Recommendations to the
Commission on Next-Generation Assessments
and Accountability
on behalf of the
Texas High Performance Schools Consortium

Presented By

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Background and Overview of the Work
of the Texas High Performance Schools Consortium

February 23, 2016

Chairman Kim and Members of the Commission,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I am Karen Rue, superintendent of Northwest ISD, and along with Greg Smith, superintendent of Clear Creek ISD, serve as co-chair of the Texas High Performance Schools Consortium.

My testimony and that of my colleague, Dr. Dawson Orr, is offered on behalf of the Consortium and in response to Sec. 39.507 (b) Education Code: "the commission shall consider the recommendations of the Texas High Performance Schools Consortium established under Section 7.0561, including recommendations related to innovative, next-generation learning standards and assessment and accountability systems."

My purpose is to share with you the work of the Consortium as we have moved from Vision to Action since the Consortium was established by Senate Bill 1557 in 2011, and to draw parallels to the legislative charges each of us have been given. Dr. Orr will offer recommendations based on this work.

The Consortium is charged with informing the governor, legislature, and commissioner of education on "methods for transforming Texas public schools in the state by improving student learning through the development of innovative, next-generation learning standards and assessment and accountability systems."

The Consortium's work offers many areas of overlap with the Commission's charge, particularly in relation to defining the purpose of a state accountability system, the role of student assessment in that system, and establishing a student assessment and public school accountability system that meets state goals, is community-based, promotes parent and community involvement, and reflects the unique needs of each community.

Our work has also focused on the following key components of a successful system.

Integration of Digital Tools and Resources into Student Learning

Digital platforms provide students the opportunity to work within learning environments that reflect the needs of future-ready students. Teachers, as designers of student learning experiences, must be able to navigate digital resources to fully support student learning. Consortium districts have invested in professional development that adds capacity for leveraging technology to customize learning for individual students. TASA on iTunes U® is an example of digital integration of the Consortium's work, consisting of 62 course-specific collections of digital resources aligned to Texas standards and available at no cost to all Texas educators.

Exemplars – Digital Integration

Alamo Heights ISD – Spotlight on Engagement: Technology Integration

[https://vimeo.com/114918395]

Clear Creek ISD – Latitude 2 Learn: Personalized Learning in CCISD

[https://vimeo.com/114924587]

Willis ISD – Digital Transformation

[https://vimeo.com/114996089]

High-Priority Learning Standards

The Consortium has designed a process for determining high-priority learning standards that emphasizes depth over breadth where the local community is accountable for empowering students to learn, live, and earn in a global and digital environment. It begins with prioritizing and focusing on what matters most — deeper and fewer standards through connected content, thinking and skills, as described in the following graphic:

Fewer and Deeper Standards — Connected content, thinking, and skills	Assessment — Designed to assess fewer, deeper standards	Instruction — Determines level and type of learning opportunities
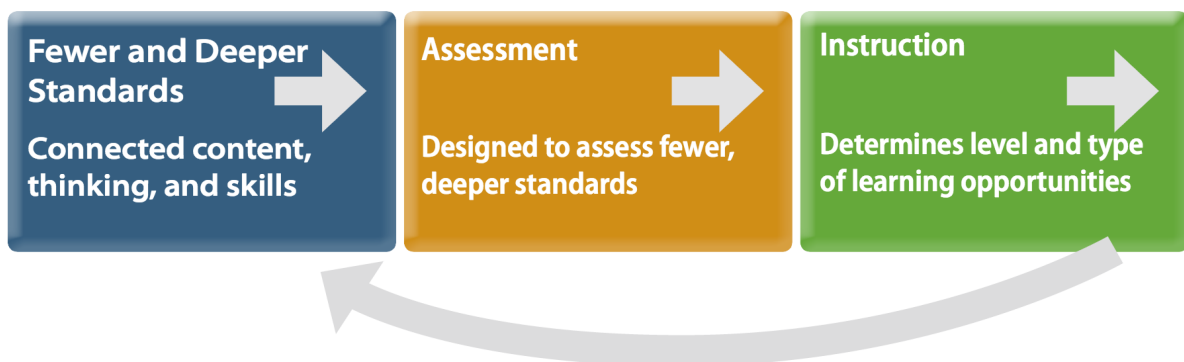
The sheer number of standards in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) creates a significant impediment to deeper learning. The State Board of Education's TEKS review process, currently focused on English Language Arts, is an important part of the process to create fewer, deeper learning standards that will enable our students to be prepared for success in college and careers.

