

Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for 2015 Accountability and Beyond

Changes to the performance indexes and the inclusion of additional indicators that are described below are necessary to meet statutory requirements of House Bill 3 (HB 3), 81st Texas Legislature, 2009; House Bill 5 (HB 5), 83rd Texas Legislature, 2013. Additional changes to accountability are made to address the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR[®]) program changes for the 2014-15 school year communicated by letter to school districts on August 29, 2014.

1. Recommendations: 2015 System Rigor

The overall design of the accountability system will remain the same, evaluating performance according to four indexes:

- Index 1: Student Achievement
- Index 2: Student Progress
- Index 3: Closing Performance Gaps
- Index 4: Postsecondary Readiness

The statutory policy goals for the accountability system specified in Chapter 39.053(f) of the Texas Education Code are as follows:

- Improving student achievement at all levels in the core subjects of the state curriculum
- Ensuring the progress of all students toward achieving Advanced Academic Performance
- Closing Advanced Academic Performance level gaps among groups

The *Accountability System Goals and Guiding Principles – 2013 and Beyond*, accessible at <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/account/2015/20141208mtg/guiding.pdf>, describe the overarching goal of Texas being among the top ten states in postsecondary readiness by 2020.

In preparation for possible changes to the index calculations in 2016, ATAC members requested clarification of the goals regarding advanced performance levels and their associated STAAR student performance standard (Level III and Final Level II). Both APAC and ATAC members requested clarification of postsecondary readiness in specific reference to college preparedness versus alternate routes to postsecondary success for 2016 accountability and beyond.

Changes affecting all four performance indexes.

Changes to assessments for students with disabilities

STAAR assessments are available to students who receive special education services as determined by the student's admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee. Three changes planned for school year 2014–15 will directly affect assessments available for students with disabilities:

Elimination of STAAR Modified: STAAR Modified, alternate assessments based on modified academic achievement standards available for eligible students receiving special education services, were administered for the final time in 2013–14. The U.S. Department of Education informed states that assessments based on modified standards for students served by special education may no longer be used for accountability purposes after the 2013–14 school year.

Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for 2015 Accountability and Beyond

Administration of STAAR Accommodated (STAAR A): STAAR A assessments are accommodated versions of the general STAAR assessments available for eligible students. Administered for the first time in spring 2015, STAAR A is intended for students with disabilities receiving special education services and students with dyslexia and related disorders (as defined by Texas Education Code §38.003) being served under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. STAAR A student performance results on tests administered in spring 2015 will be reported with STAAR results.

Redesigned STAAR Alternate 2 implemented: House Bill 5 required a redesign of STAAR Alternate with implementation in February 2015. The new STAAR Alternate 2 assessments were redesigned to meet the diverse needs of students with significant cognitive disabilities enrolled in grades 3 through 8 and EOC subjects. Designed as a standardized item-based assessment, the new STAAR Alternate 2 consists of 24 scripted questions. It is administered to students in a one-on-one setting, and the responses are submitted through an online form. New performance standards for STAAR Alternate 2 will be set in spring 2015, and STAAR Alternate 2 student performance results will be reported with STAAR results.

APAC Recommendation: Agreed with the ATAC recommendation to apply a hold-harmless provision for the STAAR A and STAAR Alternate 2 test results in Index 1.

Decision: APAC member consensus.

Rationale: The ATAC recommendation directly addresses changes to assessments for students with disabilities and is an appropriate application of the hold-harmless provision. Under the ATAC recommendation, STAAR A and STAAR Alternate 2 results are only included in Index 1. The hold-harmless provision, therefore, only applies to these specific assessments as included in Index 1. The hold-harmless provision is explained following the next section and in further detail in Appendix A.

Implementation of revised TEKS mathematics curriculum

Because new curriculum standards in mathematics were implemented in 2014-15 for grades K–8 (adopted by the State Board of Education [SBOE] in April 2012), the spring 2015 STAAR mathematics assessments for grades 3–8 will be used to develop new STAAR student performance standards during summer 2015. Students who participate in the spring 2015 STAAR grades 3–8 mathematics administrations will receive a raw score prior to the end of the school year. In August 2015, updated student confidential reports and test data files will indicate the passing status based on new student performance standards.

Equivalent performance standards will be developed that establish a link or “bridge” between the spring 2015 STAAR grades 3–8 mathematics tests and the previous (2014) mathematics tests. For accountability purposes only, the testing contractor will establish a link between the new spring 2015 STAAR grades 3–8 mathematics tests and the previous mathematics tests to determine equivalent performance standards. The bridge study process will statistically map the previous performance standards to the new assessments using common items appearing on both the prior version and the new version of the STAAR mathematics assessments. The bridge study’s process provides a comparison of performance on the new 2015 STAAR mathematics assessments to performance on the 2014 STAAR mathematics assessments in order to ensure that the bridged performance standards at the following levels are equivalent to the original STAAR mathematics performance standards.

Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for 2015 Accountability and Beyond

- Phase-in 1 Level II
- Final Level II
- Advanced Level III

APAC Recommendation: Expand the hold-harmless provision to address the issues related to the transition to the new TEKS for grade 3-8 mathematics. The hold-harmless provision would be applied to the STAAR A and STAAR Alternate 2 results in Index 1, *and* STAAR (regular) grade 3 – 8 mathematics results in Indexes 1, 3, and 4. This recommendation requires separate hold-harmless processes for Index 1, Index 3, and Index 4. The hold-harmless process compares the results of Index 1 that include STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics tests to Index 1 results without those assessments. This option also requires that Index 3 and Index 4 include a hold-harmless process to compare the indexes with STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics tests to the index results without those assessments.

Decision: Eight members voted to expand the hold-harmless provision to include grades 3 – 8 mathematics and four of the APAC members voted in support of the ATAC recommendation. Two members abstained from voting.

Rationale: After a lengthy discussion, the APAC members expressed their primary concerns regarding the use of grade 3-8 mathematics results in 2015 accountability: 1) the significant diversity of instructional resources and supports available to school districts to address changes in the mathematics curricula, 2) lack of understanding of the bridge study, specifically how student performance on the new 2014-15 mathematics TEKS affects the bridge study results; and 3) different opinions of the appropriateness of the bridge study results. Following their small group discussions, the APAC engaged in a question and answer session with the psychometric staff and contractors who explained how the 2014 equivalent performance standards were determined by the STAAR Mathematics Bridge Study. The majority voted to expand the hold-harmless provision to include grades 3–8 mathematics results using 2014 equivalent performance standards based on the STAAR Mathematics Bridge Study.

Due to the complexity of the expanded hold-harmless provision and the limited time available to process the state accountability results, the following apply:

- **Accountability Rating Lists:** Accountability ratings and distinctions will be reported by Friday, August 7, 2015. Additional data tables will not be available on the same date as the release of the 2015 ratings.
- **Delayed Accountability Reports:** Due to the complexity of an expanded hold-harmless provision and timeline of available STAAR Mathematics Bridge Study results, accountability reports, accountability summary information, and system safeguard data will be released at a later date. Currently, TEA staff estimate release of additional information within one week following the release, by August 14, 2015.

Data reported for 2015 accountability will include STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and the STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent performance standards as calculated from the STAAR Mathematics Bridge Study result. The reports will include the modified rating label with annotations explaining a hold-harmless provision was applied. Performance data that exclude the STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and the STAAR

Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for 2015 Accountability and Beyond

(regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent performance standards as calculated from the STAAR Mathematics Bridge Study will not be reported.

- **Distinction Designations:** All indicators used to evaluate distinctions are aligned with results that include STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent standards. This includes the following:
 - Advanced Level III performance indicators are aligned with Index 1 and will therefore include student performance on STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent standards at the Advanced Level III performance standard.
 - *Top 25 Percent: Student Progress* indicator aligned with Index 2 will exclude STAAR A progress measure results and ELL progress measure results for grades 3-8 mathematics.
 - *Top 25 Percent: Closing Performance Gaps* indicator aligned with Index 3 will include STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent standards (STAAR A and STAAR Alternate 2 are excluded);
 - Postsecondary Readiness Distinction, indicator of STAAR Postsecondary Readiness Standard (measured by the Index 4 STAAR Component) will include STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent standards (STAAR A and STAAR Alternate 2 are excluded);
 - Also for evaluation of all Distinction Designations:
 - ◆ No hold-harmless provision is applied to the distinction outcome.
 - ◆ The Campus Comparison Group methodology is changed to include the percent of students served by special education programs based on fall PEIMS enrollment.
- **System Safeguards:** The system safeguard data and measures are aligned to Index 1 and will include student performance on STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent standards. The Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS) and federally required identification of Focus and Priority Schools, including submission of assessment results to the U.S. Department of Education, will include these results.

2. Recommendations: Accountability Ratings Criteria and Targets

Ratings Criteria. Performance targets are set for each index while rating criteria establish the number of indexes that must meet the index target in order to receive a *Met Standard* or *Met Alternative Standard* rating.

