high school courses—Algebra I, English I, English II, Biology, or U.S. History.
- Students who meet participation requirements are assessed with STAAR Alternate 2 for all grades/subjects and courses.
- The admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee is required to

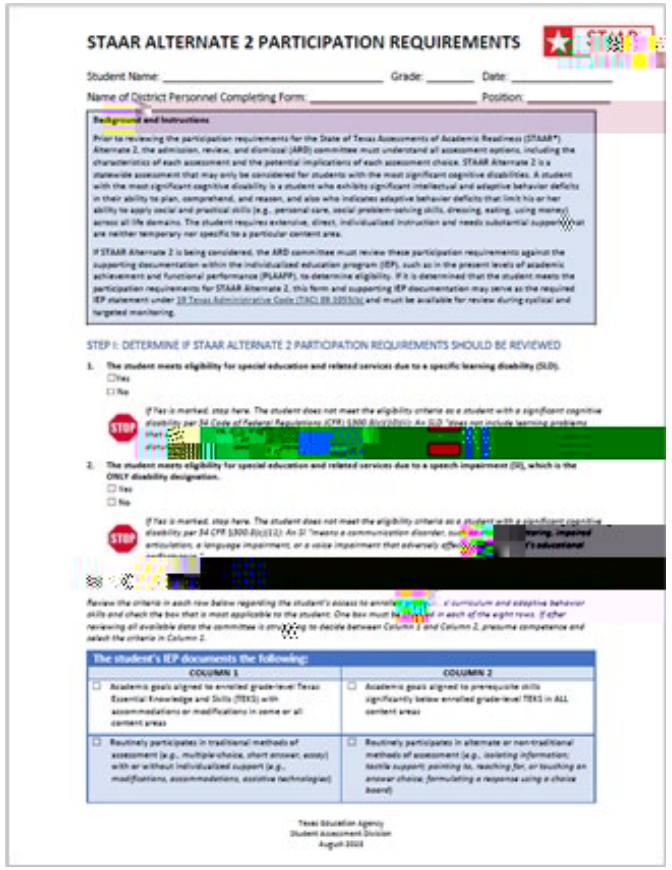
USDE Denial by State

In March of 2023, USDE denied the 1% waiver for 14 states (indicated in darkeblue) for not making significant progress toward meeting the 1% state limit and/or not testing at least 95% of eligible students.

Eight states saw their waiver approved for making 'significant progress' towards reaching the 1% state limit.

Revised STAAR Alternate 2 Participation Requirements

STAAR Alternate 2 Participation Requirements (continued)



STAAR ALTERNATE 2 PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

Name of District Personnel Completing Form: _____ Position: _____

Background and Instructions

Prior to reviewing the participation requirements for the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) Alternate 2, the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee must understand all assessment options, including the characteristics of each assessment and the potential implications of each assessment choice. STAAR Alternate 2 is a statewide assessment that may only be considered for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. A student with the most significant cognitive disability is a student who exhibits significant intellectual and adaptive behavior deficits in their ability to plan, comprehend, and reason, and also who indicates adaptive behavior deficits that limit his or her ability to apply social and practical skills (e.g., personal care, social problem-solving skills, dressing, eating, using money) across all life domains. The student requires extensive, direct, individualized instruction and needs substantial support that are neither temporary nor specific to a particular content area.

If STAAR Alternate 2 is being considered, the ARD committee must review these participation requirements against the supporting documentation within the individualized education program (IEP), such as in the present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP), to determine eligibility. If it is determined that the student meets the participation requirements for STAAR Alternate 2, this form and supporting IEP documentation may serve as the required IEP statement under 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §89.1055(b) and must be available for review during cyclical and targeted monitoring.

STEP I: DETERMINE IF STAAR ALTERNATE 2 PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS SHOULD BE REVIEWED

1. **The student meets eligibility for special education and related services due to a specific learning disability (SLD).**
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

   STOP *If Yes is marked, stop here. The student does not meet the eligibility criteria as a student with a significant cognitive disability per 34 CFR §300.8(c)(1)(i). An SLD Target not include learning problems that*

2. **The student meets eligibility for special education and related services due to a speech impairment (SI), which is the ONLY disability designation.**
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

   STOP *If Yes is marked, stop here. The student does not meet the eligibility criteria as a student with a significant cognitive disability per 34 CFR §300.8(c)(11): An SI "means a communication disorder, such as [illegible] stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment that adversely affect[illegible] educational*

Review the criteria in each row below regarding the student's access to enrolled grade-level curriculum and adaptive behavior skills and check the box that is most applicable to the student. One box must be checked in each of the eight rows. If after reviewing all available data the committee is struggling to decide between Column 1 and Column 2, presume competence and select the criteria in Column 2.

