Summary of Changes – Final Compared to Preliminary Decisions
Accountability System for 2004 and Beyond
Commissioner of Education Final Decisions
April 2004

Minimum Size Criteria

- In 2004, the minimum size required in the numerator for the completion rate is increased from 5 to 10 dropouts (non-completers). This means that both the completion rate and the annual dropout rate will be evaluated in 2004 if there are 10 or more dropouts. In 2005, the numerator minimum size will be 5 for both the dropout rate and completion rate indicators. This means that in 2005 these measures will be evaluated if there are 5 or more dropouts. (See page 8.)

- Altering the minimum size control for student groups (30/10%/50) to omit the 10%/50 component in 2007 will be explored further, rather than definitely making this change in 2007. (See pages 3, 9, 11.)

SDAA II

Discussions are ongoing to identify a uniform state standard for performance on SDAA II. Development of an improvement standard will also be explored. (See page 7.)

Use of Commended Performance

Measures that incorporate TAKS Commended performance into the accountability ratings will be developed in 2005 and used in ratings no later than 2007. (See page 13.)

TAKS Cumulative Exit-level Passing Indicator

An indicator that includes the performance of subsequent passing scores for exit-level students who fail the first administration of the test will be explored for the future. (See page 14.)

Ratings Labels

The AYP Status (“Meets AYP” or “Missed AYP”) will be joined with the *Academically Unacceptable* rating label, as it is with the other rating labels. (See page 16.)

Accountability System for 2004 and Beyond
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Overall Design: Improvement Model

1. Accountability Criteria. The overall design of the accountability rating system is an improvement model. For each measure used in the ratings evaluation, campuses and districts can meet the standard for *Academically Acceptable* or *Recognized* by meeting either an absolute performance standard or an improvement standard.

   Rationale: Improvement criteria allow a gate out of *Academically Unacceptable* and are incorporated without increasing the number of indicators and measures in the system. Higher absolute performance standards can be established without penalizing large numbers of campuses and districts that realistically cannot be expected to reach these standards for several years, especially given the increase in the number of indicators and measures in the system. Conversely, lower performing campuses and districts are rewarded for making gains. Since gains are required on each measure for which the absolute standard is not met, no subject or student group is neglected. Evaluation of student group performance, considered a strength of the former state accountability system, could be compromised under other designs such as a weighted or proportional system. At the *Recognized* level, the improvement option allows campuses and districts that are close to meeting the *Recognized* standard and improving to be assigned the *Recognized* label.

2. Rating Labels.

   Exemplary
   Recognized
   Academically Acceptable
   Academically Unacceptable

   The accountability rating labels for districts are specified in statute. Campuses will be assigned the same rating labels as districts rather than having different labels for the same rating categories.

   Rationale: Using the same rating labels for campuses and districts will simplify the ratings system.

3. New Campuses. If a new campus (regular or charter campus) would receive a rating of *Academically Unacceptable* in its first year of operation, assign a rating of *New Campus* or *Not Rated*.

   Rationale: The same rules would apply to regular campuses and charter campuses, which were treated differently under the former accountability system. New campuses are not rated *Academically Unacceptable* before they have prior-year data on which to calculate improvement, which is appropriate in a system in which improvement is a major factor in the ratings.

Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Indicators

1. Subjects and Grades

TAKS Accountability Indicators				
Subjects	Grades	Student Passing Standard		
		2004	2005	2006
Reading ELA ELA	3-9 10 11	1 SEM 1 SEM 2 SEM	PR PR 1 SEM	PR
Writing	4, 7	1 SEM	PR	PR
Mathematics	3-10 11	1 SEM 2 SEM	PR 1 SEM	PR
Social Studies	8, 10 11	1 SEM 2 SEM	PR 1 SEM	PR
Science	5, 10 11 8	1 SEM 2 SEM n/a	PR 1 SEM n/a	PR PR TBD

TAKS: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
PR: TAKS Panel Recommended Passing Standard
1 SEM: TAKS 1 Standard Error of Measurement Below PR
2 SEM: TAKS 2 SEM Below PR
n/a: Not Applicable; TBD: To Be Determined

Subjects and Grades. The TAKS results [English (grades 3-11) and Spanish (grades 3-6)] are summed across grades by subject and each subject is evaluated for All Students and each student group that meets minimum size requirements.

Reading/English Language Arts (ELA). Reading (grades 3-9) and English language arts (grades 10-11) results are combined and evaluated as a single subject. For campuses and districts serving grade 9 and grade 10 or 11, counts of reading and ELA students who meet the standard are summed and divided by the total number taking reading or ELA.

Testing Window. Results for students given a make-up test within the testing window are included in the accountability measures.

Grade 3 Reading. Results from the first and second administrations of the grade 3 reading tests are incorporated into the TAKS reading/English language arts indicator. (For students enrolled on the same campus for both administrations of the grade 3 reading test, results of the second administration will be used for students who failed or were absent from the first administration. The district indicator will include students enrolled in the same district for both tests.) This decision will be applied to grade 5 reading and mathematics beginning in 2005 and grade 8 reading and mathematics beginning in 2008 when the social promotion testing requirements under the Student Success Initiative (SSI) are extended to those grades and subjects.

Student Passing Standard. The TAKS performance indicator is calculated as percent *Met Standard* using the student passing standard adopted by the State Board of Education (SBOE) for each specific year.

Rationale: This proposal fulfills statutory requirements that all TAKS subjects and grades be included in the accountability system by 2005. Combining reading/English language arts will affect only districts and campuses with grade 9 and grade 10 or 11. Combining the subjects will avoid isolating performance of one grade and subject (grade 9 ELA) in high school evaluations.

The number of subjects evaluated by school type will be more equitable and it is likely that more student groups will be evaluated. Writing was not included in the indicator because the overlap with reading in grades tested would complicate evaluating and interpreting performance. Incorporating grade 3 reading results from the first and second administrations gives credit to campuses and districts for those students who pass the test on the second administration; it also discourages manipulation of attendance on test dates by including the results of first-time test takers during the second administration. Accountability standards will be held constant between 2004 and 2006 while the rigor of the student passing standard increases.

