

## FAQs for the *Classroom Effectiveness Indices (CEIs)*

\*\*\*Information in this document may not apply to CEIs for years prior to 2012-13.\*\*\*

\*\*\*Last updated on October 2, 2013.\*\*\*

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*Click a question to jump to the response.*

### **General Questions**

- 1) What are Classroom Effectiveness Indices?
- 2) Are CEIs fair?

### **Teacher Eligibility**

- 3) Which teachers receive CEIs?
- 4) What if a teacher was on leave?
- 5) Are teachers of full year courses who were hired late in the term eligible to receive CEIs?

### **CEI Roster Verification (CRV)**

- 6) Why are teachers required to verify their CEI rosters in the spring before the CEIs are computed?
- 7) How are students denoted as enrolled in a semester on my CEI rosters?

### **Student Eligibility**

- 8) Which students are *eligible*, that is, included in the calculation of a 2012-13 CEI?
- 9) What is a continuously-enrolled (or “CE”) student?
- 10) What exceptions are made for chronically absent students?
- 11) How does retention affect a student’s CEI eligibility?

### **Test Combinations**

- 12) Which assessments are used for computing CEIs?
- 13) Are alternative forms of the *STAAR* and *TAKS* used in the calculation of CEIs?
- 14) Are scores from the 2nd and 3rd administrations of *STAAR* and *TAKS* used in the calculation of CEIs?

### **Computing CEIs**

- 15) How are CEIs computed?
- 16) What is a relative gain score?
- 17) Who are *similar students*?
- 18) What census variables are used to determine similar students?
- 19) How many students are required to compute a CEI?

### **Interpreting CEIs and CEI Reports**

- 20) What is the difference in my *section*, *course*, and *division* CEIs?
- 21) What is the difference between a *CEI* and a *CEI percentile*?
- 22) If I taught a self-contained class, should my section CEI and course CEI be the same?
- 23) Why do I have more than one *division* CEI?
- 24) I had a high percentage of students pass the *TAKS*. Why don’t I have a very high 2012-13 CEI?
- 25) Why are some students not listed on my 2012-13 CEI report though they were on my CEI rosters in the spring?
- 26) Why are some students printed separately from other students (in bold red font) on my 2012-13 CEI report?
- 27) Is it an error if a student passed the test but is listed with a low relative gain score (“red bar”) on my 2012-13 CEI report?

## FAQs for the *Classroom Effectiveness Indices (CEIs)*

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\*\*\*Last updated on October 2, 2013.\*\*\*

---

28) Is it an error if a student had a higher test score in 2012-13 than he did in 2011-12 but is listed with a low relative gain score (“red bar”) on my 2012-13 CEI report?

29) What are *CEI tiers*?

30) What does it mean if my CEI report has an “ADJUSTED” stamp?

### **Adjustment Process**

31) On what grounds can I dispute my CEIs?

32) Why is the course, section, or student information incorrect on my 2012-13 CEI report?

### **Policy Updates**

33) Which STAAR 3-8 scores will be used to compute CEIs for fourth-grade English Reading/Language Arts courses?

34) Which test scores will be used to compute CEIs for bilingual Reading/Language Arts courses?

35) If I teach the Spanish portion of bilingual Reading/Language Arts, which test scores will be used to compute my CEIs?

36) I am a fifth-grade teacher who provides language arts instruction to my students, but according to a note on my CEI course list “CEIs for 0500-Language Arts are no longer computed.” Why will I not receive 2012-13 CEIs for this course?

37) Can my 2012-13 CEIs be computed even if I was on leave for more than 20 working days during the 2012-13 school year?

### **What are Classroom Effectiveness Indices?**

The CEIs are a fair, valid, and reliable way to measure the effect a teacher has on student achievement. They are relative measures of student academic achievement. In contrast to systems such as Texas’ AEIS, which evaluate a student’s performance only in relation to a certain standard (such as a passing standard), CEIs evaluate a student’s performance as it compares to the performance of all other district students who are most similar. The similarity is determined by demographic characteristics as well as the scores received on certain prior-year tests.

CEIs are scaled each year to an average of 50 and a standard deviation of 10 so that values are comparable across years. A CEI of 50 indicates that a teacher’s students performed at levels expected for their comparison groups. Indices above or below 50 indicate that students performed above or below levels expected for their individual comparison groups.

