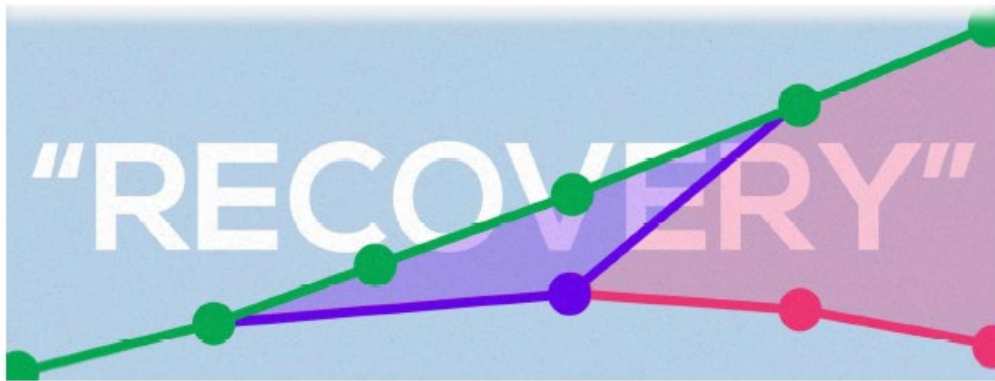




Comparisons Matter: Considering What Recovery Is

Now is the Time to Begin Preparing for the Reporting of Spring 2022 Assessment Results



Nathan Dadey | February 23, 2022



The question about the pandemic impact has largely been answered – it's bad (e.g., [Betebenner et al. 2021](#)). In many cases, really bad. With Spring 2022 assessment – and the subsequent assessment results – on the horizon, the question looming is now “are students recovering”? Answering this question requires (1) determining what recovery *is* and (2) *judging* whether students are actually recovering.

The answers to these questions have consequential implications for how we communicate about student learning, and thus recovery. Consider two hypothetical headlines that could emerge based on Spring 2022 results:

- **Schools continue to struggle:** 2022 6th graders still not doing as well as 2019 6th graders
- **Schools are back on track:** 2022 6th graders doing better than 2021 6th graders

These headlines provide more nuance than would typically be found in a newspaper headline, yet obviously still are not nuanced enough. Both of these headlines could both be true given the same Spring 2022 assessment results, but neither necessarily enhances public understanding about whether students are actually recovering.

