

**Accountability System for 2005 and Beyond  
Commissioner of Education Final Decisions  
March 2005**

**Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)**

1. Fifth Grade Reading and Mathematics. Results from the first and second administrations of the grade 5 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 5 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.) The same procedures will be used to incorporate the results from the first and second administrations of the grade 5 mathematics tests into the TAKS mathematics indicator. The decision to use the first and second administrations will be applied to grade 8 reading and mathematics beginning in 2008 when the promotion testing requirements under the Student Success Initiative are extended to those grade 8 subject areas.

*Rationale:* This parallels the methodology applied to the use of multiple administrations of grade 3 reading for the 2004 ratings, and implements the plan previously recommended by the 2004 focus group and commissioner's accountability advisory committee.

2. Standards. Maintain the 2004 standards for 2005. Increase the *Academically Acceptable* standards in 2006 by 10 points for Reading/ELA, Writing, Social Studies, and Science, and by five points for Mathematics. Delay the increase in the *Recognized* standard from 75% to 80% until 2009.

	<b>2005 AA/Re/Ex</b>	<b>2006* AA/Re/Ex</b>	<b>2007* AA/Re/Ex</b>	<b>2008* AA/Re/Ex</b>	<b>2009* AA/Re/Ex</b>	<b>2010* AA/Re/Ex</b>
<b>R/ELA, W, SS</b>	50 / 70 / 90	<b>60 / 70 / 90</b>	<b>60 / 75 / 90</b>	<b>65 / 75 / 90</b>	<b>70 / 80 / 90</b>	<b>70 / 80 / 90</b>
<b>Mathematics</b>	35 / 70 / 90	<b>40 / 70 / 90</b>	<b>45 / 75 / 90</b>	<b>50 / 75 / 90</b>	<b>55 / 80 / 90</b>	<b>60 / 80 / 90</b>
<b>Science</b>	25 / 70 / 90	<b>35 / 70 / 90</b>	<b>40 / 75 / 90</b>	<b>40 / 75 / 90</b>	<b>45 / 80 / 90</b>	<b>50 / 80 / 90</b>

\* Standards are subject to review annually and may be adjusted.

*Rationale:* Since 2005 marks the phase-in of the student passing standards from 1 SEM to the Panel Recommended (PR) standards for grades 3-10 and from 2 SEM to 1 SEM for grade 11, the 2005 accountability standards remain constant as planned and published in the *2004 Accountability Manual*. For 2006, this decision differs from previous plans by accelerating the increase in *Academically Acceptable* standards in all subject areas. While many other alternatives were considered, the decision to increase standards in 2006 was reached after weighing concerns over the increasing rigor of the student passing standards in both 2005 and 2006 against the expected gains in actual performance over the next two years.

The increase in the *Recognized* standard from 75% to 80% is postponed until 2009 to take into account the proposed inclusion of the grade 8 science test in the accountability system beginning in 2008.

The standards for mathematics and science reflect the lower performance in these subjects in 2004 compared to reading/ELA, writing, and social studies, and the greater gaps in performance between the 2004 and 2005 student passing standards. Initially setting standards that reflect a starting point and phasing in higher standards over time continues the philosophy of the prior system which led to nationally recognized gains in performance of student groups that significantly closed the performance gaps.

3. Required Improvement. Required Improvement (RI) will be defined as it was in the 2004 system for TAKS. A floor that is five points below the current year standard is necessary for using RI to achieve the *Recognized* rating. RI is calculated as the amount of gain in percent *Met Standard* required to

reach the current year accountability standard in two 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. RI is calculated for each TAKS subject area, for All Students, and each student group evaluated.

*Rationale:* This feature of the system functioned as intended in 2004. The overall design of the accountability system is an improvement model. The system rewards either meeting the absolute performance standard or the improvement standard. The use of the five point floor for achieving *Recognized* with RI was deemed to be an appropriate safeguard to earning this higher rating label. The RI definition will be reevaluated each year as the student passing standard is phased in, and, if appropriate, adjustments proposed based on actual gains each year.