### **Are CEIs fair?**

Several safeguards built into the Indices protect against unfair comparisons. Many of the safeguards are also components of the School Effectiveness Indices, or SEIs. Students are compared to students with the same gender, socio-economic status, language proficiency, and special student population status who also demonstrated similar levels of achievement in prior years. For example, the performance of limited English proficient (LEP) students is compared only with that of other LEP students, never with the performance of non-LEP students.

Because a student’s current year performance is only evaluated *relative to the performance of his or her group of “similar students,”* CEIs are not impacted by year-to-year differences in test types (norm-referenced followed by STAAR 3-8) or a change in the “difficulty level” of tests. All students in a comparison group took the same tests in both years (prior and current), and all students in a comparison group had the same scores on the prior year’s tests. The current-year scores in a

## FAQs for the *Classroom Effectiveness Indices (CEIs)*

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---

comparison group are being compared *to each other*, with a higher score in the comparison group resulting in a higher relative gain score and hence a larger contribution to the teacher's CEI. In other words, the students who contribute highly to a CEI are those who outperform their comparison groups; these students do not necessarily have the highest absolute scores on the test.

### Which teachers receive CEIs?

**Teachers who had** students enrolled with them in these courses receive CEIs, assuming the students took appropriate norm-referenced, *STAAR 3-8*, *STAAR EOC*, *TAKS*, or *ACP* tests.

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Elementary   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grades 1-5 mathematics courses</li><li>• Grades 1-5 language arts courses (reading, language arts, writing, etc.)</li><li>• Grade 5 science courses</li></ul>   |
| Middle       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grades 6-8 language arts (reading, language arts, writing, etc.) courses</li><li>• Grades 6-8 mathematics courses</li><li>• Grade 8 science or social studies courses</li><li>• Grades 7-8 courses with <i>ACPs</i></li></ul> |
| High schools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grades 9-11 <i>STAAR EOC/TAKS</i> subjects (language arts, math, science, social studies)</li><li>• Grades 9-12 courses with <i>ACPs</i></li></ul>  |

### What if a teacher was on leave?

Teachers normally eligible for CEIs who have more than 20 working days of leave do not have CEIs computed for that school year because of the extensive time away from the classroom. Data from Human Resources is used to determine leave status. Since the 2011-12 CEIs, teachers have had the opportunity to “opt-in” to receive CEIs in the event that they were on leave for more than 20 working days during the school year of interest. The CEIs computed at a teacher's request are permanent.

### Are teachers of full year courses who were hired late in the term eligible to receive CEIs?

Teachers of full-year courses who were hired more than 20 working days after the first day of the school year are not eligible to receive 2012-13 norm-referenced, *STAAR*, or *TAKS* CEIs. Teachers of semester 1 courses who were hired more than 10 working days after the first day of semester 1 are not eligible to receive Semester 1 CEIs. Teachers of semester 2 courses who were hired more than 10 days after the first day of semester 2 are not eligible to receive Semester 2 CEIs. Although a full year teacher who was hired late in the term is not eligible to receive a *STAAR* or *TAKS* CEI, they may be eligible to receive a second semester *ACP* CEI.

### Why are teachers required to verify their CEI rosters in the spring before the CEIs are computed?

The “connection” or “link” between a student and a teacher is the student's enrollment in the teacher's course for the duration of the term (year or semester, depending on the assessment). Sometimes the official record of student-to-teacher scheduling, stored in the district's student information system, does not reflect the true instructional environment because of data entry errors, scheduling errors, system errors, etc. In order to compute the most accurate CEIs and eliminate “after-the-fact” roster corrections in the fall, teachers are now provided with an opportunity in the spring to review and make corrections to their CEI rosters.

## FAQs for the *Classroom Effectiveness Indices (CEIs)*

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---

**For the 2012-13 CEIs, all roster corrections had to be made on MyData Portal before the end of the correction window in June 2013, in order for the rosters to be updated before computation of CEIs began in June 2013.**

### How are students denoted as enrolled in a semester on my CEI rosters?

The CEI rosters include all students who were enrolled in your courses for a least one day during the school year. Each student is marked for each term in which he was scheduled. The mark is a ✓ (the student was in class for a sufficient number of days during the term to be considered for inclusion in the teacher's CEI) or an ✗ (the student was not in class for a sufficient number of days during the term to be considered for inclusion). For CEIs, students are linked to a teacher if they are in the teacher's course for a sufficient number of days during the appropriate school term.