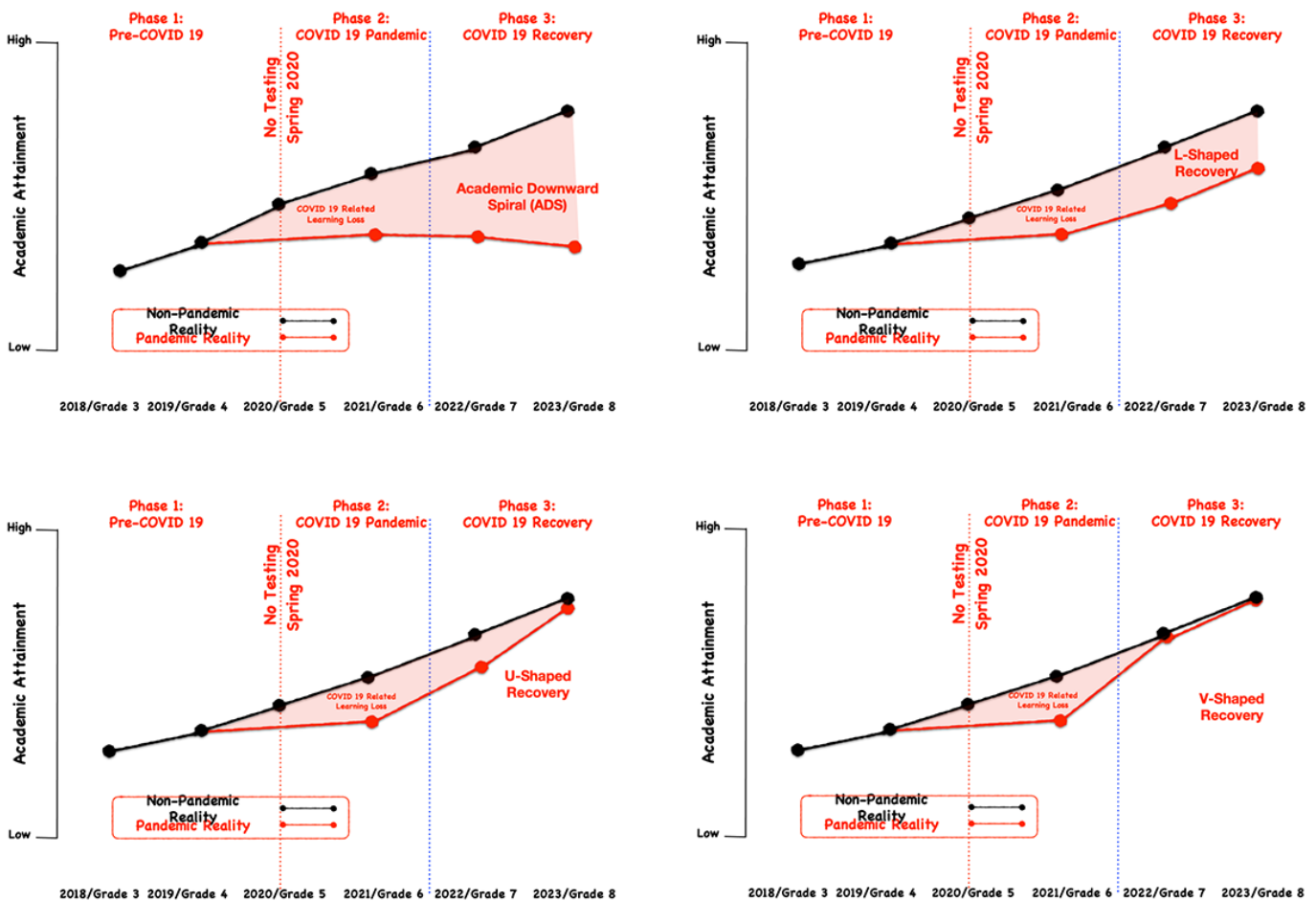
The message that we want to convey about recovery should shape the way we frame comparisons, at least in part. Does “recovery” mean returning to pre-pandemic levels of performance (“Schools continue to struggle”)? Does “recovery” mean improvement from last year (“Schools are back on track”)? Does “recovery” mean both of those things, and more? Of course it does.

So, how do we communicate that message effectively?

Finding the Right Comparisons for Spring 2022 Assessment Results

Last year, the comparison was straightforward. Most states compared Spring 2021 results to Spring 2019 results, and in rare instances looked back prior to 2019. This year, considering Spring 2022 results involves the additional complexity of needing to take into account both pre-pandemic (i.e., 2019) and “during” pandemic (2021) data.

One way to consider these distinctions is through hypotheticals. My colleagues [Betebenner & Wenning \(2021\)](#) proposed comparing actual student performance (i.e., the pandemic reality) to the performance a student *would have had* if the pandemic had not happened (i.e., the non-pandemic reality). In the figure below, Betebenner and Wenning sketch out impact in terms of four trajectories of student performance in sixth grade during the 2020-2021 school year.



The top left panel realizes our worst fears about student academic attainment moving forward – an Academic Downward Spiral (ADS) in which students continue to lose ground. In the top right panel, an L-Shaped trajectory, students make progress from 2021 but never recover from the initial impact of the pandemic. The bottom two panels, U-shaped and V-shaped trajectories, reflect a more positive outcome than either the ADS and L-shaped trajectories, in which student academic attainment quickly or slowly returns to pre-pandemic levels.

Determining whether students are experiencing any or all of these trajectories requires multiple years of data. The Spring 2021 assessment results have set the stage and the stage is bleak (again, see [Betebenner et al. 2021](#)).

Looking ahead, a state's first task with regard to communicating about the recovery is deciding where to place Spring 2022 results. Betebenner and Wenning optimistically placed Spring 2022 in "Phase 3: COVID-19 Recovery". Would it be more accurate to place Spring 2022 results as a second data point in "Phase 2: COVID-19 Pandemic"? The correct answer may be somewhere in between and it vary across and even within states, but depicting it accurately will be a critical component of communicating effectively about the recovery.

Now, let's return to our original questions.

What is Recovery?

