

**Accountability System Development for 2015
Accountability Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC)**

Options for Index Targets and Requirement Improvement

Background

The document, State Assessments Evaluated in 2015 Accountability, outlined the significant changes to the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) program that impact the 2015 accountability system. This document provides the Accountability Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC) with options for consideration for the 2015 index targets given the anticipated changes to the STAAR testing program. Options for incorporating required improvement calculations in future accountability rating cycles are also considered.

Options for 2015 Accountability and Index Targets

Index 1: Inclusion or exclusion of new Special Education Assessments. The assessment results evaluated in Index 1 are the same results used for the System Safeguards, which drive the Texas Accountability and Intervention System (TAIS) and federally-required identification of Focus and Priority Schools. These results are also submitted to the U.S. Department of Education to meet federal requirements for an annual submission of assessment results used for federal accountability.

Since the Index 1 results are used to meet both state and federal accountability and reporting requirements, the following three options are limited to Index 1 only. None of these options recommend inclusion of the STAAR Accommodated and STAAR Alternate 2 results in the Index 2, Index 3, and/or Index 4 calculations in 2015. Regardless of the option selected for 2015 accountability, the 2016 accountability development process must reconsider how the STAAR Accommodated and STAAR Alternate 2 assessments are evaluated in each index in 2016 and beyond.

Options for 2015 Index 1

Option 1: Exclude the STAAR Accommodated and STAAR Alternate 2 results from the Index 1 calculations.

This option also excludes STAAR Accommodated and STAAR Alternate 2 from the campus-level Distinctions Designation indicators of student performance at the Advanced Level III performance standard.

Pro

- The new assessments are not evaluated in state accountability system.
- The performance of many students previously tested on STAAR Modified or STAAR Alternate would not affect the state rating or system safeguard results.

Con

- Requires creation of a separate federal accountability system safeguard indicators to implement the federally-required identification of Focus and Priority Schools and to meet federal submission requirements of assessment results for all students tested.
- Adds significant complexity to the reporting requirements for districts and campuses, since they would need to keep track of and be able to explain differences between the two sets of assessment results for their respective schools.

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Option 2: Include the STAAR Accommodated and STAAR Alternate 2 results in the Index 1 calculations.

This option also includes STAAR Accommodated and STAAR Alternate 2 in the campus-level Distinctions Designation indicators of student performance at the Advanced Level III performance standard. Due to the inclusion of new special education assessments, an additional campus characteristic is added to the Campus Distinctions Comparison Groups methodology: Percent of students served by special education programs.

Pro

- This option allows the state to meet federal requirements because Index 1 is the underlying data for the state and federal system safeguards.
- The Index 1 target could be adjusted to minimize the impact of students previously tested on STAAR Modified on Index 1 and the system safeguard results.

Con

- Requires an adjustment to the Index 1 target without knowing how students will perform on the new special education assessments.
- Does not minimize the impact of students previously tested on STAAR Modified or STAAR Alternate on the accountability rating.

Option 3: Include the STAAR Accommodated and STAAR Alternate 2 results in the Index 1 calculations and apply a “hold harmless” feature which adjusts the rating outcome if Index 1 fails to meet the target solely due to the inclusion of these assessments.

Under this option, the Index 1 calculations and the campus-level Distinctions Designation indicators are aligned so that student performance on STAAR Accommodated and STAAR Alternate 2 are included the performance rates of campuses at the Advanced Level III performance standard. For this reason, the Campus Comparison Group methodology is modified to include the percent of students served by special education programs.

Pro

- Allows the state to meet federal requirements because Index 1 is the underlying data for the state and federal system safeguards.
- Hold harmless feature removes the impact of students previously tested on STAAR Modified from the accountability rating results.
- Hold harmless feature removes the impact of students tested on the new STAAR Alt 2 on student passing standards that are not determined until spring 2015.
- Does not require the recalculation of data in 2016 in order to make prior year comparisons.

Con

- Adds additional complexity to the rating system, since the assigned rating will differ from the outcomes shown on the underlying data.

Index 2: Limited STAAR Progress Measures available. Changes to various aspects of the STAAR program in 2015 limit the agency’s ability to report student progress in 2015.

Options for 2015 Index 2

Option 1: Evaluate Index 2 in 2015 based on available student progress measures.

