

# Empowered for Success

A College and Career Newsletter for the Gulf Coast

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June 2012

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## STAAR End-of-Course Exam Results

Many of our readers are familiar with the state's performance on the newly implemented [STAAR](#) (The State of Texas Assessment for Academic Readiness). The [results](#) seem concerning, but show a reality that the Gulf Coast educational community is well acquainted with: our students' readiness for college work. Whereas former state standardized testing emphasized knowledge and curriculum mastery, the STAAR is explained by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) as emphasizing cognitive strategies and readiness standards. (View a comparison chart of [TAKS vs. STAAR](#) [.pdf].) The STAAR pass/fail status of a student should indicate two points: whether or not that student learned essential skills of that course, and whether or not that student is prepared to do well in the course that follows.

The initial results may seem discouraging in a way similar to the initial reception of the TAKS test, in 2004. The following is a quote from Former Commissioner of Education Shirley Neely, after the second round of [TAKS results](#) were released in 2005.

"Much was asked of [high school juniors] when state law created the tougher TAKS (Texas Academic Knowledge and Skills). The test covers more subjects and requires more complex reasoning and thinking skills than the previous state test. When fewer than half the students passed the first year, there were more than a few people who were worried, but the Class of 2005 showed us what they can do."

(Former Commissioner of Education Shirley Neely, in 2005)

## Professional Development Calendar

EOC Success in  
Regions 4, 5, and 6  
July 5 - 18

[Secondary Mathematics  
Improvement](#)

[Collaborative \(SMIC\)  
2012 Summer Institute](#)  
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

@ Region 6 ESC  
July 9

[STAAR Techniques to  
Engage Learners in  
Literacy and Academic  
Rigor \(STELLAR\)](#)

Grades 8 - 12  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
@ Region 4 ESC  
July 9 - 10

[World History EOC  
Success](#)

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
@ Region 5 ESC  
July 9 - 11

[Algebra II EOC State-  
Developed Academy](#)  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

@ ESC Region 5  
July 11

[STAAR EOC Reading](#)

The [passing standards](#) (.pdf) of STAAR will increase in 2014 and will reach the final level by 2016. With all the dedicated educators in the state, we are confident that this will statement will be echoed about the STAAR as well.

For more information on STAAR EOC standards, visit [tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/staar/](http://tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/staar/).

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**This section of *Empowered for Success* is based solely on the feedback of our readers. To share your institution's CCRS initiatives, simply visit our [Contact Us](#) page of the [Gulf Coast CCRS](#) website and send us an email with your information. We look forward to hearing from you!**

## Common Reader Workshop

July 25 - 26 @ Amarillo College

Contributed by: Russel Lowery-Hart, Ph.D

I hope that you'll consider attending or sending a member of your staff to join us for this dynamic in-state workshop.

**What is it?** Amarillo College [will host a workshop](#) specifically geared to the development, implementation and assessment of Common Reader programs. It will feature professionals who have worked with Common Reader programs previously, but who also are still learning how the program can function at full capacity. This workshop was born from talking with other Common Reader participants at the First-Year Experience conference, and their desire to "talk shop" about assessment and other how-to areas.

**Who should attend?** The workshop is intended for those responsible for planning, implementing and assessing Common Reader programs. It would be appropriate for those currently involved in Common Reader programs, or those interested in beginning programs on their campus.

**How much does it cost?** With current budget constraints, this type of conference fits the bill for affordability. The conference registration fee is \$99.

For more information about the workshop, or for travel information, visit Amarillo College's Common Reader [blog](#).

9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
@ Brenham High School  
July 11 - 13

[Chemistry EOC Success Academy II](#)

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
@ Corrigan-Camden High School

July 16 - 17  
[Surviving the STAAR Physics EOC](#)

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
@ Region 5 ESC  
July 16 - 18

[Biology EOC Success](#)

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
@ Region 4 ESC  
July 18 - 20

[Algebra II EOC Success](#)

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
@ Crockett Middle School

July 19 - 20

[Geometry EOC Success](#)

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
@ Region 4 ESC  
July 23 - 24

[English III EOC Success](#)

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
@ Region 4 ESC  
July 26

[Writing for STAAR and Beyond](#)

9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
@ College Station Conference Center  
July 31 - August 1

[Algebra I EOC Success](#)

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
@ Needville Junior High  
See the complete ESC event calendars for June 2012:

[Region 4](#)

[Region 5](#)

[Region 6](#)

## Online Resources

### Stay up-to-date on Gulf Coast news

For upcoming events and recent articles in education in the Gulf Coast, visit our [news page](#).

A few of the latest items:

- May 3, 2012: [College Enrollment and Work Activity of High School Graduates](#), a report from the US Bureau of Labor and Statistics
- March 8, 2012: [Transfer & Mobility, A National View of Pre-Degree Student Movement in Postsecondary Institutions](#), the signature report of National Student Clearinghouse
- April 24, 2012: [Simplifying Student Aid](#), an article from The College Board

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If you have any feedback or suggestions, please email  
*Empowered for Success* Editor [Alicia Wilson](#).  
Be sure to stop by the [GC-CCRS](#) website  
for more information and updates!

For other resources:  
[Gulf Coast CCRS News](#)

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