What do we mean when we say recovery? Is it an immediate return to pre-pandemic performance (i.e., the V-shaped recovery)? Unlikely, but if so, our primary point of comparison is 2019, which is similar to many of the comparisons conducted on Spring 2021 data. However, in many cases, such a return will require levels of unprecedented growth. So, overly focusing on just 2019 may paint a picture that negates the progress we have made. On the other hand, it is unlikely that we are seeking to understand recovery *just* in terms of our current or ongoing pandemic or post-pandemic reality, in which we would compare Spring 2022 results only to 2021.

Ultimately, we think that *each* comparison holds value and the matter is essentially one of emphasis – what comparison matters more? What should the headline from the SEA be?

Are Students Actually Recovering?

So, what do we say about these hypothetical students, now seventh graders in 2022, and their recovery?

Unfortunately, an important part of messaging Spring 2022 results is going to be effectively communicating that one "post-pandemic" data point is not enough information to answer that question. Unless the Spring 2022 results show a V-shaped trajectory (unlikely) or clearly reflect an Academic Downward Spiral (hopefully unlikely), we will not have enough information to conclusively determine whether we are seeing the beginning of an L-shaped or U-shaped trajectory or even an ADS.

Given this uncertainty, states should:

1. **Define Recovery.** Clearly define what recovery means, in easy to understand terms, and use that consistently throughout communication.
2. **Review Prior Messaging.** Review prior communications about the impact of the pandemic, and in particular how impact has been quantified, and then determine whether messaging in 2022 will be a continuation, or revision of, the messaging in 2021.
3. **Consider Learning Acceleration Efforts.** Determine what can and should be said about the impact of learning acceleration efforts. An unpredicted level of [federal funding](#) has been allocated to education and the public will want to know if those dollars have been well

spent. Even if interventions are implemented at the local level, states can play a key role in disseminating information on what is being done and how well it is working.

4. **Consider the Role of Other Data.** Assessment results alone do not tell the whole story about recovery, or lack thereof. Clearly, [student socio-emotional well-being](#) can and should be attended to in communicating about a pandemic. Even more distal measures of student well-being and learning (e.g., enrollment and attendance data) can be valuable and allow us to understand whether some students are in, or at risk of, an Academic Downward Spiral or an L-shaped trajectory.

These recommendations are ordered in terms of importance – if a state does nothing else, it should clearly define what recovery means and use that definition consistently. Building on this definition of recovery is also an understanding of how long it might take to recover, which in many cases will be a multiyear endeavor. Without a clear definition of recovery, messaging can be muddled, stakeholders can get confused, and ultimately the importance of messages around recovery could be lost. And given the impacts from Spring 2021, understanding recovery, and subsequently supporting continued recovery, are paramount.

Finally, it is not too soon to begin considering the definition of recovery. If the past two years have taught us anything, it's that it is never too early to start planning.

TSA Assessment Forum Update

What Now Needs Attention?

Presenters



Christina Trotter
Irving ISD

Director of Assessment &
Research
2020 TSNAP President



Chris Cordell
Austin ISD

Director of System Wide
Testing
2016 TSNAP President



Dr. Keith Haffey
Spring Branch ISD

Executive Director for
Assessment &
Compliance
2005 TSNAP President

1. Data Files

Christina Trotter

Data File Issues:

- File size limits capped. File size needs to be expanded to accommodate more than 10,000 lines at a time.
- Preliminary data doesn't match the published data file format which impacts uploading and downloading data into district testing and SIS databases.

2. Monitoring Testing

Christina Trotter

Monitoring Testing Issues:

