

Chapter 3 – The Basics: *Additional Features*

As shown in *Chapter 2 – The Basics: Base Indicators*, districts and campuses can achieve a rating by meeting the absolute standards for the different indicators. However, under certain conditions, a campus or district can achieve a rating:

- by meeting *Required Improvement*; and/or
- by using the *Exceptions Provision*.

Additionally, under certain circumstances a district's rating may be restricted to *Academically Acceptable*. These additional requirements for districts are explained in the last part of this chapter.

All additional features are applied and calculated automatically by TEA before ratings are released. Districts and campuses do not need to request the use of additional features.

Required Improvement to *Academically Acceptable*

Campuses or districts initially rated *Academically Unacceptable* may achieve an *Academically Acceptable* rating using the Required Improvement feature.

Who is evaluated for Required Improvement: Districts and campuses whose performance is *Academically Unacceptable* for any TAKS subject, Completion Rate II, or Annual Dropout Rate measure evaluated. Note that because this is the first year of the SDAA II, no Required Improvement is possible for SDAA II in 2005.

TAKS

Improvement Standard: In order for Required Improvement to move a campus or district to *Academically Acceptable*, the campus or district must have shown enough improvement on the deficient TAKS measures since 2004 to be able to meet the current year accountability standard in two years.

There are different standards for the *Academically Acceptable* rating for TAKS:

- *Reading/ELA, Writing, and Social Studies*. Any measure below the standard must achieve enough gain to meet a standard of **50%** in two years.
- *Mathematics*. Any measure below the standard must achieve enough gain to meet a standard of **35%** in two years.
- *Science*. Any measure below the standard must achieve enough gain to meet a standard of **25%** in two years.

Methodology: The *actual change* must be equal to or greater than the *Required Improvement*:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \text{Actual Change} & & \text{Required Improvement} \\ \text{[performance in 2005]} - \text{[performance in 2004]} \geq & & \frac{\text{[standard for 2005]} - \text{[performance in 2004]}}{2} \end{array}$$

Example. For 2005, an elementary campus has performance above the *Academically Acceptable* standard in all areas except for their Economically Disadvantaged student group in TAKS mathematics; only 29% met the standard. Their performance in 2004 for the same group and subject was 19%.

First calculate their *actual change*:

$$29 - 19 = 10$$

Next calculate the *Required Improvement*:

$$\frac{35 - 19}{2} = 8$$

Then compare the two numbers to see if the *actual change* is greater than or equal to the *Required Improvement*:

$$10 \geq 8$$

Result: the campus meets Required Improvement, so its rating is *Academically Acceptable*.

Minimum Size Requirements: In order for Required Improvement to be an option, the district or campus must have test results (for the subject and student group) of at least 10 students in 2004.

Other Information:

- Prior year percent *Met Standard* is recalculated using the current year student passing standard so that gain from the prior year to the current year uses comparable performance data for the two years. In other words, the 2004 performance of 19% for the elementary campus in the example above, is based on a student passing standard at the Panel Recommendation so that it is comparable to performance in 2005. See *Chapter 2 – The Basics: Base Indicators* for more information on passing standards. Note that for this year, prior year (2004) performance for grade 5 reading and mathematics uses the single administration only while current year (2005) grade 5 reading and mathematics results are based on the cumulative results of the first and second administration.
- All improvement calculations are done on performance rates and standards that have been rounded to whole numbers. Required Improvement calculations are expressed as a percent, rounded to whole numbers. For example, 4.5% is rounded to 5%.

COMPLETION RATE II

Improvement Standard: In order for Required Improvement to move a campus or district to *Academically Acceptable*, the campus or district must have shown enough improvement on the deficient Completion Rate II measures since the class of 2003 to be at **75.0%** in two years.

Methodology: The *actual change* must be equal to or greater than the *Required Improvement*:

Actual Change		Required Improvement
[completion rate for class of 2004] minus [completion rate for class of 2003]	≥	[75.0] – [completion rate for class of 2003] 2

Minimum Size Requirements: In order for Required Improvement to be an option, the district or campus must have had at least 10 students (in the same student group) in the completion rate class of 2003.

Other Information:

- Completion Rate II is used for 2004 and 2005.
- Campuses that serve students in grades 9, 10, 11, and/or 12 but do not have their own completion rate will be evaluated using their district’s completion rate. Depending on the school’s configuration over the years, the district rate may be used for current year, prior year, or both in determining if it met Required Improvement.
- All calculations are expressed as a percent, rounded to one decimal point. For example, 4.85% is rounded to 4.9%, not 5%.

