

2015 Accountability Policy Advisory Committee

Summary of meeting on January 21, 2015

Meeting Objective

The purpose of the initial meeting of the 2015 Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) was for Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff to provide an orientation to committee members. The orientation included an overview of the 2014 state assessment and accountability systems and results, an outline of the 2015 accountability topics, and a preview of future accountability topics. Several Accountability Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC) members attended to help familiarize APAC members with the accountability system.

Charge and Scope of Work of Committee

TEA staff explained the history of the APAC, briefly touched on the goals of the committee, and led members through the accountability system's guiding principles. TEA staff also reviewed the 2015 accountability calendar.

Overview of 2014 State Assessment and Accountability Systems

TEA staff discussed highlights of the 2015 assessment program that included the SSI requirements for grades 5 and 8 and the timeline for setting the passing standards for grades 3–8 mathematics. The assessment discussion was followed by an overview of the accountability system, during which ATAC members—each working with a small group of APAC members—provided more detail to the APAC members regarding the accountability system's construction and how the indexes are calculated. Staff then provided an overview of the accountability intervention system. This part of the meeting ended with a review of the 2014 accountability ratings and ATAC members explaining the details of the ratings and distinction designations to APAC members.

Overview of 2015 Accountability Topics

TEA staff began this part of the meeting by presenting a chart that shows which assessment's results were used to determine the ratings for each of the four accountability indexes in 2013 and in 2014 and which assessment's results might be used to determine the ratings for each of the four accountability indexes in 2015. The presentation continued with a review of the written summary of the December 2014 ATAC meeting. Following the staff presentation, ATAC members again worked with small groups of APAC members to further explain the chart and summary.

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Preview of Future Accountability Topics: Options for A–F Ratings

TEA staff explained the statutory requirement for assigning each district a grade of A, B, C, D, or F beginning with the accountability ratings for the 2016–2017 school year. APAC members were also provided three preliminary options for this rating system that were discussed at the December 2014 ATAC meeting. APAC members discussed these options with ATAC members, and expressed their thoughts about the options as follows:

- APAC table one suggested assigning each district a grade for each of the four indexes in addition to an overall grade.
- APAC table two also suggested assigning a grade for each of the four indexes but added that using distinction designations to determine grades might disadvantage smaller or less affluent districts.
- APAC table three suggested helping districts acclimate to the new rating system by starting with option 1 before phasing-in option 2 in a subsequent year.
- APAC table four suggested using option 2 without requiring districts to meet all four indexes.

Summary and Next Steps

The next APAC meeting was set for Monday, February 23. At this meeting, the APAC will review the final ATAC proposal for 2015 accountability and identify its recommendations for the commissioner of education.