Chapter 4 – The Basics: *Determining a Rating*

The previous two chapters described the base indicators and the additional features of the system (Required Improvement and the Exceptions Provision). This chapter describes how to use the indicator data results with the additional features to determine campus and district ratings. The ratings for the overwhelming majority of campuses and districts can be determined this way. Some campuses and districts must be evaluated using different procedures. See *Chapter 6 – Special Issues and Circumstances* for details about which campuses and districts are affected and how they are evaluated.

WHO IS RATED?

The state accountability system is required to rate all districts and campuses that serve students in grades 1 through 12. The first step is to identify the universe of districts and campuses that can be considered for a rating. For 2006, the universe is determined to be those districts and campuses that reported students in membership in any grades (early education through grade 12) in the fall of the 2005-06 school year. The universe is then divided into those campuses and districts to be evaluated under Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) procedures (see *Part 2 – Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Procedures*) and those evaluated using standard procedures. Most districts and campuses identified for standard procedures receive one of the four primary rating labels (*Exemplary*, *Recognized*, *Academically Acceptable*, or *Academically Unacceptable*). Some receive a label of *Not Rated*. Rating labels and their uses are described below.

Once the universe of standard campuses and districts is established, the next step is to determine if the district or campus has TAKS results on which it can be evaluated. In order to attain one of the four primary rating labels, districts and campuses must have at least one TAKS test result in the accountability subset. An effort is made through the pairing process to supply TAKS results to campuses (with any grades from 1 to 12) with no students in the grades tested so that they can also be evaluated. For more information on pairing see *Chapter 6 – Special Issues and Circumstances.*

Districts and campuses that have only SDAA II results, only completion rates, only dropout rates, or only combinations of these three will not receive one of the four primary ratings in 2006. To be eligible to be *Exemplary*, *Recognized*, *Academically Acceptable*, or *Academically Unacceptable*, TAKS results are required and *only* TAKS results are required. Districts and campuses need not have data for the SDAA II, dropout, or completion indicators in order to receive a rating. Furthermore, performance on any one of the TAKS subjects is sufficient for a rating to be assigned (science, mathematics, reading/ELA, writing, or social studies).

Though at least one TAKS tester (in the accountability subset) is required to be considered for a rating, some places with very small numbers of total TAKS test results may ultimately receive a *Not Rated* label. The process of Special Analysis is employed when there are very small numbers of total test takers to determine if a rating is appropriate. See *Chapter 6 – Special Issues and Circumstances* for details about Special Analysis.

STANDARD RATING LABELS

Rating labels for districts are specified in statute. For 2006, standard campuses and districts will be assigned one of the following rating labels.

Table 4: Standard Rating Labels

	District or Charter Operator Use	Campus Use (non-charter and charter)
Exemplary	Used for districts or charter operators with at least one TAKS test result (in any subject) in the accountability subset. Small numbers subject to Special Analysis.	Used for campuses serving grades 1-12 with at least one TAKS test result (in any subject) in the accountability subset. Includes campuses with TAKS data due to pairing. Small numbers subject to Special Analysis.
Recognized		
Academically Acceptable		
Academically Unacceptable		
Not Rated: Other	Used for districts or charter operators in the unlikely event that there is insufficient data to rate due to no TAKS results in the accountability subset. In 2006, this rating may be assigned to districts impacted by Hurricane Rita.	Used if the campus: ○ has no students enrolled in grades higher than kindergarten; ○ has insufficient data to rate due to no TAKS results in the accountability subset; ○ has insufficient data to rate through Special Analysis due to very small numbers of TAKS results in the accountability subset; ○ is a designated Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) or a designated Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP); or ○ was impacted by Hurricane Rita and met provisions outlined in *Appendix I.*
Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues	Used in the rare situation where the accuracy and/or integrity of performance results are compromised and it is not possible to assign a rating label based on the evaluation of performance. This label may be assigned temporarily pending an on-site investigation or may be assigned as the final rating label for the year. This rating label is not equivalent to an *Academically Unacceptable* rating. The Commissioner of Education also has the authority to lower a rating or assign an *Academically Unacceptable* rating to address problems with the accuracy and/or integrity of performance results that are discovered through accountability system safeguards, Performance-Based Monitoring, or other monitoring and compliance reviews. Data quality is considered to be a district responsibility. It is possible for a district rating to be *Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues* without any of its campuses having that rating label. If any campus within a district receives a rating of *Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues,* then the district's rating will be affected. The district may receive a rating of *Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues,* either temporarily or permanently, or the district's rating may also be changed to *Academically Unacceptable* for data quality reasons. See *Chapter 15 – Responsibilities and Consequences* for more information about the circumstances that trigger this rating label.	

Registered alternative education campuses will receive ratings under the AEA procedures. See *Chapter 12 – AEA Ratings* for information on the AEA rating labels.

NOTIFICATION OF RATINGS (AUGUST 1, 2006)

Notification of campus and district accountability ratings will occur on August 1, 2006. This consists of release of the campus and district data tables and the district summary reports on TEA's website. Ratings for both standard and registered alternative education campuses (AECs) will be included.

NOTIFICATION OF RATINGS (LATE OCTOBER, 2006)

Accountability ratings are finalized when the accountability appeals process is completed. Agency web products related to state accountability (both public and secure sites) will be updated to reflect the outcome of appeals and to add the Gold Performance Acknowledgments information in late October, 2006. See *Chapter 18 – Calendar* and *Chapter 14 – Appealing the Ratings* for more information.

USING THE DATA TABLE TO DETERMINE A RATING

In late July, prior to finalizing all computations necessary for accountability ratings, TEA will provide districts with access to preview data tables for the district and each campus within the district through the TEASE website.

These tables will *not* show a rating and will *not* provide calculations for Required Improvement or the Exceptions Provision. However, using the data on the tables and the *2006 Accountability Manual*, districts can anticipate their ratings in advance of the TEA ratings release. *These preview data tables will contain unmasked data and must be treated as confidential.* That is, information that reveals the performance of an individual student may be shown.

Sample data tables (unmasked) are excerpted on the following pages to present a step-by-step explanation of how ratings are determined.