ANNUAL DROPOUT RATE

Improvement Standard: In order for Required Improvement to move a campus or district to *Academically Acceptable*, the campus or district must have shown enough decline in their dropout rate to be at **1.0%** in two years.

Methodology: The *actual change* must be equal to or less than the *Required Improvement*:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \text{Actual Change} & & \text{Required Improvement} \\ [2003-04 \text{ dropout rate}] - [2002-03 \text{ dropout rate}] \leq & \leq & \frac{[1.0] - [2002-03 \text{ dropout rate}]}{2} \end{array}$$

This calculation measures *reductions* in rates, not gains as with TAKS or Completion Rate II results. The actual change in the dropout rate needs to be *less than or equal to* the Required Improvement for the standard to be met, and will involve negative numbers. Stated another way, the actual change needs to be a larger negative number than the Required Improvement.

Example. In 2003-04, a middle school had a dropout rate for their Hispanic student group of 1.8%. Their Annual Dropout Rate in 2002-03 for the same group was 3.2%.

First calculate their *actual change*:

$$1.8 - 3.2 = -1.4$$

Next calculate the *Required Improvement*:

$$\frac{1.0 - 3.2}{2} = -1.1$$

Then we compare the two numbers to see if the *actual change* is less than or equal to the *Required Improvement*:

$$-1.4 \leq -1.1$$

Result: the campus meets Required Improvement, so its rating is *Academically Acceptable*.

Minimum Size Requirements: In order for Required Improvement to be an option, the district or campus must have had at least 10 grade 7-8 students (in the same student group) in 2002-03.

Other Information:

- All calculations are expressed as a percent, rounded to one decimal point. For example, -1.875% is rounded to -1.9%, not -2%.

Required Improvement to *Recognized*

Who is evaluated for Required Improvement: Districts and campuses whose performance is at the high end of *Academically Acceptable* for any TAKS subject, or – *new for this year* – Completion Rate II or Annual Dropout Rate. Note that because this is the first year of the SDAA II, no Required Improvement is possible for SDAA II in 2005.

TAKS

Improvement Standard: In order for Required Improvement to move a campus or district from *Academically Acceptable* to *Recognized*, the campus or district must have:

- performance ranging from 65% to 69% on the measure, and
- shown enough improvement on TAKS since 2004 to be at **70%** in two years.

Methodology: The *actual change* must be equal to or greater than the *Required Improvement*:

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{Actual Change} \\ \text{[performance in 2005]} - \text{[performance in 2004]} \geq \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} \text{Required Improvement} \\ \frac{[70] - \text{[performance in 2004]}}{2} \end{array}$$

Example. For 2005, a district has performance above the *Recognized* standard in all areas except for their Economically Disadvantaged student group in TAKS science; only 65% met the standard. Their performance in 2004 for the same group and subject was 61%.

First determine if their current year performance is *at or above the floor* of 65%:

$$65 \geq 65$$

Next calculate their *actual change*:

$$65 - 61 = 4$$

Then calculate the *Required Improvement*:

$$\frac{70 - 61}{2} = 5 \text{ (4.5 rounds to 5)}$$

Finally, compare the two numbers to see if the *actual change* is greater than or equal to the *Required Improvement*:

$$4 \text{ is not greater than or equal to } 5$$

Result: the district does not meet Required Improvement, so its rating remains *Academically Acceptable*.

Minimum Size Requirements: For Required Improvement to be an option, the district or campus must have test results (for subject and student group) of at least 10 students in 2004.

Other Information:

- Prior year percent *Met Standard* is computed using the current year student passing standard so that gain from the prior year to the current year uses comparable performance data for both years. In other words, the 2004 performance of 61% for the district in the example above is based on a student passing standard at the Panel Recommendation so that it is comparable to performance in 2005. See *Chapter 2 – The Basics: Base Indicators* for more information on passing standards. Note that for this year, prior year (2004) performance for grade 5 reading and mathematics uses the single administration only while current year (2005) grade 5 reading and mathematics results are based on the cumulative results of the first and second administration.
- The *Recognized* standard for the TAKS indicator (70%) is the same for all subjects.
- All improvement calculations are done on performance rates and standards that have been rounded to whole numbers. Required Improvement calculations are expressed as a percent, rounded to whole numbers. For example, 4.5% is rounded to 5%.