4. Commended Performance. Measures will be developed that incorporate TAKS Commended Performance into the accountability ratings by 2007. Options will be developed for consideration during the 2006 focus group and advisory committee process that address:
  - possible improvement measures for Commended Performance; and,
  - potential performance standards and uses for a Commended Performance indicator.

*Rationale:* Commended Performance is planned to be incorporated into the rating system at the *Exemplary* and possibly the *Recognized* levels by 2007 in order to create an incentive to increase student performance among students achieving well above the *Met Standard* passing level.

#### **State Developed Alternative Assessment II (SDAA II)**

1. Indicator. The SDAA II indicator is defined to parallel the definition of the 2004 SDAA indicator. It will be used in the same manner in the 2005 system as it was used in 2004. The SDAA II indicator is a single performance indicator evaluated for all SDAA II tested grades (grades 3-10 in 2005). 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 II tests for which ARD expectations were established (summed across grades and subjects). The SDAA II indicator is evaluated at the All Students level only.

*Rationale:* Although the SDAA II is more similar to the TAKS than the SDAA was, the two are still different assessments, and it is appropriate to evaluate SDAA II results as a separate indicator rather than combining the results with TAKS. The SDAA II indicator treats 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 II indicator is evaluated at the All Students level only.

Since Required Improvement cannot be evaluated in 2005, a mechanism will be developed for cases when the SDAA II indicator is the sole reason for not achieving the next higher rating. In 2005 this mechanism may involve specifying conditions under which an appeal of the SDAA II indicator will be considered. Details will be provided in the *2005 Accountability Manual* scheduled to be released by the end of May, 2005.

As always, ARD committees should set appropriate expectations for each SDAA-tested student in compliance with state policy and procedures. These policies and procedures are described in the reference manual titled, *Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee Decision-making Process for the Texas Assessment Program*.

2. Minimum Size Requirements. As in 2004, SDAA II (All Students) performance will be evaluated for campuses and districts with results from 30 or more tests (summed across grades and subjects). Since SDAA II is administered for either two or three subjects (reading/ELA, writing, and mathematics) depending on the grade tested, and the results are summed across subjects as well as

grades, the 30 tests minimum size requirement can represent as few as 10 students at grades 4 and 7 and as few as 15 students at grades 3, 5, 6, and 8-10. The criteria of 10 students for the SDAA II corresponds to the all students minimum size criteria of 10 students for the dropout and completion rate measures that will be used for 2005 accountability. There are no minimum size requirements for TAKS at the All Students level.

3. Required Improvement. An improvement measure for the SDAA II cannot be calculated until two years of data are available. Use of RI for SDAA II will be introduced in 2006 once two years of data are available and actual change in performance can be researched.
4. Standards. The performance standards for the SDAA II indicator are set at the same levels as the TAKS reading/ELA tests for 2005. Appropriate standards for this indicator for 2006 and beyond will be determined in 2005-06 when data are available from the first administration (2005).

	2005 AA/Re/Ex	2006 AA/Re/Ex	2007 AA/Re/Ex	2008 AA/Re/Ex	2009 AA/Re/Ex	2010 AA/Re/Ex
<b>SDAA II</b>	50 / 70 / 90	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

### Exceptions Provision

1. Exceptions Provision. The Exceptions Provision will be used in 2005 as it was used in 2004. Exceptions apply to the 26 assessment measures only – 25 TAKS measures (5 subjects x 5 student groups) plus the SDAA II measure. As previously planned, campuses and districts may not re-use an exception in 2005 if it was used in 2004. This means an exception will not be granted for the same measure for two consecutive years. For example, if a campus was granted an exception for African American mathematics performance in 2004, the campus is not eligible for an exception for African American mathematics performance in 2005.

The other system safeguards created for this provision are maintained; namely, a maximum of three exceptions can be used (depending on the number of measures evaluated); and, an absolute performance floor that is no more than five points below the *Academically Acceptable* standard must be achieved.

This provision can only elevate a rating to *Academically Acceptable*. This provision does not apply to the *Recognized* or *Exemplary* rating categories. 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 could only move the campus from *Academically Unacceptable* to *Academically Acceptable*.