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This option would also include a recommendation to evaluate Index 1 **or** Index 2 targets in order to receive an accountability rating of *Met Standard*. For example, a district or campus that meets the 2015 Index 1 target but does not achieve the Index 2 target would still receive a Met Standard rating. Similarly, a district or campus that meets the 2015 Index 2 target but does not achieve the Index 1 target would still receive a Met Standard rating.

Pro:

- All districts and campuses would continue to be measured on student progress, without any negative impact on the limited number of available progress measures.
- Evaluation of the Index 1 **or** Index 2 target addresses concerns that the 2015 grade 5 and 8 mathematics results are based on a single administration in 2015.

Con:

- The 2016 accountability development process must reconsider whether to require Index 2 for the accountability rating *Met Standard*.

Option 2: Evaluate Index 2 in 2015 based on the progress measures available for the Reading/ELA subject only.

Pro:

- All districts and campuses will have available progress measures in Reading for grades 3 – 8 and high school.
- The focus of the Index 2 evaluation would be reading and English language arts, subjects where the most targeted instruction is needed.

Con:

- Index 2 results, and the accountability rating, would provide a partial view of district and campus efforts toward student progress.

Option 3: Do not evaluate Index 2 in 2015 for elementary and middle schools.

Pro:

- High school campuses and districts will have available progress measures in both Reading and Mathematics or Algebra I and English II STAAR EOCs.

Con:

- The 2015 Index 2 results will not be comparable to the prior year 2014 results for any type of campus.
- Creates inequities for K-12 campuses (481 statewide) who will be evaluated on student progress measures at grades 3 – 8.

Index 3 Closing the Performance Gap. Except for the recommendation described above to exclude the 2015 results of STAAR Accommodated and STAAR Alternate 2, no substantive changes are recommended for consideration for Index 3.

Index 4 Postsecondary Readiness. (Discussed in a separate agenda item)

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Options for Required Improvement (RI) in 2015

Background

The following table provides the statutory citation for required improvement and the legislative interpretation that was provided during the March 2012 meeting of the ATAC and Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) during the 2013 accountability development process.

Statutory Reference TEC §39.053 (e)	Interpretation
<p>TEXAS EDUCATION CODE TITLE 2. PUBLIC EDUCATION SUBTITLE H. PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM ACCOUNTABILITY CHAPTER 39. PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM ACCOUNTABILITY Subchapter C. Accreditation §39.053. Performance Indicators: Student Achievement (e) Performance on the student achievement indicators under Subsections (1) and (2) shall be compared to state standards and required improvement. The state standard shall be established by the commissioner. Required improvement is the progress necessary for the campus or district to meet state standards and, for the student achievement indicator under Subsection (c)(1), for its students to meet each of the performance standards as determined under Section 39.0241.</p>	<p>Authority to set accountability targets is assigned to the commissioner.</p> <p>This subsection references two of the statutory indicators in Subsection (c); however, it does not prohibit the commissioner from setting accountability targets for additional indicators, as required under Subsections (b) and (f).</p> <p>For the dropout rate indicator, required improvement is defined as the progress necessary for the campus or district to meet accountability targets. The 2016 ratings are the first year that two years of longitudinal dropout or graduation rates will be calculated under the same definition (classes of 2014 and 2015) due to changes that were effective in 2010-2011.</p> <p>For the assessment indicator, required improvement must address both the Level II and Level III performance standards on the assessments. A calculation based on either campus improvement or student progress could be used to meet the requirement. If the required improvement calculation is based on campus improvement, it is not necessary to calculate required improvement for student progress.</p>

Since March 2012, required improvement statutory references were expected to be addressed in the third year of the current rating system by a separate required improvement calculation at the index level for campuses and districts that do not meet the accountability target. At that time, it was anticipated that underlying indicators of the performance index framework would be fully implemented by 2015, and, therefore, able to be used for year-to-year comparisons.

However, given the changes in the Texas Assessment Program affecting 2015 accountability, a review of possibilities for meeting the mandate for required improvement is necessary. Due to the new assessments for students with disabilities, the STAAR results that will be evaluated in 2015 cannot be directly compared to the STAAR results evaluated in 2014 for any of the four performance indexes.

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Therefore, it is not possible to use performance gains/losses between the two years in an improvement calculation. Also, depending on the options selected above regarding inclusion/exclusion of the new special education assessments, it may not be necessary to apply a required improvement feature in 2015 if the Met Standard rating can be achieved by meeting either the Index 1 or Index 2 target.

