General Comments: Standards Implementation Professional Development

Overview of the Standards Changes and/or Knowledge of TEKS

1. Going over and emphasizing the new changes and what it looks like is important.
2. Explore the shift with the 8 strands and how it impacts instruction.
3. Need training provided on the thinking behind the new TEKS and how they should be implemented. There are a lot of changes that many teachers may not understand. Getting teachers on the same page is priceless.
4. Professional development on new ELARS a year prior to implementation.
5. Professional development on the revised TEKS and state expectations.
6. We would like a detailed and informative PD that is interactive and open for a question and response time. We need to make sure that there is a true and clean alignment with all ELA TEKS K-12.
7. We need to know how the new TEKS will translate into actual lessons and what specific skills needs to be taught and to what depth.
8. We need to teach/train pre-service teachers about TEKS. TEKS need to be a part of their education curriculum-especially fast-track programs like A-Step.

PD Through ESC’s and/or Fair Training Across the State

1. Train district leaders/ESC specialists, which can then be turned around to teachers across the districts in person.
2. Professional development by the state for consistency.
3. Teachers need explicit instruction on how to be effective teachers. For new ELAR TEKS, the best way to reach the masses would be to train all ESC ELAR consultants and hold them responsible to equip and train educators within the 20 regions.
4. Consistent PD across all region ESC’s. My district is very mobile and we see the inconsistent teaching from other districts.

5. The same training across the state; modules, specific language so curriculum coordinators and teachers are not left to interpret the standards and can focus on instruction.

6. PD needs to come from state—ESC—district.

7. In order to be fair to the students of our state, we have to train teachers across the state in similar ways. To give teachers unequal training in the standards that will be assessed is setting kids up for problems.

8. We need training for all teachers to be the same, whether in urban or rural schools. Some trainings are hours away from teachers.

9. I need the ESC’s to be explicitly trained so that the strands are not just ambiguous documents. They are in the best position (20 of them) to be consistent/or spread a consistent message throughout the state.

**PD Through Districts and/or Funding/Resources for PD**

1. Unfortunately, not all ELAR teachers are experts in the facets of ELA, so PD to fill in those gaps would be great.

2. If teachers, educational professionals, etc. are included in the types of PD we are given, can we include curriculum specialists (representatives from districts across Texas) in the actual design (or creation of) PD?

3. State training should be available to teachers, not just district leaders.

4. Fall 2017/Spring 2018, district level personnel like directors, coordinators, literacy coaches, curriculum specialists (through cohorts and academies); Spring 2018/Summer 2018, academies approach presented by district personnel with ongoing support provided through cohorts (state-level cohorts from Fall 2017/Spring 2018).

5. Resources to choose from to create locally appropriate training (as it sounds that we are on the hook to provide PD)

6. Districts also need guidance to lead the work that happens locally. Providing resources/materials to district curriculum leaders would be extremely helpful.

7. Literacy coaches being left in place to push out PD at the campus level.

8. Once ELAR/SLAR TEKS have been revised, school districts need time allotted and funds to conduct PD for all teachers at all grade levels.

9. Training should be effective above all. In order to be so, it should be flexible to meet all learning styles—just like children. Also, small, manageable bites—the way to eat an elephant. Implementation takes time and should be allowed for between bites. Adequate funding should be supplied by the state because that’s how we realize our state leaders value our education system.

10. Provide relevant resources.
11. Resources to choose from to create locally appropriate training (as it sounds that we are on the hook to provide PD)

12. Districts also need guidance to lead the work that happens locally. Providing resources/materials to district curriculum leaders would be extremely helpful.

13. Literacy coaches being left in place to push out PD at the campus level.

14. PD material to walk away with (new/revised standards) needs to allow for timely delivery of resources.

15. We need funding for staff development on the new TEKS.

16. It’s important to budget for training for the implementations of these new TEKS. To save funds, we could plan for an overview and leave districts with lists of ways to “check in” on implementation through conversations and PD.

