Chapter 2 – Ratings Criteria and Index Targets

The *2015 Accountability Manual* describes the 2015 accountability system and explains how information from different sources is used to calculate and assign accountability ratings and award distinction designations. The manual attempts to address all possible scenarios; however, because of the number and diversity of districts and campuses in Texas, there could be some unforeseen circumstances that are not anticipated in the manual. Should such circumstances arise, the commissioner of education will interpret the manual as needed to assign the appropriate ratings and/or award distinction designations that preserve both the intent and the integrity of the accountability system.

2015 Ratings

To meet state statutory requirements, the accountability system must assign ratings that designate acceptable and unacceptable performance for districts and campuses. In 2015, one of the following ratings is assigned to each district and campus based on its performance on the required indexes. Unless otherwise noted, the term districts includes open-enrollment charters.

Met Standard indicates acceptable performance and is assigned to districts and campuses that meet the targets on all required indexes for which they have performance data.

Met Alternative Standard indicates acceptable performance and is assigned to eligible CHARTER DISTRICTS AND ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION CAMPUSES (AECs) that are evaluated by ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY (AEA) provisions. To receive this rating, eligible charter districts and AECs must meet modified targets on all required indexes for which they have performance data.

Improvement Required indicates unacceptable performance and is assigned to districts and campuses, including charter districts and AECs evaluated under AEA provisions, that do not meet the targets on all required indexes for which they have performance data.

In a few specific circumstances, a district or campus does not receive a rating. When this occurs, a district or campus is given one of the following two labels.

Not Rated indicates that a district or campus did not receive a rating for one or more of the following reasons:
- The district or campus serves only students enrolled in early education (EE).
- The district or campus has no data in the ACCOUNTABILITY SUBSET.
- The district or campus has insufficient data to assign a rating after SMALL NUMBERS ANALYSIS has been conducted.
- The district operates only residential facilities.
- The campus is a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP).
- The campus is a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP).
- The campus is a residential facility.
- The test documents for either the district or campus were lost in transit between the district and the test contractor.

Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues indicates that data accuracy and/or integrity have compromised performance results, making it impossible to assign a rating. The assignment of a *Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues* label may be permanent or temporary pending further investigation.

2015 Index Targets

For each index, a specific target is determined, and districts and campuses must meet an index's target in order to demonstrate acceptable performance for that index. Districts and non-AEA campuses (campuses not evaluated under alternative education accountability provisions) have separate targets from charter districts and AECs evaluated under alternative education accountability provisions. In addition, for non-AEA campuses only, separate targets are identified for each SCHOOL TYPE for Index 2, Index 3, and Index 4. (Please see the explanation of school type later in this chapter).

The 2015 targets for Index 1, Index 3, and Index 4 are provided in the table below. The 2015 Index 2 targets for campuses are set at about the fifth percentile of 2015 campus performance by campus type and will be identified prior to the release of the 2015 accountability ratings. The 2015 Index 2 target for non-AEA districts is set at about the fifth percentile of 2015 campus performance across all non-AEA campuses and will be identified prior to the release of the 2015 accountability ratings.

For non-AEA districts and campuses, Index 4 is comprised of four components: STAAR results, graduation rate, graduation diploma plan rate, and postsecondary indicator. Because not all districts and campuses have data for each of these components, Index 4 has two separate and distinct targets: one based on the four components and one based on STAAR results only. The target that a district, campus, or charter is required to meet is determined by whether it has data for each of the four components. For a district, high school campus, or campus serving grades K–12, the target for Index 4 is based on all four components. For elementary campuses, middle school campuses, and any other district or campus that does not have data for each of the four components of Index 4, the target is based on the STAAR component only.

For AEA charter districts and campuses, Index 4 evaluates two components *or* the graduation rate/annual dropout rate component only. For AEA charters and campuses, the components of Index 4 are 1) STAAR results and 2) graduation rate/annual dropout rate. If both components are available, then Index 4 evaluates both components with a target of **33**. Otherwise, the Index 4 evaluation is based only on the graduation rate/annual dropout rate with a target of **45**. In either case, bonus points are added as described in *Chapter 4 – Performance Index Indicators*.

2015 Accountability Performance Index Targets for Non-AEA Districts and Campuses

Target	Index 1	Index 2	Index 3	Index 4	
				All Components	STAAR Component Only
Districts	60	5th Percentile*	28	57	13
Campuses					
Elementary		5th Percentile*	28	n/a	12
Middle	60	5th Percentile*	27	n/a	13
High School/K-12		5th Percentile*	31	57	21

* Targets for non-AEA campuses are set at about the fifth percentile of non-AEA 2015 campus performance by campus type. Targets for non-AEA districts correspond to about the fifth percentile of non-AEA 2015 campus performance across all campus types.