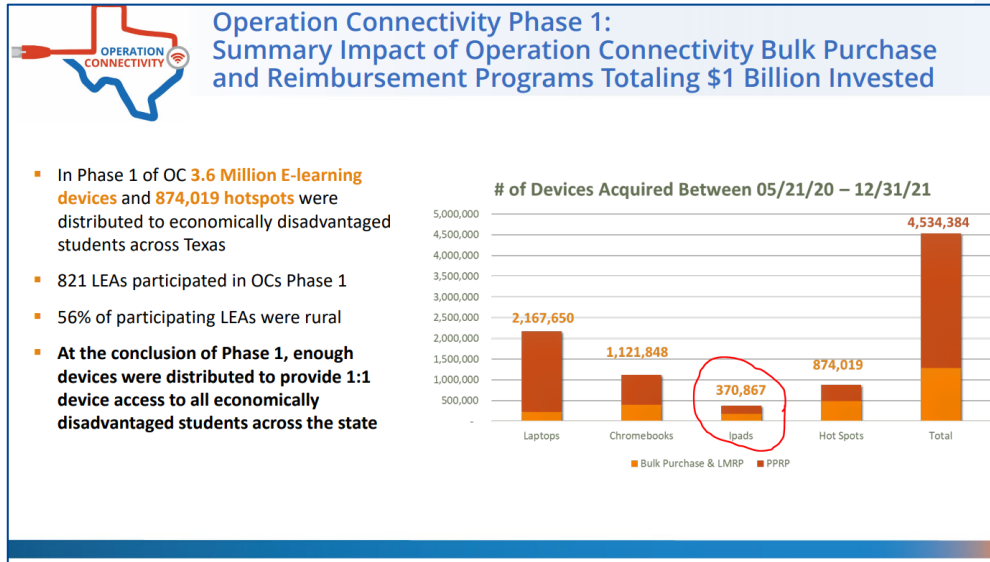
- Need a live, online dashboard for DTCs and CTCs. DTCs should be able to support CTCs and see sessions they created and correct any issues immediately.
- Need more robust reporting to view score codes, progress of testing, and test completion by administration.
- Need a TELPAS combined status report
- Need a TELPAS completion report
- K-1 DEI Entry should be done one time

3. iPads

Christina Trotter

iPad Testing Issues:

- Must be corrected before TELPAS EOY testing & May 2022 STAAR testing.



4. Test Materials

Dr. Keith Haffey

Test Materials for May 2022

- Forms for OA
- Inability to view all materials lists
- Additional Order window
- The lack of extra, blank labels for paper testing is a problem
- TDS window should match the testing calendar
- Shipping communication? Only goes to the DTC in-box?

5. 7th Gr. Reading Screeners

Dr. Keith Haffey



SY 21-22 Grade 7 Reading Instruments Guidance and Instructions for Submitting a Waiver *August 26, 2021*

TEC, §28.006(c-1) requires each school district to administer at the beginning of the seventh grade a reading instrument adopted by the commissioner to each student whose performance on the grade 6 STAAR reading assessment did not demonstrate reading proficiency.

The commissioner has adopted the following:

- Istation's Indicators of Progress, Advanced Reading (ISIP-AR)
- Reading Analysis and Prescription System (RAPS 360)
- Texas Middle School Fluency Assessment (TMFSA)
- Woodcock Johnson III Diagnostic Reading Battery (WJ III DRB)

LEAs are required to use one of these reading diagnostic instruments. Districts may request a waiver in order to use another instrument approved by a local district board of trustees in order to best meet student needs in the 2021-2022 school year only.

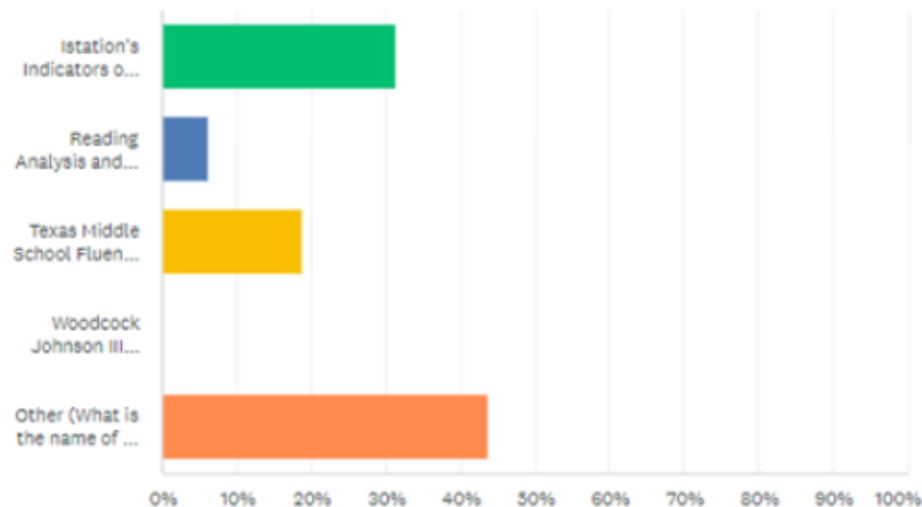
A waiver of the requirement to use an adopted instrument will only be approved for one year and will not be waived beyond the 2021-2022 school year.