2. Campuses, Students, and Student Groups

Accountability Subset. District ratings are based on test results for students enrolled in the district on the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) October enrollment snapshot date. This is the same method used to define the district accountability subset in the past. The method for determining the campus accountability subset is changed. Campus ratings are based on test results for students enrolled on the campus on the PEIMS October enrollment snapshot date. Performance of mobile students not included in the accountability subset will be made available separately.

Student Groups. TAKS performance is evaluated for All Students and for the following student groups that meet minimum size requirements:

- African American
- Hispanic
- White
- Economically Disadvantaged

Minimum Size Requirements. Student groups are evaluated if the campus or district has test results for at least 30 students in the group (summed across grades) for the subject and the group represents at least 10 percent of all test takers in that subject, ***or*** test results for at least 50 students in the group even if that represents less than 10 percent of all test takers in the subject. This is the same minimum size criteria used for student groups in 2002. Whether or not to drop the "10 percent or 50" component of the student group minimum size criteria will be explored further. If dropped, this change would first go into effect with 2007.

Rationale: Campuses and districts are held accountable only for students whose learning they have had an opportunity to influence. Inclusion of other ethnic groups is not appropriate until the group comprises 10 percent of the statewide student population and there are significant performance gaps. Additional student groups, such as special education and limited English proficient (LEP), would increase redundancy in evaluating student results. Separate measures will be developed for SDAA and progress of English language learners (see SDAA and ELL below). Minimum size requirements for student groups from the former accountability system will be used for 2004 through 2006 while the new test is phased in. The 30-student minimum size requirement under consideration for 2007 includes more student groups (than the 30/10%/50 requirement) and represents a long-term goal of including all student groups that are large enough to produce valid and reliable evaluations.

3. Special Circumstances

Small Campuses and Districts. Campuses and districts with fewer than 30 total students tested on TAKS will receive special analysis under circumstances similar to those used in the former accountability rating system. (Special analysis will be conducted for all campuses and districts with TAKS results for fewer than 10 total students and for campuses and districts that would otherwise receive a rating of *Exemplary*, *Recognized*, or *Academically Unacceptable* based on TAKS results for fewer than 30 students.) Special analysis consists of analyzing current and past performance data to determine if the initial rating assigned under the standard evaluation process is an aberration or an indication of consistent performance.

Campuses with No Students in Grades Tested. For accountability ratings, districts are required to pair campuses with no students enrolled in the grades tested on TAKS (grades 3-11) with a campus with which they share a feeder relationship. Beginning in 2004, districts will have the option of pairing a campus with the district (to be evaluated on district results) rather than another campus. Pairing decisions will be made by districts based on guidelines provided by TEA. Charter campuses with no students in the grades tested on TAKS will not be required to pair with another campus for accountability ratings purposes.

Pairing for Calculation of Student Gains. In the past, for purposes of Comparable Improvement, districts had to provide additional pairing for campuses with a high grade of three. This will not be done for 2004. Calculations based on student growth will not be performed for any campuses with paired data.

Rationale: Special analysis ensures that campuses and districts with small numbers of students are rated fairly and that districts are not unfairly penalized for ratings of very small campuses wherein the students may constitute a very small percentage of the district enrollment. Pairing allows evaluation of more campuses serving grades 1-12. The option of pairing a campus with the district is appropriate for a campus that has a feeder relationship with many campuses or that serves students from across the district in a special program.

4. TAKS Standards

TAKS Accountability Standards *						
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Exemplary	>= 90%	>= 90%	>= 90%	>= 90%	>= 90%	>= 90%
Recognized	>= 70%	>= 70%	>= 70%	>= 75%	>= 80%	>= 80%
Academically Acceptable R/ELA, W, SS Mathematics Science	 >= 50% >= 35% >= 25%	 >= 50% >= 35% >= 25%	 >= 50% >= 35% >= 25%	**	**	**
Student Passing Standard	Gr. 3-10 1 SEM Gr. 11 2 SEM	Gr. 3-10 PR Gr. 11 1 SEM	Gr. 3-11 PR	Gr. 3-11 PR	Gr. 3-11 PR	Gr. 3-11 PR

TAKS: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
PR: TAKS Panel Recommended Passing Standard
1 SEM: TAKS 1 Standard Error of Measurement Below PR
2 SEM: TAKS 2 SEM Below PR
R/ELA: Reading/English Language Arts; W: Writing; SS: Social Studies

* The phase-in schedule for the accountability standards will be reevaluated annually; any changes will be announced at least one year in advance.

** *Academically Acceptable* standards will increase incrementally until the standards for all subjects reach 70 percent. The timeline for phasing in the higher accountability standards will be developed once actual data on performance gains are evaluated.

Standards. The table above shows proposed accountability standards for 2004 campus and district ratings and a schedule for phasing in higher standards. The TAKS accountability standards are the same for campuses and districts and for All Students and each student group. However, the standards are different for some subjects. The preference is to initially set a TAKS *Academically Acceptable* standard that reflects a starting point based on current performance and phase in to a higher standard over time. However, there is also a desire to hold the TAKS accountability standard constant while the TAKS student passing standard increases in rigor. The proposed *Academically Acceptable* accountability standards represent the compromise of these two goals. The lower standards for mathematics and science reflect the lower performance in these subjects in 2003 compared to reading/ELA, writing, and social studies, and the greater

gaps in performance between the 2003 student passing standard (2 SEM) and the higher student passing standard being phased in (PR).

The first increase in the standards occurs in 2007 when the phase-in of the student passing standard is complete. (This calendar may be modified if the SBOE changes the calendar for phase-in of the student passing standard.) The *Academically Acceptable* standard will increase incrementally over time until it reaches 70 percent. The timeline for 2007 and beyond will be developed once actual data on performance gains under TAKS are available for evaluation. The *Recognized* standard, set at 70 percent in 2004, will increase to 80 percent (10 percentage points below the *Exemplary* standard) by 2008. There is no phase-in to the *Exemplary* standard, which is set at 90 percent beginning in 2004.

5. TAKS Required Improvement

Improvement Measure. The Required Improvement measure will be calculated as the amount of gain in percent *Met Standard* required to reach a predetermined accountability standard in a set number of years. (For example, the amount of gain from the prior year in percent *Met Standard* required to meet an *x* percent accountability standard in *y* years.) Prior year percent *Met Standard* will be recalculated at the current year student passing standard so that gain from the prior year to the current year is calculated using comparable performance data for the two years. Required Improvement will be calculated for each TAKS subject, for All Students, and each student group evaluated. The TAKS Required Improvement measure for 2005 and beyond will not be finalized until a second year of statewide TAKS results is available.