### Which students are *eligible*, that is, included in the calculation of a 2012-13 CEI?

A student must meet **all eligibility criteria** to have his score included in a teacher's CEI:

- RETENTION (*ITBS/Logramos, STAAR 3-8, TAKS* and middle-school *ACPs*): Student was not retained in either of the last two school years.
- CONTINUOUSLY ENROLLED: Student is enrolled in the teacher's course and in attendance with the teacher for a minimum number of days and has not missed more than a set number of days in a course. "*Days in attendance*" implies the student was enrolled in the teacher's course and was not recorded as absent (*EA* or *UA*).
- PREVIOUS YEAR'S TESTS: Student has appropriate test score combinations from 2011-12 and 2012-13.

### What is a continuously-enrolled (or "CE") student?

A student is considered to be continuously-enrolled if he is enrolled in the teacher's course and in attendance with the teacher for a minimum number of days. Additionally, he must not miss more than a set number of days in a course prior to the first day of the testing period for each assessment used in the computation of CEIs for the course. (See "[A Note About...](#)" #3 for test-specific attendance requirements.) Absences (*EA* or *UA*), late enrollment, withdrawals, or transfers to another campus result in days counted against this minimum "days in attendance." "*Days in attendance*" implies the student was enrolled in the teacher's course and was not recorded as absent (*EA* or *UA*). A student who withdraws from a course must enroll again within 10 school days to be continuously-enrolled.

### What exceptions are made for chronically absent students?

Chronically absent students will not accumulate enough days in attendance with the teacher to meet the eligibility criteria (See "Which students are eligible, that is, included in the calculation of a 2012-13 CEI?"), and hence their scores cannot be used to compute the teacher's CEI.

### How does retention affect a student's CEI eligibility?

Retention applies to *STAAR ITBS/Logramos-*, *STAAR 3-8-*, and *TAKS*-based CEIs and middle school *ACP* CEIs. The student must not be retained in the last two school years. That is, the grade levels on which the student was tested in 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13 were sequential, like "4-5-6." A student with a testing grade sequence of "5-6-6" or "5-5-6," for example, would not be eligible. For high school *STAAR EOC* and *ACP* CEIs, retention history is not an eligibility criterion.

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---

### Which assessments are used for computing CEIs?

The following assessments are used in the computation of the CEIs as appropriate by grade level: *ITBS/Logramos*, *STAAR*, *STAAR* with accommodations, *STAAR* (Modified), *STAAR* (Linguistic), *TAKS*, *TAKS* (Accommodated), and *ACPs*. The district-developed benchmark tests are **never** used in CEI calculations. They are formative-type assessments to be used for instructional decisions.

### Are alternative forms of the *STAAR* and *TAKS* used in the calculation of CEIs?

*STAAR*, *STAAR* with accommodations, *STAAR* (Modified), *STAAR* (Linguistic), *TAKS*, and *TAKS* (Accommodated) scores are used to calculate year-long CEIs. *STAAR* (Alternative), *TAKS* (Modified), and *TAKS* (Alternative) scores are not used in any part of the SEI/CEI model (not as prior-year tests to determine “similar students” and not as current year tests to use as performance measures) because of the nature of the tests.

### Are scores from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> administrations of *STAAR* and *TAKS* used in the calculation of CEIs?

Scores from second and third administrations of the *STAAR* and *TAKS* cannot be used in the computation of CEIs because the population of students across the district with scores from these administrations is not sufficient for the comparison process.

### How are CEIs computed?

CEIs are computed in two stages using statistical procedures based on multiple regression. In the first stage, to assure the indices are fair to the teacher, the teacher’s students are compared only with other students in the district who are of the same gender, socio-economic status, language proficiency, and special student population status who also had similar levels of achievement the previous year. (Socio-economic status is determined by receipt of free or reduced-price lunches as well as three neighborhood census variables. See “*What census variables are used to determine similar students?*”)

In the second stage, assessment results from the prior year are evaluated to find those that do the best job of estimating student performance on each current year test. Each unique set of current-year test scores is regressed against all combinations of two tests from the prior year, and the best combinations are selected based on two criteria: The correlation between the variables must be high, meaning there is strong relationship between the variables, and there must be a large number of student scores left in the calculation, so that the indices are not computed based on just a few students. Having already controlled for the demographic variables listed above, student performance in the current year is then compared only to the performance of district students who had the same scores on last year’s tests that were selected in stage two. A statistical method known as HLM produces the relative gain scores that are used for the SEIs and CEIs.