Options for Required Improvement in 2016 and Beyond

If appropriate comparisons can be made between the assessment results evaluated in 2016 and beyond, the following is an overview of potential areas of implementation of required improvement calculations.

Three areas for discussion are: 1) the level of application of the RI calculation, 2) the RI calculation, and 3) the overall application of RI that allows districts and campus to meet accountability standards.

1) Options for the Level of application of Required Improvement

<i>Level Applied</i>	Pro	Con	
<i>Indicator Level</i>		2015 STAAR indicators are not comparable to 2014.	Index 4 includes a maximum of six possible indicators; additional improvement calculation adds to the complexity.
<i>Index Component</i>	For Index 1, 2, and 3, the index consists of only one component; therefore this option applies to Index 4.	2015 STAAR components alone not comparable to 2014.	Additional improvement calculations for each of the four components of Index 4 adds complexity.
<i>Index Level</i>			An improvement calculation is required for each Index which may add complexity.
<i>Index 1</i>	Hold Harmless Option provides comparable data for an RI calculation.		
<i>Index 2</i>	n/a		
<i>Index 3</i>	Comparable 2014 and 2015 Index 3 evaluations include the Advanced Level III performance standard.		
<i>Index 4</i>	Comparable 2014 and 2015 Index 4 evaluations include the Final Level II performance standard.		
<i>Rating</i>	Simple to calculate and easy to explain.		Consideration of a rigorous improvement calculation may be necessary in order to validly determine a district/campus as <i>Met Standard</i> .

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TEA staff recommendation: Apply Required Improvement at the Index Level.

2) Options for the Required Improvement Calculation

Option 1: Require **ten** years to meet the Index goal.

This option is similar to the federal graduation rate Four-Year Graduation Rate Growth Target approved by the U.S. Department of Education and applied to System Safeguard results. The growth target requires a 10 percent decrease in difference between prior year graduation rate and the 90.0 percent graduation rate goal. The calculation is the equivalent of improvement required to reach the graduation goal of 90% in ten years. It is also similar to the former AYP performance safe harbor calculation that required a ten percent decrease in the prior year failures. In that case, the safe harbor calculation was the equivalent of improvement required to reach a standard of 100% in ten years. For example:

<i>Actual Change</i>			<i>Required Improvement</i>
[2016 Index Score] – [2015 Index Score]	≥		$\frac{[\text{Index Target Goal}] - [\text{2015 Index Score}]}{10}$

Pro:

- Allows for a reasonable goal to be set the index target.
- Previously used performance requirement is easily transferable calculation for use with Index scores.
- Calculation may be familiar to district and campus staff.
- Provides sufficient rigor to replace Index target.

Con:

- Requires setting future goals for index targets, e.g., 90 for Index 1.
- Adds complexity to the performance index accountability system.

Option 2: Require **two** years to meet the **current year Index target**.

This option applies a calculation similar to required improvement used in the previous state accountability system in which the campus or district must have shown enough improvement since the previous year to be able to meet the current year performance index target. For example:

<i>Actual Change</i>			<i>Required Improvement</i>
[2016 Index Score] – [2015 Index Score]	≥		$\frac{[\text{2016 Index Target}] - [\text{2015 Index Score}]}{2}$

Pro:

- Previously used performance requirement is easily transferable calculation for use with Index scores.
- Calculation may be familiar to district and campus staff.
- Provides sufficient rigor to replace index target.

Con:

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- Adds complexity to the performance index accountability system.

Option 3: Require **any improvement** from the previous year Index Score.

This option is similar to improvement requirements used for federal accountability graduation rate in previous AYP system. For example:

Actual Change		Required Improvement
[2016 Index Score] – [2015 Index Score]	≥	1 point

Pro:

- Easy to calculate and understand.

Con:

- Adds complexity to the performance index accountability system.
- May not represent sufficient rigor to replace Index target.

3) Options for the Application of Required Improvement (RI) Across Indexes

The application of RI in the performance index framework allows alternatives that were not available under the previous state accountability system. The current system allows for a balance between the rigor of the RI calculation and the application of RI in the performance index. RI calculations that are rigorous may be applied generously to identify districts or campuses as having *Met Standard*. Alternatively, RI calculations that lack rigor may be strictly applied to ensure there is sufficient improvement to meet required index targets in the following years.