APAC Recommendation: Agree with the ATAC recommendation that in order to receive a *Met Standard* or *Met Alternative Standard* rating, all campuses and districts must meet the performance index target on the following indexes if they have performance data for evaluation:

Index 1 **OR** Index 2 **AND** Index 3 **AND** Index 4

**Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for
2015 Accountability and Beyond**

Decision: Twelve members voted in support of endorsing the ATAC recommendation; one member abstained. A second proposal was presented with a separate vote on an alternative rating criteria for *Met Standard* or *Met Alternative Standard* rating. The proposal would allow districts and campuses to achieve a satisfactory rating by meeting the index targets on three or more indexes. In other words, a school could miss one of any four index targets and still receive a satisfactory rating. One APAC member voted in support of this proposal.

Rationale: Following the discussion on the grade 3 – 8 mathematics assessment, the APAC discussed the appropriateness of targets based on an expanded application of the hold-harmless provision. After some discussion, the majority of APAC members voted to support the ATAC recommendation for rating criteria. Members agreed the recommendation addresses the rigor of the 2015 accountability system due to the revised TEKS mathematics curriculum and planned changes to assessments for students with disabilities.

Performance Index Targets. The majority of ATAC members recommended the following performance index targets for 2015:

Recommended Performance Index Targets

	Index 1 Maintain 2014 Targets	Index 2*	Index 3 Maintain 2014 Targets	Index 4 Maintain 2014 Targets	
				All Components	STAAR Component Only
Non-AEA					
District Targets	55	5 th Percentile	28	57	13
Campus Targets:	55				
Elementary		5 th Percentile	28	n/a	12
Middle		5 th Percentile	27	n/a	13
High School/K-12		5 th Percentile	31	57	21
AEA				Both Components	Graduation/ Dropout Rate Component Only
AEA Campus and Charter District Targets	30	5 th Percentile	11	33	45

* Targets for non-AEA campuses are recommended to be set at about the fifth percentile of non-AEA 2015 campus performance by campus type. Targets for non-AEA districts correspond to about the fifth percentile of non-AEA 2015 campus performance across all campus types.

Rating Labels. The 2015 rating labels remain the same rating labels issued in 2014 accountability

- *Met Standard* – met the required performance index targets and other accountability rating criteria
- *Improvement Required* – did not meet the required performance index targets or other accountability rating criteria

Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for 2015 Accountability and Beyond

- *Met Alternative Standard* – assigned to charter operators and alternative education campuses evaluated under alternative education accountability (AEA) provisions
- *Not Rated* – under certain circumstances, districts or campuses may receive no rating label

APAC Recommendation: Agree with the ATAC recommendation to hold the 2014 targets constant for Index 1, Index 3, and Index 4; and apply a target at about the fifth percentile of performance by campus type for Index 2.

Decision: Eleven members supported the ATAC recommendation, three members abstained.

Rationale: The APAC discussion on rating criteria and targets reflected a general agreement with the ATAC recommendation and rationale. Individual members expressed their concern that schools with consistently low performance in mathematics may not be identified by the application of prior year targets. The consensus of the APAC was that maintaining 2014 targets for 2015 accountability addresses system rigor caused by changes in assessments. Also discussed were the planned transition to the STAAR Phase-in 2 Level II student performance standard implemented beginning in school year 2015–2016 which would impose additional rigor at the same time that consideration will be given to raising the targets. Members discussed developing a long-range plan for the accountability target setting beginning in 2016.

3. Recommendations: Performance Indexes

The original design of each performance index remains the same as the prior year. Changes to each index and clarification of the expanded hold-harmless provision are described in the following sections.

Index 1: Student Achievement. The index remains a snapshot of performance across subjects, on both general and alternative assessments, at the satisfactory performance standard.

Hold-Harmless Provision

The **base index data** results for Index 1 will include STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and the STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent performance standards as calculated from the STAAR Mathematics Bridge Study results.

The **Index 1 hold-harmless** results will exclude STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and the STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent performance standards. If the Index 1 scores from the base Index 1 data does not meet the Index 1 targets, the hold-harmless score will be used to determine the accountability rating outcome. The accountability report will include annotations explaining a hold-harmless provision was applied. See Appendix A: Hold-Harmless Provision for further details.

The accountability reports, campus-level distinctions designations of indicators Advanced Level III performance, plus system safeguard outcomes and data table are aligned to Index 1 and will include student performance on STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and the STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent performance standards. The campus comparison group will also be modified to include the percent of students served by special education programs based on fall PEIMS enrollment.

Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for 2015 Accountability and Beyond

As detailed above, limited information will be provided with the accountability rating lists released by Friday, August 7. Note that accountability data that exclude STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and the STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent performance standards results will not be reported.

Inclusion of English Language Learners (ELLs)

The ATAC recommended changes to the accountability processing of tests results of English Language Learners (ELLs) in two unique circumstances: ELLs served by special education programs, and those with parental denials for instructional services. These changes are applied only for ELLs enrolled in their second through fourth years in U.S. schools. Note that ELLs in their first year of enrollment in U.S. schools are excluded from accountability.

The inclusion of ELLs in these unique circumstances require changes to the Index 1 and Index 3 calculations. The ATAC recommendation provides detailed changes across all four indexes summarized in *ATAC Recommendations for 2015 Accountability, Appendix A: 2015 Accountability Inclusion of English Language Learners (ELLs) in Special Categories at:*

http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/account/2015/20150205mtg/ATAC_FinalRecommendations_2015.pdf

APAC Recommendation: Agree with ATAC recommendation.

Decision: Seven APAC members voted to endorse the ATAC recommendation, and four members abstained.

Rationale: APAC members were briefed on the issues regarding the unique circumstances of ELLs served by special education programs and those with parental denials for instructional services. Several members were in agreement with the original ATAC recommendation to request the calculation of an ELL Progress Measure for ELLs with parental denials for services. Members discussed the statewide diversity of instructional and financial resources available to address the needs of ELLs. Since the APAC members varied in their awareness of ELL instructional practices, the majority deferred to the ATAC ELL Workgroup recommendation for appropriate inclusion in 2015 accountability.

Index 2: Student Progress. Measures of student progress provide an opportunity for districts and campuses to receive credit for improving student performance independent of overall student achievement.

APAC Recommendation: Agreed with the ATAC recommendation regarding Index 2, detailed below. In addition, the APAC endorsed the proposed changes for ELLs including changes to the ELL student group used in Index 2 calculations.

Decision: APAC member consensus.

Rationale: The ATAC recommendation addresses changes in available progress measures from assessments for students with disabilities, and the lack of STAAR progress measure results for grades 3-8 mathematics.

Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for 2015 Accountability and Beyond

Weighted Performance Rate

The Index 2 calculation for STAAR Weighted Progress Rate is changed to a combined aggregated rate. The Index 2 calculation will combine STAAR and ELL Progress Measures in reading, mathematics (Algebra I only in 2015), and writing for an aggregate weighted progress rate. This change is applied to 2015 accountability system only, with further discussion on the Index 2 calculation in 2016. The percent met or exceeded progress, and percent exceeded progress will be calculated from the combined tests in reading, mathematics (Algebra I only in 2015), and writing. The STAAR aggregate weighted progress rate will be used in the Index 2 calculation; the specific subject percentages will not contribute to the calculation. Index 2 will continue to accumulate points weighted by the students' level of performance: one point for each percentage of tests that met or exceeded progress; one additional point for each percentage of tests that exceeded progress. Cumulative performance (met and exceeded progress plus exceeded progress) in each subject therefore contributes from 0 to 200 points to the groups consisting of All Students and each student group that meets minimum size criteria.

Progress Measures not used

In order to address the changes to the grades 3-8 mathematics tests and new assessments for students with disabilities on STAAR Progress Measures, Index 2 will exclude STAAR A progress measures. Although ELL Progress Measures will be calculated for all subjects, Index 2 will exclude grades 3-8 mathematics ELL Progress Measures. There are no STAAR progress measures in 2015 for grades 3-8 mathematics.

Campus-level distinctions designations indicators of greater than expected growth used for additional academic achievement distinction designations (AADD) in reading/ELA and mathematics are aligned to Index 2 and are the same percentages reported on Index 2 data tables. Also note that ELL Progress Measures in reading/ELA and writing (all grades) are included in Index 2. More information on student progress measures can be found at the following links to the Student Assessment website, STAAR® General Resources section, see

- STAAR Progress Measure
- ELL Progress Measure, available at <http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/staar/>

Expand the ELL Student Group

The Index 2 ELL student group is expanded to include current and monitored ELLs in the first and second years of academic monitoring after exiting ELL status. Student progress results for an ELL student are included in the ELL student group if the student has been identified as a current or monitored limited English proficient (LEP) student and has been appropriately coded on assessment answer documents. Students are coded as either 1) a currently identified LEP student ("C") or 2) the student has met the criteria for bilingual/ESL program exit, is no longer classified as LEP in PEIMS, and is in the first or second year of monitoring as required by statute ("M1" or "M2").