### What is a relative gain score?

A relative gain score is a measure of how much a student exceeded or fell below the average score when his performance was compared to that of similar district students. The scores are *relative* because they are based on comparisons, not arbitrary or external score criteria; they are sometimes referred to as *fairness-adjusted* because the comparisons take place only among similar students (see “*are similar students?*”), not the entire student population.

### Who are similar students?

Relative gain scores are based on comparisons made within groups of *similar students*. Similar students share the following: they were administered the same current-year test, had the same

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demographic characteristics, and had the same scores on the same prior-year tests. The demographic characteristics controlled for in the SEI/CEI model are gender, LEP status, socio-economic status as determined by receipt of free or reduced-price lunches, special student population status, and three neighborhood characteristics. (See “*What census variables are used to determine similar students?*”)

### What census variables are used to determine similar students?

Three *neighborhood variables* from U.S. Census tracts are controlled for in the SEI/CEI model. A student’s variables are based on her address in the district database in the spring.

- 1) Median household income among households headed by a person of same ethnicity as student. (In the CEI report, this statistic is reported in thousands of dollars, e.g., “\$26/hh” represents median household income of \$26,000.)
- 2) Percentage of adults over 25 of same ethnicity as student with a college degree.
- 3) Percentage of persons of same ethnicity as student living below the federal poverty level.

### How many students are required to compute a CEI?

A CEI at any level (section, course, or division) is only computed if at least eight students have relative gain scores to contribute to the computation. An adjustment is made in all computations to allow for the increased effect of variability in small group sizes, but groups smaller than eight are too small to be reliable even with the adjustment.

### What is the difference in my *section*, *course*, and *division* CEIs?

CEIs can be computed by grouping students in different ways. One can look at the performance of students in a *section*, in a *course*, or in a *division* (language arts/reading, science, etc.).

- A *section* CEI summarizes the relative gain scores of the students enrolled in the teacher’s *section* and compares them to all other teachers’ sections in which students took the same tests
- A *course* CEI summarizes the relative gain scores of students enrolled in the teacher’s *course* (all sections of the course) and compares them to all other teachers’ courses in which students took the same tests
- A *division* CEI summarizes the relative gain scores of students enrolled in any course within the teacher’s *division* (content area) and compares them relative to all other teachers with scores in that division

### What is the difference between a *CEI* and a *CEI percentile*?

The CEI is a **relative number** that lets a teacher compare her students’ progress in a year to that of other teachers who were teaching the same content to similar students. For any type of CEI (section, course, division), the average among all teachers is 50, so if your CEI was above 50, your students’ performance tended to be above average when each was compared to the performance of similar students. The standard deviation is always 10, which means about 68 percent of the Indices are between 40 and 60.

Imagine that the CEIs for a course are written down in an ordered list, from smallest to largest. The *percentile rank* of one of these is the percentage of CEIs that fall below that value. If a course CEI of 56.2 is said to be at the 73<sup>rd</sup> *percentile*, then 73 percent of CEIs for that course are at or below 56.2.

Percentiles can be figured for any type of CEI. However, the “ordered list” described above would only contain one type of CEI. If your *science division* percentile is 65, then your CEI is larger than 65 percent of all other *science division* CEIs. A section CEI and a course CEI may be the same value, but

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---

after being placed in an “ordered list” of the same kind of CEI, their percentile ranks will likely be different.

### **If I taught a self-contained class, should my section CEI and course CEI be the same?**

Section and course CEIs for self-contained teachers should be close. They likely are not *identical* because when they were standardized (to mean 50 and standard deviation 10), the set of section CEIs and the set of course CEIs were not identical. There are more section CEIs than course CEIs, because even in elementary grades, teachers often have at least two sections of the same course. Another result of having CEIs that differ for sections and courses is the potential for different *percentile ranks* for the section and course CEIs. Section and course CEIs are each placed in their own “ordered list” for figuring the percentile equivalent. (See “*What is the difference between a CEI and a CEI percentile?*” for more information about percentile ranks.)

