



TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

1701 North Congress Ave. ★ Austin, Texas 78701-1494 ★ 512/463-9734 ★ FAX: 512/463-9838 ★ <http://www.tea.state.tx.us>

Robert Scott
Commissioner

January 30, 2009

Mr. Arne Duncan, Secretary
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-6400

Dear Secretary Duncan:

Enclosed is the Texas Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook (Texas AYP Workbook) dated January 30, 2009. The workbook is updated to reflect changes to the Texas AYP calculations as a result of the following events and/or guidance letters from the United States Department of Education (USDE).

- USDE approval of Texas' growth model proposal for the 2008-2009 school year with conditions:
 - Texas must meet the requirements in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with USDE concerning TAKS-Alternate (TAKS-Alt) assessments;
 - Texas must discontinue use of Confidence Intervals and Uniform Averaging for determining the AYP status for districts or campuses with fewer than 50 assessments (small numbers analysis).
- USDE flexibility provided for the students displaced by Hurricane Ike and for districts and campuses directly impacted by Hurricane Ike.
- Review of the December 5, 2008, letter from the USDE regarding amending Title I Accountability Workbooks in which states were strongly encouraged to submit only amendments that are either (1) necessary to bring a State's accountability workbook into compliance with current law, or (2) required to accurately reflect current practice in a State's accountability system. In addition, the Workbook clarifies that students previously identified as receiving special education services are not included in the AYP calculations for the special education student group.

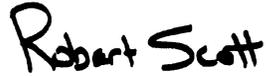
Regarding the Hurricane Ike provisions, please know that many Texas school districts are still recovering from the devastating impact of this storm. In addition to Hurricane Ike, you may recall that Hurricanes Dolly and Gustav and Tropical Storm Edouard struck Texas – all within 52 days of each other. Then Hurricane Ike struck the southeast Texas coast on September 13, 2008. According to the Office of the Governor, Hurricane Ike will likely go down in history as the most costly and destructive storm ever to hit Texas.

The Hurricane Ike flexibility requested for 2009 AYP calculations mirrors the same flexibility provided by the USDE following the dual impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in the 2005-06 school year. One difference, however, is that the flexibility allowed for districts impacted by Hurricane Rita was applied to districts closed for seven or more instructional days. The flexibility requested for Hurricane Ike will apply to districts closed for ten or more instructional days to align with the Hurricane Ike provision proposed for the Texas accountability rating system.

In addition to the modifications above, the workbook also includes other minor revisions which have been tracked for your convenience.

If you need additional information or have questions about any of the proposed amendments or revisions, please contact Criss Cloudt, Associate Commissioner for Assessment, Accountability, and Data Quality, by telephone at (512) 463-9701 or by e-mail at criss.cloudt@tea.state.tx.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Scott". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

Robert Scott
Commissioner of Education

Attachment

Enclosure: Texas Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook

cc: Lizzette Reynolds, Deputy Commissioner, Statewide Policy and Programs
Criss Cloudt, Associate Commissioner for Assessment, Accountability, and Data Quality
Anita Givens, Acting Associate Commissioner for Standards and Programs
Gene Lenz, Deputy Associate Commissioner for Special Programs
Cory Green, Director, NCLB Program Coordination
Shannon Housson, Director, Performance Reporting Division