Minimum Size Requirements. The TAKS Required Improvement measure will be calculated for any subject and student group that meets minimum size requirements in the current year and has test results for at least 10 students in the prior year.

Use in Ratings. Campuses and districts that do not meet the *Academically Acceptable* absolute performance standard for any TAKS subject (All Students or any student group) can meet the accountability criteria for that measure by demonstrating Required Improvement. Campuses and districts that do not meet the *Recognized* absolute performance standard for any TAKS subject (All Students or any student group) can meet the accountability criteria for that measure if they are within five percentage points of meeting the *Recognized* standard and demonstrate Required Improvement.

2004 Improvement Standard.

- *Academically Acceptable*: For 2004 only, the TAKS improvement standard for the *Academically Acceptable* rating will be calculated as the amount of gain from the prior year in percent *Met Standard* (1 SEM) required to meet the *Academically Acceptable* accountability standard for the subject in 2 years.

  Reading/ELA, Writing, and Social Studies – 2004 TAKS improvement standard is the amount of gain from 2003 in percent *Met Standard* (1 SEM) required to meet the 50 percent accountability standard in 2 years.

  Mathematics – 2004 TAKS improvement standard is the amount of gain from 2003 in percent *Met Standard* (1 SEM) required to meet the 35 percent accountability standard in 2 years.

  Science – 2004 TAKS improvement standard is the amount of gain from 2003 in percent *Met Standard* (1 SEM) required to meet the 25 percent accountability standard in 2 years.

- *Recognized*: For 2004 only, the TAKS improvement standard for the *Recognized* rating will be calculated as the amount of gain from 2003 in percent *Met Standard* (1 SEM) required to meet the 70 percent *Recognized* accountability standard in 2 years. Campuses and districts must have at least 65 percent *Met Standard* in 2004 to be eligible for the improvement option at the *Recognized* level.

Rationale: Required Improvement is incorporated into the ratings process and a second way to meet the *Academically Acceptable* or *Recognized* ratings criteria is provided. Change in percent *Met Standard* can be calculated for almost any campus or district, subject, and student group for which performance is evaluated. As the student passing standard is phased in, the amount of gain will reflect actual gain at the higher current year student passing standard. Larger gains are required for campuses and districts farther from meeting the performance standard. At the *Recognized* level, only campuses and districts close to meeting the *Recognized* standard on TAKS performance can move up to *Recognized* through Required Improvement. Required Improvement standards for 2005 and beyond will be developed in early 2005 following analysis of actual gains made between 2003 and 2004.

6. Other TAKS Improvement Measures

   Additional TAKS improvement measures, such as Comparable Improvement (CI) and Progress of Prior Year Failers, will be developed in early 2005 when results from the second year of TAKS testing are available. The TAKS Growth Index (TGI), which matches individual students from the current year with the prior year, will be considered for the calculation of these measures. Measures such as the TGI that track individual student gains are sometimes referred to as "value added" performance measures. No additional TAKS improvement measures other than Required Improvement will be used in the accountability system in 2004. The following are examples of possible uses of additional TAKS improvement measures for ratings, Gold Performance Acknowledgments (GPA), and reporting beginning in 2005:

   - Comparable Improvement measure based on TGI for Gold Performance Acknowledgments
   - Optional base indicators using TGI for alternative education campus ratings
   - Reporting Progress of Prior Year Failers in conjunction with measures related to the Student Success Initiative

State-Developed Alternative Assessment (SDAA) Indicator

1. SDAA Indicator

   Indicator. A single performance indicator is evaluated for SDAA (grades 3-8 in 2004). The indicator is calculated as the number of tests meeting admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee expectations (summed across grades and subjects) divided by the number of SDAA tests for which ARD expectations were established (summed across grades and subjects). The SDAA measure is evaluated at the All Students level only.

   Minimum Size Requirements. SDAA (All Students) performance will be evaluated for campuses and districts with results from 30 or more tests (summed across grades and subjects). Since SDAA is administered for three subjects (reading, writing, and mathematics) and the results are summed across subjects as well as grades, the minimum size requirement of 30 tests can represent as few as 10 students.

   Rationale: The majority of students receiving special education services can and do take the TAKS test for at least one subject. Less than half of students receiving special education services take the SDAA only. The performance results of special education students who take the TAKS are included in the TAKS indicators used for accountability. The performance of special education students who take the SDAA are also included in the accountability system, but in a separate indicator. Since TAKS and SDAA are different types of assessments, it is appropriate to evaluate SDAA as a separate indicator rather than combining the results with TAKS. The SDAA measure treats a subset of special education students as a student group on a measure designed for that

population while avoiding the disadvantages inherent in using special education as a student group throughout the system; therefore the SDAA measure is evaluated at the All Students level only. There is less incentive to lower expectations for this population of special education students than there might be if SDAA results influenced the TAKS indicators. Also, the SDAA will undergo significant changes in 2005 and incorporating the SDAA results into the TAKS indicators can be reconsidered once the new SDAA II has been implemented for grades 3-10. Use of average performance (rather than students passing all tests taken) is most consistent with TAKS indicators and increases considerably the number of campuses for which the indicator is available.

2. SDAA Standards

2004 Standard. The performance standards for SDAA are set at the same levels as the TAKS reading/ELA tests for 2004:

- Exemplary: 90%
- Recognized: 70%
- Academically Acceptable: 50%

2005 and Beyond. Major changes are scheduled for the SDAA in 2005. A new version of the tests, better aligned with the TAKS, will be introduced in 2005 for grades 3-10, extending the test to grades 9-10 for the first time. Grades 9-10 cannot be incorporated into the accountability indicator until the second year of testing (2006) when information on ARD expectations is available. It may be necessary to consider the first administration of the SDAA II in 2005 to be a benchmark year for all grades. If ARD expectations are available for grades 3-8 in 2005, it may be necessary to reevaluate the standard. It may also be necessary to add analyses designed to identify inappropriate testing, such as monitoring change in expectations for individual students, campus and district ratios of special education students tested on TAKS versus SDAA over time, and other analyses. There is also discussion of identifying a uniform state standard or improvement standard for performance on the SDAA II in addition to the ARD expectations standard that is set locally. Additional changes in state testing policy for SDAA and in local assessment practices due to *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) requirements related to use of results from alternative assessments in Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) could also lead to changes in the SDAA indicator. Consequently, the SDAA accountability measure will be a different measure after 2004. Standards will be set when the new measure is developed using results from the 2005 statewide benchmark administration of the new test.

