NORM-REFERENCED TESTS VS. CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

In May of 2013, the Houston ISD Board of Education approved a change of Norm-Referenced Tests (NRTs) from Pearson’s Stanford/Aprenda/NNAT to HMH-Riverside’s IOWA/Logramos/CogAT. Beginning in 2014-2015, HISD implemented HMH-Riverside’s IOWA/Logramos/CogAT assessments for the first time.

The IOWA Assessments are a comprehensive set of measures that are designed to provide a thorough assessment of a student’s progress in skills and standards that are essential to successful learning. NRTs cannot be tightly aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) because they are based on national norms and standards. NRTs will assess the “majority” of standards taught in the HISD curriculum.

NORM-REFERENCED TESTS (NRT) VS. CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS (CRT)

Norm-Referenced Tests (NRTs) measure broad skill areas sampled from a variety of textbooks, syllabi, and standards from multiple states. This type of test identifies whether the test taker performed better or worse than other test takers. NRTs are designed to highlight achievement differences between and among students to produce a dependable rank order of students across a continuum of achievement from high achievers to low achievers. Tests such as the IOWA (HMH-Riverside) and the California Achievement Test (CTB/McGraw-Hill) are normed using a national sample of students. The Common Core States’ Standards, as well as the TEKS, and other national standards, informed the development of the IOWA Assessments.

Criterion-Referenced Tests (CRTs) measure specific skills which make up a designated curriculum such as the TEKS. CRTs report how well students are doing based on a pre-determined performance level on a specified set of educational goals or outcomes included in the school, district, or state curriculum. The score shows whether or not test takers performed well or poorly on a given task. Tests such as the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) would be an example which measures the mastery of TEKS.

RESOURCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact the HISD Student Assessment Department (studasmt@houstonisd.org) for more information regarding the IOWA or STAAR assessments.

Houston ISD employees may access the resources for IOWA assessments by clicking on the link below.
https://connectteams.houstonisd.org/team/sa/NRT_Programs/Forms/AllItems.aspx

Resources for the STAAR assessments can be accessed on the Texas Education Agency (TEA) website by clicking on the link below.
http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/