2. Maximum Exceptions. As in 2004, the maximum number of exceptions 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

3. Annual Review. It is anticipated that the Exceptions Provision will be phased-out when the new assessment program is fully implemented and the accountability requirements stabilize. Therefore, the provision will be reevaluated in 2006 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:* This feature functioned as intended. The Exceptions Provision provides relief to larger campuses and districts that have more diverse student populations and, therefore, are evaluated on more measures.

### **Completion Rate (Grade 9-12) Indicator**

1. Minimum Size. The minimum number of non-completers required for analysis of this indicator decreases from 10 to 5 in 2005 for All Students and each student group.
2. Definition of a Completer. There is a significant definitional change that will increase the rigor of the completion rate indicator beginning with the 2006 accountability system. Beginning with the class of 2005 (students whose cohort entered 9th grade in 2001-02), only graduates and continuing students (students who return to school for the fifth year) will count in the definition of high school completer for the accountability completion rate. GED recipients from the class of 2005 will not be considered completers.

*Rationale:* GED recipients are included in the class of 2004 completion rates because the accountability rules for that graduating class were not announced until late in the 2004 school year. Campuses and districts knew before the beginning of the 2005 school year that students in that graduating class of 2005 and beyond who receive a GED will not be counted as completers for accountability ratings.

3. Definition of a Dropout. There is a second significant definitional change that will increase the rigor of the completion rate indicator beginning with the 2007 accountability system. The completion rate indicator is calculated as the number of completers expressed as a percent of total students in the class (graduates, continuing students, GED recipients, and dropouts). Beginning in 2007, the definition of a dropout (which comprises a portion of the denominator of this indicator) will change to begin phasing-in use of the NCES definition of a dropout. In 2007, the dropouts in the denominator of the completion rate will be defined using the current state definition for the first three years of the cohort and an NCES-compliant definition for the fourth year. In 2008, the first two years will be the state definition and the last two years will be NCES-compliant. By 2010 the definition will be fully NCES-compliant.

*Rationale:* Even though the completion rates for the classes of 2006, 2007, and 2008 will have a combination of dropout definitions, the advantages of this methodology outweigh this disadvantage. The phase-in option assures that the definitions of dropouts for the annual rate and the longitudinal rate are consistent in each year. The definition used for agency reporting is the same as the definition used for district data submissions. Students classified as "other leavers" when reported to the agency are classified as "other leavers" in accountability calculations.

4. Use in Reporting. The agency will consider reporting one of the other options explored for the dropout definition; namely, a progression rate for the class of 2009. The progression rate measures the progress of a cohort through high school by reporting the enrollment status of cohort members each year. For example, in 2007, the status of first-time 2005-06 ninth graders as of 2006-07 is reported. In 2008, the status of the cohort as it finishes its third year is reported, etc. Though not feasible as an accountability indicator in the short-term, this new measure presents information that is seen as useful to districts and campuses.

5. Required Improvement. In 2005, campuses and districts with completion rates may “gate up” to *Recognized* if the amount of gain in the completion rate would reach the 85.0% *Recognized* standard in two years. As with TAKS RI, a minimum performance floor that is five percentage points below the *Recognized* standard is required; therefore completion rate performance must be between 80.0% and 84.9% to be eligible for this feature. RI is also used to allow campuses and districts to achieve the *Academically Acceptable* rating by demonstrating enough gain to reach the *Academically Acceptable* standard in two years. As with TAKS RI, there is no floor for using RI to gate up to *Academically Acceptable*.

*Rationale:* Even though RI use with the completion rate did not impact any ratings in the 2004 system, having it available parallels the use of RI with TAKS. Districts and campuses have a second way to achieve a higher rating, if they can demonstrate enough improvement. This keeps an incentive in the system to focus on improving campus and district completion rates. Also, with changes to minimum size, planned increases in the rigor of the standards, and changes to the measure definition, more campuses and districts may need and be able to use this feature in the future.