3. SDAA Required Improvement

Improvement Measure. The SDAA *Academically Acceptable* Required Improvement standard for 2004 will be calculated as the amount of gain from 2003 in percent *Met ARD Expectations* required to reach a 50 percent accountability standard in 2 years. The SDAA *Recognized* Required Improvement standard for 2004 will be calculated as the amount of gain from 2003 in percent *Met ARD Expectations* required to reach a 70 percent accountability standard in 2 years. Campuses and districts must have at least 65 percent *Met ARD Expectations* to be eligible for the Required Improvement option at the *Recognized* level.

Minimum Size Requirements. The SDAA Required Improvement measure will be calculated for any campus or district that meets minimum size requirements for SDAA in the current year and has SDAA results for at least 10 tests in the prior year.

Use in Ratings. Campuses and districts that do not meet the *Academically Acceptable* performance standard for SDAA can meet the accountability criteria for SDAA by demonstrating Required Improvement. Campuses and districts that not meeting the *Recognized* absolute performance standard for SDAA can meet the accountability criteria for that measure if they are within five percentage points of meeting the *Recognized* standard and demonstrate Required Improvement.

Rationale: Consistent with the overall design of the accountability system, the SDAA Required Improvement measure provides a second way to meet the *Academically Acceptable* or *Recognized* ratings standard. Larger gains are required for campuses and districts farther from meeting the performance standard.

Completion Rate (Grades 9-12) and Annual Dropout Rate (Grades 7-8) Indicators

1. Dropout Definition

   NCES Definition. Change the state accountability dropout definition for 2005-06 leavers by adopting the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) dropout definition. Use the new definition in the 2005-06 annual dropout rate calculation for grades 7-8. Use the new dropout definition in the completion rate calculation for the class of 2009 when four years of data are available. Continue to participate in required submission of state and district annual dropout counts under the NCES definition to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). Continue to report NCES dropout counts for Texas school districts and the state. (A comparison of the current state dropout definition and the NCES dropout definition can be found in the publications *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2001-02* which is available on the TEA website at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/research/dropout/0102/index.html.)

   Rationale: Fulfills statutory requirements. Time is allowed for implementation of the new leaver reporting system, so that the NCES definition can be used at the campus level as well as the district and state levels. One dropout definition is used consistently across years in the 4-year completion rate calculation.

2. Completion Rate (Grades 9-12)

   Completion Rate Indicator. Count graduates and continuing students (students who return to school for a fifth year) in the definition of high school completer for the accountability completion rate beginning with the 2006 ratings. This indicator counts general educational development (GED) recipients as completers in 2004 and 2005 as a phase-in to the stricter definition of completer. The completion rate indicator is completers as a percent of total students in the class (graduates, continuing students, GED recipients, and dropouts).

   Campus and District Ratings. Use the completion rate for campus and district ratings for all campuses and districts that have served grades 9-12 for the last five years. Campuses that include any of the grades 9-12 but do not have a completion rate (have not served grades 9-12 for the last five years) are assigned the completion rate of the district for accountability rating purposes.

   Student Groups. Completion rates are evaluated for All Students and for the following student groups that meet minimum size requirements:
   - African American
   - Hispanic
   - White
   - Economically Disadvantaged

   Minimum Size Requirements.

   For 2004, student groups are evaluated if the campus or district completion rate class has (1) at least 10 dropouts (or non-completers) ***and*** (2) at least 30 students in the group and the group represents at least 10 percent of students in the class ***or*** at least 50 students in the group even if that represents less than 10 percent of all students in the class.

For 2004, completion rates are evaluated at the All Students level if there are at least 10 students in the class ***and*** at least 10 dropouts (or non-completers).

For 2005 and 2006, the minimum size criteria are:

Student groups – at least 5 dropouts (or non-completers) ***and*** 30/10%/50 students in the class

All Students – at least 5 dropouts and 10 students in the class

Whether or not to drop the "10 percent or 50" component of the student group minimum size criteria will be explored further. If dropped, this change would first go into effect with 2007.

Rationale: Consistent indicators are used at campus and district levels. All Students in grades 9-12 will be included in the district completion rate even if campuses serving these students are not serving grades 9-12 inclusive for 5 years. Any campus serving grade 9, 10, 11, or 12 will be evaluated on completion rate. GED recipients are included in the class of 2003 and 2004 completion rates because the accountability rules will not be announced until late in the 2004 school year. Campuses and districts will know before the beginning of the 2005 school year that students in that graduating class who receive a GED will not be counted as completers for accountability ratings. The class of 2005 completion rate is used for the 2006 accountability ratings.

The rigor of the completion rate indicator will increase in 2006 when students receiving a GED are no longer counted as completers. The completion rate definition is limited to graduates and continuing students in order to emphasize the state goal of every Texas student receiving a high school diploma. While it is acknowledged that current legislation permits students enrolled in public schools who are seriously credit deficient to earn GEDs, the accountability provisions have been crafted with the state graduation goal in mind. Additionally, because the state standards have not been set at 100 percent, some students within a school district may still receive GEDs without necessarily impacting the school district or campus accountability rating.

Fifth-year continuing students are included in the completion rate so that students who take longer than 4 years to complete high school are not counted as leavers while they are still enrolled and working toward completion. This group includes special education students whose individual education plan is a 5 or 6 year graduation plan, students who were retained after entering grade 9, and high-school-aged recently-arrived unschooled immigrants. This definition also recognizes that continuing students are much more likely to graduate than to drop out or receive a GED.