COMPLETION RATE II

Improvement Standard: In order for Required Improvement to move a campus or district from *Academically Acceptable* to *Recognized*, the campus or district must have:

- a completion rate ranging from 80.0% to 84.9% on the measure, and
- shown enough improvement on the deficient completion rate measures since the class of 2003 to be at **85.0%** in two years.

Methodology: The *actual change* must be equal to or greater than the *Required Improvement*:

$$\frac{\text{Actual Change}}{\text{[completion rate for class of 2004] minus [completion rate for class of 2003]}} \geq \frac{\text{Required Improvement}}{\frac{[85.0] - [\text{completion rate for class of 2003}]}{2}}$$

Minimum Size Requirements: In order for Required Improvement to be an option, the district or campus must have had at least 10 students (in the same student group) in the completion rate class of 2003.

Other Information:

- Completion Rate II is used for 2004 and 2005.
- Campuses that serve students in grades 9, 10, 11, and/or 12 but do not have their own completion rate will be evaluated using their district's completion rate. Depending on the school's configuration over the years, the district rate may be used for current year, prior year, or both in determining if it met Required Improvement.
- All calculations are expressed as a percent, rounded to one decimal point. For example, 4.85% is rounded to 4.9%, not 5%.

ANNUAL DROPOUT RATE

Improvement Standard: In order for Required Improvement to move a campus or district to *Recognized*, the campus or district must have:

- an Annual Dropout Rate ranging from 0.9% to 0.8% on the measure, and
- shown enough decline to be at **0.7%** in two years.

Methodology: The *actual change* must be equal to or less than the *Required Improvement*:

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{Actual Change} \\
 [2003-04 \text{ dropout rate}] - [2002-03 \text{ dropout rate}] \leq \frac{\text{Required Improvement}}{2} \\
 \frac{[0.7] - [2002-03 \text{ dropout rate}]}{2}
 \end{array}$$

Note that this calculation measures *reductions* in rates, not gains as with TAKS or completion rate results. The actual change in the dropout rate needs to be *less than or equal to* the Required Improvement for the standard to be met, and will involve negative numbers. Stated another way, the actual change needs to be a larger negative number than the required change.

Minimum Size Requirements: In order for Required Improvement to be an option, the district or campus must have had at least 10 grade 7-8 students (in the same student group) in 2002-03.

Other Information:

- All calculations are expressed as a percent, rounded to one decimal point. For example, -1.875% is rounded to -1.9%, not -2%.

Exceptions

Campuses or districts evaluated to be *Academically Unacceptable* after application of Required Improvement may be able to “gate up” to *Academically Acceptable* using up to three exceptions for TAKS and/or SDAA II measures.

The Exceptions Provision provides relief to larger campuses and districts with more diverse student populations who are evaluated on more measures.

The number of exceptions available for a campus or district is dependent on the number of assessment measures on which the campus or district is evaluated, as shown in the following table.

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

The Exceptions Provision applies to any of the 25 TAKS measures (5 subjects multiplied by 5 groups: All Students, African American, Hispanic, White, and Economically Disadvantaged), and the SDAA II measure. The Exceptions Provision does not apply to either the Completion Rate II or Annual Dropout Rate indicators.

Other Information:

- *Performance Floor.* Performance on the measure to which the Exceptions Provision will be applied must be no more than five percentage points below the accountability standard for the *Academically Acceptable* rating level. In the example below, the high school qualifies to use their exceptions because both their mathematics and science performance were within five points of the standards of 35% and 25%, respectively.
- *One-Time Use.* An exception will not be granted for the same measure for two consecutive years. For example, if a campus was 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. In the example below the high school will not be able to use exceptions on economically disadvantaged performance in TAKS mathematics or science in 2006.
- *Only Successful Application.* The Exceptions Provision is only applied if it will successfully move a campus or district from *Academically Unacceptable* to *Academically Acceptable*. For example, a campus may be eligible for two exceptions, but if it actually needs three exceptions in order to raise its rating to *Academically Acceptable*, then no exceptions are used; the campus remains *Academically Unacceptable*. This means that in 2006, all measures will be eligible for use as exceptions since none were used in 2005.
- *Only for Assessment.* The provision applies to assessment measures, TAKS and SDAA II, not to the Completion Rate II or Annual Dropout Rate indicators. That is, if a campus or district is *Academically Unacceptable* due to either the Completion Rate II or Annual Dropout Rate indicators, the Exceptions Provision is not applied.

