

Senate Committee Considers Ending TAKS Test

Austin-The Senate Education Committee looked at a bill Tuesday that would replace the current standardized testing system with end-of-course exams.

The state's Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test has been criticized for its limitations, such as failing to prepare

students for college, and forcing instructors to teach to the test rather than focusing on content. Senate Bill 1031 would phase out the TAKS test, replacing it with four end-of-course exams, beginning in the 2009 school year.

Bill Sponsor and Committee Chair Florence Shapiro says

these kinds of tests serve students and teachers better than the current system of standardized tests. "End of course assessments, I believe, will provide a better way for students, for schools and for the state to measure and test our students," she said.

The first class to take these exams would be the 2009 incoming freshmen class. These tests would be offered for the four core curriculum areas, Math, Science, English and Social Studies, and would make up 15 percent of a student's final grade.

In order to graduate from high school, students would need to score at least 70 points out of 100 on all 16 of the end-of-course exams taken over the course of their high school careers.

The TAKS test has also been criticized for an increase in "testing irregularities" that may indicate cheating.

SB 1031 includes provisions for increased security surrounding these end-of-course exams, directing the Education Agency Commissioner to develop new security standards, and authorizing random audits of school districts to ensure compliance. It would also make leaking test information a class-C misdemeanor.

The Senate passed a bill Tuesday that seeks to increase international pressure on the current

regime in the Sudan to end the genocide taking place in the Darfur region of that country.

Senate Bill 247, by Houston Senator Rodney Ellis and Plano Senator Florence Shapiro, would direct the Employee and Teacher Retirement System of Texas to divest holdings in certain companies that do business in Sudan.

Companies that substantially aid the government of Sudan or don't significantly benefit the people of Sudan are eligible for divestment. This represents a few companies, mostly oil and gas, that would require divestment of about \$500 million in investments, or less than one percent of the total fund balance, said Ellis.

Ellis said that Texas role in ending genocide in Sudan is more than just placing economic pressure, but also serving as a model for other states to follow.

He said Tuesday's measure, along with a measure recently passed by Colorado, could bring this issue to the federal government. "I think those two states in particular, will be a signal to other states in the country," he said. "I would make a prediction that when another seven or eight states pass legislation along these lines, you may see this debate go on in the United States Congress."

SUDOKU

			4	1			2	
			6					5
	2			7		3		6
		7		5	8			
5				7		3		
	9	6			2		5	7
	8						4	9
6	5	4		3		8		
					4	5	6	

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Beginner

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

3	9	5	4	8	7	6	1	2
7	8	6	3	2	4	5	9	8
6	4	2	9	1	5	3	8	7
7	5	1	2	4	7	9	6	8
8	3	6	7	9	1	2	7	5
4	2	9	8	5	6	7	1	3
9	6	3	9	7	8	1	2	4
5	8	7	5	3	2	9	7	6
2	1	7	8	2	4	9	1	7

ANSWER:

The Custom Shoppe
808 Front St. • Columbus • (979) 732-5254
Hours by appointment only

When your home looks good, you feel good.

Custom Window Treatments and Interior Design

Custom Picture Framing
"you name it, we'll frame it"
All work is Guaranteed to your Satisfaction

In home previews, estimates, consulting and installation is available.

The Wild Goose Chase
...has new books, office supplies and Easter Gifts now available.

Come see the selection of Easter bookmarks, angel notepads, inspirational books about the Saints, Christianity and many other subjects.

Get a free ribbon and cross bookmark with a purchase of \$15.

704 S. McCarty, next to Eagle Lake Drug Store, 979-234-6877

Curly's Crazy Striped Outlaws
ARE HOSTING A
Night Golf Tournament & Fish Fry
FRIDAY, MARCH 30
WEIMAR GOLF COURSE

Entry Fee: \$50 per player
Entry form deadline is March 29 at Noon

Includes Fish Dinner for Player Only
Additional dinners may be purchased for \$8 Adult or \$5 Age 10 & under

Format: 4 Person Scramble
Get your entry form now. Limited to 72 paid players (18 teams max)
Tee Time: 6 p.m.
Fish Dinner served after front 9
Prizes for 1st, 2nd & 3rd
For more information contact Karen Schobel at 732-2388. We are always looking for hole sponsors, if interested please call.

Proceeds benefit American Cancer Society

Headlight Wants Ads Really Work!