If the waiver option is no longer an option for the 2022-2023 school year, and the commissioner's list is unchanged, would this impact your local assessment program? If so, how?

Is this a *Local Control* issue?

Which instrument is being used for conducting the required beginning of the 7th grade reading screener? Please select one from the dropdown box.

Answered: 16 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Istation's Indicators of Progress, Advanced Reading (ISIP-AR)	31.25%
▼ Reading Analysis and Prescription System (RAPS 360)	6.25%
▼ Texas Middle School Fluency Assessment (TMFSA)	18.75%
▼ Woodcock Johnson III Diagnostic Reading Battery (WJ III DRB)	0.00%
▼ Other (What is the name of the instrument?)	43.75%

Responses

TOTAL

TSA Survey

What are TSA Districts using?

Other (What is the name of the instrument?) Responses:

HMH Reading Inventory			
Literably			
MAP Fluency			
MAP for current year, otherwise it was TMFSA			
NWEA MAP			
STAR Renaissance			
NWEA MAP			

What reading instruments are being used for other middle school grades?
Limit 100 words.

Open-Ended Response

Reading Inventory and Phonics Inventory by HMHCO

ISIP and HMH Reading Inventory

Map; Literably

Istation

NWEA MAP Reading

Besides MAP Fluency, we give MAP Growth.

iLit and TMSFA

NWEA MAP

moving to MClass for grades 3-7 beginning SY 2022-2023)

None

NWEA MAP

Renaissance 360

NWEA MAP

STAR Renaissance (6-8 math and reading)

What are
TSA
districts
using across
middle
school
grades?

If any instrument being used this year is through a waiver, what option is being considered for next year if (1) the Commissioner's list does not change, and (2) the waiver is no longer an option? Limit 100 words.

Open-Ended Response

We were under the impression that the waiver ended last year so in the midst of a pandemic, we transitioned to Amplify/mClass - one of the limited options offered.

We want to continue with the waiver. We are not ready to make a decision at this time. If a waiver is not a choice we will explore our options and make a decision based on the needs of the kids.

We'll use TPRI for Elem, no plans for 7th.

No waiver is being used this year

Will want to continue using MAP. If not allowed, we will go back to using TMSFA.

We are changing our instruments to align to the requirements beginning next year.

Hoping there is a waiver...

No waiver is currently being used.

We did not apply for a waiver. We are meeting all requirements. *One comment I would like to make is for TEA to consider the 7th grade tool. It provides no instructional value and has become a compliance piece for the beginning of the year.*

What
about
next
year?

6. THECB data

*2021 TAPR Completing One Year Without Enrollment in a
Developmental Education Course*

Dr. Keith Haffey

Texas Education Agency
2020-21 Other Postsecondary Indicators (TAPR)
SPRING BRANCH ISD (101920) - HARRIS COUNTY

