

## Chapter 11 – Additional Features of AEA

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As shown in *Chapter 10 – AEA Base Indicators*, alternative education campuses (AECs) can achieve a rating by meeting the absolute standards for the different indicators. However, under certain conditions, AECs can achieve a rating by:

- meeting Required Improvement; and/or
- using the accountability data for at-risk students in the district.

All additional features are applied and calculated automatically by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) before ratings are released. AECs do not need to request the use of additional features.

Additional requirements for charters are explained later in this chapter.

### Required Improvement

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AECs and charters initially rated *AEA: Academically Unacceptable* may achieve an *AEA: Academically Acceptable* rating using the Required Improvement feature. Required Improvement can be applied to all three base indicators: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Progress, Completion Rate II, and Annual Dropout Rate.

Required Improvement compares prior-year performance to current-year performance. In order to qualify for this comparison, the target group (All Students or any student group) must meet a minimum size requirement for the prior year. See *Minimum Size Requirements* in this chapter for each indicator.

#### Who is evaluated for Required Improvement:

- AECs of Choice whose performance is *AEA: Academically Unacceptable* for any TAKS Progress, Completion Rate II, or Annual Dropout Rate measure.
- Residential Facilities whose performance is *AEA: Academically Unacceptable* for any TAKS Progress or Annual Dropout Rate measure. (Residential Facilities are not evaluated on Completion Rate II.)
- Charters evaluated under AEA procedures whose performance is *AEA: Academically Unacceptable* for any TAKS Progress, Completion Rate II, or Annual Dropout Rate measure.

#### TAKS PROGRESS INDICATOR

**Improvement Standard:** In order for Required Improvement to move an AEC or charter to *AEA: Academically Acceptable*, the AEC or charter must demonstrate sufficient improvement on the deficient TAKS measures to meet a standard of **50%** within two years.

**Methodology:**

The *Actual Change* must be equal to or greater than the *Required Improvement*.

*Actual Change* is the difference between performance in 2009 and 2008.

*Required Improvement* is the result of the 2009 standard minus performance in 2008 divided by 2.

**Example:**

In 2009, an AEC has performance above the *AEA: Academically Acceptable* standard in all student groups except for Economically Disadvantaged; only 38% meet the standard. Performance in 2008 for the same group is 21%.

First calculate the *Actual Change*:  $38 - 21 = 17$

Next calculate the *Required Improvement*:  $(50 - 21) / 2 = 15$  (14.5 rounds to 15)

Then compare *Actual Change* to *Required Improvement* to determine if *Actual Change* is greater than or equal to the *Required Improvement*:  $17 \geq 15$

The AEC meets *Required Improvement*, so its rating is *AEA: Academically Acceptable*.

**Minimum Size Requirements:** Required Improvement is not calculated if the AEC or charter has less than 10 test results (for the student group) in 2008.

**Other Information:**

- *Performance in 2008.* Prior-year performance includes Spring 2008 grades 3-11 TAKS results (primary administration); Texas Growth Index (TGI) for 2007 to 2008, growth of 0 (zero) or higher; April and February 2008, and October and July 2007 grade 11 TAKS retests meeting the passing standard; and April and February 2008, and October and July 2007 grade 12 results meeting the student passing standard.
- *Rounding.* All improvement calculations of performance rates and standards are rounded to whole numbers. For example, 4.5% is rounded to 5%.

**COMPLETION RATE II INDICATOR**

**Improvement Standard:** In order for Required Improvement to move an AEC of Choice or charter to *AEA: Academically Acceptable*, the AEC of Choice or charter must demonstrate sufficient improvement in the Completion Rate II to meet a standard of **60.0%** within two years.

**Methodology:**

The *Actual Change* must be equal to or greater than the *Required Improvement*.

*Actual Change* is the difference between the Completion Rate II for the Class of 2008 and the Class of 2007.

*Required Improvement* is the result of the 2009 standard minus the Completion Rate II for the Class of 2007 divided by 2.

**Example:**

An AEC of Choice has a Class of 2008 Completion Rate II of 57.3% for All Students. The Class of 2007 Completion Rate II for All Students is 48.8%.

First calculate the *Actual Change*:  $57.3 - 48.8 = 8.5$

Next calculate the *Required Improvement*:  $(60.0 - 48.8) / 2 = 5.6$

Then compare *Actual Change* to *Required Improvement* to determine if *Actual Change* is greater than or equal to the *Required Improvement*:  $8.5 \geq 5.6$

The AEC of Choice meets *Required Improvement*, so its rating is *AEA: Academically Acceptable*.