17. Training for districts in how best to support and redeliver training when necessary.

18. I want updated books, computer programs, etc. for the new TEKS! I also want the material to reflect ALL cultures.

Time for Training and/or Extended Periods of Training

1. We need models and time to practice translating TEKS into lessons.

2. PD needs to be ongoing and job embedded—it begins with some type of overview and then bends into grade-specific training. PD needs to include the big picture of the LA block and how to fit it all in.

3. Time to process the information is needed; ongoing assistance/PD after implementation is needed.

4. PD available throughout the year, chunked into manageable pieces, and online video PD.

Other

1. I am less concerned about how PD is delivered and more concerned about what is delivered.

2. I feel quite confident about what 30 years of teaching has taught me.

3. I love the idea of online training snippets like Khan academy. Just in time learning.

4. Offering academies like were done in the past were great as long as all stakeholders can attend.

5. You spoke a little about the need for ease-of-access to virtual and face-to-face PD opportunities. Another very important component of PD is that it must be effective training so that the knowledge is transferrable to all classrooms.

Specific Comments: When and What Type of Standards Implementation Professional Development
When to Train

1. I would love to see training for the new standards in July or August, right before school, at the ESC or through district coordinators. In a perfect world, we would have assessment suggestions: not just STAAR questions but the kind of rigor and real-world applications in addition to formative assessment ideas.

2. PD during the 2017-2018 year, scheduled as release time throughout the school year.

3. Professional development earlier than the summer before implementation.

4. PD for the new TEKS needs to start the year prior to implementation.

5. Training on TEKS should begin at least 6 months before implementation for districts to process the changes and make adjustments to scope and sequence documents and plan and rewrite assessments.

Online Training

1. I love Donna Bahorich’s comment idea about vignettes/modules online.

2. PD online with the ability to ask questions as needed and follow-up components released throughout the school year.

3. Time needs to be designated/required by the state for the online modules to be completed.

4. Online training modules that are free, housed at TEA and user friendly.

5. Online modules with classroom scenarios (video clips) combined with tips/rationale/explanation interspersed. Keep these modules available so they can be revisited time and again as needed to review.

6. Providing online PD through webinars and/or modules, twitter chats. Also, doing a TOT to those individuals who are charged with training administrators and teachers on curriculum.

7. Online modules would be very helpful to teachers.

Hybrid Training

1. Face-to-face training is needed with follow-up digitally throughout the year to reflect and learn.

2. I like the idea of modules online for training. However, I do think that there should be an in-depth face-to-face training for school reading specialists or representatives from different schools who need a more in-depth understanding of the new TEKS. Then, the teachers could go online, but they would have a knowledgeable person to go to with questions.

3. Delivered both in person (ESC’s) and online in modules, maybe by small areas.

Face-to-Face Training

1. Small group professional development taught at the district level by outside experts (including vertical alignment training).
Follow Up After Initial Training

1. After professional development, or training, allow time to plan, digest, discuss with campus/teachers what can be implemented immediately, near future, later goal. We get training but no time to put into effect.

Training for Writing Instruction

1. Prompt ideas for persuasion, transition practice between paragraphs, models for expository and persuasive and SARs.
2. Samples of composition expectations…ex. Multi-genre essay focusing on literary, informational, argumentative
3. We need more professional development on how to integrate reading/writing TEKS in secondary education.
4. I think teachers need to spend less time breaking down the TEKS and SE’s and write and read along with their students. Sharing the experiences our students do is the best way to teach them.
5. Successful integration of reading and writing TEKS during the limited time in one class period, especially in the grades that are STAAR tested for both reading and writing.
6. Every teacher needs extensive experience with writing workshop. Teachers need to spend at least a week learning the elements of writing workshop and writing-being authors. They need to experience what they will do with students. This will inform their teaching and understanding of the TEKS.
7. Teachers need to experience reading and workshops as students so they understand the power of being treated as a reader and writer. At least one week immersed in learning the skills and tools used by professionals would help teachers know how to set the stage and the conditions for their students.
8. Teachers need clarification on teaching writing and that the different modes of writing build on each other. Also, that if the students are taught all of the modes, they will be prepared for the test. The importance is to teach students to read like writers.