Click On Your Headlight!

www.eaglelakeheadlight.com

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15				16				
17				18				19				
20				21				22				
			23				24			25	26	27
28	29	30						31				
32								33				
34										35		
36			37	38				39	40			
41								42				
43				44	45		46	47				
				48			49			50	51	52
53	54	55			56					57		
58					59					60		
61					62					63		

- 60. The content of cognition
- 61. Domestic
- 62. Formerly (archaic)
- 63. A branch of the Tai languages

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Muslim pilgrimage
- 2. Ancient Greek City
- 3. Horse color
- 4. Flees for safety
- 5. Make steep
- 6. Samuel __, diarist
- 7. A musical notation
- 8. Aweigh
- 9. In a way, glided
- 10. Landholder
- 11. A way to request
- 12. Burn residue
- 13. Allow
- 21. Publicizes
- 22. Rhenium
- 25. Pressed
- 26. Stored fodder
- 27. Assistant
- 28. One who socks
- 29. DNA sequence that codes for a gene
- 30. Spinach dock
- 37. Accumulated
- 38. Preaching scarves
- 39. Cutty __ (drink)
- 40. Intestinal inflammation
- 44. Thus
- 45. Remove by rubbing
- 46. Civil wrongs
- 47. Walking
- 49. Lacrimal secretion
- 50. Nothing (Span.)
- 51. Mastery (Scottish)
- 52. Drench
- 53. Academy of Country Music
- 54. Blat
- 55. News organization

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. German courtesy title
- 5. Prevents harm to creatures
- 9. Secret plan
- 14. Healing herb
- 15. European person
- 16. Corpulent
- 17. Hearing-impaired
- 18. Copycat
- 19. Zero
- 20. New Year's Day
- 23. Swindles
- 24. Cranky
- 28. More contemptible
- 31. Spooky
- 32. Plural of 14 across
- 33. Humorous

CLUES ACROSS

- 34. Single Lens Reflex
- 35. Fuzzy fabric surface
- 36. Afghan city
- 39. Surround and isolate
- 41. Fragrant resin from tropical trees
- 42. 1950 Nobel Prize: Chemistry
- 43. Get worse
- 46. Used as a counterbalance to obtain net weight
- 48. Horse racing
- 53. Hurt by maltreatment
- 56. About aviation
- 57. Edible Pacific root
- 58. French dynasty
- 59. Eisaku __, Japanese Prime Minister

PUBLIC NOTICE

QUALITY FORD IS THE REPO DEPOT!

DRIVE TODAY for as little as \$149 DOWN OR \$149/MTH*

HUNDREDS OF REPOSSESSED CARS, TRUCKS AND SUV'S MUST BE SOLD!

MILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO LOAN DURING THIS SPECIAL EVENT!

CREDIT DOESN'T MATTER IF WE CAN'T GET YOU APPROVED... WE WILL GIVE YOU \$500!*

PUSH PULL OR DRAG YOUR TRADE ALL TRADES ACCEPTED!

FREE • HAMBURGERS • HOT DOGS EVERY SATURDAY UNTIL SALE ENDS

REGISTER TO WIN A RIDING LAWNMOWER

HURRY • SALE ENDS MARCH 17TH!!

QUALITY Ford

HIGHWAY 90A DOWNTOWN HALLETTSVILLE

888-867-5267

361-798-3661

*All offers with approved credit. Approval terms may vary depending on multiple factors. See dealer for details. Pictures for illustration purposes only.

KIDS' corner

World FACT:

WHEN PEOPLE IN THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE CELEBRATE SPRING, WHAT SEASON ARE PEOPLE IN THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE HAVING?

ANSWER: AUTUMN

Spring Crossword

1			2			3
4						
				5		
6						

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Blooms
- 4. Precipitation
- 5. Water bird
- 6. Has fun

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Capable of reproducing
- 2. Strong breezes
- 3. Moderate season

Answers

Across 1. Flowers 4. Rain 5. Swan 6. Enjoys
Down 1. Fertile 2. Winds 3. Spring

THIS DAY IN... HISTORY

March 20

- 1852: THE BOOK "UNCLE TOM'S CABIN" WAS PUBLISHED.
- 1969: JOHN LENNON MARRIED YOKO ONO IN GIBRALTAR.
- 2005: A 6.6 MAGNITUDE EARTHQUAKE HIT FUKUOKA, JAPAN, THE COUNTRY'S FIRST MAJOR EARTHQUAKE IN 100 YEARS.

new word

pollen

the cells that carry the male DNA of a seed plant

How they SAY it in...

- English: FLOWER
- Spanish: FLOR
- Italian: FIORE
- French: FLEUR
- German: BLUME

Did YOU KNOW?

THE AVERAGE BUTTERFLY HAS A LIFE SPAN OF TWO WEEKS OR LESS. THERE ARE SOME SPECIES THAT CAN LIVE UP TO A YEAR, BUT NONE LONGER THAN THAT.

get the PICTURE?

Can you guess what the bigger picture is featured here?

ANSWER: CATERPILLAR