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June 12, 2016

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TO: Parent or Guardian Addressed

RE: 5th and 8th Grade STAAR Testing and Runge ISD Summer Acceleration

Thank you for entrusting Runge ISD with the education of your child. Working together we believe your child will achieve academic success.

From previous school communication you were informed that your 5th grade or 8th grade student who did not perform satisfactorily on the recent STAAR Reading or Math tests must retest late June. So, for these students Runge scheduled summer acceleration classes that are already underway for 5th grade, and are set to begin soon for 8th grade. Each of these are State requirements for the Student Success Initiative.

Friday June 10th Mike Morath, Commissioner of Education, issued notice to districts that ceases the June STAAR testing requirement for Grades 5 and 8. For several reasons, Commissioner Morath has removed the student consequences attached to STAAR testing for these two grades. **Students in these two grades will not be tested this month and the STAAR results will not be used for promotion/retention decisions.**

With or without the testing requirement. Runge ISD is committed to improving the individual success of all students. We have summer acceleration classes scheduled with teachers ready and eager to work with your child. With no summer testing, there is no acceleration requirement. However, we invite and encourage you to bring your child to the summer acceleration program as scheduled.

Thank you for your support and understanding. Please contact Campus Principals and/or Counselors if you have questions and/or comments.

Sincerely,

Pam Seipp, Interim Superintendent

Enclosures: (2)TEA Press Release and Letter



Commissioner Mike Morath

1701 North Congress Avenue • Austin, Texas 78701-1494 • 512 463-9734 • 512 463-9838 FAX • tea.texas.gov

June 10, 2016

To the Administrator Addressed:

SUBJECT: Significant Changes to June STAAR Testing for Grades 5 and 8, Student Success Initiative (SSI) Requirements and Confidential Student Reporting Timelines

As a result of ongoing reporting issues with our testing vendor, we will be removing student consequences attached to STAAR testing for grades 5 and 8 for the remainder of the 2015-16 assessment cycle. We are also modifying the requirements for SSI and the reporting requirements for Confidential Student Reports (CSR).

The decisions outlined in this communication are based on TEA's commitment to our districts and students, and with the priority of ensuring that those affected are not penalized due to our ongoing vendor reporting issues.

Cancellation of June STAAR Testing for Grades 5 and 8

Given that June STAAR test results will not be required to be used for promotion decisions for SSI purposes and are not used for accountability, I am cancelling the June administration of STAAR for grades 5 and 8.

Students in grades 5 and 8 who did not perform satisfactorily on the March 2016 or May 2016 STAAR mathematics and/or reading tests will not be retested in June. We encourage districts to use local discretion to determine on an individual basis whether accelerated instruction should be offered in the applicable subject area for students who did not pass the mathematics and/or reading assessments in March and/or May. For the 2015–2016 school year, districts are not required to convene grade placement committees based solely on grade 5 and 8 STAAR results. Instead, you should use local discretion and all relevant and available academic information to make promotion/retention decisions for these students as you see fit, such as the recommendation of the teacher and the student's grade in each subject.

Confidential Student Report (CSR) Guidance

Given delays in reporting, TEA is altering the start of the five-day timeline for sending CSRs to families. CSRs must still be distributed to families within five days, once reporting issues are resolved and final data files are provided to school districts.

TEA is moving as fast as possible to address any reporting concerns that are being identified. Expect further communication regarding revised timelines around score reporting for grades 3-8 and EOCs, and data file distribution in the coming days. If you need more information, please contact the Student Assessment Division at 512-463-9536.

I deeply apologize for the continuing problems your students and staff are being forced to deal with because of ongoing reporting issues with our testing vendor.

Sincerely,
Mike Morath
Commissioner of Education



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NEWS Texas
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Agency

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June 10, 2016

Commissioner Morath waives grade 5 and 8 student retesting and retention requirements

AUSTIN – As a result of ongoing reporting issues with the state’s testing vendor, Commissioner of Education Mike Morath announced today that the state will be removing student consequences attached to State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) for fifth and eighth-grade students for the 2015-2016 school year. He also cancelled the June 21-22 fifth and eighth-grade retest administration.

Even though state requirements have been waived, districts are still encouraged to use local discretion to determine on an individual basis whether accelerated instruction should be offered to support students. Districts will not be required to convene Grade Placement Committees but are encouraged to use all relevant and available academic information to make promotion decisions.

Morath said, “I apologize for the continuing problems our students and staff are being forced to deal with because of ongoing reporting issues with our testing vendor. Kids in the classroom should never suffer from mistakes made by adults. We intend to hold the vendor, Educational Testing Service, accountable.”

Normally, fifth and eighth-grade students must pass the reading and math assessments in order to be promoted. If a student does not pass the tests after three tries, the student must be retained unless a Grade Placement Committee, composed of a principal, teacher, and the student’s parents, unanimously agrees to promote the child to the next grade level. State law gives the commissioner the ability to waive this law when necessary.

The full letter is available at http://tea.texas.gov/taa_letters.aspx.

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