Alignment to high-priority learning standards allows us to establish assessment expectations that rely on rigorous performance tasks. Dr. Ho referenced this in his policy remarks supporting the use of "local assessments of student learning objectives," the need to "emphasize formative and diagnostic feedback," and the need to "invest significantly in assessment and item development."

High-priority learning standards and new assessment design support a new vision of accountability that aligns with future-ready learning in today's world.

Exemplars – High-Priority Learning Standards

Coppell ISD – Learning Design: Inquiry

[https://vimeo.com/114993752]

McKinney ISD – Meaningful and Dynamic Curriculum Strategies With Project-Based Learning

[https://vimeo.com/115008074]

Roscoe Collegiate ISD – The Atmosphere: Creativity, Engagement, Collaboration, Inspiration

[https://vimeo.com/114997690]

Multiple Assessments

Examining the body of work students create gives us a clear understanding of what students have learned. Writing samples, project-based demonstrations, journals, science projects, reading response logs, and digital portfolios offer evidence of a wider range of student knowledge, skills, and progress than standardized tests. The Consortium advocates for the use of multiple measures *for learning* and *of learning.* These multiple assessments inform parents, students, teachers and school districts in ways that allow timely, actionable information concerning the extent of student learning.

The value of multiple assessments was also emphasized in Dr. Ho's remarks to this Commission. The Consortium offers the following examples of methods for measuring student performance:

- early college implementation

- student completion of industry recognized certifications in the broad STEM fields

- student-led collaborative research

- capstone research projects

- digital portfolios

- writing assessment pilot led by Sunnyvale ISD

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- examination and revision of grading practices and procedures that appropriately inform students, parents, and teachers about the student's learning

Exemplars – Multiple Assessments

Coppell ISD – Assessment for Learning

[https://vimeo.com/114992341]

Highland Park ISD – Senior Internship Program

[https://vimeo.com/115172066]

Lewisville ISD – Standards-Based Report Card

[https://vimeo.com/115176492]

Northwest ISD – Standards-Based Bulletin Board
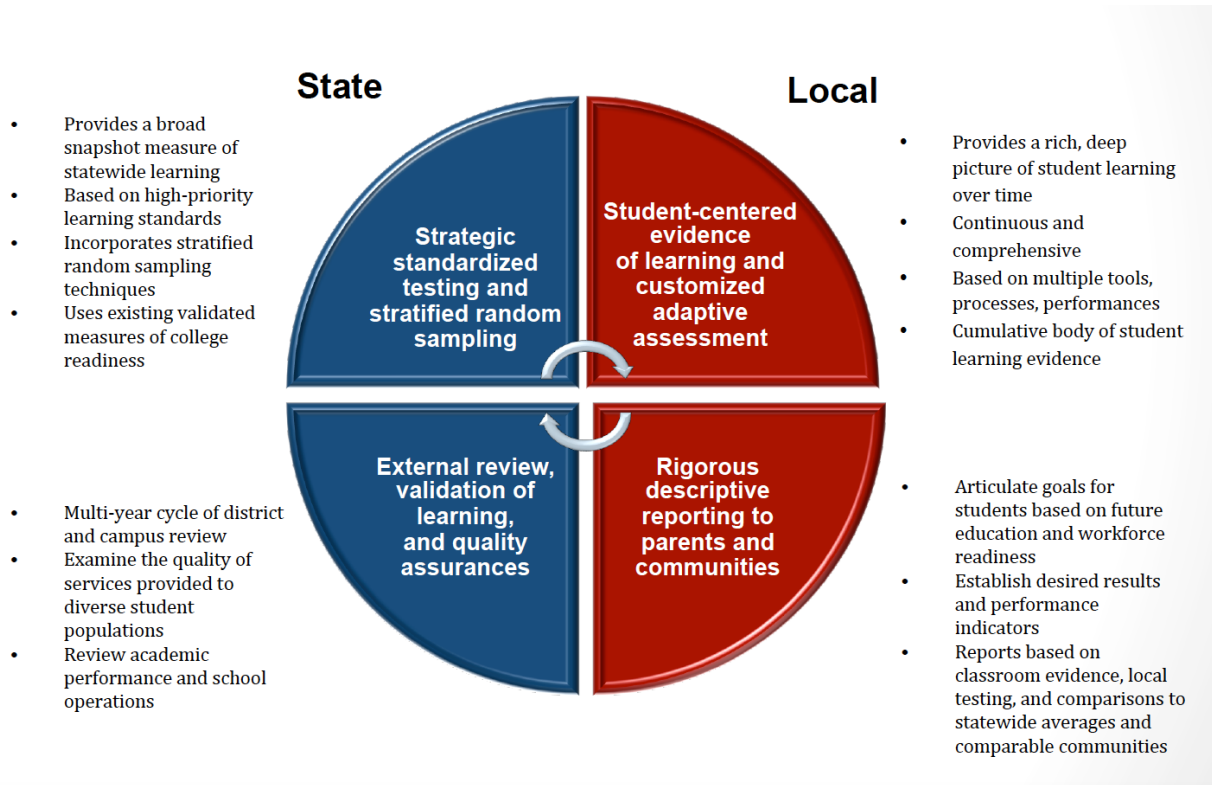
[https://vimeo.com/115146247]