The student's IEP documents the following:

COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2
☐ Academic goals aligned to enrolled grade-level Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) with accommodations or modifications in some or all content areas	☐ Academic goals aligned to prerequisite skills significantly below enrolled grade-level TEKS in ALL content areas
☐ Routinely participates in traditional methods of assessment (e.g., multiple-choice, short answer, essay) with or without individualized support (e.g., modifications, accommodations, assistive technologies)	☐ Routinely participates in alternate or non-traditional methods of assessment (e.g., isolating information; tactile support; pointing to, reaching for, or touching an answer choice; formulating a response using a choice board)

STAAR ALTERNATE 2 PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

- ☐ Needs that impact access and progress in academic areas
- ☐ Significant needs that impact access and progress in academic areas, which affect the student's ability to function independently
- ☐ Functional [illegible] study skills, self-advocacy, [illegible] access to the enrolled grade-level TEKS in [illegible] academic areas
- ☐ Functional goals (e.g., personal care and hygiene, communication, social skills) implemented across ALL settings to support access to the enrolled grade-level TEKS with the need for ongoing adult assistance (e.g., prompting, cueing, physical assist) for student progress
- ☐ The need for some additional support (e.g., general reminders, practice) to [illegible] life and participate in academic instruction across ALL settings
- ☐ Initiates, performs, and completes self-care routines (e.g., feeding, dressing, toileting) with no or minimal adult assistance (e.g., visual schedule)
- ☐ Requires ongoing adult assistance (e.g., prompting, [illegible] NOTE: The student's requirement of adult assistance is NOT due to a physical disability alone but rather to the student's significant cognitive disability.
- ☐ Follows age-appropriate directions, daily routines, and schedules with some specialized support (e.g., accommodations, assistive technologies)
- ☐ Requires ongoing, individualized, specialized supports (e.g., modifications, task analysis, direct instruction, assistive technologies, [illegible] than charts, tactile schedules, social narratives) and ongoing adult [illegible]
- ☐ [illegible] age-appropriate level

OR

- ☐ Independently uses traditional response modes (e.g., verbal, sign language, written) to participate in on-topic academic and social conversations at an age-[illegible] level with minimal adult assistance

OR

- ☐ Uses traditional response modes (e.g., verbal, sign language, written) but may be inconsistent when expressing wants and needs AND requires individualized supports to participate in on-topic academic and social exchanges at an age-appropriate level

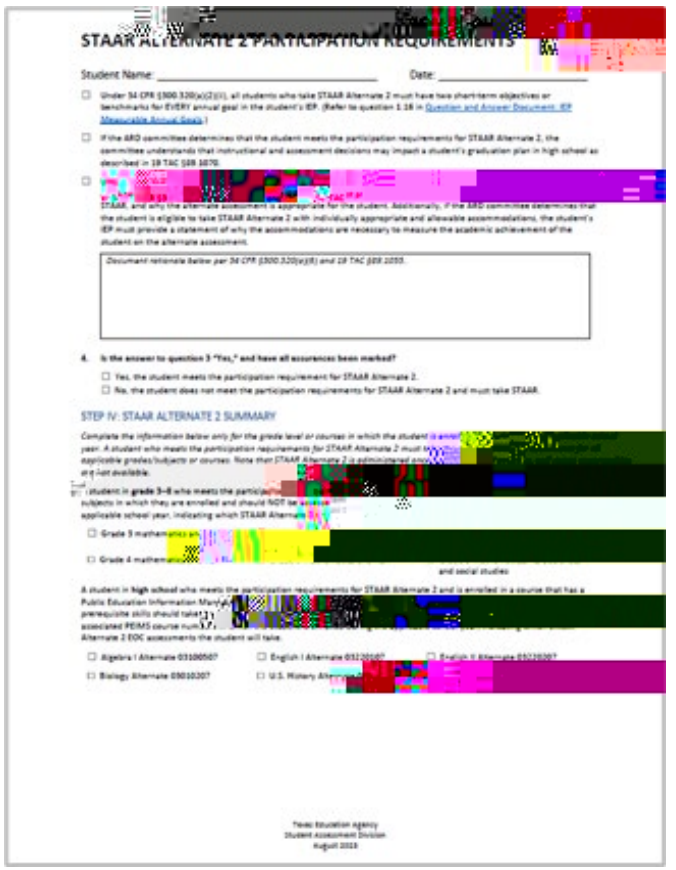
3. **Does the student have the MOST significant cognitive disability?**
   - ☐ Yes, [illegible] are in Column 2
   - ☐ No, [illegible] more criteria is marked in Column 1

   STOP *If No is marked, [illegible] must take [illegible]*

STEP III: PROVIDE ASSURANCES AND CONFIRM STAAR ALTERNATE 2 PARTICIPATION

All assurances must be reviewed and marked for the student to participate in STAAR Alternate 2.

- ☐ The ARD committee confirms that the decision to administer STAAR Alternate 2 was NOT based on a student's [illegible] category, educational environment, instructional setting, [illegible] homelessness, immigrant, emergent bilingual, migrant, [illegible] below-grade-level reading skills, excessive or extended absences, [illegible] expected peer performance on STAAR and its impact on accountability calculations.



STAAR ALTERNATE 2 PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

- ☐ Under 34 CFR §300.320(a)(2)(i), all students who take STAAR Alternate 2 must have two short-term objectives or benchmarks for EVERY annual goal in the student's IEP. (Refer to question 1.16 in Question and Answer Document: IEP Measurable Annual Goals.)
- ☐ If the ARD committee determines that the student meets the participation requirements for STAAR Alternate 2, the committee understands that instructional and assessment decisions may impact a student's graduation plan in high school as described in 19 TAC §89.1070.
- ☐ [illegible]

STAAR, and why the alternate assessment is appropriate for the student. Additionally, if the ARD committee determines that the student is eligible to take STAAR Alternate 2 with individually appropriate and allowable accommodations, the student's IEP must provide a statement of why the accommodations are necessary to measure the academic achievement of the student on the alternate assessment.

Document rationale below per 34 CFR §300.320(a)(6) and 19 TAC §89.1055.

4. **Is the answer to question 3 "Yes," and have all assurances been marked?**
   - ☐ Yes, the student meets the participation requirement for STAAR Alternate 2.
   - ☐ No, the student does not meet the participation requirements for STAAR Alternate 2 and must take STAAR.

