

Chapter 8 - AEA Registration Criteria and Requirements

Registration criteria restrict use of alternative education accountability (AEA) procedures to:

- campuses that offer nontraditional programs rather than programs within a standard campus,
- campuses that meet the at-risk registration criterion,
- charters that operate only alternative education campuses (AECs), and
- charters that meet the AEC enrollment criterion.

Alternative Education Campuses (AECs)

AECs including charter AECs must serve students “at risk of dropping out of school” as defined in Texas Education Code (TEC) §29.081(d) and provide accelerated instructional services to these students. Each AEC registered for evaluation under AEA procedures is designated as an AEC of Choice or Residential Facility.

AEC of Choice. At-risk students enroll at AECs of Choice to expedite progress toward performing at grade level and high school completion.

Residential Facility. Education services are provided to students in residential programs and facilities operated under contract with the Texas Youth Commission (TYC), students in detention centers and correctional facilities that are registered with the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission (TJPC), and students in private residential treatment centers.

In this *Manual* the terms “AEC” and “registered AEC” refer collectively to AECs of Choice and Residential Facilities that are registered for evaluation under AEA procedures and meet the at-risk registration criterion.

AEC ELIGIBILITY

AECs have the option to be rated under AEA procedures and indicators. Campuses that choose not to register are evaluated under standard accountability procedures. The performance results of students at registered AECs are included in the district’s performance and used in determining the district’s accountability rating and for acknowledgments under the standard accountability procedures.

The following types of campuses have the option to register for evaluation under AEA procedures:

- AEC of Choice; and
- Residential Facility.

The following types of campuses are ineligible for evaluation under AEA procedures. Data for these campuses are attributed to the home campus:

- disciplinary alternative education programs (DAEPs);
- juvenile justice alternative education programs (JJAEPs); and

- stand-alone General Educational Development (GED) programs.

See *Chapter 6 – Special Issues and Circumstances* for more information on DAEPs and JJAEPs.

AEA CAMPUS REGISTRATION PROCESS

AECs registered in 2004-05 were re-registered automatically in 2005-06. A rescission letter was required from AECs not wishing to remain registered for AEA. A *2005-06 Alternative Education Accountability Campus Registration Form* was required for each AEC not already on the list of registered AECs that wished to be evaluated under 2005-06 AEA procedures. The 2006 registration process closed on August 31, 2005. The list of registered AECs is available on the AEA website at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/aea>.

AEA REGISTRATION CRITERIA

Ten criteria are required for campuses to be registered for AEA. However, the requirements in criteria (6)-(10) may not apply to charter campuses (depending on the terms of the charter) or for community-based dropout recovery campuses established in accordance with TEC §29.081(e). The requirements in criterion (9) apply to Residential Facilities only if students are placed in the facility by the district.

- (1) The AEC must have its own county-district-campus (CDC) number to which Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data are submitted and test answer documents are coded. A program operated within or supported by another campus does not qualify.
- (2) The AEC must be identified in AskTED (Texas School Directory database) as an alternative campus.
- (3) The AEC must be dedicated to serving “students at risk of dropping out of school” as defined in TEC §29.081(d).
- (4) The AEC must operate on its own campus budget.
- (5) The AEC must offer nontraditional settings and methods of instructional delivery designed to meet the needs of the students served on the AEC.
- (6) The AEC must have an appropriately certified, full-time administrator whose primary duty is the administration of the AEC.
- (7) The AEC must have appropriately certified teachers assigned in all areas including special education, bilingual education, and/or English as a second language (ESL) to serve students eligible for such services.
- (8) The AEC must provide each student the opportunity to attend a 7-hour school day as defined in TEC §25.082(a), according to the needs of each student.
- (9) If the campus serves students with disabilities, the students must be placed at the AEC by their Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee.
- (10) Students with disabilities must receive all services outlined in their current individualized education programs (IEPs). Limited English proficient (LEP) students must receive all services outlined by the language proficiency assessment

committee (LPAC). Students with disabilities and LEP students must be served by appropriately certified teachers.

AT-RISK REGISTRATION CRITERION

Beginning in 2006, an at-risk registration criterion will be implemented under AEA procedures. Each registered AEC must have a minimum percentage of at-risk students enrolled on the AEC verified through current-year PEIMS fall enrollment data in order to remain registered and be evaluated under AEA procedures. The at-risk criterion begins at 65% and increases by five percentage points annually until it reaches 75% in 2008, where it is expected to remain.