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

APAC Recommendation: Agreed with the ATAC recommendation to apply no changes to the 2015 Index 3 calculation. The APAC endorsement of the proposed changes for ELLs include the Index 3 change for tests of ELLs with parental denial for instructional services enrolled in their second

Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for 2015 Accountability and Beyond

through fourth years in U.S. schools. Note that the APAC recommendation to expand the hold-harmless provision to address grades 3–8 mathematics results requires a separate hold-harmless process for Index 3, explained below.

Decision: APAC member consensus.

Rationale: The ATAC recommendation aligns with the APAC discussion regarding possible changes to the Index 3 calculation for 2016 accountability. The APAC recommendations for future accountability cycles are provided in the last section of this document.

Hold-Harmless Provision

The APAC recommendation to expand the hold-harmless provision to include STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and STAAR (regular) assessments of grade 3 – 8 mathematics will affect Index 3.

The **base index data** results for Index 3 are calculated as in 2014 and will include the STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent performance standards as calculated from the STAAR Mathematics Bridge Study results. Test results from STAAR A and STAAR Alternate 2 are excluded from the base Index 3 data.

The **Index 3 hold-harmless** process will begin with the base index data and exclude STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent performance standards. If the Index 3 scores from the base Index 3 data does not meet the Index 3 target, the hold-harmless score will be selected to apply toward the accountability rating outcome. The accountability report will include annotations explaining a hold-harmless provision was applied. See Appendix A: Hold-Harmless Provision for further details.

The accountability reports and campus-level Distinctions Designation of *Top 25 Percent: Closing Performance Gaps* are aligned with the base Index 3 data, and will include STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent standards.

Index 4: Postsecondary Readiness. Emphasizes the role of elementary and middle schools in preparing students for the rigors of high school, and the importance of earning a high school diploma that provides students with the foundation necessary for success in college, the workforce, job training programs, or the military. Alternative procedures are provided for Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) campuses and charter districts serving at-risk students in alternative education programs.

APAC Recommendation for 2015 Accountability: Agreed with the ATAC recommendation to expand the existing postsecondary indicator, defined in 2014 as the college-ready Indicator, and maintain the 2014 Index 4 calculation and component weights. Note that the APAC recommendation to expand the hold-harmless provision to address grades 3–8 mathematics results requires a separate hold-harmless processes for Index 4.

Decision: Twelve members voted in support of endorsing the ATAC recommendation, and one APAC member voted against the recommendation.

Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for 2015 Accountability and Beyond

Rationale: The APAC discussed the ATAC proposed postsecondary readiness indicator, specifically the methods used to credit the percent of annual graduates reported through one of three routes, described below. One member was concerned that crediting students' for completing at least one advanced/dual enrollment course credit was not sufficient preparation for postsecondary readiness. Other members discussed the limitations of existing public K – 12 and higher education student data collection systems that, at the present time, prevented the recommendation of a more appropriate indicator. The majority of the APAC agreed that the ATAC recommendation of the expanded indicator would meet statutory requirements for 2015 accountability.

Expanded Postsecondary Readiness Indicator

The design of Index 4 as applied to non-AEA campuses and districts continues to be based on four components.

- STAAR Postsecondary Readiness
- Graduation Rate
- Graduation Plan
- Postsecondary Indicator

The existing postsecondary indicator, defined in 2014 as the college-ready indicator, will be expanded to include additional credit for students in other postsecondary readiness activities: advanced or dual enrollment course completion; or commitment to the career and technical education (CTE) coherent course sequence program.

The definition of the indicator for 2015 accountability is shown below.

graduates reported for school year 2013–14 that:

- 1) meet college-ready criteria in *both* reading/English language arts and mathematics
- OR**
- 2) completed and received credit for at least one advanced/dual enrollment course

OR

- 3) enrolled and completed credit for the CTE coherent sequence

-----divided by-----
number of graduates reported for school year 2013–14

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Procedures

Expand AEA provisions by including the selected additional postsecondary indicators component as bonus points to Index 4.

Hold-Harmless Provision

The APAC recommendation to expand the hold-harmless provision include STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and STAAR (regular) assessments of grade 3 – 8 mathematics will affect Index 4.

The **base index data** results for Index 4 are calculated as in 2014 and will include the STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent performance standards as calculated from the STAAR Mathematics Bridge Study results. Test results from STAAR A and STAAR Alternate 2 are excluded from base Index 4 data.