Page 22 of 28

	Academic Year	State	Region 04	District	African American	Hispanic	White	American Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	Special Ed	Econ Disadv	EB/EL
Advanced/Dual-Credit Course Completion (Grades 9-12)														
Any Subject	2019-20	46.3%	46.9%	43.1%	30.7%	33.7%	56.1%	28.6%	70.7%	*	57.4%	10.0%	32.0%	15.6%
	2018-19	44.6%	44.2%	44.4%	32.2%	34.8%	57.1%	25.0%	72.8%	*	60.0%	10.2%	33.9%	15.6%
English Language Arts	2019-20	18.2%	20.0%	19.8%	10.9%	13.4%	29.5%	7.1%	34.2%	*	27.9%	2.1%	12.4%	3.1%
	2018-19	17.8%	18.5%	21.1%	13.9%	15.2%	29.3%	5.9%	37.2%	*	28.3%	3.2%	14.5%	3.3%
Mathematics	2019-20	20.7%	20.8%	27.9%	19.2%	18.2%	42.0%	22.2%	50.9%	*	38.0%	4.8%	17.3%	7.4%
	2018-19	20.4%	19.8%	28.7%	17.7%	18.7%	43.2%	12.1%	51.3%	*	40.0%	4.3%	18.2%	6.7%
Science	2019-20	22.4%	20.7%	16.6%	10.4%	11.2%	23.0%	7.1%	34.7%	*	24.5%	1.5%	10.4%	2.8%
	2018-19	21.7%	20.0%	17.7%	10.3%	10.9%	26.3%	14.3%	37.8%	*	23.4%	2.9%	10.1%	3.6%
Social Studies	2019-20	24.6%	24.8%	25.9%	12.8%	17.1%	38.0%	4.0%	53.2%	*	38.8%	2.7%	15.7%	3.2%
	2018-19	23.6%	22.7%	25.5%	12.5%	15.3%	38.3%	6.5%	57.8%	*	43.8%	1.6%	14.0%	1.9%
CTE Coherent Sequence (Annual Graduates)														
	2019-20	58.5%	55.9%	38.5%	41.5%	35.7%	42.3%	28.6%	43.8%	*	30.8%	23.1%	36.3%	31.1%
	2018-19	59.0%	53.8%	34.0%	30.8%	32.4%	37.6%	*	31.5%	*	40.0%	21.0%	31.1%	19.6%
Graduates Enrolled in Texas Institution of Higher Education (TX IHE)														
	2018-19	52.6%	53.6%	50.6%	36.4%	39.8%	65.2%	*	73.6%	*	45.7%	24.8%	38.7%	20.9%
	2017-18	53.4%	54.7%	49.7%	34.6%	38.9%	61.6%	40.0%	73.0%	*	68.8%	23.4%	39.0%	25.0%
Graduates in TX IHE Completing One Year Without Enrollment in a Developmental Education Course														
	2018-19	42.2%	42.7%	23.4%	*	32.8%	22.2%	*	8.3%	-	*	-	27.9%	*
	2017-18	60.7%	63.3%	75.7%	61.1%	60.6%	86.4%	*	92.0%	*	93.8%	29.2%	61.8%	30.3%



Texas Education Agency
 2020-21 Other Postsecondary Indicators (TAPR)
 SPRING BRANCH ISD (101920) - HARRIS COUNTY

Page 22 of 28

	Academic Year	State	Region 04	District	African American	Hispanic	White	American Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	Special Ed	Econ Disadv	EB/EL
Graduates in TX IHE Completing One Year Without Enrollment in a Developmental Education Course														
	2018-19	42.2%	42.7%	23.4%	*	32.8%	22.2%	*	8.3%	-	*	-	27.9%	*
	2017-18	60.7%	63.3%	75.7%	61.1%	60.6%	86.4%	*	92.0%	*	93.8%	29.2%	61.8%	30.3%



Texas Education Agency
2020-21 Other Postsecondary Indicators (TAPR)
SPRING BRANCH ISD (101920) - HARRIS COUNTY

Page 22 of 28

	Academic Year	State	Region 04	District	African American	Hispanic	White	American Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	Special Ed	Econ Disadv	EB/EL
Graduates in TX IHE Completing One Year Without Enrollment in a Developmental Education Course														
	2018-19	42.2%	42.7%	23.4%	*	32.8%	22.2%	*	8.3%	-	*		27.9%	*
	2017-18	60.7%	63.3%	75.7%	61.1%	60.6%	86.4%	*	92.0%	*	93.8%	29.2%	61.8%	30.3%

AUSTIN ISD (227901) - TRAVIS COUNTY

Graduates in TX IHE Completing One Year Without Enrollment in a Developmental Education Course														
	2018-19	42.2%	46.7%	40.3%	37.5%	37.0%	40.1%	-	57.5%	-	61.1%	27.3%	38.3%	31.3%
	2017-18	60.7%	73.8%	77.4%	54.3%	71.3%	89.3%	60.0%	91.8%	*	84.1%	28.7%	64.7%	37.9%

IRVING ISD (057912) - DALLAS COUNTY

Graduates in TX IHE Completing One Year Without Enrollment in a Developmental Education Course														
	2018-19	42.2%	41.5%	15.3%	9.7%	11.4%	16.7%	20.0%	48.3%	-	*	16.7%	14.6%	0.0%
	2017-18	60.7%	57.3%	47.2%	33.3%	42.1%	65.7%	60.0%	79.3%	-	72.7%	3.4%	43.6%	17.2%

