



NEWS

Texas
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Eighty-three percent of fifth-grade students and 75 percent of eighth-grade students pass TAKS math

AUSTIN – As about 3 million students across the state spent the day taking a Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) exam in math or reading, the Texas Education Agency announced the results of tests given earlier this month. Eighty-three percent of fifth-grade students and 75 percent of eighth graders passed the math TAKS on the first administration.

Students in those two grades must pass the math and reading exams to be promoted to the next grade.

“A majority of our fifth and eighth-grade students deserve our congratulations because they have met this important promotion requirement but, clearly, we have more work to do to help all students pass the math exam,” Commissioner of Education Robert Scott said.

This marks the first year that the state’s promotion requirements apply to eighth-grade students. It also marks a year of significant change in the state’s testing program. In order to comply with requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act, Texas has replaced a test called the State Developed Alternative Assessment II or SDAA II, which was an exam given to many students served by special education, with new versions of the TAKS.

TAKS includes a form called TAKS (Accommodated) for student served by special education who meet the eligibility requirements for certain specific accommodations. The TAKS (Accommodated) form includes format accommodations such as larger fonts and fewer items per page and contains no embedded field-test items. Many students who are receiving special education services this year are taking TAKS (Accommodated).

TAKS (Accommodated), as required by federal law, tests students served by special education on material at the grade level in which they are enrolled. SDAA II allowed students to be tested at their instructional level, which for most children served by special education was lower than the grade level at which they were enrolled.

Test results reported today include both TAKS and TAKS (Accommodated) results. TAKS results reported in 2003-2007 are for TAKS only because TAKS (Accommodated) was not a testing option until 2008.

At fifth grade, 83 percent of the total students who took the TAKS or TAKS (Accommodated) test in English, passed the math exam and 39 percent earned Commended Performance.

Following are the passing rates, called Met the Standard, and Commended Performance levels for the state’s major student groups. The percentages represent combined TAKS and TAKS (Accommodated) passing rates.

Student group	Percent Met the Standard	Percent Commended Performance
Asian American	96	70
African American	73	24
Hispanic	80	32
White	90	50
All students	83	39

Among the 264,006 fifth-grade students who took the standard TAKS, 85 percent passed and 41 percent achieved the Commended Performance level. That is comparable to 2007 results when 85 percent of the students passed the test and 39 percent earned Commended Performance.

Of the 5,412 students who took the TAKS or TAKS (Accommodated) fifth-grade math exam in Spanish, 46 percent passed and 11 percent performed at the Commended Performance level.

Eighth grade

Among 309,822 eighth-grade students who took TAKS or TAKS (Accommodated), 75 percent passed the math test and 21 percent achieved Commended Performance.

Following are the combined passing rates for TAKS and TAKS (Accommodated) at this grade level:

Student group	Percent Met the Standard	Percent Commended Performance
Asian American	93	52
African American	61	9
Hispanic	69	14
White	85	31
All students	75	21

Among the students who took TAKS only, 78 percent passed and 22 percent reached the Commended Performance level. That is higher than 2007 performance levels in which 71 percent passed and 17 percent obtained Commended Performance.

Students who did not pass the fifth and eighth-grade math exam will have a chance to retake the test on May 13 and July 1. Students may retake the reading test for these grades, as well as third grade, on Wednesday and July 2.

If a student does not pass the tests required for promotion, he or she is retained. However, the student’s parents can appeal the retention decision to a Grade Placement Committee, composed of the parents, the child’s teacher and the principal. Committee members can review all available information and, by unanimous agreement, they can elect to promote the student.

Regardless of whether the student who failed TAKS is retained or promoted, additional instructional help, such as tutoring or extra math or reading classes, are made available to the child.

TAKS testing for other grades and subjects continues through Friday. Those results are expected to be released in late May.

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Please contact your local school district for fifth and eighth-grade math results for your area.