

# Introduction

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## ABOUT THE 2006 ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

The state accountability system is an integrated system of standard and alternative education accountability (AEA) procedures. The most significant change to the 2006 standard procedures is the increase in TAKS standards for achieving the *Academically Acceptable* rating. Significant to the AEA procedures is the implementation of an at-risk registration criterion that requires each registered alternative education campus (AEC) to have a minimum percentage of at-risk students enrolled on the AEC in order to remain registered and be evaluated under AEA procedures.

Also significant for certain districts are the modifications put in place to ensure that those areas impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita are rated appropriately.

## ABOUT THIS MANUAL

This *Accountability Manual* is a technical resource that explains the accountability system used by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to evaluate the performance of public school districts and campuses. This includes registered alternative education campuses and charter operators and their campuses. This *Manual* provides details of the accountability system for 2006, including ratings, acknowledgments, responsibilities and consequences, and special issues. Information necessary for determining 2006 ratings (standard and AEA) and acknowledgments is included.

As with previous editions of the *Manual*, selected chapters are adopted by reference as Commissioner of Education administrative rule. *Appendix A* provides the text of the rule, proposed at the time of publication, to adopt portions of this *Manual* by reference. The final adopted rule will be effective in July 2006.

## EDUCATOR INPUT

For the review of the procedures adopted in 2005 and proposed in 2006, TEA staff invited the assistance and advice of educators, school board members, business and community representatives, professional organizations, and legislative representatives from across the state. The commissioner considered all proposals and made final decisions which are reflected in this publication. The annual use of these advisory bodies will continue. With their assistance, the system can be modified, indicators improved, standards reevaluated, and other necessary adjustments made. The result is a carefully deliberated system that will challenge our schools to prepare all students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## SYSTEM PHILOSOPHY

Over the years TEA has worked closely with public school personnel and others to develop an integrated accountability system. The standard and AEA procedures of the 2006 system are based upon these guiding principles:

- **STUDENT PERFORMANCE**  
The system is first and foremost designed to improve student performance;

- **RECOGNITION OF DIVERSITY**  
The system is fair and recognizes diversity among campuses and students;
- **SYSTEM STABILITY**  
The system is stable and provides a realistic, practical timeline for measurement, data collection, planning, staff development, and reporting;
- **STATUTORY COMPLIANCE**  
The system is designed to comply with statutory requirements;
- **APPROPRIATE CONSEQUENCES**  
The system sets reasonable standards for adequacy, identifies and publicly recognizes high levels of performance and performance improvement, and identifies campuses with inadequate performance and provides assistance;
- **LOCAL PROGRAM FLEXIBILITY**  
The system allows for flexibility in the design of programs to meet the individual needs of students;
- **LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
The system relies on local school districts to develop and implement local accountability systems that complement the state system; and
- **PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW**  
The system supports the public's right to know levels of student performance in each school district and on each campus.

## **REPORTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM**

*Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS).* The AEIS is a comprehensive reporting system defined in state statute. Since 1990-91, campus and district AEIS reports have been generated and published annually for all campuses and districts in the state. Local districts share responsibility for disseminating the AEIS reports, including holding hearings for public discussion of the AEIS report content. All indicators used for accountability are reported in the AEIS, with additional disaggregations depicting how each grade level and different populations performed. Indicators that will potentially be used in future accountability ratings are also published in the AEIS when possible. The reports also show participation rates on the state-administered tests. Additionally, the AEIS shows demographic information about students and staff, program information, and financial information, all of which provide context for interpreting accountability results.

*School Report Card (SRC).* Also required by state statute, this agency-generated report provides a subset of the information found on the AEIS report and is produced at the campus level only. Campuses must provide the SRC to each student's family.

*Snapshot: School District Profiles.* This TEA publication provides a state and district-level overview of public education in Texas. Though no longer available as a printed publication, the most current *District Detail* section of *Snapshot*—nearly 90 items of information for each public school district—is available on the agency website.

*Pocket Edition.* This brochure provides a quick overview of state-level statistics on performance, demographics, campus and district ratings, personnel, and finances.

*Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).* AYP is a federal accountability program mandated under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. For more information on similarities and differences between the federal and state accountability systems, see *Appendix C – Comparison of State and Federal Systems*.

*Online Reports.* All of the reports cited above are available on the agency website through the Division of Performance Reporting homepage at [www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/index.html](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/index.html).

**Table 1: Definitions of Terms**

Throughout this *Manual*, the terms listed below are defined as shown, unless specifically noted otherwise. See *Chapter 13 – AEA Glossary and Index* for definitions of terms specific to the AEA procedures.

<i>Charter Operator</i>	A charter operator is treated like a district in the accountability system. The charter operator is identified with a unique six-digit number as are districts. The campus or campuses administered by a charter are identified with unique nine-digit number(s). The charter operator may administer instruction at one or more campuses.
<i>Districts</i>	This term includes charter operators as well as traditional independent school districts.
<i>Campuses</i>	This term includes charter campuses as well as campuses administered by traditional independent school districts.
<i>Superintendent</i>	The educational leader and administrative manager of the district or charter operator. This term includes other titles that may apply to charter operators, such as chief executive officer, president, and chief administrative officer.
<i>Standard Campus</i>	A campus evaluated under standard accountability procedures. This includes campuses that serve students in alternative education settings, but that are not registered to be evaluated under the AEA procedures.
<i>Registered Alternative Education Campus (AEC)</i>	A campus registered for evaluation under AEA procedures and meets the at-risk registration criterion. This term includes AECs of Choice as well as Residential Facilities.