- 2006 – 65% or higher at-risk student enrollment at the registered AEC
- 2007 – 70% or higher at-risk student enrollment at the registered AEC
- 2008 – 75% or higher at-risk student enrollment at the registered AEC

An at-risk registration criterion accomplishes two goals. It restricts use of AEA procedures to AECs that serve large populations of at-risk students and enhances at-risk data quality.

The following safeguards are incorporated for AECs not meeting the at-risk registration criterion. The Prior-Year PEIMS At-Risk Data and New Campus safeguards are permanent and apply in 2006 and beyond. Since 2006 is the first year of implementation, an At-Risk Statewide Average safeguard has been developed for AECs not meeting the 65% at-risk registration criterion. The At-Risk Statewide Average safeguard is a one-year accommodation and applies in 2006 only.

Prior-Year PEIMS At-Risk Data Safeguard. If a registered AEC does not meet the at-risk criterion in the current year, then it remains under AEA if the AEC meets the at-risk criterion in the prior year. For example, an AEC with an at-risk enrollment of 64% in 2006 and 65% in 2005 remains registered in 2006.

New Campus Safeguard. If a new campus is registered for evaluation under AEA procedures, then the AEC is not required to meet the at-risk criterion in its first year of operation. This safeguard provides an accommodation for new campuses with no prior-year data.

At-Risk Statewide Average Safeguard. The 2006 at-risk statewide average is 49%. If a registered AEC does not meet the 65% at-risk registration criterion and the two safeguards above are not applicable, then the AEC remains under AEA if the AEC has at least 49% at-risk enrollment in 2006. This safeguard is a one-time accommodation for the new at-risk registration criterion and applies in 2006 only.

Due to timing between AEC registration, PEIMS fall enrollment submission, and PEIMS fall data availability in the spring, the at-risk registration criterion cannot be applied until early April. The 2006 AEA campus registration is rescinded for AECs not meeting the at-risk registration criterion or utilizing the safeguards. As a result, the AEC does not qualify for evaluation under AEA procedures and will receive a 2006 rating under standard accountability procedures. The AECs that shifted from AEA to standard accountability received a letter from TEA in late April to notify them that the AEC would be evaluated under the standard accountability procedures.

The final list of 2006 registered AECs was posted on the AEA website in May 2006. Additionally, an email was sent to all superintendents when the list was available.

The at-risk registration criterion will be evaluated annually to determine whether adjustments are necessary.

Charters

In this publication the term “charter” refers to the charter operator, not an individual charter campus. The terms “charter campus” and “charter AEC” refer to an individual campus.

CHARTERS EVALUATED UNDER AEA PROCEDURES

Under AEA and standard accountability procedures, charter ratings are based on aggregate performance of the campuses operated by the charter. Performance results of all students in the charter are included in the charter’s performance and used in determining the charter’s rating.

Charters receiving ratings under AEA procedures are evaluated on the same indicators as registered AECs:

- performance on the *Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)*,
- performance on the *State-Developed Alternative Assessment II (SDAA II)*,
- *Completion Rate II*, and
- *Annual Dropout Rate* for grades 7 through 12.

Charters that operate only registered AECs. Charters that operate only registered AECs will be evaluated under AEA procedures. Charters that operate only registered Residential Facilities are not evaluated on Completion Rate II.

Charters that operate both standard campuses and registered AECs. Charters that operate both standard campuses and registered AECs have the option to be evaluated under AEA procedures if the AEC enrollment criterion described below is met. TEA will contact each charter to obtain their preference. If a preference cannot be obtained, then the charter will be evaluated under standard accountability procedures.

AEC ENROLLMENT CRITERION FOR CHARTERS

In order for a charter that operates both standard campuses and registered AECs to be eligible for evaluation under AEA procedures, the charter must meet the AEC enrollment criterion. At least 50% of the charter’s students must be enrolled at registered AECs. AEC enrollment is verified through current-year PEIMS fall enrollment data.

Charters that operate both standard campuses and registered AECs will be evaluated under standard accountability procedures if fewer than 50% of the charter’s students are enrolled at registered AECs.