PLANO ISD (043910) - COLLIN COUNTY

Graduates in TX IHE Completing One Year Without Enrollment in a Developmental Education Course														
	2018-19	42.2%	41.5%	46.1%	42.9%	43.1%	50.8%	-	41.6%	-	31.8%	33.3%	44.9%	*
	2017-18	60.7%	57.3%	76.7%	55.0%	64.4%	78.5%	50.0%	90.1%	*	77.1%	19.8%	57.1%	29.8%

HOUSTON ISD (101912) - HARRIS COUNTY

Graduates in TX IHE Completing One Year Without Enrollment in a Developmental Education Course														
	2018-19	42.2%	42.7%	46.7%	36.6%	49.9%	50.0%		68.9%	*	37.5%	23.1%	44.0%	15.8%
	2017-18	60.7%	63.3%	57.3%	39.3%	58.2%	75.2%	53.3%	87.7%	100.0%	70.2%	15.4%	53.0%	20.6%

Numerous TSA districts had sharp declines in district overall and several student groups.

Texas Education Agency
2020-21 Other Postsecondary Indicators (TAPR)
SPRING BRANCH ISD (101920) - HARRIS COUNTY

Page 22 of 28

	Academic Year	State	Region 04	District	African American	Hispanic	White	American Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	Special Ed	Econ Disadv	EB/EL
Graduates in TX IHE Completing One Year Without Enrollment in a Developmental Education Course														
	2018-19	42.2%	42.7%	23.4%	*	32.8%	22.2%	*	8.3%	-	*	-	27.9%	*
	2017-18	60.7%	63.3%	75.7%	61.1%	60.6%	86.4%	*	92.0%	*	93.8%	29.2%	61.8%	30.3%

ECTOR COUNTY ISD (068901) - ECTOR COUNTY

Graduates in TX IHE Completing One Year Without Enrollment in a Developmental Education Course														
	2018-19	42.2%	38.6%	33.2%	30.0%	28.4%	39.4%	*	70.0%	-	50.0%	0.0%	30.1%	16.7%
	2017-18	60.7%	48.8%	37.6%	24.0%	35.2%	42.6%	20.0%	78.9%	-	40.0%	6.5%	30.4%	0.0%

SAN ANTONIO ISD (015907) - BEXAR COUNTY

Graduates in TX IHE Completing One Year Without Enrollment in a Developmental Education Course														
	2018-19	42.2%	62.0%	59.8%	38.9%	61.3%	71.4%	-	*	-	*	33.3%	55.8%	12.5%
	2017-18	60.7%	57.7%	44.2%	38.0%	44.2%	57.7%	-	40.0%	*	*	14.5%	41.5%	14.3%

DALLAS ISD (057905) - DALLAS COUNTY

Graduates in TX IHE Completing One Year Without Enrollment in a Developmental Education Course														
	2018-19	42.2%	41.5%	37.9%	26.6%	41.0%	38.1%	*	27.3%	*	*	0.0%	34.3%	38.1%
	2017-18	60.7%	57.3%	39.9%	28.5%	39.8%	72.1%	55.6%	63.3%	55.6%	61.1%	8.4%	37.6%	17.7%

While other TSA districts had small declines or increases in district overall and several student groups.