**Minimum Size Requirements:** Required Improvement is not calculated if the AEC of Choice or charter has less than 10 students in the Completion Rate II Class of 2007.

**Other Information:**

- *Completion Rate II Definition.* Completion Rate II for the prior year is computed using the same definition as the current year so that gain from the prior year to the current year uses comparable data for both years. Specifically, the Completion Rate II definition includes graduates, General Educational Development (GED) recipients, and continuing students as completers.
- *NCES Dropout Definition.* Beginning with 2007 accountability, the definition of a dropout changes to comply with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) definition. This transition to the NCES dropout definition impacts the Completion Rate II indicator. Beginning with 2007 accountability, the dropout component of the Completion Rate denominator changes. In 2007, only one of the four years in the cohort is affected. In 2008, two years of the cohort are affected, and so on, until 2010 when the Completion Rate denominator uses the NCES dropout definition for all four years of the cohort. See *Appendix I* for detailed information on the NCES dropout definition.
- *Rounding.* All calculations are expressed as a percent, rounded to one decimal point. For example, 4.85% is rounded to 4.9%.

**ANNUAL DROPOUT RATE INDICATOR**

**Improvement Standard:** In order for Required Improvement to move an AEC or charter to *AEA: Academically Acceptable*, the AEC or charter must demonstrate a decline in the Annual Dropout Rate to be at **20.0%** within two years.

**Methodology:**

The *Actual Change* must be equal to or less than the *Required Improvement*.

*Actual Change* is the difference between the 2007-08 and 2006-07 Annual Dropout Rates.

*Required Improvement* is the result of the 2009 standard minus the 2006-07 Annual Dropout Rate divided by 2.

This calculation measures declines in rates. The *Actual Change* in the Annual Dropout Rate must be less than or equal to the *Required Improvement* for the standard to be met and will

contain negative numbers. The *Actual Change* needs to be a larger negative number than the required change.

**Example:**

In 2007-08, an AEC had an Annual Dropout Rate for All Students of 22.8%. The Annual Dropout Rate in 2006-07 for All Students was 34.2%.

First calculate the *Actual Change*:  $22.8 - 34.2 = -11.4$

Next calculate the *Required Improvement*:  $(20.0 - 34.2) / 2 = -7.1$

Then compare *Actual Change* to *Required Improvement* to determine if the *Actual Change* is less than or equal to the *Required Improvement*:  $-11.4 \leq -7.1$

The AEC meets *Required Improvement*, so its rating is AEA: *Academically Acceptable*.

**Minimum Size Requirements:** Required Improvement is not calculated if the AEC or charter has less than 10 grade 7-12 students in 2006-07.

**Other Information:** All calculations are expressed as a percent, rounded to one decimal point. For example, -1.875% is rounded to -1.9%.

**Other Information:**

- *NCES Dropout Definition.* Beginning with 2007 accountability, the definition of a dropout changed to comply with the NCES definition. See *Appendix I* for detailed information on the NCES dropout definition.
- *School Leaver Provision (SLP) for 2009.* In April 2008, the Commissioner of Education announced that the 2009 SLP would apply only to the Annual Dropout Rate indicator evaluated under AEA procedures. However, revising the Annual Dropout Rate standard to 20.0% eliminates the need to use the SLP in 2009 and beyond.

## Use of District At-Risk Data

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In limited circumstances, data for at-risk students in the district are used to evaluate registered AECs. Use of data for at-risk students in the district acknowledges that AECs are part of the overall district strategy for education of students at risk of dropping out of school.

AECs of Choice and Residential Facilities may be evaluated on the TAKS Progress and Annual Dropout Rate indicators using data for at-risk students in the district. AECs of Choice may be evaluated on Completion Rate II of at-risk students in the district.

## TAKS PROGRESS INDICATOR

**Who is evaluated for the TAKS Progress Indicator using performance data of at-risk students in the district:**

- AECs of Choice and Residential Facilities that do not meet the 50% standard, do not demonstrate Required Improvement, and have results for fewer than 10 tests in the current year.
- AECs of Choice and Residential Facilities with no TAKS results.

**Required Improvement:** If the AEC does not meet the performance standard based on district performance data of at-risk students, then Required Improvement is calculated using district performance data of at-risk students.

**Minimum Size Requirements:** If there are less than 10 at-risk TAKS test results in the district, then Special Analysis is conducted.

**Special Analysis:** Special Analysis consists of analyzing current and past performance data to determine if the initial rating assigned under the automated evaluation process is an aberration or an indication of consistent performance. Methods of Special Analysis are discussed in *Chapter 6 – Special Issues and Circumstances*.

