

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2008 ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

October 23, 2008

THE STATE OF TEXAS

In 2008, the State of Texas achieved *Academically Acceptable* status, with:

- ✓ TAKS passing rates of 86 percent or above for all students and all student groups for reading/ELA, writing, and social studies, 69 percent or above for all students and all student groups for mathematics, and 61 percent or above for all students and all student groups for science; and
- ✓ Grade 9-12 completion rates of 80.5 percent or above for all students and all student groups; and
- ✓ Grade 7-8 dropout rates of 0.7 percent or less for all students and all student groups.

Compared to the 2007 TAKS results using the 2008 indicator definition, the 2008 statewide performance on the TAKS was equal to or improved for all students and all student groups in each subject area tested.

Completion Rate I, the rate that excludes GED recipients as completers, declined for all students and for each student group between the class of 2007 and the class of 2006. Decreases in completion rates may be due to significant changes in the dropout definition beginning with the 2005-06 school year, but may also be due to the more difficult TAKS exit-level requirements beginning with the class of 2007.

The dropout rate for students in grades 7-8 in 2006-07 varies across the all students group and each of the individual student groups from a low of 0.2% for White students to a high of 0.7% for African American students. Though the overall grade 7-8 dropout rate stayed steady at 0.4%, slight improvement (0.1%) was demonstrated for both the Hispanic and African American student groups between 2005-06 and 2006-07.

DISTRICTS

Of the 1,229 districts, 43 districts (3.5%) are rated *Exemplary* and 329 (26.8%) are rated *Recognized* in 2008. The districts rated *Exemplary* comprise 0.6% of the total student enrollment, while the districts rated *Recognized* comprise 19.9% of total students enrolled.

818 of the 1,229 districts achieved the *Academically Acceptable* rating and comprise 79.1% of the total students enrolled. This includes 65 charter operators achieving the *AEA: Academically Acceptable* rating under AEA procedures.

32 districts are *Academically Unacceptable* representing 0.3% of the total students enrolled. This includes 2 charter operators rated *AEA: Academically Unacceptable* under AEA procedures.

7 districts (all charter operators) are *Not Rated: Other*. See the topic "Not Rated Districts and Campuses" below for more information about this rating category.

- ✓ 36 of the 43 *Exemplary* districts are very small (total enrollment less than 500), and 56% are rural (24 of the 43).
- ✓ 47% of *Recognized* districts are very small, having fewer than 500 students enrolled. Approximately 45% of *Recognized* districts have 30% or more minority students enrolled; 65% have 40% or more economically disadvantaged students.
- ✓ In 2008, 19 of the *Recognized* districts (5.9%) are large (10,000 or more students enrolled) compared to only 2 districts of this size earning *Recognized* in 2007 (0.9%).

CAMPUSES

Of the 8,195 campuses, 1,000 campuses (12.2%) are rated *Exemplary* and 2,819 (34.4%) are rated *Recognized* in 2008. The campuses rated *Exemplary* comprise 12.0% of the total student enrollment, while campuses rated *Recognized* comprise 33.5% of total students enrolled.

3,508 of the 8,195 campuses (42.8%) achieved the rating *Academically Acceptable* and comprise 50.4% of the total students enrolled. This includes 397 campuses rated *AEA: Academically Acceptable* under AEA procedures.

202 of the 8,195 campuses (2.5%) are rated *Academically Unacceptable* and comprise 2.5% of the total students enrolled. This includes 15 campuses rated *AEA: Academically Unacceptable* under AEA procedures.

665 campuses are *Not Rated: Other*. See the topic "Not Rated Districts and Campuses" below for more information about this rating category.

A large majority (85%) of the 1,000 schools rated *Exemplary* are elementary schools (848), with the remainder distributed among 40 high schools, 88 middle schools, and 24 multi-level schools.

The 2,819 *Recognized* schools are profiled as follows:

- 76% are elementary;
- 14% are middle schools;
- 7% are high schools; and
- 2% are multi-level schools.