Training with Examples/Samples/Models

1. Please include strategies to reinforce the new standards that use best practices, and please include sample EOC/STAAR questions for any newly revised standards. Include strategies, approaches, and samples/models of writing for the new standards, including the research component.
2. We need digital links to actual lessons that show teaching of the standards.
9. PD that provides time to see how the new TEKS can be applied to tried and true lessons and units-no need to completely rearrange curriculum.
10. Support from the state in how to turn the TEKS/SE’s into “units of study” for each grade level.
11. Include what it looks like when students master the new standards.
12. We need curriculum documents for all subject areas that are clear, specific, and full of examples. They are currently too vague and open to interpretation. That openness creates much confusion and stress.

13. Teacher sample lessons, units, assessments that can exemplify what is intended by the standards. We are English teachers. We interpret everything in complex ways. If consistency is to be expected across the state, agreed upon examples of standards in practice are needed. Then, allow teachers and districts to differentiate or adapt for their student populations.

**Vertical Alignment and/or How to Teach So Many Skills to So Many Different Students**

1. Many of the literacy skills in the secondary repeat. It would be much better if teachers were shown how they build and that they should be taught like that. Secondary teachers struggle with literacy and need structure and support.

2. We need vertical alignment training to ensure that we are reinforcing and building knowledge and skills from grade to grade.

3. Lots of training on the flow from one grade level to the next—the importance of where your puzzle piece fits in the student’s school and life experience.

4. I believe teachers need clarity over the expectations at each grade and an understanding of how the standards connect to...best practice instruction, student real world experiences, racial justice, including re-centering the schooling experience of Black and Hispanic students.

5. Teachers need comprehensive lists of changes, TEKS that have moved up and down grade levels at least 12 months beforehand to adequately plan for making sure there are no gaps and holes in learning.

6. We need training on how teachers manage to teach all of these TEKS in the short amount of time they have.

7. Vertically aligned trainings are needed.

8. More help with differentiation in the rural setting.

**Phonological Awareness, Phonics, Grammar Training**

1. High school teachers will need training to incorporate read alouds, student choice, and the aspects of vocabulary listed as word study, phonological awareness, print concepts and phonics.

2. For teachers who have not been trained in helping students develop word structure knowledge through phonological awareness...and phonics to decode...is there a plan for teacher training?

3. I have a great deal of concern about the large amount of grammar to be expected to be taught at the high school level. We will need more on that.

**Training on Assessment**

1. We need more training and resources for our special populations so that we can get them to pass the same tests that other students take or STAAR A, which is just accommodated.
2. How will the standards be assessed? Teachers need this key piece to facilitate backwards planning and vertical alignment.
   a. SAT-ACT
      i. EOC Classroom Assessment
   1. STAAR

Research, Reading, and Rhetoric Training

1. PD that focuses on the research TEKS-how to implement/integrate with other strands so research is less of a “stand alone” unit (which is what often happens).
2. Reading, inferences across texts: how to create authentic questions for them.
3. As an AP teacher, I have more extensive training with teaching rhetoric/logic (logical fallacies, structure of an argument, etc.), but these ideas are more prominent in the new TEKS, so my co-workers will need more training in that area.

Other General Training Comments

1. Tech apps. that support reading and writing.

Specific Comments: What Does Not Work for Standards Implementation Professional Development

1. Prescription where we are all robots and are provided cookie cutter lessons is not good.
2. Everybody is going to ask for curriculum/application training, but ignore them. Until teachers are experts/masters of what is actually in the standards, and their structures, all other training will be a waste of time.
3. Khan Academy-type lessons but with time allocated in the school day and not just “checking the box”- we did that.
4. Not a week-long in-service of “The state hasn’t told us yet” or “We don’t really know yet.”
5. We don’t want the ridiculous TEA-created PowerPoint programs that overly script the presenters. Ex. TALA
6. Professional development done by subject level—pick on object to cover and cover in depth instead of just touching on 12 different flavor of the week ideas.