Community-Based Accountability

The purpose of a community-based accountability system is to engage the community in the education of its youth by establishing rigorous standards that meet the unique needs of that community. HB 5 established a community-focused component in our current state accountability system, recognizing the importance of community involvement in student learning. A community-based accountability system empowers local school districts to design their own internal systems of assessment and accountability that, while meeting state standards, allow districts to innovate and customize learning experiences for students.

A community-based accountability system consists of four parts:

1. student and classroom-centered evidence of learning
2. strategic use of standardized testing
3. performance reviews and validation of learning by highly trained visiting teams and

4. rigorous descriptive reporting to parents and community

State / **Local**

Provides a broad snapshot measure of statewide learning
Based on high-priority learning standards
Incorporates stratified random sampling techniques
Uses existing validated measures of college readiness

Strategic standardized testing and stratified random sampling

Student-centered evidence of learning and customized adaptive assessment

Provides a rich, deep picture of student learning over time
Continuous and comprehensive
Based on multiple tools, processes, performances
Cumulative body of student learning evidence

Multi-year cycle of district and campus review
Examine the quality of services provided to diverse student populations
Review academic performance and school operations

External review, validation of learning, and quality assurances

Rigorous descriptive reporting to parents and communities

Articulate goals for students based on future education and workforce readiness
Establish desired results and performance indicators
Reports based on classroom evidence, local testing, and comparisons to statewide averages and comparable communities

It demonstrates evidence of community involvement and engagement in the setting of goals, in results, and in performance indicators.

Exemplars – Community-Based Accountability Systems

Clear Creek ISD – 2014-15 Community Based Accountability Report

[http://goo.gl/pjL2sh]

College Station ISD – CSISD's Community-Based Accountability

[https://vimeo.com/114989931]

Northwest ISD – Community Dashboard: Community-Based Accountability Measures of Success

[http://datadashboard.businesscatalyst.com/]

Closing Remarks

The passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was a response to the "test and punish" regime of NCLB and gives states discretion to set goals and hold districts accountable. In addition, it enables communities and parents to be involved in important decisions regarding the education of their children and the multiple measures that define success. U.S. Senator John Cornyn understands this and has given us the formula for success:

> "Washington's not very good at command and control when it comes to public education," Cornyn said. "That authority is best handled at the state and local level. **If the federal government will set the standard and then provide the resources — the flexibility — for these superintendents, they can come up with the best way to achieve those outcomes.**"
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> *—U.S. Senator John Cornyn, February 17, 2016, KERA interview*

The timing of this commission along with the passage of ESSA creates a unique opportunity for the state to make meaningful changes to our current assessment and accountability system that will better serve the students of Texas.

Thank you for the opportunity to share the work of the Texas High Performance Schools Consortium with you, and thank you for your work on behalf of Texas public education.

Short- and Long-Term Recommendations to the Commission on Next-Generation Assessments and Accountability on behalf of the Texas High Performance Schools Consortium

February 23, 2016

Chairman Kim and Members of the Commission:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input for your consideration as you develop a policy framework for the next-generation assessment and accountability system. I am Dawson Orr, and I represent the High Performance Schools Consortium. I currently am a clinical professor and serve as Chair of the Department of Educational Policy and Leadership in the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education at Southern Methodist University. Prior to assuming my current role, I was a public school educator for 38 years, with a quarter century of service as a superintendent in three distinct school districts, Pampa ISD in the Panhandle, Wichita Falls ISD, and Highland Park ISD in Dallas. During my Texas public school tenure, I have experienced (to the fullest) TEAMS, TAAS 1, TAAS 2, TAKS, EOCs, and STAAR.