6. Use of District Rate. As in 2004, the district completion rate is used for the evaluation of this indicator for campuses that do not have their own completion rate (have not served grades 9-12 for the last five years). For example, a senior high school that only served grades 11 and 12 is attributed the district's completion rate because it did not have its own. Appeals for special circumstance high schools are permitted, as was done in 2004, e.g., new high schools created to serve special populations of gifted and talented and/or early college bound students.

*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.

7. Standards.

<b>Longitudinal Completion Rate (Grades 9-12) Accountability Standards</b>						
	<b>2005</b> Class of 2004; 9 <sup>th</sup> grade 00-01	<b>2006</b> Class of 2005; 9 <sup>th</sup> grade 01-02	<b>2007</b> Class of 2006; 9 <sup>th</sup> grade 02-03	<b>2008</b> Class of 2007; 9 <sup>th</sup> grade 03-04	<b>2009</b> Class of 2008; 9 <sup>th</sup> grade 04-05	<b>2010</b> Class of 2009; 9 <sup>th</sup> grade 05-06
<b>Exemplary</b>	95.0%	95.0%	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>Recognized</b>	85.0%	85.0%	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>Academically Acceptable</b>	75.0%	75.0%	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>Completion Rate Definition</b>	Graduates + GED Recipients + Continued HS	Graduates + Continued HS	Graduates + Continued HS	Graduates + Continued HS	Graduates + Continued HS	Graduates + Continued HS
<b>Dropout Definition</b>	Current State Definition	Current State Definition	Phase-in NCES definition	Phase-in NCES definition	Phase-in NCES definition	NCES definition

*Rationale:* The standards are held constant for 2005 and 2006 while the definition of a completer is changing and becoming more rigorous (by removing GED recipients from the completion rate in 2006). Standards for 2007 and beyond are to be determined.

Over time it is anticipated that the *Academically Acceptable* standard for this indicator will increase to 85.0% and the *Recognized* standard will increase to 90.0%.

## Annual Dropout Rate (Grade 7-8) Indicator

1. Minimum Size. The minimum number of dropouts required for analysis of this indicator decreases from 10 to 5 in 2005 for All Students and each student group.
2. Definition of a Dropout. The annual dropout rate indicator is a one-year count of grade 7 and 8 dropouts expressed as a percent of total students enrolled in grades 7 and 8 for that school year. The state accountability dropout definition will be changed beginning with 2005-06 leavers by adopting the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) dropout definition. This definition will be used to calculate the 2005-06 annual dropout rates. This means 2007 will be the first accountability year to evaluate grade 7-8 annual dropout rates using the new definition. The new definition will also be used to create the denominator of the longitudinal completion rate beginning with the class of 2006.
3. Standards.

Annual Dropout Rate (Grades 7-8) Accountability Standards						
	2005 from 2003-04	2006 from 2004-05	2007 from 2005-06	2008 from 2006-07	2009 from 2007-08	2010 from 2008-09
<b>Exemplary</b>	0.2%	0.2%	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>Recognized</b>	0.7%	0.7%	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>Academically Acceptable</b>	1.0%	1.0%	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>Dropout Definition</b>	Current State Definition	Current State Definition	NCES Definition	NCES Definition	NCES Definition	NCES Definition

*Rationale:* The standards are held constant for 2005 and 2006. Standards for 2007 and beyond are to be determined. 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.

4. Required Improvement. In 2005, campuses and districts with dropout rates may “gate up” to *Recognized* if the amount of improvement (decline) in the dropout rate would reach the 0.7% *Recognized* standard in two years. In 2005, a minimum performance floor of 0.9% is required; therefore, dropout rate performance must be between 0.9% and 0.7% to be eligible for this feature. RI is also used to allow campuses and districts to achieve the *Academically Acceptable* rating by demonstrating enough improvement (decline) to reach the *Academically Acceptable* standard in two years. As with TAKS RI, there is no floor for using RI to gate up to *Academically Acceptable*.