### **Why do I have more than one *division* CEI?**

A teacher will have a division CEI for each content area (language arts/reading, mathematics, etc.) in which her students were tested.

### **I had a high percentage of students pass the TAKS. Why don't I have a very high 2012-13 CEI?**

CEIs are based on *relative performance*, that is, how a student did when compared to a group of “similar students.” (See “*Who are similar students?*”) They are not based in any way on whether a student meets (or does not meet) a passing standard.

Students can “pass the test” but not perform as well as similar district students who started at the same level of performance the year before. These students will contribute little to a teacher’s CEI. Conversely, students who “fail the test” but who perform much better than similar students with the same level of performance last year will contribute greatly to a teacher’s CEI.

A teacher’s CEI goes up with each student who outperforms his or her unique comparison group.

### **Why are some students *not* listed on my 2012-13 CEI report though they were on my CEI rosters in the spring?**

On the CEI report, only students who were in the teacher’s course for a set number of days during the term (year or semester, depending on the assessment) are listed. The following attendance criteria were applied for the creation of CEI rosters:

- Year-long courses: Student missed fewer than 21 days in course prior to April 26, 2013.
- Fall courses: Student missed fewer than 11 days in course prior to January 18, 2013.
- Spring courses: Student missed fewer than 11 days in course prior to April 26, 2013.

The rosters in the report reflect teacher-made changes that were submitted prior to the deadline of June 4, 2013, unless a change was denied by the teacher’s approver.

### **Why are some students printed separately from other students (in bold red font) on my 2012-13 CEI report?**

Some students are in the teacher’s class for the length of the term but do not meet eligibility requirements for inclusion in the CEI. (See “*Why are some students not listed on my 2012-13 CEI report though they were on my CEI rosters in the spring?*” and “*Which students are eligible, that is, included in the calculation of a 2012-13 CEI?*”) The students’ information is printed in bold, red font in the CEI report, and a brief description of the reason for their ineligibility is reported.

## FAQs for the *Classroom Effectiveness Indices (CEIs)*

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---

### Is it an error if a student passed the test but is listed with a low relative gain score (“red bar”) on my 2012-13 CEI report?

No. Whether a student “passed the test” is independent of the student’s relative performance within his group of “similar students.” A high relative gain score means a student performed above average within her comparison group, and a low relative gain score means a student performed below average in her group. “Passing the test” simply means the student scored above an arbitrary value. Even if he passes, the student’s *progress* may be less than similar students in the district, that is, students with the same demographic profile who had the same test scores *last year*.

Imagine a student “Angela.” Suppose that *both* last year *and* this year, everyone in Angela’s group of similar students passed the test. If most of the other students scored much higher this year than last year, but Angela scored only slightly higher than last year, she would have a “low relative gain score” (below 50) because she improved less than the others, *even though she passed*.

### Is it an error if a student had a higher test score in 2012-13 than he did in 2011-12 but is listed with a low relative gain score (“red bar”) on my 2012-13 CEI report?

No. The **fairness-adjusted relative gain score** for a student is a *relative* measure of the student’s 2012-13 performance, computed by comparing his scores to those of all similar district students. A student’s score on the TAKS ELA, for example, may have increased by any number of points, but if most other similar students’ scale scores on the same test increased by *more*, the student’s gain score will be lower than 50. He did not gain as much as similar students.

The value of the gain score is not an actual change in a student’s TAKS scale score or norm-referenced percentile. It is called a “relative gain” score because it is a value that measures the student’s gain *compared to other students*, and it is “fairness-adjusted” because the comparison is only among *similar* students. Gain scores for a particular grade and test (or just test in the case of ACPs) are set so that the average is always 50 and the standard deviation is always 10.

### What are CEI tiers?

For determining some professional development opportunities, division CEIs may be divided into five tiers, which are equally-spaced groups of CEI percentiles. Tier 1 consists of percentiles between 1 and 19, tier 2 is between 20 and 39, tier 3 is 40 to 59, tier 4 is 60 to 79, and tier 5 is 80 to 99. **Tiers are no longer reported on teachers’ CEI reports.** Use the definition above if you wish to determine a “tier” for your division CEI.