General Comments: Clarity of Standards

Glossary/Clarifying Document/Examples Needed
1. We need documents that provide clear specificity and examples that help us to understand with great clarity the meaning of the student expectations and ideas about how students should show mastery.

2. Resources and the specificity in our standards would help tremendously.

3. Grade-band TEKS need an accompanying document to reference how that TEK looks different in 2nd versus 3rd grade. We laughed about the glossary, but the academic vocabulary should list any vocabulary a student might encounter on the STAAR test. For example, stage directions...where was that in the TEKS?

4. I feel confident in the development opportunities that my district offers; however, no amount of training will be successful until we have clear TEKS with examples to show teachers what the state intends to see in our classrooms.

5. My district offers many development opportunities. No amount of training will be beneficial until we have clear TEKS with examples to show teachers what the state would like to see in our classroom.

6. We need clear expectations and examples of what the TEKS actually mean. Less ambiguity in the language of the TEKS.

**Clarify Wording of TEKS Document**

1. All I need from the state is for them to clarify the language of the TEKS so that I understand exactly what the state expects to see in my classroom.

2. The language of the TEKS needs to be clarified because many teachers have a hard time deciding on what the “verbiage” intends.

3. Right now the standards are dense and intimidating. PD needs to unpack them.

4. Provide specificity for very general terms in the SE’s. This is especially important for new teachers.

5. Need the language to be less ambiguous without being too specific and rigid.

6. Need clear, non-ambiguous language in the new TEKS.

7. TEKS specificity to clarify the language.

8. More clarification on vague/broad SE’s.

9. As a district ELAR coordinator, I need to ensure that the standards are accessible for teachers. Accessible means clear, concise, objective-easy to decode and translate into instruction in the classroom. If the students are objective, then teachers can make use of the training we provide.

**General Comment About Training**

1. The training will need to ensure that teachers have a full understanding of what the TEKS mean-the clarity of what they need to teach. Therefore, teaching will be consistent throughout the state.

**Specific Comments: Clarity of Standards**
1. Regions and districts need a guiding document that could include a glossary of terms, supporting research, clarifying statements for each TEK/SE, vision statements (what are we striving for teachers and students), and alignment from grade to grade; we need to see the progression of learning by standard.

2. When writing the state standards, I know there’s a vision for how they will translate into instruction. Share the vision of the standard, and set parameters for allowable interpretations.

3. Clarify how these new standards will change the STAAR.

4. There is a good bit of reading jargon such as “schema,” “metacognition,” “recursive,” etc. I understand these concepts as a reading specialist, but I’m not sure all of our teachers, especially secondary, will understand the terminology without definitions.

5. Without a glossary, can we just change the academic language of the standards to student friendly for the appropriate age of that TEK. We as teachers change/interpret the TEKS to an objective for our kids. Why not just write the TEKS in a student friendly objective?

6. The vocabulary/skills that go with each strand of the TEKS need to be clear and specific with what needs to be learned.

7. A dictionary with clear, unambiguous terms from standards, especially when it comes to persuasion (i.e. argument v. claim; commonplace assertion, factual claim, & opinion).

**General Comments: First Draft of the ELAR/SLAR TEKS**

1. By the way, the draft was quite good and on the right track.

2. The draft of the new TEKS looks like it is on the right track. There are a few standards with examples, but can we have more.

3. Will other subject areas take some responsibility at secondary to teach the reading/writing aspects of their academic language?

**Specific Comments: First Draft of the ELAR/SLAR TEKS**

1. I love the strand addressing bias.

2. Define “schema” with specific examples. The word “persuasive” has been replaced with the word “argumentative” or “argumentation.” Is this to take a stand and defend or to create a thesis and support with evidence (more expository). ENG I, II, III, IV

3. We need fewer standards. Many teachers will see all of the romanettes as a linear checklist.

4. We need to understand how to handle the redundancies that exist in the draft TEKS within the high school grade level (not between). Clearly delineate the grade-level TEKS to be taught each year of high school so we can better see the scaffolding of skills and instruction.