The testimony that I offer you, as well as that of my colleague, Dr. Karen Rue, Superintendent of Northwest ISD, is informed by our work as members of the High Performance Schools Consortium created by the Texas Legislature in 2011.

Before moving directly to our recommendations, I do commend the work of Professor Andrew Ho and the design principles he articulated. I also offer a small, but significant, reframing for you to consider as you do your work and develop recommendations. I would ask that you think of assessment and accountability not as a system, rather as a **subsystem** of a much larger and

complex system of learning and teaching. As such, a subsystem should be congruent with the other key components or subsystems that make up the larger system and not distort the work of the overall educational system.

As an example, the State of Texas has recognized the vital importance of developing teachers as adult learners who can grow and adapt to the changing educational needs of students. Also, the new appraisal instrument for teachers focuses on growth, professional learning, and capacity building. While Dr. Ho articulates the importance of downplaying high-stakes measures like school rankings and school-to-school comparisons, the State of Texas is moving forward with an A-F school ranking that will continue to drive teaching to a test in order to avoid negative sanctions. In this environment, the testing and assessment subsystem will trump the instructional improvement subsystem. I would urge this Commission to help frame the proper role of assessment-based accountability within the context of the larger purpose of a state learning system. I will cling to the belief that the purpose of the state learning system is not, and should not be, to produce great standardized test-takers.

Moving to our work in the High Performance Schools Consortium, I offer the following short-term recommendations that recognize the constraints imposed on the State of Texas by federal law. I will offer a second set of recommendations that are more significant and will require new thinking and redefining the federal-state-local partnership.

Recommendation 1: Limit state testing to the readiness standards. While the SBOE is leading important work to develop English Language Arts high-priority learning standards, the process of curriculum revision across the disciplines will be lengthy. The children and teachers of Texas can't continue to try to learn and be tested on a numbing number of discrete learning standards. "Mile-wide and an inch deep" is not a cliché, it is a reality. Teaching for coverage does

not support the deeper learning that colleges, universities, and the workplace demand. I have attached previous testimony given to the House Public Education Committee on this recommendation and the one that follows.

Recommendation 2: Establish true learning standards-based state assessments. The testing design of present state tests does not allocate a sufficient number of test items to a given standard nor does it support meaningful comparison over time on a given learning standard. Standards may be assessed with two or fewer questions. A standard may be tested one year and not the next. Teachers cannot draw meaningful instructional inferences from such a design. State law now sets a two-hour window as a design constraint. Let's use it to develop a better test, a more instructionally valuable test, not just a shorter test.

Recommendation 3: Limit state testing and its inclusion in the accountability system to the requirements of federal law. Over the last 20 years the state has expanded the subjects tested and incorporated much of that testing into a high-stakes accountability system. This has added to the climate and culture of teaching to tests, and changed, for the worse, sound instructional strategies in the teaching of writing and science. As provided for in Section 39.0231 of the Education Code, the legislature has tacitly recognized that a new model for the assessment of writing, one based on teachers as the primary evaluators of student learning, will better serve the students, parents, and teachers of Texas. In the area of science, fifth-grade science teachers race through an exhaustive number of readiness and supporting standards that results in 10-year-olds being expected to learn and understand the solar system in one 45-minute lesson. I have attached previous testimony given to the Senate Education Committee concerning the assessment of writing.

Recommendation 4: Begin modeling stratified random sampling from past tests and future tests. While federal law requires testing every child in certain grades, the state should begin preparing its case for stratified random sampling. No state has more data to mine than Texas. It is time to start building the case for the use of stratified random sampling and the redirection of testing dollars to educational research for instructional strategies to meet the needs of the increasingly diverse student population of Texas.

Recommendation 5: Expand the opportunities for innovation into alternative, district based assessment and accountability subsystems. The writing pilot (Section 39.0231, Education Code) is but one small example of the need to engage in action research and the development of authentic learning and assessment models. The state has articulated a commitment to assessment and accountability that is community-based, promotes parent and community involvement, and reflects the unique needs of each community. Let me emphasize that again — the unique needs of each community. It seems to me that the seedbed most fertile for that work, where such a model is to be developed, must be in the communities and school districts that serve the children in those communities. The state should use the High Performance Schools Consortium and other districts as settings for additional pilot initiatives that can inform the development of community-based accountability and assessment (sub)systems. Deregulation will spark innovation.