STEP IV: STAAR ALTERNATE 2 SUMMARY

Complete the information below only for the grade level or courses in which the student is [illegible] year. A student who meets the participation requirements for STAAR Alternate 2 must [illegible] applicable grades/subjects or courses. Note that STAAR Alternate 2 is administered [illegible] are not available.

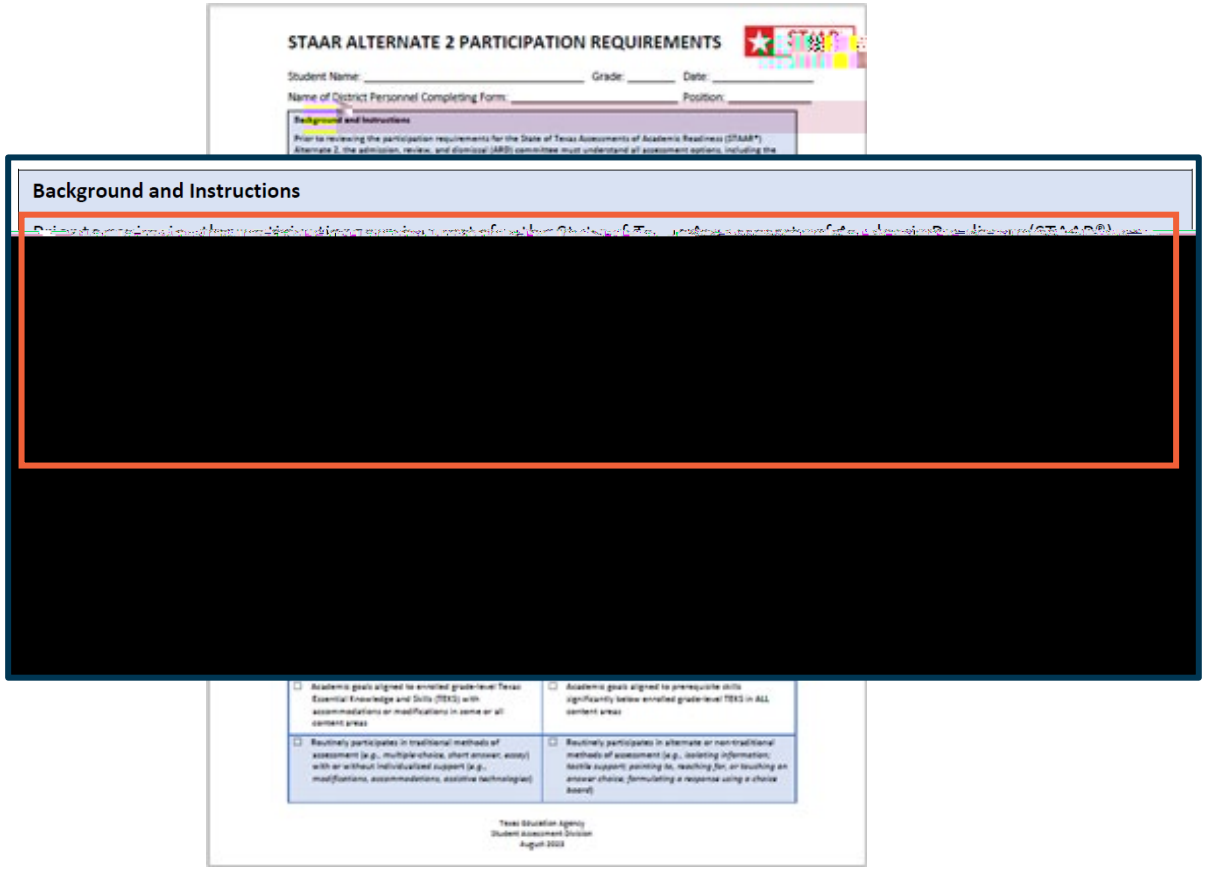
- A student in **grade 3–8** who meets the participation [illegible] subjects in which they are enrolled and should NOT be [illegible] applicable school year, indicating which STAAR Alternate [illegible]
  - ☐ Grade 3 mathematics and [illegible]
  - ☐ Grade 4 mathematics [illegible] and social studies

A student in **high school** who meets the participation requirements for STAAR Alternate 2 and is enrolled in a course that has a Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) course number and prerequisite skills should take the STAAR Alternate 2 EOC assessments the student will take.

- ☐ Algebra I Alternate 03100507
- ☐ English I Alternate 03120507
- ☐ English II Alternate 03220507
- ☐ Biology Alternate 03010207
- ☐ U.S. History [illegible]

Background and Instructions

- The ARD committee must review state assessment decisions annually.
- The ARD committee must understand all assessment options, including the characteristics of each assessment option and the potential implications of each assessment option.



