

## **Chapter 8 – System Safeguards and Other Federal Requirements**

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The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) (P.L. 107-110), reauthorized and amended federal programs established under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA). Under NCLB, accountability provisions that formerly applied only to districts and campuses receiving Title I, Part A funds were expanded to all districts and campuses. All public school districts, campuses, and the state were evaluated annually for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) from the 2002-03 through the 2011-12 school years.

On February 28, 2013, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) requested that the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) waive specific provisions of the ESEA. The U.S. Secretary of Education approved the Texas waiver request on September 30, 2013, which waived the 2012-13 AYP calculations and allowed the state's existing systems of interventions to guide the support and improvement of schools. As a result of the approved ESEA Flexibility Waiver, the state accountability System Safeguard information was used to meet federal accountability requirements to identify Priority and Focus Schools that are eligible for additional federal funding while subject to a series of federally-prescribed interventions.

### **State Accountability System Safeguards**

The disaggregated performance results of the state accountability system serve as the basis of safeguards for the accountability rating system to ensure that poor performance in one area or one student group is not masked in the performance index. The state accountability system safeguard data are released in conjunction with the state accountability ratings.

The disaggregated performance measures and safeguard targets are calculated for performance rates, participation rates and graduation rates of eleven student groups: All Students and seven racial/ethnic groups: African American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, White, and Two or More Races; Economically Disadvantaged, Students with Disabilities, and English language learners (ELLs). Beginning in 2014, the ELL student group includes ELL students currently identified as limited English proficient (LEP) plus additional ELL students who have met the criteria for exiting bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. These students are no longer classified as LEP for Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) reporting and are in the first or second year of monitoring as required by state statute.

Performance rates calculated for the safeguard system are the disaggregated performance rates used for Index 1. A single target will be used that corresponds to the 2014 target for student achievement in Index 1. Targets for participation rates, graduation rates, and limits on use of State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Alternate and STAAR Modified are aligned to federal requirements. District and campus level system safeguard results will be reported for any cell that meets accountability minimum size criteria.

The *Accountability System Safeguard Measures and Targets* table below contains detailed information about the 2014 performance targets that are used for the state system safeguards and federal accountability evaluations.

<b>Accountability System Safeguard Measures and Targets</b>											
	All	African Amer.	Hispanic	White	Amer. Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	Econ. Disadv.	Special Ed	ELL
<b>Performance Rate Targets - State</b>											
Reading	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%
Mathematics	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%
Writing	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%
Science	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%
Soc. Studies	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%	55%
<b>Performance Rate Targets - Federal</b>											
Reading - Federal	79%	79%	79%	79%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	79%	79%	79%
Mathematics - Federal	79%	79%	79%	79%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	79%	79%	79%
<b>Participation Rates</b>											
Reading	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Mathematics	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
<b>Federal Graduation Rates *</b>											
4-year	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%
5-year	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%
<b>District Limits on Use of Alternative Assessment Results</b>											
Reading - Modified	2%	<i>Not Applicable</i>									
Reading - Alternate	1%	<i>Not Applicable</i>									
Mathematics - Modified	2%	<i>Not Applicable</i>									
Mathematics - Alternate	1%	<i>Not Applicable</i>									

\* Federal graduation rate targets include an improvement target.

## 2014 System Safeguards Reports

On August 8, 2014, the state accountability ratings, distinction designations, and System Safeguard reports, will be released on the TEA website. The System Safeguard reports provide disaggregated results with the percent of measures and targets met. The information serves as the basis for the accountability rating system and ensures that poor performance in one area or one student group is not masked in the overall performance index. For 2014, the state accountability disaggregated safeguard measures include four components: 1) performance rates, 2) participation rates, 3) graduation rates, and 4) limits on use of alternative assessments. The performance rates, participation rates and graduation rates are calculated for 11 student groups: All Students; seven racial/ethnic groups: African American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, White, and Two or More Races; Economically Disadvantaged, students receiving Special Education services, and the current or monitored ELL student group.

### Performance Targets

Performance rates calculated for the state accountability safeguard system are the same disaggregated results used for Index 1 in reading, mathematics, writing, science, and social studies. The performance target for the 2014 System Safeguard measures correspond to the 55 percent target on Index 1: Student Achievement.

## Federal Participation Rates

Test participation rates are included in the accountability System Safeguards reports. The target of 95 percent is unchanged from the federal accountability target in place in prior years. Participation measures are based on all students enrolled at the time of testing and defined as the total number of test answer documents submitted by each school district (denominator of the participation rate). The calculation is not limited to students enrolled for the full academic year. Test answer documents that are coded “Absent” or “Other” are not counted as participants and are therefore not included in calculating the participation numerator.

