

Chapter 2 – Accountability System Overview

History of the Accountability System

State Accountability

In 1993, the Texas Legislature enacted statutes that mandated the creation of the Texas public school accountability system to rate school districts and evaluate campuses. A viable and effective accountability system was achievable in Texas because the state already had the necessary infrastructure in place: a pre-existing student-level data collection system; a state-mandated curriculum; and a statewide assessment tied to the curriculum.

The system initiated with the 1993 legislative session remained in place through the 2001-02 school year. The ratings issued in 2002 were the last under that system. Beginning in 2003, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) was administered. This assessment included more subjects and grades, and was more difficult than the previous statewide assessment. A rating system based on the TAKS was developed during 2003. Ratings established under the redesigned system were first issued in the fall of 2004. Districts and campuses were required to meet criteria on up to 25 separate assessment measures and up to 10 dropout and completion measures. The last year for accountability ratings based on the TAKS was 2011.

In 2012, no state accountability ratings were issued while the Texas Education Agency (TEA) worked with advisory committees to develop a new rating system based on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) and a new distinction designations system. This new accountability system allows for a large number of measures without the rating being dependent on a single measure. The 2012-13 school year marks the first year of ratings using STAAR results and distinction designations.

Federal Accountability

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) (P.L. 107-110), reauthorized and amended federal programs established under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA). Under NCLB, accountability provisions that formerly applied only to districts and campuses receiving Title I, Part A funds were applied to all districts and campuses. All public school districts, campuses, and the state were evaluated annually for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) from the 2002-03 through the 2011-12 school years.

TEA has requested that the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) waive specific provisions of the ESEA. The waiver requests that the current Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) calculations and performance targets be replaced with the state's robust accountability rating system. The new system meets the intent and purposes of the ESEA statute that would allow the state's existing systems of reform and interventions to guide the support and improvement of teaching and learning. See *Chapter 10 – Federal Accountability* for more detail on the waiver for 2013.

Overview of the 2013 Accountability System

The following chart outlines the accountability ratings and distinction designations that will be assigned in 2013.

Accountability Rating (Districts and Campuses)	Distinction Designations (Campuses Only)
Met Standard	Top 25%: Student Progress and/or Academic Achievement: Reading/ELA and/or Academic Achievement: Mathematics
Met Alternative Standard (Assigned to charter operators and alternative education campuses evaluated under alternative education provisions)	N/A
Improvement Required	N/A

State Accountability Ratings

The overall design of the accountability rating system is a performance index framework. Performance indicators are grouped into four indexes that align with the goals of the accountability system. The structure for evaluation of performance across the four indexes affords multiple views of campus and district performance. Performance across the four indexes are used to assign accountability rating labels based on performance targets that are set for each index.

Index 1: Student Achievement. Provides a snapshot of performance across subjects, on both general and alternative assessments, at the satisfactory performance standard.

Index 2: Student Progress. Provides a measure of student progress by subject and student group independent of overall student achievement levels.

Index 3: Closing Performance Gaps. Emphasizes advanced academic achievement of the economically disadvantaged student group and the lowest performing racial/ethnic student groups at each campus or district.

Index 4: Postsecondary Readiness. Emphasizes the importance for students to receive a high school diploma that provides them with the foundation necessary for success in college, the workforce, job training programs, or the military.

Distinction Designations

Campuses that receive an accountability rating of *Met Standard* are eligible for distinction designations. Campus distinction designations will be based on campus performance in relation to a comparison group of campuses. The following campus distinction designations will be awarded in 2013:

Top 25% Student Progress

Academic Achievement in Reading/English language arts

Academic Achievement in Mathematics

System Safeguards

With a performance index framework, poor performance in one subject or one student group does not necessarily result in an *Improvement Required* accountability rating. However, disaggregated performance will be reported and districts and campuses are responsible for addressing performance for each subject and each student group. The disaggregated performance results will serve as the basis of safeguards for the accountability rating system to ensure that poor performance in one area or one student group is not masked in the performance index. The intent of the safeguards system is to also meet additional federal accountability requirements that are not met in the performance index. See *Chapter 9 – Responsibilities and Consequences* for more detailed information about the system safeguards that will be evaluated in 2013.

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