5. The new TEKS don’t seem to be vertically aligned across the board. There seem to be issues with clarity and rigor in some of the new strands; ex. 6C, D: the rigor seems to
have dropped and high school is teaching devices formerly covered in junior high school or middle school.

6. Why are speeches in persuasive strand and in 8th grade lit-nonfiction strand?

7. There are too many ELA TEKS.

8. I some way, incorporate the ELPS into some of the standards so that teachers are able to know “Oh! I can incorporate these ELPS with these TEKS to help scaffold the standards.”

9. Clarify what legible writing in H.S. text looks like, when we are no longer teaching handwriting.

10. Lacking media text in H.S.

General Comments: Assessment

1. Even though there is no control over testing, there needs to be. There needs to be a correlation between the TEKS and standardized testing. They need to truly be designed to work together and all parties on the same page, moving in the same direction.

2. The SBOE needs to make sure that the standard tests and TEKS actually are correlated.

3. Better information on how alignment to STAAR will look

4. If curriculum and assessment are to be aligned, why are they handled by two different entities?

5. Please make sure assessments are tightly aligned to the standards.

Specific Comments: Assessment

1. ELA needs portfolios rather than writing tests.

2. It is frustrating to teach kids how to write for STAAR, a “test game” that is not, clearly not, real world relevant; writing 26 lines for example. Expository writing is a real-world skill, so why not frame it in the context of real-world writing without length constraints.

3. We need to move away from 26 lined papers and trying to move students from a 3rd grade level to a 9th grade level in 4 months-impossible!

4. Students need only one English test, just like there is only one math, one science, and one history test.

5. The 9th and 10th grade ELA STAAR tests are overwhelming.

6. If we are going to teach our students how to write an expository, then it needs to be an expository writing that would be what is expected in the Real World! What an expository should not be is the one that the state currently expects! You, the state, are asking for a false version of an expository, as well as the rubric it is graded with. A real world expository essay doesn’t ask for 26 lines of writing as a limit! Nor, is it expected to fit within a rubric such as the state has designed. The current expository is a made up version/expectation that’s designed only for the Texas STAAR writing.
Specific Comments: Classroom Environments

1. Students are not writing enough because the teachers cannot manage their tremendous class sizes and grade 160 student essays.

2. Grading must change. The GPA race and state testing are killing great instruction. Pursue standards-based grading.

3. We need to make sure we stop putting our teachers in a position to teach to the test—even though we say “we don’t.”

4. We need more time, but that won’t happen.

5. Teachers struggle with the amount of TEKS they have to uncover with students. Do they have enough time?

General Comments: Policy Making

1. Sometimes I feel like a group of people who are not experts in the field are making decisions for all. I’m appalled by leaders who make these decisions and don’t put their own children in the public system, which they themselves are controlling. Appalled. What I need from you is to put us in these positions—people who live these policies, standards and assessments with kids. Think about it. Medical boards are comprised of doctors. The State Bar is comprised of lawyers. Can we have educators making policy now? Please?

2. Many teachers would benefit from professional treatment of being able to...provide feedback on the revisions and being appreciated at the state/legislative level through increased pay and reduced funding decreases (that is to say stop defunding educational initiatives such as Texas Literacy grant, TLI).

3. We need realistic grade level expectations from the state.

4. I think ELA needs a strong state standard for PD training on the new TEKS. Small districts with one high school suffer greatly. When information rolls out, it does to service centers and 25 largest school districts. And, who is lagging in meeting the state passing standards—smaller districts. Please help.

5. I would like to be acknowledged as an expert. Teachers are the experts!

6. We are the experts of our field. However, you hire basically anyone, not even college graduates, to score STAAR. Why?

General Comments: Curriculum

1. We need a curriculum where it is laid out in a way where all schools in the district are on the same line, same lessons being taught—not robotic! More like, having a multitude of lessons that will be effective and highly interactive for all student populations.

Comments of Thanks

1. Thank you for taking the time to read this!

2. Thanks!