The five recommendations offered are interim steps necessary to mitigate shortcomings in the present system and offer a path forward to next-generation assessment and accountability. However, the charge to the Commission goes beyond fixing the shortcomings of the current reality. The opportunity, no, the critical need before us as citizens, is to develop a new reality that will support the deeper learning and responsibility of citizenship required to survive and thrive in a rapidly changing, globally complex, and economically interdependent world.

Creating a New Reality Through New, Balanced Partnerships

Creating an assessment and accountability system that supports the transformed system of teaching and learning needed for the future is no small order and will require thoughtful work, grounded in evidence-based practice, informed by ongoing action learning and research, and re-conceptualized roles of the key stakeholders, particularly local districts, the state, and the federal government.

The High Performance Schools Consortium makes the following recommendation regarding the state and federal partnership:

The Commission should urge the state to seek relief from the mandatory whole population testing requirements for grades 3-8 and 10. The state should show the programmatic efficacy and efficiency of stratified random sampling of Texas children to guide state policy in the same manner as national policy has been guided by the federal government's NAEP testing program. The state is the proper authority to determine if stratified random sampling should be supplemented by selected whole grade testing at key gateway transition points.

Regardless of the success of the petition for relief from federal testing, a new and balanced partnership is needed. The state role has grown dramatically over the last 25 years and has evolved to a point that the state assessment and accountability system tries to function as a statewide super instructional management system accounting for the individual progress of each child through the application of standardized measures. That role has led to an imbalanced partnership and will not succeed. The state should focus on the overall quality of the educational system.

The District's Role

In a next-generation system, **districts are accountable for learning at the student, classroom, school, and district level**.

They are **accountable to** the students, parents, and communities they serve.

Districts have the **lead responsibility** for the following core accountability functions:

1. Determine measures and assessments of student learning aligned to standards.
2. Collect evidence documenting learning using measures and methods that are standards-aligned.
3. Determine student learning at the classroom, school, and district level based on multiple measures.
4. Communicate and report student learning to students, parents, and stakeholders.
5. Determine the implications for local policy, instruction, and resource allocations based on student learning data.

The State's Role

In a next-generation system, **the state is accountable for the establishment of a rigorous accreditation process** to ensure educational quality at the district, regional, and state level.

The state is **accountable to** taxpayers and citizens.

The state has the **lead responsibility** for the following core accountability functions:

1. Establish educational quality expectations.
2. Determine high-priority learning standards.

3. Assess student learning as a function of quality audits through random sampling, gateway years, and other limited measures.

4. Determine educational quality at the state, regional, and district level based on multiple measures and dimensions.

5. Determine the implications for statewide policy, research and innovation, curriculum development, and resource allocation based on the determination of educational quality.

It is our strong belief that these redefined roles, coupled with sound design principles such as those articulated by Andrew Ho, would establish the framework for next-generation assessment and accountability. Such a framework would allow districts, in partnership with universities, communities, and the state to delve deeply into formative and diagnostic assessment that supports genuine, transferable learning. It provides for innovation in assessment practices and the opportunity to develop the non-intrusive, embedded assessments that many special needs and special circumstances learners need. It offers customization over standardization as the paradigm for improvement. The High Performance Schools Consortium stands ready to help bring the next-generation assessment and accountability system into reality.

Thank you for your commitment to the enormous responsibility you have accepted.

A New Vision for Public School Accountability in Texas:
A More Balanced State and Local Partnership

State Accountability	Local Accountability
Accreditation of • Educational quality (state, regional, and district level) **Accountable to** • Taxpayers and citizens ***Core Accountability Functions:*** • Establish educational quality expectations • Determine high-priority student learning standards • Audit districts for educational quality (attainment of standards) • Assess student learning as a function of quality audits (e.g., random, seldom, gateway) • Communicate/report educational quality determination • Educational quality determination of state, regional, district level (based on multiple dimensions) • Determine statewide policy/guidance/budget implications of educational quality determination	**Accountable for** • Student learning (district, school, classroom, and student level) **Accountable to** • Parents and community ***Core Accountability Functions:*** • Determine measures / assessments of student learning (standards aligned) • Collect evidence documenting learning (using standards-aligned measures and methods) • Communicate/report student learning • Determination of student learning at the district, school, and classroom level (based on multiple measures/methods) • Determine local policy / instruction/resource implications based on student learning data

Testimony to the Texas House Public Education Committee, April 2, 2013

Chairman Aycock, Representative Ratliff, and members of the House Public Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify for HB 2836. I am Dawson Orr, Superintendent of Schools in Highland Park ISD. I believe that this bill would benefit students in grades 3 through 8 across the state.