Of the 187 *Academically Unacceptable* schools under standard procedures in 2008, their ratings were as follows in 2007:

- 62 were *Academically Unacceptable*.
- 0 were *Exemplary*.
- 2 were *Recognized*.
- 107 were *Academically Acceptable*.
- 6 were *AEA: Academically Acceptable*.
- 1 was *AEA: Academically Unacceptable*.
- 1 was *Not Rated: Other*.
- The remaining 8 did not exist in 2007.

The 187 schools rated *Academically Unacceptable* under standard procedures are distributed among 63 elementary schools, 44 middle schools, 65 high schools, and 15 multi-level schools.

CHARTERS

Charter Operators

Of 198 charter operators, 14 are *Exemplary* (7.1%), 41 are *Recognized* (20.7%), 115 are rated *Academically Acceptable* (58.1%), and 21 are *Academically Unacceptable* (10.6%).

Of the 115 *Academically Acceptable* charters, 50 achieved this rating under standard procedures and 65 achieved the rating under AEA procedures.

Of the 21 *Academically Unacceptable* charters, 19 were evaluated under standard procedures and 2 were evaluated under AEA procedures.

Charter Campuses

Of the 374 charter campuses, 23 are rated *Exemplary* (6.1%) and 69 are rated *Recognized* (18.4%). Together, the *Exemplary* and *Recognized* categories represent 30.6% of all students enrolled in a charter school. 226 charter campuses are rated *Academically Acceptable* (60.4%). 32 charter campuses are rated *Academically Unacceptable* (8.6%).

Of the 226 *Academically Acceptable* charter campuses, 79 achieved this rating under standard procedures and 147 achieved the rating under AEA procedures.

Of the 32 *Academically Unacceptable* charter campuses, 27 were evaluated under standard procedures and 5 were evaluated under AEA procedures.

The remaining 24 charter campuses (6.4%) are *Not Rated: Other* and comprise 4.0% of the total students enrolled in a charter school. See the topic "Not Rated Districts and Campuses" below for more information about this rating category.

MOVEMENT

Under certain circumstances the initial rating assigned can be changed. Reasons for a rating change include the following: small numbers requiring special analysis; additional requirements in the system (such as district rating consequences of having one or more *Academically Unacceptable* campuses); the consequences of granted appeals; or, in 2008, the application of the School Leaver Provision.

Special Analysis, Districts

As a result of special analysis, 8 districts that had very small numbers of students tested on TAKS had rating changes. 1 district moved from *Academically Acceptable* to *Recognized*. 1 district moved from *Academically Acceptable* to *Not Rated: Other*. 6 districts moved from *Academically Unacceptable* to *Academically Acceptable*.

Special Analysis, Campuses

As a result of special analysis, 49 campuses that had very small numbers of students tested on TAKS had rating changes. 31 of the 49 campuses received the rating *Not Rated: Other* since there was not sufficient data to assign a rating. 15 campuses received the rating *Academically Acceptable* based on special analysis and 3 received the rating *Recognized* based on special analysis.

In 2007 a School Leaver Provision (SLP) was added to the system, such that the leaver indicators (either alone or in combination) could not be the cause for a lowered campus or district rating. This provision was extended to apply for 2008 as well. For campuses and districts evaluated under standard procedures, the provision applies to the Underreported Students Indicator (for districts only), the grade 7-8 Annual Dropout Rate, and Completion Rate I. The SLP also applies to campuses and charter operators evaluated under AEA Procedures. For 2008 AEA ratings, if the Completion Rate II and/or grade 7-12 Annual Dropout Rate indicator(s) are the only cause for an *AEA: Academically Unacceptable* rating, then the AEC or charter is assigned the *AEA: Academically Acceptable* label.

School Leaver Provision, Districts (Standard Procedures)

As a result of the SLP, a total of 95 districts were able to achieve a higher rating. 79 districts that would otherwise have been *Academically Unacceptable* used the SLP to achieve a higher rating. 76 moved from *Academically Unacceptable* to *Academically Acceptable*. 3 moved from *Academically Unacceptable* to *Recognized*. Another 16 moved from *Academically Acceptable* to a higher rating: 15 to *Recognized*, and 1 to *Exemplary*. Overall, districts used the SLP most often for completion rate (80). 6 districts used the SLP for both dropout rate and completion rate. 3 used it for dropout rate alone. 6 used it for excessive underreported students.

