

Chapter 1 – Introduction

About this Manual

The *2016 Accountability Manual* is a technical guide that explains how the Texas Education Agency (TEA) uses the accountability system to evaluate the academic performance of Texas public schools. The manual describes the accountability system and explains how information from different sources is used to calculate and assign accountability ratings and award distinction designations.

History of the Accountability System

In 1993, the Texas Legislature mandated the creation of a public school accountability system to evaluate and rate school districts and campuses. A viable and effective accountability system was possible because the necessary infrastructure was already in place: a student-level data collection system, a state-mandated curriculum, and a statewide assessment program tied to the curriculum. This first accountability system remained in use until the 2001–02 school year.

The second accountability system included the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and assigned ratings for the first time in fall 2004. TAKS included additional subjects and grades, which significantly increased system rigor. Also, districts and campuses were required to meet criteria on up to 25 separate assessment measures and up to 10 dropout and completion measures. The last year for accountability ratings based on the TAKS was 2011.

House Bill (HB) 3, passed by Texas legislature in 2009, redesigned the state assessment and accountability systems to focus on postsecondary readiness for all Texas public school students. Because of the transition to the current assessment program, state accountability ratings were not issued in 2012. TEA worked throughout 2012 with technical and policy advisory committees to develop the current accountability system based on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) program. This accountability system uses a performance index framework to combine a broad range of indicators into a comprehensive measure of district and campus performance. The 2012–13 school year was the first year ratings were assigned based on STAAR results.

With the passage of HB 5 in 2013, the legislature added additional indicators of postsecondary readiness. The 2014 ratings included college-ready graduates, a new postsecondary readiness measure. The 2015 accountability system replaced college-ready graduates with an expanded postsecondary readiness measure that added students who earn credit for at least two advanced/dual-credit courses or enroll in a coherent sequence of career and technical education (CTE) courses.

Goals of the Texas Accountability System

Texas will be among the top ten states in postsecondary readiness by

Accountability Advisory Groups

Educators, school board members, business and community representatives, professional organizations, and legislative representatives from across the state have been instrumental in developing the current accountability system.

Accountability Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC) includes representatives from school districts and regional education service centers (ESCs). Members made recommendations to address technical issues for 2016 accountability.

Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) includes representatives from legislative offices, school districts, and the business community. Members identified issues critical to the accountability system and reviewed the ATAC recommendations. The APAC either endorsed the ATAC's recommendations or developed its own, which were forwarded to the commissioner. The commissioner considered all proposals and made final decisions on February 12, 2016, that are reflected in this manual.

See *Appendix A – Acknowledgments* for more information on advisory groups. The accountability development proposals and supporting materials that were reviewed and discussed at each advisory group meeting are available online at <http://tea.texas.gov/2016accountability.aspx>.

Overview of the 2016 Accountability System

State Accountability Ratings

The state accountability system assigns one of three academic ratings to each district and campus: *Met Standard*, *Met Alternative Standard*, or *Improvement Required*. These ratings are based on a framework of four indices that combine a range of indicators into a comprehensive measure of performance.

The performance index framework combines results from STAAR assessments, graduation rates, rates of students completing the various graduation plans, and other indicators. The performance indices are as follows:

Index 1: Student Achievement provides a snapshot of performance across subjects.

Index 2: Student Progress measures year-to-year student progress.

Index 3: Closing Performance Gaps emphasizes the academic achievement of economically disadvantaged students and the two lowest-performing racial/ethnic student groups.

Index 4: Postsecondary Readiness emphasizes the importance of earning a high school diploma that provides students with the foundation necessary for success in college, job training programs, the workforce, or the military.

Distinction Designations

Campuses that receive an accountability rating of *Met Standard* are eligible to earn distinction designations. Distinction designations are available for achievement in several different areas and awarded to campuses based on performance relative to a group of campuses of similar 8.8(es)-2(bas)-2T

Comparison of 2015 and 2016 Performance Index Criteria and Indicators for NonAEA Districts and Campuses

	2015	2016
Index 1: Student Achievement	Index 1 Target: 60	Index 1 Target: 60
	All Student Groups and all tests combined o Grades 3-8 mathematics excluded o STAAR A and STAAR Alt 2 for all grades and subjects excluded	All Student Groups and all tests combined o Grades 3-8 mathematics included o STAAR A and STAAR Alt 2 for all grades and subjects
	Performance standard: Phase I Level I (Satisfactory)	Performance standard: Level II Satisfactory Standard
	STAAR EOC Assessments (5 tests): o English I o English II o Algebra I o Biology o U.S. History	No change

Comparison of 2015 and 2016 Performance Index Criteria and Indicators for NonAEA Districts and Campuses

	2015	2016
Index 2: Student Progress	Index 2 Target: Based on 5th percentile of Index 2 outcomes based on the 2015 performance results by campus type: elementary, middle, or high school. 12 Targets for districts based on 5th percentile of campus performance across all campus types.	No change
	Ten student groups: All Students, seven racial/ethnic groups, Students with Disabilities, Current and Monitored ELLs	No change
	<p>Across all subject reading, writing, and mathematics (Algebra I only for available grades)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Grades 3-8 mathematics excluded o 	

* See Appendix I for a detailed description of the inclusion policies for ELL students.

Comparison of 2015 and 2016 Performance Index Criteria and Indicators on AEA Districts and Campuses

	2015	2016
Index 3 Target		Index 3 Target: Based on 5th percentile of Index 3 2016 performance results by campus type: elementary, middle, or high school K-12. Targets for districts based on 5th percentile of campus performance across all campus types.
o District:	28	
o Elementary:	28	
o Middle School:	27	
o High School K-12:	31	

* See Appendix I Inclusion of ELLs for a detailed description of the inclusion policies for ELL students.

Comparison of 2015 and 2016 Performance Index Criteria and Indicators for NonAEA Districts and Campuses

	2015	2016
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Comparison of 2015 and 2016 Performance Index Criteria Indicators for NonAEA Districts and Campuses

	2015	2016
	Graduation Rate Combined performance across graduation/dropout rates for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Grade 9-12 four year graduation rate for ten student groups; or o Grade 9-12 five year graduation rate for ten student groups, whichever contributes the most points to the index 	