Example. A large high school with a diverse population is evaluated on all student groups for reading/ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies, for a total of 20 measures. Their performance on all indicators meets the *Academically Acceptable* standards except for their economically disadvantaged students in mathematics and science, with performance at 31% and 22%, respectively, and they did not demonstrate Required Improvement for either of these measures.

The campus is evaluated on 20 assessment measures. Both their mathematics and science performance are within five points of the standards (35% and 25% respectively). They are eligible to use up to three exceptions. Therefore, their performance in these two areas that are below the standards is not considered in their accountability evaluation.

Result: the campus rating is *Academically Acceptable*. The two exception areas must be addressed in their campus improvement plan.

Note: Because of the one-time exception rule, in 2006, the campus will not be eligible to use exceptions for either of these measures – economically disadvantaged students in mathematics and economically disadvantaged students in science.

Other Information (*continued*):

- *Only for Academically Acceptable.* The Exceptions Provision is only applied at the *Academically Unacceptable* rating level to move the campus or district to the *Academically Acceptable* rating. It cannot be used to move a campus or district to *Recognized* or *Exemplary*.
- *Move only one level.* 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, and fails to meet the *Academically Acceptable* criteria on that one measure, the Exceptions Provision will only move the campus from *Academically Unacceptable* to *Academically Acceptable*.
- *Campus Improvement Plan.* Any campus that uses one or more exceptions must address performance on those measures to which the exceptions are applied in its campus improvement plan.

Additional Issues for Districts

DISTRICTS WITH *ACADEMICALLY UNACCEPTABLE* CAMPUSES

Any district that has one or more campuses rated *Academically Unacceptable* cannot receive a rating of *Exemplary* or *Recognized*. However, the *AEA: Academically Unacceptable* rating does not prevent an *Exemplary* or *Recognized* district rating in 2005. The impact of this rating on district ratings in future years will be discussed with the Educator Focus Group during the 2006 accountability development cycle. Also, by statute (*Texas Education Code* §39.072), the district rating is not affected by the ratings of campuses that are residential treatment programs or facilities operated by or under contract with the Texas Youth Commission (TYC).

UNDERREPORTED STUDENTS

Districts are required to report the “leaver” status of all grade 7–12 students who were enrolled at any time in the prior year (2003-04) but who did not continue in the current year (2004-05). These students may have left the district because they graduated, transferred to another district, dropped out, or some other reason.

When districts fail to provide a leaver record for a student who is no longer in enrollment, TEA counts him or her as underreported. In order to maintain a rating of *Exemplary* or *Recognized*, districts must not exceed the accountability standards for underreporting students.

Standard: Districts must meet the standard for both of the following measures in order to maintain a rating of *Exemplary* or *Recognized*:

- *Count of Underreported Students:* Must be fewer than or equal to 100.
- *Percent of Underreported Students:* Must be less than or equal to 5.0%.

Methodology:

$$\frac{\text{number of underreported students}}{\text{number of returning students} + \text{leavers} + \text{underreported students}} \leq 5.0\%$$

Numerator: Underreported students are those 2003-04 students in grades 7–12 for whom no enrollment record or school leaver record can be matched on 2004-05 PEIMS submission 1.

Denominator: The denominator is an unduplicated count of students who were reported in enrollment in 2003-04 PEIMS submission 1 or in attendance in 2003-04 PEIMS submission 3. This includes returning students (enrollment record submitted), leavers (leaver record submitted), and underreported students (no record submitted).

Minimum Size Requirements: There are no minimum size requirements; all districts will be evaluated for underreported students. Districts with very small numbers of underreported students that cause them to exceed 5.0% will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Data Source and Year: PEIMS submission 1 (October 2003, October 2004); PEIMS submission 3 (June 2004)

Other Information:

- *Unduplicated Count.* The methodology eliminates any duplicate records. For example, students are not counted twice because they appear on both attendance and enrollment records.
- *Rounding.* This calculation is rounded to one decimal place. For example, 5.05% is rounded to 5.1%, not 5%.

ADDITIONAL STUDENTS IN DISTRICT RATINGS

Generally speaking, districts are held accountable for the performance of all their students, including those who attend alternative education campuses that are registered for evaluation under AEA procedures. See *Chapter 6 – Special Issues and Circumstances* for more information on various campus situations and how they affect the district’s performance data.

Additionally, districts are responsible for the performance of students who are not in any campus accountability subset because they changed campuses within the district between the October ‘as of’ date and the date of testing. See *Table 3 in Chapter 2 – The Basics: Base Indicators* for more information on the accountability subset.