Option 1: Allow **any** index that does not meet the Index Target to demonstrate required improvement on that Index alone.

This option applies a calculation similar to the application of RI under the previous state accountability system.

Pro:

- Easy to understand.

Con:

- May not represent sufficient rigor to identify districts or campuses as having *Met Standard*.

Option 2: Require RI for a **proportion of indexes** evaluated in order to *Meet Standard*.

This option requires over 50% of the number of indexes evaluated to meet the RI calculation.

Pro:

- Represents sufficient rigor to identify districts or campuses as having *Met Standard*.

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Con:

- Adds complexity to the performance index accountability system.

Option 3: Allow RI for **Index 1 and Index 3** only or **Index 3 and Index 4** only.

This option allows only certain indexes evaluated to meet the required improvement alternative.

Pro:

- Meets the intent of statute to identify districts or campuses as having *Met Standard*.

Con:

- Does not credit improvements in performance in the other indexes.
- Adds complexity to the performance index accountability system.

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Appendix A: Estimating Index 3 Scores

The Index 3 calculation relies on measures of both satisfactory and advanced level performance. The index score may be view intuitively as the average of two percentages for any specific student group.

Example of Average Rates for Estimating Index 3 Scores

2014 Index 3: Closing Performance Gaps Calculation Report			
Overall Performance STAAR Weighted Performance Rate	Economically Disadvantaged	Total Points	Maximum Points
Reading	78	235	200
Mathematics	82	242	200
Writing	68	208	200
Science	78	236	200
Social Studies	76	233	200
Total		1154	1000
Index 3 Score			38

Index 3 Calculation Report			
	Economically Disadvantaged	Total Points	Maximum Points
% Phase-in Satisfactory and above	69		
% Met Advanced Standard	9		
Reading Weighted Performance Rate	78	235	600
<i>Average of Math Rates = 41</i>			
% Phase-in Satisfactory and above	71		
% Met Advanced Standard	11		
Mathematics Weighted Performance Rate	82	242	600
<i>Average of Writing Rates = 34</i>			
% Phase-in Satisfactory and above	64		
% Met Advanced Standard	4		
Writing Weighted Performance Rate	68	208	600
<i>Average of Science Rates = 39</i>			
% Phase-in Satisfactory and above	71		
% Met Advanced Standard	7		
Science Weighted Performance Rate	78	236	600
<i>Average of Social Studies Rates = 39</i>			
% Phase-in Satisfactory and above	68		
% Met Advanced Standard	8		
Social Studies Weighted Performance Rate	76	233	600

Average of Economically Disadvantaged Reading Performance Rates = 39

The example above illustrates that the average rate of all subject are performance rates is 38.4, derived from the combination of % Phase-in Satisfactory and above averaged with % Met Advanced Standard. A reasonable long-term goal may be considered based on estimating the Index 3 score. For example:

Nearly all economically disadvantaged students meet the satisfactory standard (90%) while at least half of those achieve the advanced performance level (50%).

% Phase-in Satisfactory and above	90%	Average of rates (estimated Index 3 score) = 70
% Met Advanced Standard	50%	

Additional long or short term goals may be derived from this concept.

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Appendix B: 2014 and 2013 Accountability Targets

2014 Accountability Performance Index Targets – Non-AEA Districts and Campuses

	Index 1	Index 2	Index 3	Index 4	
				All Components	STAAR Component Only
District Targets	55	16	28	57	13
Campus Targets					
Elementary	55	33	28	n/a	12
Middle		28	27	n/a	13
High School/K-12		n/a	31	57	21

2014 Accountability Performance Index Targets – AEA Charter Districts and Campuses

	Index 1	Index 2	Index 3	Index 4	
				Both Components	Graduation/ Dropout Rate Component Only
AEA Campus and Charter District Targets	30	n/a	11	33	45

2013 Accountability Performance Index Targets – Non-AEA Districts and Campuses

	Index 1	Index 2	Index 3	Index 4
District Targets	50	21	55	75
Campus Targets				
Elementary	50	30	55	n/a
Middle		29		n/a
High School/K-12		17		75

2013 Accountability Performance Index Targets – AEA Charter Districts and Campuses

	Index 1	Index 2	Index 3	Index 4
AEA Campus and Charter District Targets	25	9	30	45