

To: Gilmer Mirror

From: Union Hill I.S.D.

Re: Union Hill I.S.D. Preparing for STAAR Tests

Date: February 1, 2012- Please Run This Ad

Union Hill I.S.D. Preparing for STAAR Tests

Students in Union Hill I.S.D. and across Texas will begin taking STAAR test this school year. The STAAR replaces the TAKS test which stands for State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness. The first STAAR tests will be administered March 26, 2012. When the school year began, school districts knew almost nothing about STAAR. The first questions for STAAR test were not released by the Texas Education Agency to districts until late October. STAAR end-of-course (EOC) exams, which will be taken by 9th graders this school year, didn't come out until after school started. EOC rule changes were still being made as late as this December.

Standardized testing this year begins with 3 different types of tests:

- Students in grades 10 and 11 will continue to take Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests.
- Students in grades 3 -8 will take STAAR tests.
- Students in grade 9 will take STAAR end-of-course exams and they will continue to take them for courses they will take in the next two years.

Beginning with this year's freshman class, students will take 12 end-of-course exams by the time they finish the 11th grade. The Texas Legislature increased the significance of the End-of-Course exams by requiring the test to count as 15 percent of the students' final grade in the courses. It is the first time, in Texas history, standardized test scores have been made part of the course grades. The 12 courses requiring end-of-course testing are: English I, II, III; Algebra I, II; geometry; biology; chemistry; physics; world geography; world history; and U.S. History. Students will be given the end-of-course assessments at the end of the school year, and they will have two other chances to take them if they fail the first or second tries. The second chance will be during the summer, and the third chance will be at the end of the following fall semester.

“Union Hill I.S.D. administrators, faculty, and staff are working with Region VII Educational Services Center and using information about the tests from TEA's website: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/staar/> to ensure our students can be successful,” Ms Richardson, Superintendent of Schools stated. “We are using our c-scope curriculum and DMAC benchmarks, but the most important thing is to teach students the concepts behind the questions,” she stated.