TEXAS SCHOOL ALLIANCE SURVEY RESULTS | READING SCREENERS

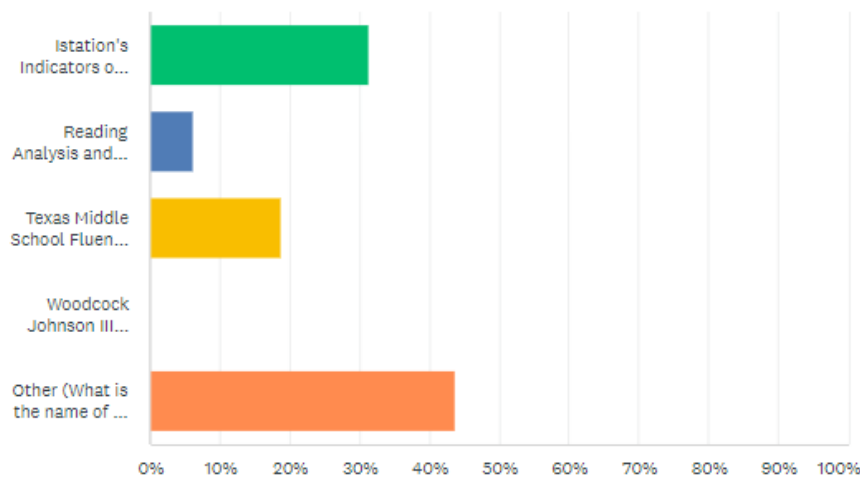
MARCH 1, 2022

Member districts were asked to complete a brief 5-question survey to see if a) there is an interest from TSA members in advocating to expand the Commissioner's approved list of diagnostic reading screeners; and b) to explore which instruments are currently used in the event that next year comes, the list is unchanged, and the waiver is no longer available. The survey closed on February 28, 2022.

The survey results from 16 out of 44 districts (37% response rate) are shown on the following pages.

Which instrument is being used for conducting the required beginning of the 7th grade reading screener? Please select one from the dropdown box.

Answered: 16 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Istation's Indicators of Progress, Advanced Reading (ISIP-AR)	31.25% 5
▼ Reading Analysis and Prescription System (RAPS 360)	6.25% 1
▼ Texas Middle School Fluency Assessment (TMFSA)	18.75% 3
▼ Woodcock Johnson III Diagnostic Reading Battery (WJ III DRB)	0.00% 0
▼ Other (What is the name of the instrument?) Responses	43.75% 7
TOTAL	16

Other (What is the name of the instrument?) Responses:

HMH Reading Inventory			
Literably			
MAP Fluency			
MAP for current year, otherwise it was TMFSA			
NWEA MAP			
STAR Renaissance			
NWEA MAP			

What reading instruments are being used for elementary? Limit 100 words.

Answered: 16 Skipped: 0

Open-Ended Response

1. mCLASS
2. Amplify mClass
3. mClass; MAP
4. Amira, Waggle
5. mCLASS DIBELS 8th Edition and IDEL
6. We piloted MAP Fluency and want to expand. Other campuses use TPRI. We also give DRA and MAP Growth.
7. TXKEA/mCLASS, Istation, DRA/EDL
8. NWEA MAP
9. Circle (PK), MClass (K-2) and IStation (moving to MClass for grades 3-7 beginning SY 2022-2023)
10. Circle (PK), mClass (K and 1st), I-Station (2nd-5th)
11. NWEA MAP
12. TX KEA, Circle, Renaissance 260 STAR, High Frequency Word Exam,
13. Istation, MCLASS, NWEA MAP
14. mClass Amplify (K-2 screener) and STAR Renaissance (K-5 math and reading)
15. mClass (1-5 reading and math)
16. NWEA MAP

What reading instruments are being used for other middle school grades?
Limit 100 words.

Answered: 16 Skipped: 0

Open-Ended Response

Reading Inventory and Phonics Inventory by HMHCO

ISIP and HMH Reading Inventory

Map; Literably

Istation

NWEA MAP Reading

Besides MAP Fluency, we give MAP Growth.

iLit and TMSFA

NWEA MAP

moving to MClass for grades 3-7 beginning SY 2022-2023)

None

NWEA MAP

Renaissance 360

NWEA MAP

STAR Renaissance (6-8 math and reading)

STAR Renaissance (6-8 math and reading)

NWEA MAP

If any instrument being used this year is through a waiver, what option is being considered for next year if (1) the Commissioner's list does not change, and (2) the waiver is no longer an option? Limit 100 words.

Answered: 16 Skipped: 0

Open-Ended Response

N/A

We were under the impression that the waiver ended last year so in the midst of a pandemic, we transitioned to Amplify/mClass - one of the limited options offered.

We want to continue with the waiver. We are not ready to make a decision at this time. If a waiver is not a choice we will explore our options and make a decision based on the needs of the kids.

N/A

N/A

We'll use TPRI for Elem, no plans for 7th.

No waiver is being used this year

Will want to continue using MAP. If not allowed, we will go back to using TMSFA.

We are changing our instruments to align to the requirements beginning next year.

N/A

Hoping there is a waiver...

N/A

No waiver is currently being used.

We did not apply for a waiver. We are meeting all requirements. *One comment I would like to make is for TEA to consider the 7th grade tool. It provides no instructional value and has become a compliance piece for the beginning of the year.*

N/A

N/A