September 2014

“We may be very busy, we may be very efficient, but we will also be truly effective only when we begin with the end in mind.”

-Stephen R. Covey

Superintendent Briefing

**Administration and Leadership**

**The Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Texas Survey** is a statewide survey to determine if they have the supports necessary for effective teaching. See the results at: [http://www.telltexas.org/results](http://www.telltexas.org/results)

**ESC-20 & School Leaders Network (SLN)** will offer school leaders a platform to collaborate with a diverse group of leaders committed to improving their practice and leading change in their communities while promoting educational opportunity for all students. More information: [http://www.esc20.net/preview.aspx?name=sup_ls.SLN](http://www.esc20.net/preview.aspx?name=sup_ls.SLN)

**Graduation Toolkit**: TEA, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board & Texas Workforce Commission, has published a graduation toolkit for students, parents & school counselors. [http://www.tea.state.tx.us/brochures/](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/brochures/)

**Curriculum and Instruction**

**New Course Update**: TEA is currently working with a group of mathematics educators and other experts in the field of mathematics to develop two new math courses for high school credit: Algebraic Reasoning and Statistics. Drafts of the proposed Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are expected to be available for public comment before the November SBOE meeting. Final approval of TEKS for these courses is expected in January 2015, with implementation in the 2015 - 2016 school year.

**Continuation of Texas Success**: Think Through Math and Istation, the existing online mathematics and reading resources currently available through TEA’s Texas SUCCESS initiative, will be continued for the 2014-2015 school year. [http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=25769815548](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=25769815548)

**Assessment**

**TEA Student Assessment TETNs** scheduled for 9/24 (Accommodations Training and STAAR A Overview) and 9/25 (STAAR Alternate Overview). Both sessions are scheduled for 9 AM – 12 PM.

**STAAR performance standards maintained for 2014-15**: TEA will maintain initial academic performance standards (Phase-In 1) for the STAAR® program for the 2014–2015 school year.

**2014 STAAR Released Tests**: The tests and answer keys are available at [http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student_assessment/staar(testquestions/](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student_assessment/staar(testquestions/)

**Student Success Initiative (SSI)**: The requirement that 5th and 8th graders must pass the STAAR mathematics assessment to be promoted will be suspended for the 2014-15 school year for mathematics only. [http://www.tea.state.tx.us/news_release.aspx?id=25769815716](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/news_release.aspx?id=25769815716)

**Other**

**Kindergarten Reading Assessment Data Submission Extension**: The Kindergarten Reading Assessment Data Submission has been extended from August 29, 2014 to September 30, 2014 to allow for completion.

**The 2014 Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll** report is available. This report shares the public opinion about education. See the results at: [http://t.co/adWYyZxjg/s/jytl](http://t.co/adWYyZxjg/s/jytl)

**ACT Takers**: The 2014 graduating class taking the ACT college admission test hit a new high. 116,547 Texas students took the ACT (up by more than 6,700 students from 2013). The 2014 ACT composite scores for Texas students continued to surpass the national average in mathematics and science. [http://www.tea.state.tx.us/news_release.aspx?id=25769815585](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/news_release.aspx?id=25769815585)

**Federal and State Programs**

**New CTE Teacher Conference, CTE Leadership Academy & Counselor Academy** sponsored by the Texas Education Agency. Applications deadlines are approaching quickly. Please access the following link to obtain the deadline and submit your online application now, visit: CTE Professional Development at: [http://cte.tamucc.edu](http://cte.tamucc.edu)

**The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010** provides LEAs in low-income areas with an alternative approach for operating school meal programs. The CEP was pilot in select states in 2011–2012 and became available nationwide for the 2014–2015 school year. For additional information regarding CEP: TEA: [http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=25769809730](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=25769809730)

**Special Education**

**Designee for Transition & Employment**: LEAs should have entered the contact information for this designee by 9/1/14. Training guidelines for the designee are being developed and disseminated in the spring of 2015.

**Texas Transition and Employment Guide**: The date for posting the guide has been extended to the end of October.

**SHARS Update**: For Medicaid purposes, a school district’s use of electronic records and signatures for SHARS is permissible. Maintaining the records in an electronic format is acceptable as long as the records are accessible to an investigator/auditor and can be reviewed as needed. Each LEA should determine at its own risk what standards are consistent with state and federal electronic requirements.

**Accountability**

**TEA Accountability Video**: The Texas Education Agency offers a quick overview of the State of Texas Accountability System and what goes into the annual ratings for schools, districts and charters. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbEgrdijuc8&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbEgrdijuc8&feature=youtu.be)

**Understanding State Accountability**: For a comprehensive and succinct explanation of the State Accountability System visit: [http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=25769815584](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=25769815584)

**Improvement Required (IR)**: If your district, campus, or charter school is identified as IR, there are required interventions through the 2014 State Accountability System and USD/ESEA Waiver. All information is available at: [http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=25769815584](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=25769815584)