School Leaver Provision, Campuses (Standard Procedures)

As a result of the SLP, a total of 142 campuses were able to achieve a higher rating. 137 campuses that would otherwise have been *Academically Unacceptable* used the SLP to achieve a higher rating. 5 moved from *Academically Unacceptable* to *Recognized*, and 132 moved from *Academically Unacceptable* to *Academically Acceptable*. Another 4 used the SLP to move from *Academically Acceptable* to *Recognized*. 1 campus moved from *Recognized* to *Exemplary*. Overall, campuses used the SLP more often for the completion rate (115) than for the dropout rate (27). No campus used the SLP for both the dropout rate and completion rate.

School Leaver Provision, Charter Operators (AEA Procedures)

A total of 30 charter operators used the SLP to achieve the *AEA: Academically Acceptable* rating. Of these 30, there were 15 that used it for both the dropout and completion rate indicators, 9 used it for the dropout rate only, and 6 used it for the completion rate only.

School Leaver Provision, Charter Campuses (AEA Procedures)

As a result of the SLP, a total of 65 campuses were able to achieve the *AEA: Academically Acceptable* rating. The SLP was used for the dropout rate by 19 campuses. 26 campuses used the SLP for the completion rate. 20 used it for both the dropout and completion rate indicators.

ADDITIONAL FEATURES IN THE SYSTEM

Required Improvement

Under standard procedures, 521 campuses were able to demonstrate Required Improvement in order to achieve a higher rating in 2008 compared to 360 the year before. Of the 2,819 *Recognized* campuses, 374 campuses (13.3%) used Required Improvement to move from a rating of *Academically Acceptable* to *Recognized*. Of the 3,111 *Academically Acceptable* campuses under standard procedures, 147 campuses (4.7%) used Required Improvement to move from a rating of *Academically Unacceptable* to *Academically Acceptable*.

Under standard procedures, 106 districts were able to demonstrate Required Improvement in order to achieve a higher rating in 2008 compared to 37 the year before. Of the 329 *Recognized* districts, 86 districts (26.1%) used Required Improvement to move from a rating of *Academically Acceptable* to *Recognized*. Of the 753 *Academically Acceptable* districts under standard procedures, 20 districts (2.7%) used Required Improvement to move from a rating of *Academically Unacceptable* to *Academically Acceptable*.

For both campuses and districts, Required Improvement was most often used for the science subject area, and secondly for mathematics.

Exceptions

Ninety (90) districts used one or more exceptions. Thirty-seven (37) used exceptions to achieve a rating of *Academically Acceptable*, 45 used exceptions to achieve *Recognized*, and 8 used exceptions to achieve *Exemplary*.

Of the 90 districts using exceptions, 76 used one exception, 11 used two, 2 used three, and 1 used all four exceptions.

Over 800 campuses used exceptions (832). There were 313 that used exceptions to achieve a rating of *Academically Acceptable*, 342 that used exceptions to achieve *Recognized*, and 177 that used exceptions to achieve *Exemplary*.

Of the 832 campuses using exceptions, 638 used one exception, 117 used two, 69 used 3 exceptions, and 8 used all four exceptions.

Sometimes additional exceptions are charged as a result of granted appeals. These additional exceptions are not included in the totals discussed above.

HURDLES

Under standard procedures, there are a total of 35 possible measures (hurdles) used to determine the accountability rating depending on the size and diversity of the campus or district.

For campuses, the accountability ratings are based on a statewide average of 13 hurdles. For elementary schools, the average number of hurdles is 12, compared to an average of 17 hurdles for middle schools and 14 for secondary schools. Charter schools that are evaluated under standard procedures are held accountable for 9 measures on average.

For districts, the average number of hurdles statewide is 18. The ten major urban districts are evaluated on an average of 34 hurdles, while the 430 rural districts are evaluated on an average of 13 hurdles.

ACADEMICALLY UNACCEPTABLE REASONS

Standard Procedures

District

Of the 30 *Academically Unacceptable* districts in 2008, 29 received this rating due to poor performance on TAKS only, and 1 received the rating due to a combination of the base indicators.