The **Index 4 hold-harmless** process will begin with the index base data and exclude STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent performance standards. If the Index 4 scores from the base Index 4 data does not meet the Index 4 target, the hold-harmless score will be

Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for 2015 Accountability and Beyond

used to determine the accountability rating outcome. The accountability report will include annotations explaining a hold-harmless provision was applied. See Appendix A: Hold-Harmless Provision for further details.

The accountability reports and postsecondary readiness distinction, indicator of STAAR postsecondary readiness standard (measured by the Index 4 STAAR Component) will include STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent standards.

4. Recommendations: Distinction Designations

Distinction designations are awarded in recognition of outstanding achievement in specific areas. Campus distinctions are based on indicators of student performance in comparison to forty similar campuses.

APAC Recommendation: Agreed with the ATAC recommendation for additional and modified indicators, outlined below. The APAC also recommend an expansion of the advanced course/dual enrollment completion indicators by subject, and a reporting recommendation to display Index 1 scores and Index 4 scores (by number of components evaluated) within a campus comparison group.

Decision: APAC member consensus.

Rationale: APAC members agreed that ATAC recommendations for changes to the distinction designation indicators were reasonable. One APAC member addressed the diversity of campuses statewide in student enrollment, staff resources, and community access to postsecondary institutions. To address the diversity, the APAC recommended additional indicators of advanced course/dual enrollment completion by subject area. Members agreed that the existing indicators of the College Board’s Advanced Placement (AP) examinations and the International Baccalaureate’s (IB) Diploma Program Advanced Placement examinations (performance and participation) are highly dependent on school district and community resources. There was a consensus that additional indicators would expand the availability of distinctions to many more campuses throughout the state.

Following the discussion, one APAC member proposed reporting the statewide index score percentile by campus type on existing accountability reports. Members engaged in a discussion on appropriate measures of school comparability, specifically concerned with measures that may appear to be easily comparable such as statewide percentiles. After evaluating the pros and cons of providing additional data, members agreed that the most useful information for public comparisons of schools are within the existing campus comparison groups. APAC members agreed with a reporting recommendation to display Index 1 and Index 4 score results for each campus comparison group.

Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for 2015 Accountability and Beyond

Additional Academic Achievement Distinction Designation (AADD) Indicators at Advanced Level III

The number of AADD indicators is expanded to include performance at the Advanced Level III performance standard for all grades and subjects tested, including each end-of-course (EOC). This recommendation modifies the original recommendation made by the AADD committees to limit the AADD indicators based on STAAR performance at Advanced Level III to “milestone” grades/subjects, such as grade 3 reading and grade 5 mathematics.

Algebra I Advanced Level III Performance: Due to the expansion of the Advanced Level III Performance indicators, Algebra I by Grade 8–Performance (Level III) is redefined as Algebra I Performance (Level III). The indicator will include STAAR EOC Algebra I test results from any enrolled grade and will measure the percent of tests at the Advanced Level III performance standard.

Algebra I by Grade 8 – Participation Indicator

The indicator of test participation in Algebra I EOC by the end of grade 8 was applied to the 2013 and 2014 Academic Achievement Distinction Designation (AADD) in mathematics. An indicator of early Algebra I completion continues to be included in distinctions, but is redefined by 1) limiting the denominator to 8th grade students, and, 2) basing the calculation on the Fall enrollment and Algebra I tests taken as reported on the Consolidated Accountability File (CAF), cumulative history section.

For a complete table of the current and new indicators, see the *ATAC Recommendation, Appendix B: 2015 Academic Achievement Distinction Designations*, accessible at http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/account/2015/20150205mtg/ATAC_FinalRecommendations_2015.pdf.

Advanced Course/Dual Enrollment Completion Indicators

The Advanced Course/Dual Enrollment Completion indicator will change to include only students enrolled in grades 11 and 12.

Advanced Course/Dual Enrollment Completion indicator change:

$$\frac{\text{number of students in grades 11 and 12 who received credit for at least one advanced or dual enrollment course in school year 2013–14}}{\text{number of students in grades 11 and 12 who completed at least one course in school year 2013–14}}$$

Distinction designations will evaluate advanced course/dual enrollment completion **by Subject** for English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Add Percent Special Education enrollment to Campus Comparison Group methodology

The campus comparison group methodology is modified to include the percent of students served by special education programs based on fall PEIMS enrollment. The addition of the percentage will result in comparisons of campuses that serve similar numbers of students that will have been tested on STAAR A and STAAR Alternate 2. The recommendation to apply a hold-harmless provision, as described above, requires that the Academic Achievement Distinction Designation indicators of Advanced Level III performance (aligned with Index 1) include student performance on STAAR A and STAAR Alternate 2 at the Advanced Level III performance standard.

Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for 2015 Accountability and Beyond

Reporting results of Index Scores in Distinction Designation Comparison Groups

An additional report will be provided that displays index score results for each campus in a selected campus comparison group. Currently, index score results are reported for the campus distinction of *Top 25 Percent: Student Progress* (based on Index 2) and *Top 25 Percent: Closing Performance Gaps* (based on Index 3). Similar displays of index score results for Index 1 and Index 4 will be made available on the TEA website.

5. Future Accountability Recommendations

APAC Recommendation for Future Accountability: APAC recommends consideration of a proposal introduced by one member to remove the STAAR component from Index 4 calculations; and modify Index 3 to add Final Level II performance to the composite weighted performance.

The APAC also recommended that the ATAC review data related to the use of attendance rate in the distinction designation calculations in order to determine if there is a negative effect in its use.

Decision: APAC member consensus.

Rationale: APAC members discussed the proposal presented by Randy Willis to remove the STAAR postsecondary readiness indicator from the evaluation of Index 4. The performance index is designed to measure postsecondary readiness. The STAAR component in Index 4 credits campuses and districts for students who meet postsecondary readiness standard on two or more tests, specifically the combined results of students achieving the Final Level II performance or above, and students meeting the student equivalency standard on substitute assessments. Index 4 was originally designed to emphasize preparation for success in high school and preparation for success in college, the workforce, job training programs, or the military. Members discussed the appropriateness of removing the STAAR component from high school evaluations. Currently, the Index 4 STAAR component is the only indicator evaluated for elementary and middle schools. Members discussed the appropriateness of the STAAR component for elementary and middle schools Index 4 evaluations, and the limited indicators of postsecondary preparedness of elementary and middle schools students. Current statute requires inclusion of student performance at the Final Level II performance standard in accountability. To address this requirement, APAC members agreed with the ATAC recommendation to reevaluate the Index 3 methodology for 2016 accountability, and recommended modifying Index 3 to include additional points for student performance at the Final Level II performance standard.

The proposal from Mr. Willis also recommended additional indicators of postsecondary readiness, such as the percent of students participating in University Interscholastic League (UIL) activities, specifically including academic and other enrichment activities. The majority of APAC members agreed with broadening the approach to accountability to include measures of student engagement. One member recommended a continued academic focus of the accountability system as originally designed in 1994. After a lengthy discussion, APAC members agreed that the proposal merited further consideration and were in consensus that the accountability system move in the direction proposed by Mr. Willis.

Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for 2015 Accountability and Beyond

The APAC discussion of the attendance rate required detailed information on the decision to include the indicator in 2013 designations. The Attendance Rate measures student attendance for the entire school year for students in grades 1-12 and applies to all four subject area Academic Achievement Distinction Designations (AADD). Consequently, this indicator cannot be the sole measure used by a campus to attain a distinction. The average statewide attendance rate for school year 2012-13 was 95.8% with very little variability among campuses. This causes very small differences in attendance rates (one hundredths of a percent) among campus in a campus comparison group.

6. Input from Additional APAC Members

Twelve members of the APAC were unable to attend the February 23 meeting. To accommodate this, TEA sent a draft of the APAC recommendations to them to ensure that all APAC members would be able to contribute to forming the committee's recommendations. TEA asked each member to respond by indicating which recommendations he or she agreed with and which ones he or she did not. Members could provide feedback either in writing or during a pre-scheduled conference call.

Two members provided written responses. One member agreed with each recommendation. The other agreed with most recommendations, but disagreed with the one recommendation that would allow districts and campuses to receive an acceptable rating by meeting the target for either Index 1 or Index 2. The member voted instead to require districts and campuses to meet both targets. The same member also disagreed with the proposal to include student participation in UIL activities in future accountability determinations.

Three other members participated in the conference call. All three agreed with the recommendation to allow districts and campuses to receive an acceptable rating by meeting the target for either Index 1 or Index 2. They added, however, that it was appropriate for 2015 only; they recommended that the districts and campuses be required to meet both targets in future years. Two members agreed with the ATAC recommendation to apply a hold-harmless provision to STAAR A and STAAR Alt only, and the third agreed with the APAC recommendation to expand the hold-harmless provision to include mathematics, grades 3–8 as well. All three members agreed with each of the remaining APAC recommendations.

**Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for
2015 Accountability and Beyond**

**Appendix A:
Hold-Harmless Provision**

A **hold-harmless provision** adjusts the campus or district accountability rating if the index outcomes fail to meet their associated target solely due to the inclusion of certain assessments.