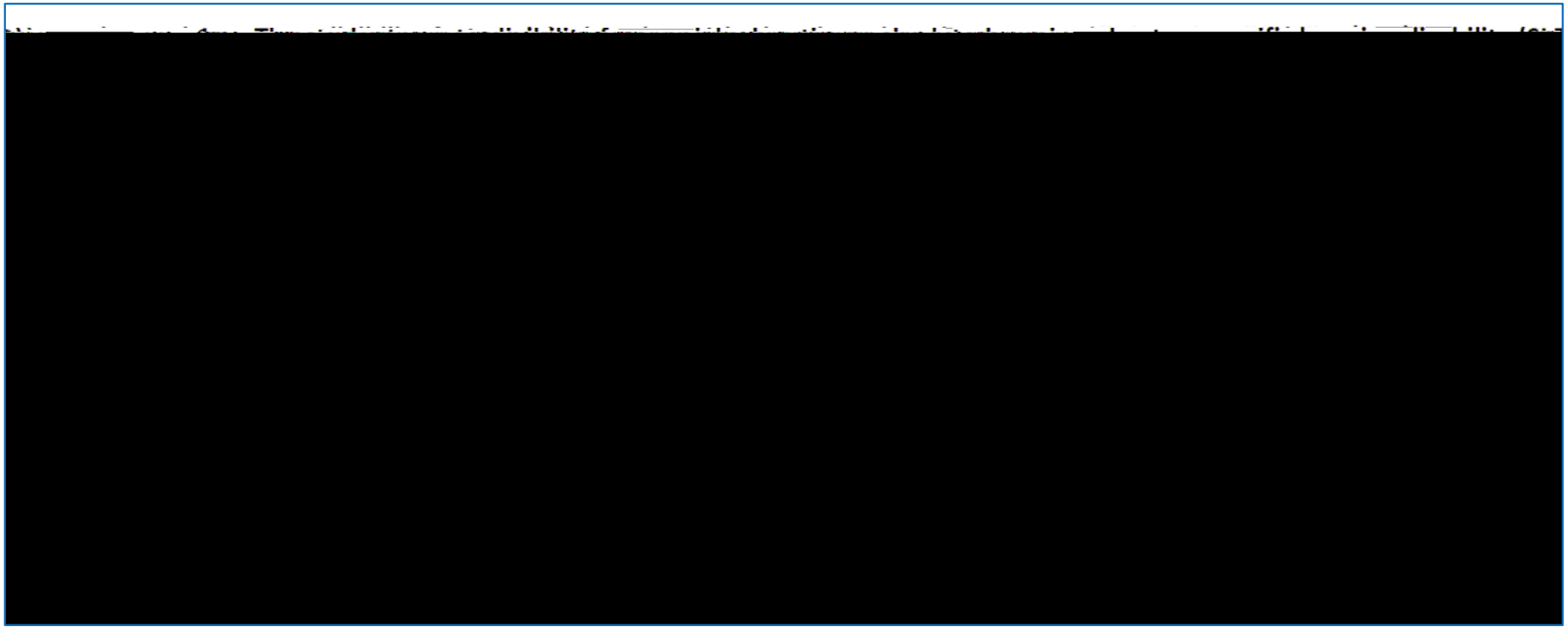
Background and Instructions (continued)

- What data does the ARD committee need to consider to determine a student's eligibility for STAAR Alternate 2?

  To determine a student's eligibility, the ARD committee must review the participation requirements against the supporting

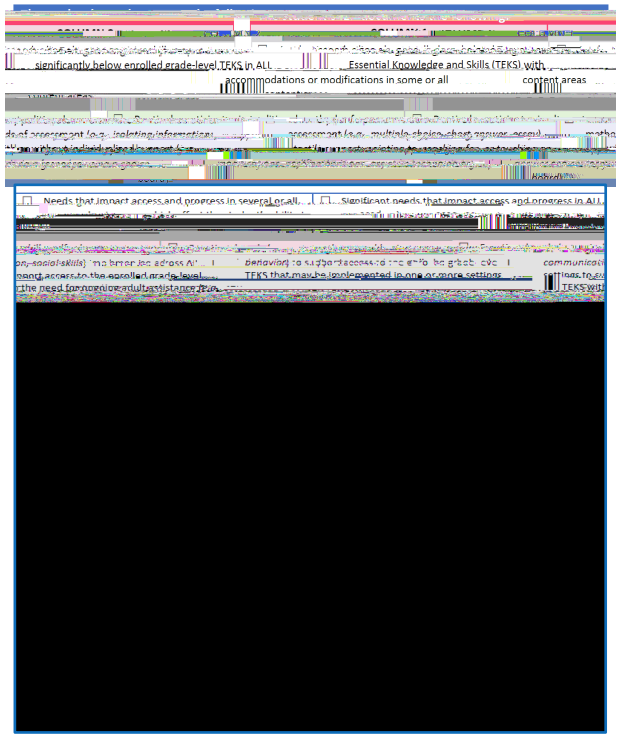
Step I: Determining Eligibility

Step Iincludes two statements to determine if the ARD committee should proceed to Step II.



Step II: Determining Eligibility

The information selected means that it is documented in the student's IEP.



Step II: Row 2

The ARD committee should ask the question:

Does the student routinely require alternate or non-traditional methods of assessment?

Step II: Row 3

[redacted]

The ARD committee should ask the question:

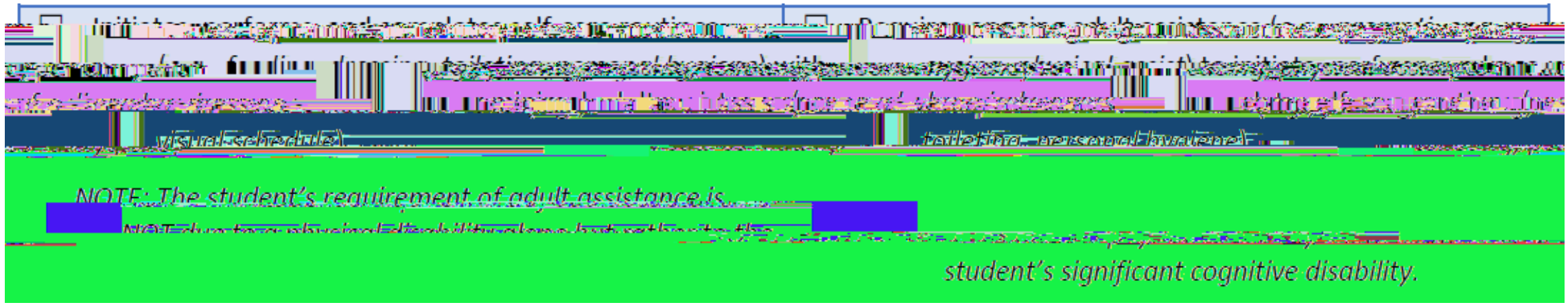
How significant are the student's needs in relatio
to how they impact access and progress in all
academic areas, which affect the student's leve
of independence?