## Federal Limits on use of Alternative Assessments

For school districts only, the System Safeguard reports indicate whether a school district exceeded the federal limit on use of alternative assessments. Federal limitations require that the number of scores that meet the STAAR Alternate Phase-in Satisfactory Standard not exceed one percent of the district’s total participation. Similarly, the use of proficient results from STAAR Modified is limited; the number of test scores that meet the STAAR Modified Phase-in Satisfactory Standard may not exceed two percent of the district’s total participation. The measures for STAAR Alternate and STAAR Modified are reported separately for reading and mathematics.

## Federal Graduation Rate Goals and Targets

Texas is required by state statute to use the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) dropout definition and federal graduation rate calculation.

*Goal:* The long term statewide goal for the four-year graduation rate is 90.0 percent. High schools and school districts that do not meet the 90.0 percent graduation rate goal must meet either an annual target or a growth target for the four-year graduation rate, or an annual target for the five-year graduation rate.

*Four-Year Graduation Rate Annual Target:* For 2014, the annual target is 80.0 percent of students graduate with a regular high school diploma in four years.

*Four-Year Graduation Rate Growth Target:* The growth target is a 10.0 percent decrease in difference between prior year graduation rate and the 90.0 percent goal.

*Five-Year Graduation Rate Annual Target:* For 2014, the annual target is 85.0 percent of students graduate with a regular high school diploma in five years.

## Consequences and Interventions

Interventions pertain to activities that result from the issuance of ratings under the state accountability system. State accountability-related interventions are those activities conducted by the Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS). Intervention activities reflect an emphasis on increased student performance, focused improvement planning, data analysis, and data integrity. Required levels of intervention are determined based on the requirements of the Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 39. See the Division of Program Monitoring and Interventions website at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/pmi> for more information.

Failure to meet the safeguard target for any reported cell will be addressed through the TAIS. If the campus or district is already identified for assistance or intervention in the TAIS based on the current year state accountability rating or prior year state or federal accountability designations, then performance on the safeguard indicators will be incorporated into that

improvement effort. The TAIS determines the level of intervention and support the campus or district receives based on performance history as well as current year state accountability rating and performance on the safeguard measures.

## Federal Accountability Requirements

The state accountability System Safeguard information is used to meet federal accountability requirements such as identification of Priority and Focus Schools, Title III evaluations, and special education reporting requirements. Along with differences in the performance targets, the minimum size criteria applied for federal accountability requirements also differ.

The underlying data used to report state accountability system safeguards is also used for federal accountability requirements such as district evaluations for Title III Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) and USDE Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) State Performance Plan (SPP) and State Annual Performance Report (APR). These federal accountability requirements are limited to the Reading/English language arts and Mathematics performance and participation indicators for the required ELL and Special Education programs at the 2013-14 federally approved performance target of 79 percent.

## Federal Performance Targets

The federally approved target of 79 percent is applied to performance results. Performance rates calculated for the state accountability safeguard system are the same disaggregated results used for Index 1. The federal target must reflect an increase from the prior year performance target of 75 percent.

## Minimum Size Requirements

The following table provides the minimum size criteria applied to the state system safeguards and the federal accountability requirements.

2014 System Safeguard Minimum Size Criteria		
Minimum Size Criteria	State System Safeguard	Federal Accountability Requirements
Performance Rates	All Students: None, Small Numbers Analysis applied  Student Groups: 25	All Students*: None, Small Numbers Analysis applied  Student Groups: 25 and 10%; or 200
Participation Rates	All Students: None, Small Numbers Analysis applied  Student Groups: 25	All Students: Not Applicable  Student Groups (for Title III AMAOs and OSEP): 25 and 10%; or 200
Federal Graduation Rates	All Students: None, Small Numbers Analysis applied  Student Groups: 25	All Students*: None, Small Numbers Analysis applied  Student Groups: n/a

\*Note that Priority School Identification requires a minimum of 25 tests for a campus to be ranked by All Students performance, and a minimum of ten students in the class to be ranked by All Students graduation rates.

The approved ESEA flexibility waiver is available online at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/nclb/>.

The Priority and Focus Schools Lists, methodology and student groups evaluated are available at [http://www.tea.state.tx.us/ESEAFlex\\_Principle2.aspx](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/ESEAFlex_Principle2.aspx).

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