The ATAC and APAC recommendation to address changes in assessments for students with disabilities requires the use of the STAAR A and STAAR Alternate 2 for Index 1 calculations with a hold-harmless provision in place. These assessments will not be used in Index 2, Index 3, or Index 4.

The expanded hold-harmless provision to address grades 3–8 mathematics results means that the hold-harmless process is applied to Index 1, Index 3, and Index 4.

Index 1. Include the STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and the STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent performance standards as calculated from the STAAR Mathematics Bridge Study results;

- Compare the results of the hold-harmless Index 1 process that excludes STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics tests from Index 1 calculations.
- Because the hold-harmless provision for Index 1 is applied to the combination of STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and the results for the STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics, it will not be possible to determine which specific assessment or the combination of assessments were the sole reason for not meeting the Index 1 target.

Index 2. Include all available progress measures, except for STAAR A progress measure results and ELL progress measure results for grades 3–8 mathematics. There is no need to apply a hold-harmless process to Index 2 scores.

Index 3. Include the STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent standards as calculated from the STAAR Mathematics Bridge Study; and

Exclude STAAR A and STAAR Alternate 2 results.

- Compare the results of the hold-harmless Index 3 process that excludes STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent standards as calculated from the STAAR Mathematics Bridge Study from Index 3 calculations.

Index 4. Include the STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent standards as calculated from the STAAR Mathematics Bridge Study; and

Exclude STAAR A and STAAR Alternate 2 results.

- Compare the results of the hold-harmless Index 4 process that excludes STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics based on 2014 equivalent standards as calculated from the STAAR Mathematics Bridge Study from Index 4 calculations.

**Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for
2015 Accountability and Beyond**

**Appendix A:
Hold-Harmless Provision**

- The current STAAR Postsecondary Readiness Standard indicator evaluated in Index 4 is defined as the percent of students meeting the Final Level II performance standard in two or more subject areas. The exclusion of the grades 3-8 mathematics results will require campuses and districts to meet the Final Level II standard on two or more tests based on the remaining subjects (reading, writing, science, and social studies).

The final step of the hold-harmless provision will adjust the accountability rating if Index 1, Index 3, or Index 4 outcomes fail to meet the index target solely due to the inclusion of the combination of STAAR A, STAAR Alternate 2, and STAAR (regular) assessments in grades 3–8 mathematics tests.

**Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) Recommendations for
2015 Accountability and Beyond**

Appendix B: APAC Attendance on February 23, 2015

APAC Members in Attendance:

- Julie Shields, Education Advisor, *Office of the Governor*
- Andrea Winkler, Public Education Budget Analyst, *Legislative Budget Board*
- Jenna Watts, Policy Director, *House Public Education Committee*
- HD Chambers, Superintendent, *Alief ISD*
- Noell Lambert Alley, *Responsive Education Solutions* (Substitute for Chuck Cook, CEO, *Responsive Education Solutions*)
- LaTonya Goffney, Superintendent, *Lufkin ISD*
- Cesar Maldonado, Chancellor, *Houston Community College*
- Mike Morath, Member, *Dallas ISD Board of Education*
- Gonzalo Salazar, Superintendent, *Los Fresnos CISD*
- Jeri Stone, Executive Director/General Counsel, *Texas Classroom Teachers Association*
- Cynthia Opheim, Associate Provost, *Texas State University* (Substitute for Denise Trauth, President, *Texas State University*)
- Randy Willis, Superintendent, *Granger ISD*
- Julie Linn, Executive Director, *Texans for Education Reform*
- Mike Meroney, Consultant & Lobbyist, *Jobs for Texas*
- Barbara Knaggs, Parent, *Austin ISD*

APAC Members Not in Attendance Due to Illness, Bad Weather, or Other Reasons:

- Marian Wallace, Education Policy Advisor, *Office of the Lieutenant Governor*
- Beth Shields, Committee Director, *Senate Education Committee* (appointed in early February)
- Andrea Sheridan, Senior Education Advisor, *Office of the Speaker of the House*
- Alton Frailey, Superintendent, *Katy ISD & Texas Association of School Administrators*
- David Gardner, Deputy Commissioner, *Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board*
- Erma Johnson Hadley, Chancellor, *Tarrant County College District*
- Andrew Kim, Superintendent, *Comal ISD*
- Mike McFarland, Superintendent, *Lancaster ISD*
- Joe Arnold, Manager Community & Government Affairs, *BASF Corporation*
- Susan Dawson, President and Executive Director, *E3 Alliance*
- Sheri Doss, Parent, *Texas PTA Board*
- Frank Jones, Parent, *Leander ISD*