This bill recognizes that the present assessment blueprint of the state does not support the kind of teaching and learning that our students need to be prepared to world class standards. Specifically, the state tests too many standards at a superficial level and includes some standards that can be more efficiently and effectively assessed at the classroom level.

The Texas state curriculum is known as the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. The curriculum describes learning standards which are the curricular aims that girls and boys need to know. The important standards at each grade level are known as "readiness standards". TEA characterizes readiness standards as those which are:
1. Essential for success in the current grade
2. Important for preparedness in the next grade
3. Support college and career readiness
4. Necessitate in-depth instruction
5. Address significant content and concepts

In other words, these are the skills and knowledge that matter, that are needed to be a successful learner. In grades 3-8 in Reading and English Language Arts there are 80 readiness standards tested with 174 questions for an average of slightly above 2 questions per standard. No teacher would draw a strong instructional inference about what a student knows, or doesn't know, based on 2 questions. Why is the test designed this way? I believe it is because the state also chooses to measure supporting standards. However, the supporting standards are not essential for success in the current grade. TEA characterizes supporting standards in this way:
1. Introduced in the current grade, but may be emphasized in a subsequent year
2. Reinforced in the current grade, but may be emphasized in a previous year
3. Play a role in preparing students for the next grade, but not a central role
4. Address more narrowly defined content and concepts.

So despite having a limited role, the 108 supporting standards in Reading/ELA are tested by 106 questions. To add to the confusion, the state samples the supporting standards over a three year period.

The effect of the state assessment blueprint, when coupled to a high stakes testing system, is that teachers are driven to teach for coverage, not for depth. Supporting standards have to be given the same weight as readiness standards. The result is a "mile-wide, inch deep" curriculum and testing program that provides limited information to students, teachers, and parents.

Supporting standards will be taught and assessed by teachers in the classroom when they represent the pre-requisite skills students need for the readiness standards. Readiness standards represent significant learning concepts that merit more than 2 to 3 questions if they are to be meaningfully measured. I urge your support for HB 2836.

Thank you,
Dawson R. Orr
Superintendent, Highland Park ISD

Testimony to the Senate Education Committee, August 26, 2014

Chairman Patrick and members of the Senate Education Committee. I am Dawson Orr, Superintendent of Schools in Highland Park, Dallas. I am beginning my 6th year in Highland Park and my 25th year as a Texas school superintendent having previously served as the superintendent of Pampa ISD and Wichita Falls ISD.

Thank you for the opportunity for dialogue on the importance of writing for students as they prepare for college and career readiness.

My understanding of today's hearing is to examine STAAR writing scores, review the types of writing required, and to explore the need for targeted staff development in writing. My testimony addresses the types of writing expected from students, to what extent does the state assessment of writing allows reasonable inferences about the status of student writing, and some thoughts on targeted staff development.

In testimony before this committee during the last legislative session, I expressed great concern about a "mile-wide, inch-deep" state curriculum coupled with a "popping corn" assessment design in which too many learning standards are tested in such a limited way that teachers can't make an informed inference about a student's mastery of a standard. We appreciated the Senate Education Committee's acknowledgment of our concerns and its unanimous support for HB 2836 which would have limited testing to the readiness standards in math and reading.

When it comes to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for writing, there is a more positive narrative to share. By and large, the TEKS for writing reflect a logical progression of increasing expectations and rigor as students move through the K-12 curriculum. I have provided excerpts from a document prepared by our Region 10 Service Center that shows the vertical alignment and cumulative nature of the writing TEKS. It is cumulative in design and provides clear guidance for curricular planning and the delivery of instruction.