**Table 15: Use of TAKS Data of At-Risk Students in the District**

Number of TAKS tests at the AEC	Does the AEC meet the performance standard on its own data?	Does the AEC demonstrate Required Improvement (RI) on its own data?	Does the AEC meet the performance standard using district performance data of at-risk students?
10 or more	Yes – assign rating	N/A	N/A
	No	Yes – assign rating	N/A
		No – assign rating	
Less than 10	Yes – assign rating	N/A	N/A
	No	Yes – assign rating	N/A
		No	Yes – assign rating
None	N/A	N/A	Yes – assign rating
			No – calculate district RI; assign rating

## COMPLETION RATE II INDICATOR

**Who is evaluated for Completion Rate II using data of at-risk students in the district:**

- AECs of Choice that do not meet the 60.0% accountability standard or demonstrate Required Improvement.
- AECs of Choice that have completion data, but do not meet minimum size requirements for All Students.
- AECs of Choice that serve students in any of grades 9-12, but do not have a Completion Rate II.
- If the AEC of Choice does not serve students in any of grades 9-12 in the 2008-09 school year, then the AEC of Choice is not evaluated on Completion Rate II.

**Required Improvement:** If the AEC of Choice does not meet the accountability standard based on at-risk students in the district, then Required Improvement is calculated using Completion Rate II of at-risk students in the district.

**Minimum Size Requirements:**

- Completion Rate II of at-risk students in the district is evaluated if there are:
  - at least 10 at-risk dropouts (non-completers), *and*
  - at least 10 students in the district at-risk Completion Rate II class.
- If at-risk students in the district do not meet minimum size requirements, then the AEC of Choice is not evaluated on Completion Rate II.

**Table 16: Use of Completion Rate II Data of At-Risk Students in the District**

Does the AEC of Choice serve students in grades 9, 10, 11, and/or 12 in 2008-09?	Does the AEC of Choice have a Completion Rate II and meet minimum size requirements in 2007-08?	Does the AEC of Choice meet the accountability standard on its own data?	Does the AEC of Choice demonstrate Required Improvement (RI) on its own data?	Do at-risk students in the district meet minimum size requirements?	Does the AEC of Choice meet the accountability standard using Completion Rate II of at-risk students in the district?
Yes	Yes	Yes – assign rating	N/A	N/A	N/A
		No	Yes – assign rating	N/A	N/A
			No	Yes	Yes – assign rating
				No	No – calculate district RI; assign rating
	No	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes – assign rating
				No	No – calculate district RI; assign rating
		N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes – assign rating
				No	No – calculate district RI; assign rating
No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**ANNUAL DROPOUT RATE INDICATOR**

**Who is evaluated for Annual Dropout Rate using data of at-risk students in the district:**

AECs of Choice and Residential Facilities that do not meet the 20.0% standard or demonstrate Required Improvement.

**Required Improvement:** If the AEC does not meet the accountability standard based on at-risk students in the district, then Required Improvement is calculated using Annual Dropout Rate of at-risk students in the district.

**Minimum Size Requirements:** Annual Dropout Rate of at-risk students in the district is evaluated if there are:

- at least 10 at-risk dropouts (non-completers), *and*
- at least 10 at-risk students in the district in grades 7-12.

**Table 17: Use of Annual Dropout Data of At-Risk Students in the District**

Number of Dropouts	Does the AEC meet the accountability standard on its own data?	Does the AEC demonstrate Required Improvement (RI) on its own data?	Does the AEC meet the accountability standard using Annual Dropout Rate of at-risk students in the district?
10 or more	Yes – assign rating	N/A	N/A
	No	Yes – assign rating	N/A
		No	Yes – assign rating
			No – calculate district RI; assign rating
0 - 9	N/A	N/A	N/A

### **Additional Requirements for Charters**

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**Underreported Students:** Charters evaluated under AEA procedures are subject to underreported student standards as described in *Chapter 3 – The Basics: Additional Features*. Although the charter AEA rating is not affected, Performance-Based Monitoring (PBM) will continue to evaluate this indicator at the 2009 standards in its Data Validation system.

**Additional Students in Charter Ratings:** Charters evaluated under AEA procedures are responsible for the performance of all students, including those who attend campuses that receive a rating of *AEA: Not Rated – Other*.

### **AEAs Rated AEA: Academically Unacceptable**

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Registered AECs rated *AEA: Academically Unacceptable* do not prevent a district rating of *Exemplary* or *Recognized*.

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