Step II: Row 5

The ARD committee should ask the question:

How extensive is the support required for the student to function safely in daily life and participate in academic instruction across ALL settings?

Step II: Row 6



The ARD committee should remember:

Other self-care routines may include, but are not limited to, tasks such as: brushing teeth, bathing, selecting appropriate clothing for the weather, washing hands, determining an appropriate meal, transitioning safely in the hallway or between classes, etc.

The ARD committee should ask the question:

How extensive and frequent is the adult support required for the student to initiate, perform, and complete self-care routines?

Frequently Asked Question

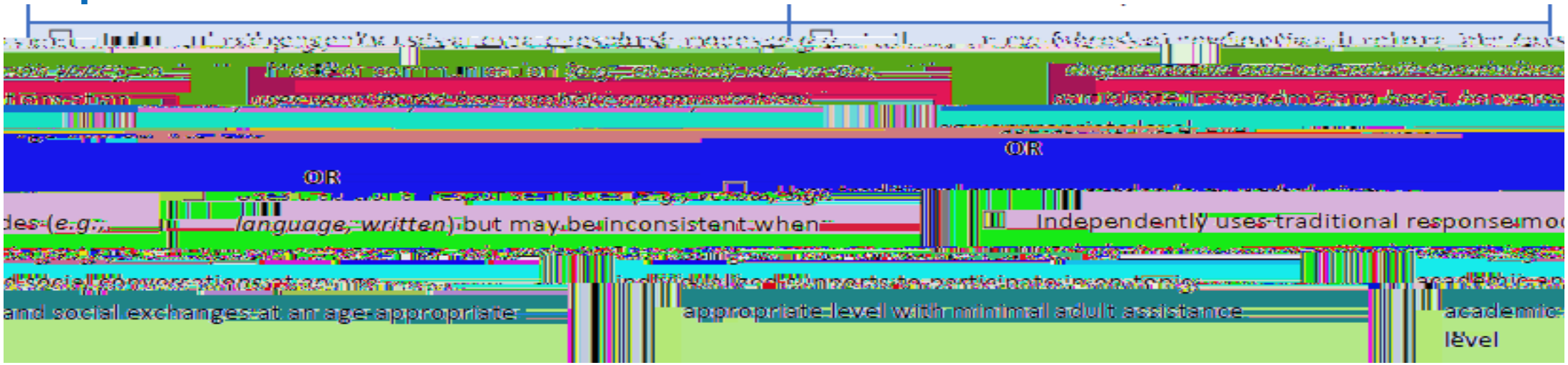
My student can_____ independently, can they still participate in STAAR Alternate 2?

It is important to look at what independence looks like for the student. What level of support is the adult providing so the student can initiate, perform, and complete the self-care routine?

Are there supports, such as:

- Visual, verbal, physical prompts
- Cueing
- Visual schedules
- Timers

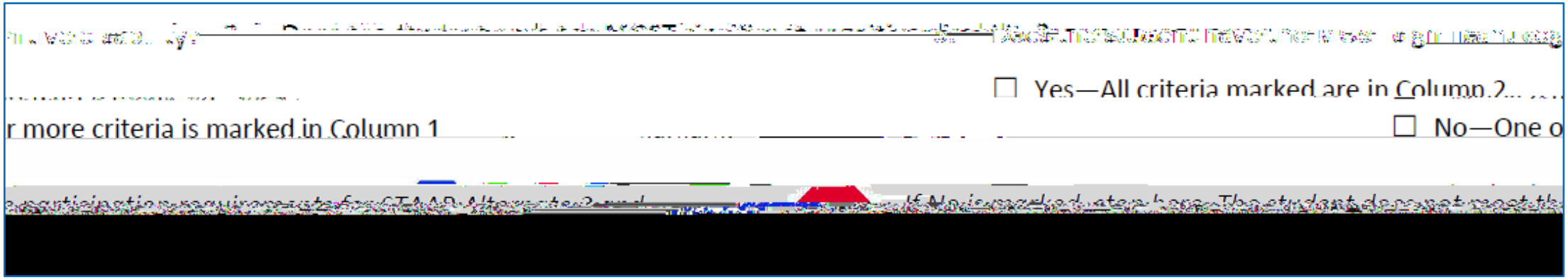
Step II: Row 8



The ARD committee should ask the question:

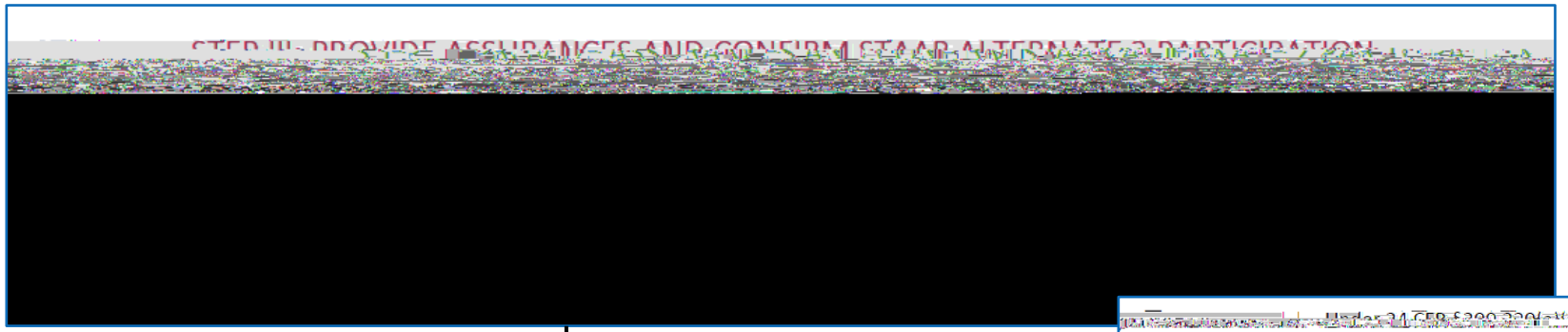
How extensive and frequent are the individualized supports required for the student to participate in on-topic and age-appropriate academic and social exchanges?

Step II: Review Criteria



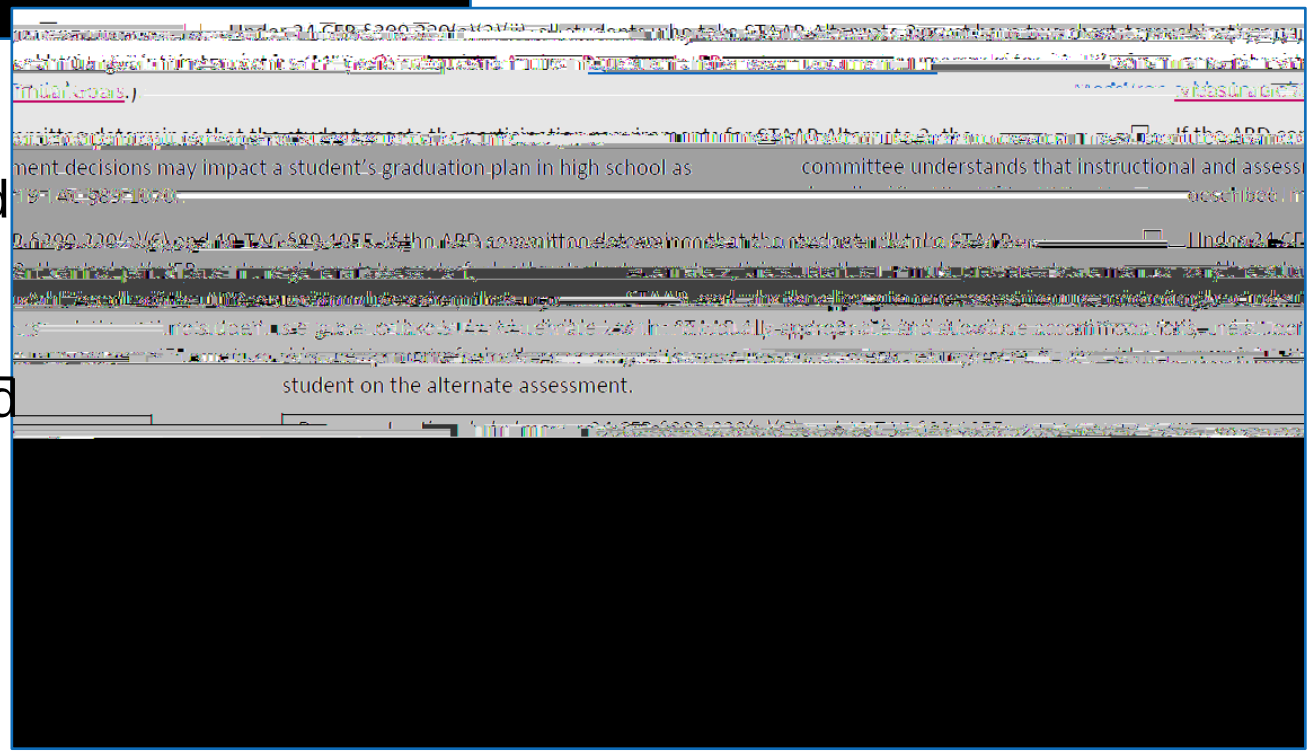
- The ARD committee will need to determine if the student has the most significant cognitive disability after reviewing all the criteria, completing each row, and selecting the appropriate response.
- Based on the response to Question 3, the ARD committee will either mo on to the next step or stop on Step II.

Step III: Provide Assurances and Confirm



All assurances must be reviewed and marked for the student to participate in STAAR Alternate 2.