Campus

Of the 187 schools rated *Academically Unacceptable*, 157 (84%) received this rating due to poor performance on TAKS only; the remaining 30 received the rating due to a combination of indicators.

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Procedures

District

Of the 2 *AEA: Academically Unacceptable* charter operators in 2008, 1 received the rating due to poor performance on TAKS and completion rate and 1 received the rating due to poor performance on TAKS as well as its completion and dropout rates.

Campus

Of the 15 schools rated *AEA: Academically Unacceptable*, 13 (87%) received this rating due to poor performance on TAKS only; 1 received the rating due to Completion Rate and poor performance on TAKS; and 1 received the rating due to poor performance on TAKS as well as its completion and dropout rates.

NOT RATED DISTRICTS AND CAMPUSES

District

7 districts, all charter operators, are *Not Rated: Other*. 3 were given this when, through the process of special analysis, it was determined there was not sufficient data upon which to base a rating. The remaining 4 had rating changes to *Not Rated: Other* due to granted appeals.

Campus

666 of the 8,195 campuses rated (8.1%) are assigned a *Not Rated* rating. These campuses comprise 1.5% of the total students enrolled. Under standard procedures, 654 campuses are *Not Rated: Other* for the following reasons:

PK-K Only	153
Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP)	183
Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP)	174
Special Analysis	31
No TAKS results	113

1 additional campus is *Not Rated* due to data integrity issues. 11 other campuses evaluated under AEA procedures are *AEA: Not Rated – Other*. 8 of these were due to granted appeals.

TAKS PARTICIPATION

- The number of tested students who are included in the accountability subset of assessment results used to determine the 2008 accountability ratings is 2,680,214 or 87.1% of all students enrolled in grades 3-11. A lower percentage of students was included in the accountability subset in 2008 (87.1%) compared to 2007 (91.6%), primarily due to the transition from SDAA II to the new alternate assessments designed for students served in special education, TAKS-Alternate (TAKS-Alt) and TAKS-Modified (TAKS-M), that were first administered in 2008.
- The number of tested students who did not affect the August accountability ratings because they were not enrolled in the district by the end of October, 2007 is 155,861 or 5.1% of all students enrolled in grades 3-11.
- When all test takers are considered, 98.4% of all students enrolled in grades 3-11 were tested, compared to 97.7% in 2007 primarily due to the inclusion of more students served in special education who were tested on TAKS-Alt and TAKS-M.
- In 2008, the percent of students exempted from the TAKS was 0.9 percent (LEP), compared to 1.3 percent (0.3 ARD, 1.0 LEP) in 2007.
- In 2008, 0.2 percent of students were absent from testing—the same percent as reported in 2005, 2006, and 2007.

RATING TRENDS – 2004 THROUGH 2008

- The first few years of the new accountability system presented the dual challenge of increasing student-level passing standards on TAKS combined with other increases in rigor to the system: increasing accountability standards; decreases in minimum size criteria for both the dropout and completion rate indicators; and definitional changes to base indicators such as completion rate, and annual dropout rate.
- From 2004 to 2008, the percent of *Exemplary* and *Recognized* campuses (combined) was 39.1% in 2004, 27.9% in 2005, 42.6% in 2006, 37.2% in 2007, and 46.6% in 2008. The percent of *Academically Unacceptable* campuses has fluctuated from 1.2% in 2004, to 2.9% in 2005, to 3.4% in 2006, to 3.3% in 2007, and 2.3% in 2008.
- From 2004 to 2008, the percent of *Exemplary* and *Recognized* districts (combined) was 32.3% in 2004, 14.9% in 2005, 29.0% in 2006, 20.0% in 2007, and 30.3% in 2008. The percent of *Academically Unacceptable* districts has fluctuated from 2.0% in 2004, to 3.0% in 2005, to 3.8% in 2006, to 4.4% in 2007, and to 2.4% in 2008.
- The table below provides counts of districts and campuses with repeating ratings in consecutive years.

