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AGENCY NEWS

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Statement from Texas Education Commissioner Mike Morath

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During this unprecedented public health challenge, we at TEA are doing all we can to support our schools and local communities. Given the need for social distancing, schools across the state are closing normal operations, and working to support learning while students remain home.

In normal times, STAAR serves as an invaluable tool to accurately and reliably diagnose how well students have learned to read, write, and do math. This information is used by parents to support the academic growth of their children, and by educators to adjust how they approach teaching to maximize student learning.

This year, though, it has become apparent that schools will be unable to administer STAAR as they would normally. TEA has already waived a host of regulations, allowing schools to quickly pivot to provide instruction and support in ways they never have before. We are thankful for Governor Abbott's willingness to waive the STAAR testing requirement, as it allows schools the maximum flexibility to remain focused on public health while also investing in the capacity to support student learning remotely.

The educators we have been working with across the state remain concerned about the possible impact COVID-19 will have on student academic growth. TEA will continue to support them in every way we can, including ensuring the availability of free tools to diagnose student learning. This will be just as necessary moving forward as it has been, so our dedicated Texas educators have the tools necessary to ensure all our students continue to grow into the best versions of themselves, both during and beyond our current public health challenge.

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