The ARD committee will also need to respond to



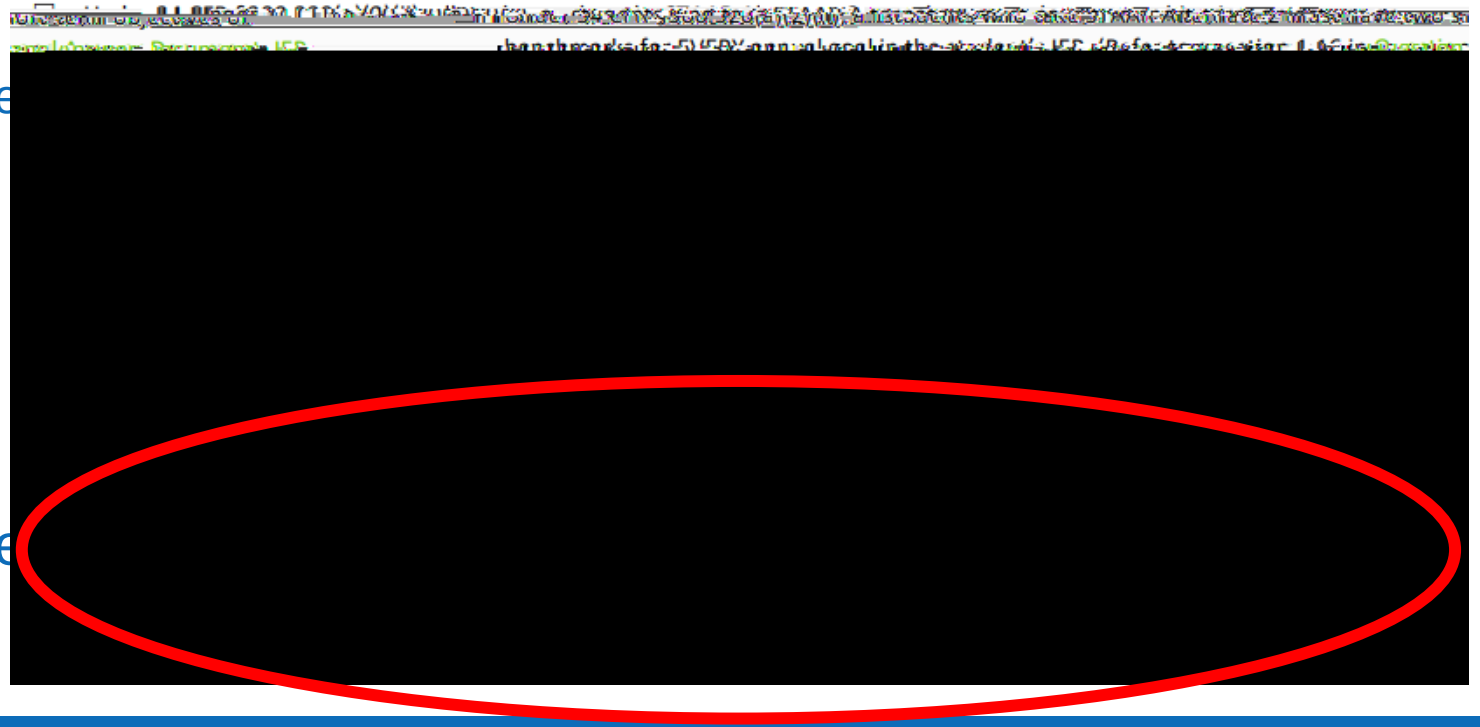
Frequently Asked Questions

What needs to be included in the rationale box? How specific do I need to be?

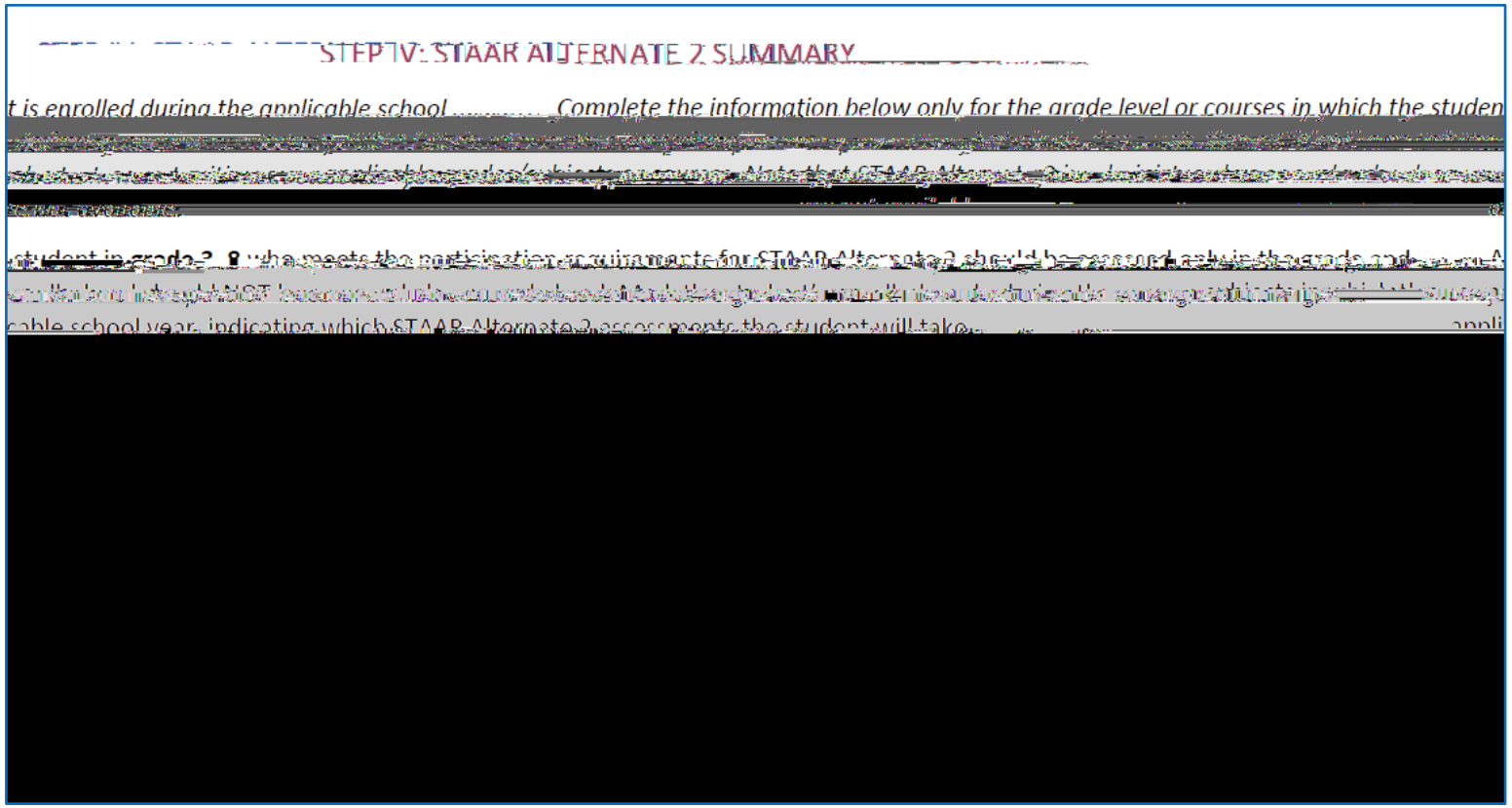
The rationale needs to include:

- A statement about why the student cannot participate in STAAR and why the alternate assessment is appropriate and
- A statement of necessary allowable accommodations.

Each row in the participation requirements does not need to be individually addressed in the rationale box because they will have already been discussed and completed in Steps I and II.



Step IV: STAAR Alternate 2 Summary



- The ARD committee needs to complete the information only for the grade level or courses in which the student is enrolled during the applicable school year.
- A student who meets the participation requirements for STAAR Alternate 2 must take the alternate assessments for all applicable grades/subjects or courses.
- STAAR Alternate 2 is administered once each school year, and retest opportunities

Frequently Asked Questions Section

Frequently Asked Question

My student no longer meets eligibility for STAAR Alternate 2, will h s or her special education programming need to change?

- If a student is not eligible to take the alternate assessment, the ARD committee is responsi for educating the student in the least restrictive environment while still addressing the student's needs and critical skills (goals and short-term objectives).
- A student may have a significant cognitive disability but does not meet the criteria as havin the most significant cognitive disability. The ARD committee will determine the programmir that is most appropriate to ensure access to and progress in the general curriculum. For some students this may mean their programming does not change, but that is an ARD committee decision and TEA cannot provide guidance on the frequency, duration, or location of individual students' special education supports and services.
- Staffing considerations for individual students are an ARD committee decision.

Frequently Asked Questions

My student has always taken STAAR Alternate 2 but no longer meets th participation requirements. What happens if my student takes STAAR a d does not pass? Is he or she required to receive accelerated instruction?

- Texas law requires all students who do not achieve Approaches Grade Level or higher on STAAR be provided accelerated instruction. These requirements were recently updated with the passage of House Bill 1416, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023.
- A parent may elect to modify or remove a requirement for the accelerated instruction by submitting a written request to the administrator at the campus in which the student is enrolled. To request the change, the student must have been administered and failed to perform satisfactorily on STAAR or administered a beginning-of-year assessment aligned with the TEKS for that grade/subject or course. An LEA may select a beginning-of-year assessment designed to show grade level proficiency on the TEKS. A student who does not have a failed STAAR assessment must be administered a beginning-of-year assessment for the parent to be able change the requirements.
- Additionally, an ARD committee may be convened if the committee feels that the student's IEP needs to be modified based on the accelerated instruction requirements.

Frequently Asked Question

Does the ARD committee have to meet again if the committee had already reviewed and determined participation for the 2023–2024 school year using the previous STAAR Alternate 2 participation requirements?

- It depends. The ARD committee must review and determine student participation in STAAR or STAAR Alternate 2 for each school year. If the ARD committee has already reviewed and determined participation for the 2023–2024 school year using the previous STAAR Alternate 2 participation requirements, district personnel must review all eligible students to determine if any STAAR Alternate decisions need to be re-evaluated based on the revised participation requirements.
- For those students whose participation needs to be re-evaluated based on the updated participation requirements, assessment participation decisions may be made through an ARD amendment in accordance with 34 CFR §300.324(a)(4) or a full ARD meeting.
- For any future assessment participation decisions, the ARD committee should use the updated STAAR Alternate 2 participation requirements.

Frequently Asked Question

My student meets the participation requirements for STAAR Altern e 2
in some areas but not all; is he or she still required to take STAAR

- Yes. Remember that the definition of a student with the most significant cognitive disability requires extensive supports in all areas not just in particdu</MCI3.7 (.-4.7 (s)-1.6 (u)tr051 0.4 (t)]TJ /TT0 1iic)-3

Frequently Asked Question

I have only ever given STAAR Alternate 2 but now have a student who needs to take STAAR. Do I need to be trained in administering both assessments?

- Yes. If you will be administering both types of assessments, you will need to be trained in test security and administration procedures specific to each assessment program. All district personnel who participate in state-mandated testing or handle secure test materials and content are required to be trained at least once in test security and administration procedures for the applicable assessment.

- If the student is also eligible for assessment accommodations, the test administrator must understand the proper implementation of the accommodations.

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- Additionally, an ARD committee may be convened if the committee feels that the student's IEP needs to be modified based on the accelerated instruction requirements.