3. Completion Rate Standards

Completion Rate (Grade 9-12) Accountability Standards						
	2004 (class of 2003; 9th grade 99-00)	2005 (class of 2004; 9th grade 00-01)	2006 (class of 2005; 9th grade 01-02)	2007 (class of 2006; 9th grade 02-03)	2008 (class of 2007; 9th grade 03-04)	2009 (class of 2008; 9th grade 04-05)
Exemplary	>= 95%	>= 95%	>= 95%	TBD	TBD	TBD
Recognized	>= 85%	>= 85%	>= 85%	TBD	TBD	TBD
Academically Acceptable	>= 75%	>= 75%	>= 75%	TBD	TBD	TBD
Indicator Definition	(Grads + GED + Cont. HS)	(Grads + GED + Cont. HS)	(Grads + Cont. HS)	(Grads + Cont. HS)	(Grads + Cont. HS)	(Grads + Cont. HS)

2004 - 2006 Standards. The completion rate accountability standards are the same for campuses and districts, for All Students, and each student group. The standards are held constant for 2004 through 2006 while the indicator is phasing in (removing GEDs from the completion rate in 2006). If the plan permitted GEDs to remain part of this indicator, the 2004 and 2005 standards would be

set higher. The more modest standards in 2004 and 2005 are designed to accommodate a more rigorous indicator definition in 2006 without compelling a lowering of the standard that year.

2007 and Beyond. Over time it is anticipated that the *Academically Acceptable* standard will increase to 85 percent and the *Recognized* standard will increase to 90 percent. However, setting standards for 2007 through 2009 has been postponed until performance data on this indicator are available under the new leaver data collection system. The recommendation is to wait until 4 years of data have been collected under the NCES definition before computing a 4-year completion rate under that definition, which would first occur for the class of 2009 to be used for 2010 accountability ratings.

4. Completion Rate Required Improvement

Improvement Measure. The completion rate Required Improvement standard will be calculated as the amount of gain from the prior year in the completion rate required to reach a predetermined accountability standard in a set number of years. (For example, the amount of gain from the prior year in the completion rate required to meet an *x* percent accountability standard in *y* years.)

Minimum Size Requirements. The completion rate Required Improvement measure will be calculated for All Students and any student group that meets minimum size requirements for completion rate in the current year and has at least 10 students in the completion rate class in the prior year.

Use in Ratings. Campuses and districts that do not meet the *Academically Acceptable* standard for completion rate for All Students or any student group can meet the accountability criteria for completion rate by demonstrating Required Improvement. Development of a completion rate Required Improvement standard for use at the *Recognized* level will be considered for 2005.

2004 Improvement Standard. For 2004 only, the completion rate improvement standard will be calculated as the amount of gain from the prior year required to meet a 75 percent completion rate in 2 years.

Rationale: Consistent with the overall design of the accountability system, the completion rate Required Improvement measure provides a second way to meet the *Academically Acceptable* ratings criteria for the completion rate. Larger gains for campuses and districts farther from meeting the completion rate standard are required. The completion rate Required Improvement standard for 2005 and beyond will not be finalized until Required Improvement standards for TAKS are developed in early 2005 to better align the assessment (TAKS and SDAA) and completion rate Required Improvement measures, given the interaction between different measures in the accountability system. At that time development of a completion rate Required Improvement standard for use at the *Recognized* level will be considered.

5. Annual Dropout Rate (Grades 7-8)

Annual Dropout Rate Indicator. The annual dropout rate indicator is grade 7 and 8 dropouts as a percent of total students enrolled in grades 7 and 8 in a single school year.

Campus and District Ratings. Use the grade 7-8 annual dropout rate for campus and district ratings for all campuses and districts that have students in grade 7 or 8.

Student Groups. Grade 7-8 annual dropout rates are evaluated for All Students and for the following student groups that meet minimum size requirements:

- African American
- Hispanic
- White
- Economically Disadvantaged

Minimum Size Requirements.

For 2004, the minimum size criteria for student groups is at least 10 dropouts and 30/10%/50 students, meaning student groups are evaluated if the campus or district has (1) at least 10 dropouts ***and*** (2) there are at least 30 grade 7-8 students in the group and the group represents at least 10 percent of grade 7-8 students ***or*** there are at least 50 grade 7-8 students in the group even if that represents less than 10 percent of all grade 7-8 students.

For 2004, annual dropout rates are evaluated at the All Students level if there are at least 10 dropouts and at least 10 grade 7-8 students.

For 2005 and 2006, the minimum size criteria are:

Student groups – at least 5 dropouts and 30/10%/50 grade 7-8 students

All Students – at least 5 dropouts and 10 grade 7-8 students

Whether or not to drop the "10 percent or 50" component of the student group minimum size criteria will be explored further. If dropped, this change would first go into effect with 2007.

Rationale: Continues to provide a school leavers measure for campuses and districts serving grades 7 and 8.

6. Annual Dropout Rate Standard (Grades 7-8)

Annual Dropout Rate (Grade 7-8) Accountability Standards						
	2004 (from 2002-03)	2005 (from 2003-04)	2006 (from 2004-05)	2007 (from 2005-06)	2008 (from 2006-07)	2009 (from 2007-08)
Exemplary	<= 0.2%	<= 0.2%	<= 0.2%	TBD	TBD	TBD
Recognized	<= 0.7%	<= 0.7%	<= 0.7%	TBD	TBD	TBD
Academically Acceptable	<= 2.0%	<= 1.0%	<= 1.0%	TBD	TBD	TBD
Dropout Definition	Current State Definition	Current State Definition	Current State Definition	NCES Definition	NCES Definition	NCES Definition

2004 – 2006 Standards. The annual dropout rate accountability standards are the same for campuses and districts, for All Students, and each student group. The *Academically Acceptable* standard is 2.0 percent for 2004 and moves to 1.0 percent in 2005. All other standards are held constant for 2004 through 2006, at which time an annual dropout rate can be calculated for districts and campuses under the NCES definition.

2007 and Beyond. Annual dropout rate standards for 2007 and beyond will be determined when campus data are available to set the standards on a dropout rate calculated under the NCES definition.

7. Annual Dropout Rate Required Improvement

Improvement Measure. The annual dropout rate *Academically Acceptable* Required Improvement standard will be calculated as the amount of decline in annual dropout rate from the prior year required to reach a predetermined accountability standard in a set number of years. (For example, the amount of decline from the prior year in the annual dropout rate required to meet an *x* percent accountability standard in *y* years.) Note that improvement on the annual dropout rate is reflected by a decline in the rate. Development of an annual dropout rate Required Improvement standard for use at the *Recognized* level will be considered for 2005.

Minimum Size Requirements. Annual dropout rate Required Improvement will be calculated for All Students and any student group that meets minimum size requirements for annual dropout rate in the current year and has at least 10 grade 7-8 students in the prior year.