The challenge in determining whether students are developing the writing fluencies needed for college/career readiness and citizenship is in properly assessing the development and quality of student writing. I submit to you that the present system of state assessment of writing, although well intended, is incapable of providing students, teachers, parents, and policymakers anything other than a very limited, rough measure of writing. I would caution against drawing too many inferences about students' interest or ability to write based on a 26-line first draft sample written under artificial circumstances that are the opposite of how quality writing generally occurs. Teachers use first drafts as the starting point and employ formative assessment strategies of self-evaluation, peer review, and targeted teacher feedback as part of a continuing process of writing. The state assessment takes formative drafts and makes summative judgments about students' writing. It's akin to judging a runner's ability to run a timed, competitive marathon by his or her first mile.

A second caution I have is centered on the lack of correlation between STAAR writing scores and other better, more established measures of writing. I am not a researcher and do not have access to the detailed academic performance of students in other districts, but I can speak to the performance of the students in my district. Our teachers, students, and parents know and embrace the importance of writing for college and university work. It is taught extensively in elementary grades through senior English. We survey our graduates after their first year of college and ask about their ability to meet college writing expectations. We monitor and evaluate our students' writing skills extensively through multiple sources. Among those sources is STAAR writing. STAAR writing tells us that only 1 in 3 of our tested high school students has reached the

advanced academic level. We simply don't have confidence in STAAR as an accurate measure of skill or as a predictor of future success.

That data lacks credibility given all of our historical data about college admission, persistence to the second year of college, and college graduation rates. There are other data as well. For example, in our district, all students, except those with unique special needs, take Explore in grade 8, Plan in grade 9, and the ACT in grade 11. The ACT has well-documented data about college readiness and these three exams are designed to show progress towards college readiness including college composition. For our most recent graduating class, 97% met the ACT English Composition standard. Advanced Placement courses are also heavily emphasized in Highland Park. While we have open enrollment for AP courses, we require that all students taking an AP course take the corresponding exam. As you know, these exams are graded by college professors and high school AP teachers. Eight out of 10 juniors and seniors take advanced placement courses. Of the 2,900 exams taken, 75% of those scores were graded at a 3, 4, or 5, meaning they were eligible for college credit. Recently, we looked back at the 2013 English II EOC writing scores for our current senior class. On the state exam, given in the spring of 2013, there were 80 students who received a rating between basic and satisfactory, hardly what we want for our students. However, as juniors, 26 of those "basic to satisfactory" students took the AP writing exam and scored a 3, 4, or 5. In addition, another 18 students who did not take AP English scored 500 or higher on the SAT writing exam or had a composite ACT score of 23.

The STAAR writing results don't correlate with those on more time-proven assessments (the AP or ACT), which are strongly considered by colleges and universities during the admissions process.

So while Texas has a solid curriculum framework for writing, it does not have a writing assessment that provides meaningful instructional feedback to the teachers, students, and parents of Texas.

Which leads me to the notion of targeted staff development. The very term begs the question, targeted toward what? What problem are we trying to solve? I do not believe there is compelling evidence that the English Language Arts teachers of Texas do not understand how to teach students to write an essay with an effective introductory and concluding paragraph, a controlling idea, and an appropriate organizing structure. Nor is there a basis to believe that teachers don't understand what constitutes acceptable student performance on the STAAR test. The Division of Assessment has also provided detailed examples of student responses and the basis for what determines a student's score.

If it is the improvement of student responses to a statewide writing prompt, there is at least one other strategy to consider and evaluate, which is the development of a writing assessment that more clearly mirrors the instructional process by which students are taught to write.

I have provided you an example of the State of Washington fourth-grade writing assessment that actually reflects the language of classroom instruction. I am not suggesting we adopt their test, but the comparison is striking. The Texas test offers five terse bullet points, while the Washington test clearly describes a writing process that reflects classroom instruction. It provides a fourth-grader a structure through which he or she can demonstrate writing proficiency. If we must test, then let's test in a way that supports quality instruction, not in a way that undermines quality instruction.

In reality, the State of Texas should aspire to something better than a standardized test. I would ask you to consider a system for gathering evidence of student writing based on the actual work

our student do in classrooms. Just as the digital environment is transforming the world of work, it can support collecting evidence of student learning via digital portfolios. It is feasible to collect a first draft, student and peer feedback, teacher feedback, and a finished work. A variety of types of writing could be collected that reflect the critical learning standards in the TEKS. Just as the AP and IB programs use outside moderators to help ensure quality and objectivity, such a system can be developed for our Texas schools.

Respectfully submitted,
Dawson R. Orr, Ph.D.