*Rationale:* Even though RI use with the dropout rate did not impact any ratings in the 2004 system, having it available parallels the use of RI with TAKS. Districts and campuses have a second way to achieve a higher rating, if they can demonstrate enough improvement. This keeps an incentive in the system to focus on improving campus and district dropout rates. Also, with changes to minimum size and the measure definition, more campuses and districts may need and be able to use this feature in the future.

## Gold Performance Acknowledgments (GPA)

1. Established Indicators. The 2004 standards will be applied to all eleven established indicators for 2005 and 2006, except for the Recommended High School Program (RHSP) / Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP) indicator. The standard for the RSHP/DAP indicator increases from 50.0% in 2004 to 60.0% in 2005 to 70.0% in 2006 and to 80.0% in 2007.

*Rationale:* The current standards for the established indicators are quite stringent. In addition, it is too late in the school year to raise GPA standards for 2005 and it is important to publish 2006 standards well in advance of the 2005-06 school year. Recommendations for standards for 2007 and beyond will be researched and evaluated prior to convening the 2006 focus group.

The RHSP/DAP standard is increased because the recommended high school program becomes the default curriculum for students entering ninth grade beginning in the 2004-05 school year (19 Texas Administrative Code §74.51, 2004).

2. New Indicators. Standards are established for four new indicators — Comparable Improvement (ELA/reading and mathematics) and College Readiness-Texas Success Initiative (ELA and mathematics). The two Comparable Improvement (CI) indicators will be implemented in 2005 and the two indicators for College Readiness-Texas Success Initiative (TSI) will be added in 2006, although reporting on this indicator began with the 2004 AEIS report.
  - Comparable Improvement. This is a campus only acknowledgment. Campuses may be acknowledged separately for Comparable Improvement (CI) in reading/English language arts (ELA) and for CI in mathematics. Campuses with an average Texas Growth Index (TGI) within the top quartile (the top 25%) of their 40-member campus comparison group for either reading/ELA or mathematics will qualify for CI acknowledgments. The top quartile standard is in effect for 2005 and 2006. The years 2007 and beyond are to be determined. This indicator evaluates performance for All Students only. Student demographics are included in the campus grouping methodology.
  - College Readiness - Texas Success Initiative. Beginning with the 2006 accountability year, the TAAS/TASP Equivalency indicator will be replaced by a new indicator, College Readiness -Texas Success Initiative (TSI). Campuses and districts may be acknowledged for TSI separately for ELA and mathematics. The 2006 standards for both subjects are recommended to be 50%. All students and each student group meeting minimum size criteria are evaluated. The minimum size criteria parallel the size criteria applied to other GPA indicators.

## Additional Requirements for Districts

1. Indicators of 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*. 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 reported and used to monitor the quality of district PEIMS data submissions. Longitudinal measures of data quality will be introduced in 2009 and may replace the annual data quality indicator in the accountability ratings process at some point in the future.
2. Underreported Students Standards. The rigor of the underreported students standard is increased each year through the 2008 accountability ratings, e.g., for 2005, any district that has more than **100** underreported students or greater than **5.0%** underreported students cannot be rated *Exemplary* or *Recognized*. See the table that follows for the standards for 2004 through 2008.

Accountability Year	Underreported students data year	Underreported students cannot exceed:	
		Number	Percent
2004	2002-03	500	5.0
2005	2003-04	<b>100</b>	5.0
2006	2004-05	100	<b>2.0</b>
<b>2007</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	100	<b>1.5</b>
<b>2008</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>1.0</b>

*Rationale:* Submission of accurate data is a district responsibility.

### Special Issues and Circumstances

1. New and Otherwise Academically Unacceptable Campuses. The provision allowed in 2004 that permitted new and otherwise *Academically Unacceptable* campuses to be labeled *Not Rated: Other* is discontinued beginning with the 2005 ratings.

*Rationale:* While this was an appropriate provision for new campuses in the first year of the new accountability system, new campuses in the 2004-05 school year have had adequate notice of the requirements of the state accountability system. New 2004-05 campuses are defined as campuses that were not in operation on the PEIMS enrollment snapshot date in 2003-04, but did have at least one student in membership on the PEIMS enrollment snapshot date in 2004-05.