Use in Ratings. Campuses and districts that do not meet the *Academically Acceptable* standard for annual dropout rate for All Students or any student group can meet the accountability criteria by meeting the annual dropout rate Required Improvement standard.

2004 Improvement Standard. For 2004 only, the annual dropout rate improvement standard will be calculated as the amount of decline from the prior year required to meet a 2.0 percent annual dropout rate in 2 years.

Rationale: Consistent with the overall design of the accountability system, the annual dropout rate Required Improvement measure provides a second way to meet the *Academically Acceptable* ratings criteria for the dropout rate. More improvement (greater declines) for campuses and districts farther from meeting the annual dropout rate standard are required. The annual dropout rate Required Improvement standard for 2005 and beyond will not be finalized until Required Improvement standards for TAKS are developed in early 2005 to better align the Required Improvement standards, given the interaction between different measures in the accountability system. At that time development of an annual dropout rate Required Improvement standard for use at the *Recognized* level will be considered.

Phase-In of New State Assessment Program

Exceptions Provision. An automatic exception provision will be applied to assessment measures used in the accountability system. If a campus or district would otherwise be rated *Academically Unacceptable* solely due to not meeting the accountability criteria (performance standard and improvement standard) on one to three assessment measures, an exception to the *Academically Acceptable* performance criteria on those measures will be granted automatically if the campus or district meets all of the other conditions described below. These conditions serve as a built-in system safeguard to the exceptions provision.

Measures. Initially the exception provision will apply to 26 assessment measures – 25 TAKS measures (5 subjects x 5 student groups) plus the SDAA measure. The English language proficiency measure for ELL students will be subject to the exception provision when it is added to the ratings system.

Maximum Exceptions. The maximum number of exceptions that will be granted is dependent on the number of assessment measures on which the campus or district is evaluated, as shown in the following table.

Assessment Measures Evaluated	**Maximum Exceptions**
1 – 5	0 exceptions
6 – 10	1 exception
11 – 15	2 exceptions
16 or more	3 exceptions

Ratings Criteria. The exceptions provision can be applied at the *Academically Unacceptable* rating level to move the campus or district to the *Academically Acceptable* rating. The campus or

district must meet the *Academically Acceptable* accountability criteria for all assessment and non-assessment measures except the assessment measures for which exceptions are granted. The exceptions provision cannot be used to move up more than one rating level. For example, if a campus meets the *Exemplary* criteria on all accountability measures except for one assessment measure, but fails to meet the *Academically Acceptable* criteria on that one measure, the exceptions provision would move the campus from *Academically Unacceptable* to *Academically Acceptable*.

Performance Floor. Performance on the measure to which the exception provision will be applied must be no more than five percentage points below the accountability standard for the *Academically Acceptable* rating level.

One-Time Use. An exception will not be granted for the same measure for two consecutive years. For example, if a campus is granted an exception for white student science performance in 2004, the campus is not eligible for an exception for white student science performance in 2005.

Campus Improvement Plan. The campus improvement plan must address performance on the measures to which the exceptions are applied.

Annual Review. The exceptions provision will be reevaluated in 2005 and annually thereafter to determine if measures should be added or removed, adjustments need to be made to the number of exceptions for which campuses or districts are eligible, or other provisions need to be modified.

Rationale: The number of assessment measures has increased from 16 in the 2002 accountability system to 26 in the proposed new accountability system, plus 10 additional measures for completion and dropout rates. The exceptions provision provides relief to larger campuses and districts that have more diverse student populations and therefore are evaluated on more measures. The exceptions prevent a campus or district from receiving an *Academically Unacceptable* rating based on a small number of new assessment measures when they meet the higher criteria for all other measures. It is anticipated that the exceptions provision will be phased out when the new assessment program is fully implemented and the accountability requirements stabilize.

Future Indicator Development

Commended Performance. For 2004 through 2006, Commended Performance will be acknowledged as part of the Gold Performance Acknowledgment (GPA) system and will be reported on the campus, district, and state Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports. Measures that incorporate Commended Performance into the accountability ratings will be developed in 2005 and used for ratings no later than 2007.

Proficiency Measure for English Language Learners (ELL). A measure of progress in English language proficiency for ELL students will be developed for use as a base indicator for state accountability ratings. The state indicator will build on the work done to define an annual measurable achievement objective (AMAO) required under Title III of NCLB, which incorporates performance on the Reading Proficiency Tests in English (RPTE). However, the state indicator could differ from the AMAO. [The AMAO is a longitudinal measure that follows ELL students from the time they enter a Texas public school until they score at the *Met Standard* level on the English TAKS reading test for two consecutive years. Progress is measured in terms of movement from one proficiency level to a higher level on RPTE and from RPTE level 3 to *Met Standard* on English TAKS.] The new state accountability measure will be reported in 2005 and accountability standards will be set. The measure will be used for ratings in 2006 or 2007. RPTE change will continue to be reported and will be used in Performance-Based Monitoring.

Rationale: Including a measure for ELL students will ensure that ELL students are steadily progressing toward proficiency in English in academic settings. The separate measure treats ELL students as a student group on a measure designed for that population while avoiding the disadvantages inherent in using ELL as a student group throughout the system. Development of the new measure can be completed for reporting in 2005.

TAKS Cumulative Exit-level Passing Indicator. An indicator that includes the performance of subsequent passing scores for exit-level students who fail the first administration of the test will be explored.

Additional Requirements for Districts

1. Check for *Academically Unacceptable* Campuses. A district that has one or more campuses rated *Academically Unacceptable* cannot receive a rating of *Exemplary* or *Recognized*.

   Rationale: Emphasizes distinction of *Exemplary* and *Recognized* ratings and requires districts to be accountable for the performance of all campuses.

2. Data Quality. Districts that fail to meet accountability standards on the annual underreported students indicator will be investigated and will be prevented from being rated *Exemplary* or *Recognized*. Subsequent investigation may prevent a district from being rated *Academically Acceptable*.

   Underreported Students Standards:

   2004 Standards. Any district that has more than 500 underreported students or greater than 5 percent underreported students cannot be rated *Exemplary* or *Recognized*. Districts that fail to meet these standards will be investigated; the investigation may prevent a district from being rated *Academically Acceptable*.