	<i>Exemplary</i> each year for the past:			<i>Recognized</i> each year for the past:			<i>Academically Unacceptable*</i> each year for the past:		
	4 or more years	3 years	2 years	4 or more years	3 years	2 years	4 or more years	3 years	2 years
Number of Districts	4	2	12	43	55	35	2	6	6
Number of Campuses	184	148	161	551	445	461	9	17	38

*In this table, *Academically Unacceptable* includes *AEA: Academically Unacceptable*. Also, *Academically Unacceptable* ratings separated by one or more years of *Not Rated* are considered consecutive.

The columns in this table are mutually exclusive. For example, the 2-year counts indicate campuses and districts with repeated ratings for exactly 2 years. The 2-year counts do not include those who also have repeated ratings for 3 years or 4 or more years.

GOLD PERFORMANCE ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Beginning with 2008, charter districts and alternative education campuses (AECs) rated under Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) procedures are eligible to earn Gold Performance Acknowledgments (GPAs). The performance of these charter districts and AECs is included in the GPA statistics discussed, below.

**2008 Gold Performance Acknowledgments
Table of Possible Acknowledgments by School Type**

Indicator	Elementary	Middle / Jr. High	High School	Multi-Level	District
Advanced Course/Dual Enrollment Completion			√	√	√
Advanced Placement / International Baccalaureate Results			√	√	√
Attendance Rate	√	√	√	√	√
Commended Performance on Reading/ELA	√	√	√	√	√
Commended Performance on Mathematics	√	√	√	√	√
Commended Performance on Writing	√	√		√	√
Commended Performance on Science	√	√	√	√	√
Commended Performance on Social Studies		√	√	√	√
Comparable Improvement: Reading/English Language Arts*	√	√	√	√	
Comparable Improvement: Mathematics*	√	√	√	√	
Recommended High School Program/Distinguished Achievement Program			√	√	√
SAT/ACT Results			√	√	√
Texas Success Initiative – Higher Education Readiness Component: English Language Arts			√	√	√
Texas Success Initiative – Higher Education Readiness Component: Mathematics			√	√	√
Total Possible Acknowledgments (14 maximum)	7	8	13	14	12

* Comparable Improvement GPA is not applicable for campuses evaluated under Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) procedures.

Statewide in 2008, approximately 80% of the 1,222 districts evaluated for GPA and 81% of the 7,517 campuses evaluated for GPA earned one or more acknowledgments, compared to 76% and 78% respectively in 2007. Some of this increase is due to the inclusion of GPAs earned by charter districts and AECs evaluated under AEA procedures. Among the 71 charter operators, 25 earned one or more acknowledgments. Among the 423 AECs, 183 earned one or more acknowledgments.

Two districts earned all 12 district acknowledgments, one district earned 11, and another ten districts earned 10. A total of 225 districts (18%) earned 1 acknowledgment, 174 (14%) earned 2 acknowledgments, and 184 (15%) earned 3 acknowledgments.

No campuses earned all 14 acknowledgments, but one campus earned 13, four campuses earned 12, and eight campuses earned 11. A total of 1,300 campuses (17%) earned 1 acknowledgment, 1,323 (18%) earned 2 acknowledgments, and 1,194 (16%) earned 3 acknowledgments.

At the campus level, the most frequent acknowledgment earned was commended on reading/ELA (38.0%), followed by commended on writing (33.0%), and commended on mathematics (30.2%). The acknowledgment earned the fewest times was the college admissions acknowledgment (SAT/ACT), with less than 1% of campuses (53) earning this accolade.

At the district level, the most frequent acknowledgment earned was commended on writing (40.1%), followed by commended on reading/ELA (38.0%), commended on social studies (33.0%), and the Texas Success Initiative in Mathematics (33.0%). As with the campuses, the acknowledgment earned the fewest times was the college admissions acknowledgment (SAT/ACT) with 2.8% of districts (34) earning this accolade.

In general, the percentages of AEA charter operators and campuses earning GPAs are smaller than their counterparts evaluated under standard procedures. Among AEA charter operators, the GPA earned most often was the RHSP/DAP (21.1%). Among AECs, the GPA earned most often was Attendance Rate (20.5%).

