

Chapter 10 – 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). On February 28, 2013, TEA requested that the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) waive specific provisions of the ESEA. The U.S. Secretary of Education approved the Texas waiver request on September 30, 2013, which waived the 2012-13 AYP calculations and allowed the state’s existing systems of interventions to guide the support and improvement of schools. As a result of the approved ESEA Flexibility Wavier, the state accountability System Safeguard information was used to meet federal accountability requirements to identify Priority and Focus Schools that are eligible for additional federal funding while subject to a series of federally-prescribed interventions.

2013 Texas Accountability System Safeguards Reports

On August 8, 2013, the Texas state accountability ratings and distinction designations were released on the TEA website, in addition to the 2013 System Safeguard reports. The System Safeguard reports provide disaggregated results with percent of measures and targets met. The information serves as the basis for the accountability rating system to ensure that poor performance in one area or one student group is not masked in the performance index. For 2013, the state accountability disaggregated safeguard measures included four components: 1) performance rates, 2) participation rates, 3) graduation rates, and 4) limits on use of alternative assessments. The performance rates, participation rates and graduation rates were calculated on eleven student groups: All Students, Seven Racial/Ethnic groups: African American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, White, and Two or More Races; Economically Disadvantaged, students receiving Special Education services, and English language learners (ELLs).

Performance Targets

Performance rates calculated for the state accountability safeguard system are the same disaggregated results used for Index 1 in Reading, Mathematics, Writing, Science, and Social Studies. The performance target for the 2013 System Safeguard measures correspond to the 50% target on Index 1: Student Achievement.

Federal Participation Rates

Test participation rates are also reported in the accountability System Safeguards reports. The target of 95% is unchanged from the federal accountability target in place in prior years. Participation measures are based on all students enrolled at the time of testing defined as the total number of test answer documents submitted by each school district (denominator of the participation rate). The calculation is not limited to students enrolled for the full academic year. Test answer documents that are coded “Absent” or “Other” are not counted as participants and are therefore not included in the participation numerator.

Federal Limits on use of Alternative Assessments

For school districts only, the System Safeguard reports include measures that indicate whether the school district exceeded the federal limits on use of alternative assessments. The federal limits on use of proficient results from STAAR Alternate require that the number of scores that meet the STAAR Alternate Phase-in 1 Level II performance standard not exceed one percent of the district's total participation. Similarly, the federal limits on use of proficient results from STAAR Modified are determined by the number of test scores that meet the STAAR Modified Phase-in 1 Level II performance standard and may not exceed two percent of the district's total participation. The measures for STAAR Alternate and STAAR Modified are reported separately for Reading and Mathematics.

Federal Graduation Rate Goals and Targets

Texas is required by state statute to use the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) dropout definition and federal graduation rate calculation.

Goal: The long term statewide goal for the four-year graduation rate is 90.0 percent. High schools and school districts that do not meet the 90.0 percent graduation rate goal must meet either an annual target or a growth target for the four-year graduation rate, or an annual target for the five-year graduation rate.

Four-Year Graduation Rate Annual Target: For 2013, the annual target is 78.0 percent of students graduate with a regular high school diploma in four years.

Four-Year Graduation Rate Growth Target: The growth target is a 10.0 percent decrease in difference between prior year graduation rate and the 90.0 percent goal.

Five-Year Graduation Rate Annual Target: For 2013, the annual target is 83.0 percent of students graduate with a regular high school diploma in five years.

Other Federal Requirements

The underlying data used to report state accountability system safeguards is used also for federal accountability requirements such as district evaluations for Title III Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) and USDE Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) State Performance Plan (SPP) and State Annual Performance Report (APR). These federal accountability requirements are limited to the Reading/English language arts and Mathematics performance and participation indicators for the required ELL and Special Education programs at the 2012-13 federally approved performance target of 75%.

See Appendix K for detailed information about the 2013 performance targets and minimum size criteria that were used for the state system safeguards and federal accountability evaluations.