### What does it mean if my CEI report has an “ADJUSTED” stamp?

The “ADJUSTED” stamp appears when corrections have been made to a teacher’s original CEI report. Corrections to a teacher’s report are most often the result of an official adjustment request submitted by the teacher, but they may also occur when the Office of Institutional Research identifies an error in the CEI reports, post-production (i.e. formatting, data quality, etc.). Once the error is fixed, an updated report containing the “ADJUSTED” stamp and updated print date is posted to the teacher’s MyData Portal account. The “adjusted” report contains the most up-to-date CEI results.

### On what grounds can I dispute my CEIs?

CEI adjustment requests generally address data quality issues. They are only considered valid if accompanied by documentation that supports a claim that demographic, attendance, or assessment data are incorrectly recorded in the district’s information system.

## FAQs for the *Classroom Effectiveness Indices (CEIs)*

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---

### Why is the course, section, or student information incorrect on my 2012-13 CEI report?

The course, section, and student information were extracted from the district's student information system after each school day. One opportunity to correct the rosters was provided in May 2013. (See "*Why are teachers required to verify their CEI rosters in the spring before the CEIs are computed?*")

Some non-roster corrections are considered for adjustments, if documentation is included to substantiate the correction and an Adjustment Request form is submitted before the deadline. (Deadline for 2012-13 CEIs is October 25, 2013.) **Submission rules and information are included with the form**, available on the CEI Information page on MyData Portal. *Data cannot be corrected in the student information system*, however, if the error is verified, corrections will be made if possible. An adjusted CEI will replace the original CEI. If an error is verified but an adjustment is *not* possible, the CEI will be removed and will no longer be tied to the teacher.

### Which STAAR 3-8 scores will be used to compute CEIs for fourth-grade non-bilingual Reading or Language Arts courses?

Based on a recommendation from the district's English Language Arts department and the Effectiveness Indices Advisory Council, CEIs for Language Arts course 0400 will be based only on students' scores on grade 4 STAAR 3-8 Writing. For Reading course 0403, CEIs will be based only on students' scores on grade 4 STAAR 3-8 Reading.

### Which test scores will be used to compute CEIs for bilingual Reading/Language Arts courses?

By design, the curricula for courses in the bilingual Reading/Language Arts sequence (0x27 Reading/Language Arts (Spanish) and 0x28 Reading/Language Arts (English)) include instruction in both reading and language arts. As a result, CEIs for these courses will be based, as in the past, on both norm-referenced or state-test Reading and Writing scores, where available. (See "*If I teach the Spanish portion of bilingual Reading/Language Arts, which test scores will be used to compute my CEIs?*")

### If I teach the Spanish portion of bilingual Reading/Language Arts, which test scores will be used to compute my CEIs?

As recommended by the Effectiveness Indices Advisory Council, the district's English Language Arts department, and the district's Multi-language Enrichment department, only student scores from tests of the same language as the course will be used in computing CEIs for bilingual reading/language arts courses. CEIs for course 0x27 will be based on scores from Spanish language tests (i.e. *Logramos* and Spanish STAAR 3-8) and CEIs for course 0x28 will be based on scores from English language tests (i.e. *ITBS* and English STAAR 3-8).

### I am a fifth-grade teacher who provides language arts instruction to my students, but according to a note on my CEI course list "CEIs for 0500-Language Arts are no longer computed." Why will I not receive 2012-13 CEIs for this course?

Since the 2011-12 school year, STAAR-based CEIs in grades 1-8 Language Arts, ELA, and Writing courses were based on students' scores from STAAR 3-8 Writing. Because STAAR 3-8 writing tests are only available for grades 4 and 7, it is not possible to compute STAAR 3-8 CEIs for language arts courses in grades 1-3, 5-6, and 8.

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### **Can my 2012-13 CEIs be computed even if I was on leave for more than 20 working days during the 2012-13 school year?**

Yes, if during the Spring 2013 CEI Roster Verification periods, you opted-in to receive 2012-13 CEIs, even if you are out on leave for more than 20 days during the 2012-13 school year, 2012-13 CEIs will be computed for you. Please note that the request to receive CEIs, independent of leave status, is irreversible.