   2005 Standards. Any district that has more than 100 underreported students or greater than 5 percent underreported students cannot be rated *Exemplary* or *Recognized*. Districts that fail to meet these standards will be investigated; the investigation may prevent a district from being rated *Academically Acceptable*.

   2006 Standards. Any district that has more than 100 underreported students or greater than 2 percent underreported students cannot be rated *Exemplary* or *Recognized*. Districts that fail to meet these standards will be investigated; the investigation may prevent a district from being rated *Academically Acceptable*.

   In addition, data quality will be a consideration when analyzing district and campus completion rate and annual dropout rate appeals. The Person Identification Database (PID) error rate will continue to be used to monitor the quality of district PEIMS data submissions. A longitudinal underreported students indicator linked to the completion rate calculation will be reported and may replace the annual data quality indicator in the accountability ratings process in four years.

   Rationale: Submission of accurate data is a district responsibility.

Options for Alternative Education Campuses

Ratings.

In 2004, registered alternative education campuses will receive a rating of *Alternative Education*.

- Performance of students enrolled on alternative education campuses will be included in the district ratings evaluations in 2004.
- Alternative education campuses will be evaluated for AYP status in 2004.

Options for evaluating performance of alternative education campuses will be developed and used for ratings in 2005, based on the following guidelines.

- The alternative education indicators must be based on data submitted through standard data submission processes (such as PEIMS) or by the state test contractor.
- There is a desire to develop measures appropriate for alternative programs offered on these campuses rather than just setting lower standards on the same measures used in the regular ratings. For example, continue to include GED recipients in the completion rate indicator for alternative education campuses after 2005 when the indicator definition used for regular instructional campus and district ratings changes.
- There is considerable interest in using the TAKS Growth Index (TGI) when evaluating alternative education campuses. The TGI and other improvement indicators will be evaluated for use as base indicators for alternative education campus ratings.

Registration.

Alternative education campuses registered with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in fall 2003 for the 2004 ratings cycle.

- Student demographic data for the registered alternative education campuses will be examined before release of 2004 ratings to ensure that only campuses serving students at risk of dropping out of school are registered.

The registration process and eligibility criteria will be examined as part of the development process for optional ratings criteria.

- Identification criteria will be re-evaluated, including consideration of adding a requirement related to the percentage of at-risk students served on the campus.
- Populations served on alternative education campuses will be examined to determine if the accountability system should make a distinction between campuses that students attend by choice (such as dropout recovery programs) and campuses to which students are assigned (such as juvenile detention centers and private residential treatment centers).
- Opportunities to automate and streamline the registration process will be explored.

Decisions Related to Charters

Charter and Charter Campus Ratings. Charters will be rated under district rating criteria based on aggregate performance of the campuses operated by the charter. Charter campuses will be rated under campus rating criteria.

Pairing. Charter campuses with no students in the grades tested on TAKS will not be required to pair with another campus for accountability ratings purposes.

Alternative Education Charters. Charters that operate only registered alternative education campuses will be evaluated under optional procedures based on the aggregate performance of the alternative education campuses operated by the charter. The optional district-level procedures for charters may include additional requirements such as the additional data quality requirements for districts. Rating criteria for charters that operate both registered alternative education campuses and regular instructional campuses will be determined based on the type of campus on which most students are enrolled. In 2004, alternative education charters will receive a rating of *Alternative Education*.

New Charters. If a new charter would receive a rating of *Academically Unacceptable* in its first year of operation, assign a rating of *New Charter* or *Not Rated*.

Rationale: Rating charters under district rating criteria is consistent with ratings procedures for other public school districts and will require charters to meet the additional data quality standards. Charters are unique in that they either have only one campus or they have multiple campuses with no feeder relationships; therefore, pairing charter campuses is inappropriate. New campuses are not rated *Academically Unacceptable* before they have prior-year data on which to calculate improvement. Rating new charters in their first year of operation would have the affect of rating the campuses operated by the charter in the first year of operation.

Relationship to AYP

1. 2004 and 2005. The state accountability ratings and AYP status will be aligned in the following ways beginning in 2004.

   Release Date. The release of state accountability ratings and AYP status will be aligned in 2004. The two releases can be aligned in 2004.

   Labels. Align the labels for state ratings and AYP status:

   Exemplary, Meets AYP: Title I and non-Title I campuses and districts that meet state *Exemplary* standards and meet AYP.

   Exemplary, Missed AYP [reason]: Title I and non-Title I campuses and districts that meet state *Exemplary* standards but miss AYP. The label will show the reason the campus or district missed AYP.

   Recognized, Meets AYP: Title I and non-Title I campuses and districts that meet state *Recognized* standards and meet AYP.

   Recognized, Missed AYP [reason]: Title I and non-Title I campuses and districts that meet state *Recognized* standards but miss AYP. The label will show the reason the campus or district missed AYP.

   Academically Acceptable, Meets AYP: Title I and non-Title I campuses and districts that meet state *Academically Acceptable* standards and meet AYP.

   Academically Acceptable, Missed AYP [reason]: Title I and non-Title I campuses and districts that meet state *Academically Acceptable* standards but miss AYP. The label will show the reason the campus or district missed AYP.

   Academically Unacceptable, Meets AYP: Title I and non-Title I campuses and districts that do not meet state *Academically Acceptable* standards but meet AYP.

   Academically Unacceptable, Missed AYP [reason]: Title I and non-Title I campuses and districts that do not meet state *Academically Acceptable* standards and miss AYP. The label will show the reason the campus or district missed AYP.

   Appeals Process. The appeals processes for state ratings and AYP status will be aligned. The final (post-appeals) state ratings and AYP status will be released together.

2. 2006 and Beyond. A proposal for further alignment of the state and federal systems will be developed for 2006 after design of the state accountability system is completed and amendments to the Texas AYP Plan have been approved by USDE. Under certain conditions, failure to meet AYP may prevent a campus or district from receiving an *Exemplary* rating under the state accountability system.

Gold Performance Acknowledgments (GPA)

Performance indicators and standards for GPA are shown in *Attachment A*. All of the GPA indicators that were used in 2002 and are still available will be used in 2004, with no changes in the GPA standards. New indicators are added to acknowledge *Commended Performance* on

TAKS. New Comparable Improvement indicators will be developed for 2005. The Algebra I end-of-course indicator is no longer available. If a performance incentive program is funded by the Legislature, the GPA system will be aligned, as appropriate, with that program. Certificates will not be issued.

Accountability Reporting

Locally Determined Alternate Assessment (LDAA). In the 2000-01 school year, districts began reporting to TEA results for students exempt from the state tests (TAAS/TAKS and SDAA) who were assigned a locally selected alternate assessment by the ARD committee. Beginning in 2003-04, LDAA results will be collected on the TAKS or SDAA answer document. Results on these tests have not previously been reported because they consist of numerous different tests with no uniform state content or standard. Participation is reported.

Reading Proficiency Tests in English (RPTE). A proficiency measure for English language learners that incorporates the RPTE is being developed. Performance on RPTE will continue to be reported.

Participation Rates. Although participation rates can affect validity of performance data, they are process measures of campus or district adherence to state assessment policies rather than student performance measures. Campuses and districts are already held to high participation standards (for both excessive use of alternative assessments and absences on the day of testing) under AYP. Given the increase in number of indicators on which campuses and districts will be evaluated under the new accountability system, a participation measure was not added as a base indicator for ratings. Participation rates will continue to be reported and monitored as part of the accountability system safeguards procedures. They will also be evaluated as part of the Performance-Based Monitoring system.

Student Success Initiative (SSI). The SSI measures are not recommended for immediate use in accountability ratings or GPA because data are not yet available to benchmark the new measures and set accountability standards. The SSI indicators should be designed to measure progress toward the stated goals of the initiative, which require students to pass certain TAKS tests as a condition for promotion to the next grade. Beginning in 2003, grade 3 students were required to pass the TAKS reading test in order to be promoted to grade 4. The measures will incorporate results from the second administration of the grade 3 reading test. Decisions about use of Progress of Prior Year Failers are also relevant to the SSI measure. New measures will be reported as they are developed. These decisions will also be applied to grade 5 reading and mathematics beginning in 2005 and grade 8 reading and mathematics beginning in 2008 when the social promotion testing requirements under the SSI are extended to those grades and subjects.

Other Accountability Processes

The following processes will be developed by TEA staff with input from educators where appropriate.

Sanctions. A coherent framework for administration of sanctions related to accountability ratings of *Academically Unacceptable*, school improvement actions under AYP, and interventions for Performance-Based Monitoring will be developed.

Future Legislation. State legislative action may affect the accountability system ratings, reports, sanctions, and rewards. At this point in time, such action cannot be predicted.

Appeals Process. As with the former accountability rating system, superintendents will be provided the opportunity to appeal data used to determine accountability ratings within a defined time limit and under a limited set of circumstances. Consideration will be given to establishing an

independent appeals panel to review appeals criteria and arbitrate appeal decisions. The state accountability and AYP appeals processes will be aligned to the extent possible.

Relationship to School FIRST Ratings. The ratings based on district academic performance and the financial ratings issued under the Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) serve different purposes. Linking the School FIRST ratings with the state accountability ratings could result in districts making financial decisions that are not in the best interest of students and do not reflect good fiscal policy. For this reason, there should be no link between the district academic performance ratings issued under the state accountability system and the ratings issued under the School FIRST system. However, the two processes could be aligned so, for example, districts could hold one public hearing to meet the public hearing requirements under both systems.

Rating Releases. Over time the feasibility of aligning the different district ratings that are released by TEA (accountability ratings, AYP status, and School FIRST) will be explored.

Accountability Calendar. Key dates in developing and implementing the new state accountability system are shown below.

- Early March 2004 — Commissioner of Education Preliminary Accountability Decisions
- Early April 2004 — Commissioner of Education Final Accountability Decisions
- Late May/Early June 2004 — 2004 Accountability Manual
- October 2004 — Accountability Ratings for Campuses and Districts

Attachment A

GOLD PERFORMANCE ACKNOWLEDGMENT STANDARDS FOR 2004

Indicator	Description	Standard	Year Evaluated
Advanced Course Completion	Percent of 9th–12th graders completing and receiving credit for at least one Advanced Course	25.0% or more**	2002-03
AP / IB Results	Percent of 11th and 12th graders taking at least one AP or IB examination *AND*	15.0% or more *AND*	2002-03
	Percent of 11th and 12th grade examinees scoring at or above the criterion on at least one examination (3 and above for AP; 4 and above for IB)	50.0% or more*	
Attendance Rate	Attendance Rate for students in grades 1-12, the total number of days present divided by the total number of days in membership.	District: 96.0% Multi-Level: 96.0% High School: 95.0% Middle School/Junior High: 96.0% Elementary: 97.0%	2002-03
Commended Performance: Reading/ELA	Percent of examinees scoring at or above the commended performance standard	20.0% or more**	Spring 2004
Commended Performance: Mathematics	Percent of examinees scoring at or above the commended performance standard	20.0% or more**	Spring 2004
Commended Performance: Writing	Percent of examinees scoring at or above the commended performance standard	20.0% or more**	Spring 2004
Commended Performance: Science	Percent of examinees scoring at or above the commended performance standard	20.0% or more**	Spring 2004
Commended Performance: Social Studies	Percent of examinees scoring at or above the commended performance standard	20.0% or more**	Spring 2004
Comparable Improvement	Not available for 2004 rating cycle.	CI standards will be developed for 2005 accountability system.	--
Recommended High School Program	Percent of total graduates meeting or exceeding requirements for the RHSP/Distinguished Achievement Program	50.0% or more**	Class of 2003
SAT/ACT Results	Percent of non-special education graduates taking either the SAT or ACT *AND*	At least 70.0% of non-special education graduates *AND*	Class of 2003
	Percent of examinees scoring at or above the criterion score (SAT 1110; ACT Composite 24)	40.0% or more at or above criterion*	
TAAS / TASP Equivalency	Percent of first-time tested graduates meeting or exceeding the TAAS equivalency standards. (Reading TLI >= X-81; Mathematics TLI >= X-77; Writing scale score >= 1540)	80.0% or more**	Class of 2003

* Indicator evaluates performance for all students & the following student groups: African American, Hispanic, and White. Economically Disadvantaged status is not available from the testing results.

** Indicator evaluates performance for all students & the following student groups: African American, Hispanic, White, and Economically Disadvantaged.

All indicators for 2004 are available at District- and Campus-level, depending on grades served.