2015 Accountability Performance Index Targets – AEA Charter Districts and Campuses

Target	Index 1	Index 2	Index 3	Index 4	
				Both Components	Graduation/ Dropout Rate Component Only
AEA Charter Districts and Campuses	35	5th Percentile*	11	33	45

* Targets for both AEA charter districts and campuses are set at about the fifth percentile of AEA 2015 campus performance.

Index Targets for Certain Districts or Charters

A district or charter comprised of only one campus that shares the same 2015 performance data with that campus must meet the index target required for the campus in order to demonstrate acceptable performance. For these single-campus districts and charters, the 2015 index targets applied to the campus will also be applied to the district, ensuring that both the district and campus receive identical ratings. Certain districts or charters that meet the definition above are considered single-campus districts or charters in any criteria outlined in this manual.

2015 Ratings Criteria

Unlike in previous years, districts and campuses will not be required to meet the target on all four indexes for 2015 accountability. To receive a *Met Standard* or *Met Alternative Standard* rating, districts and campuses must meet the performance index target on the following indexes if they have performance data for evaluation:

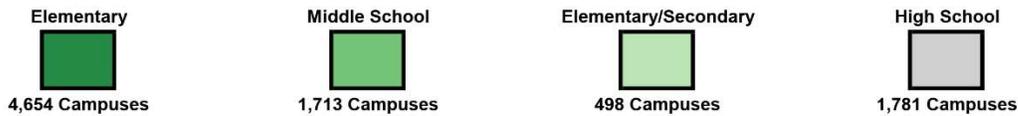Index 1 **OR** Index 2   **AND**   Index 3   **AND**   Index 4

For example, a campus with performance data for all four indexes must meet the target on either Index 1 or Index 2 and the targets on Index 3 and Index 4. A campus with performance data for Index 1, Index 3, and Index 4 must meet the target on all three of those. A campus with performance data for only Index 1 and Index 3 must meet the target on both indexes. A campus with performance data for only Index 1 and Index 2 needs only to meet the target on either of those indexes.

2015 Accountability System School Types

Every campus is labeled as one of four school types according to its grade span based on 2014–15 fall enrollment data. The four types—elementary, middle school, elementary/secondary, and high school—are illustrated by the table on the following page. The table shows every combination of grade levels served by campuses in Texas and the number of campuses that serve each of those combinations. The shading indicates the school type to which each grade span corresponds.

To find out how a campus that serves a certain grade span is labeled, find the lowest grade level served by that campus along the left column and the highest grade level along the top row. The shading of the cell where the two grade levels intersect indicates which of the four school types that campus is considered. The number inside the cell indicates how many campuses in Texas serve that grade span. For example, a campus that serves early elementary (EE) through fourth grade only is labeled elementary; there are 171 campuses that serve only that grade span. A campus that serves grades five and six only is labeled middle school, and there are a 145 such campuses statewide.

2015 Accountability System School Types
(8,646 Total Campuses)

Elementary	Middle School	Elementary/Secondary	High School
4,654 Campuses	1,713 Campuses	498 Campuses	1,781 Campuses

Highest Grade Level Served →

Lowest Grade Level Served ↓

	EE	PK	KG	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
EE	7	71	52	48	66	53	171	1005	123	0	8	1	1	0	35
PK		29	15	7	27	27	176	1128	187	7	68	5	2	1	135
KG			1	4	18	18	135	624	127	8	55	5	6	5	64
1				3	15	22	6	36	18	0	1	1	2	2	6
2					1	21	12	20	6	0	0	0	1	3	13
3						0	15	90	8	0	7	3	0	0	6
4							2	57	38	0	8	1	0	3	9
5								11	145	2	82	4	3	6	9
6									36	9	1097	16	7	23	140
7										5	261	19	16	25	130
8											14	15	11	16	39
9												60	33	22	1306
10													14	6	38
11														20	26
12															19

Who is Rated?

Districts and campuses that have students enrolled in the fall of the 2014–15 school year are assigned a state accountability rating.

Districts

Beginning the first year they report fall enrollment, districts and charter operators are rated based on the aggregate results of their campuses. Districts without any students enrolled in the grades for which STAAR assessments are administered (3–12) are assigned the rating label of *Not Rated.*

State-administered school districts, including Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Texas School for the Deaf, Texas Juvenile Justice Department, and Windham School District are not assigned a state accountability rating.

Campuses

Beginning the first year they report fall enrollment, campuses, including AECs and open-enrollment charter schools, are rated based on the performance of their students. For the purposes of assigning accountability ratings, campuses that do not serve any of the grade levels for which the STAAR assessments are given are PAIRED with campuses in their district that serve students who take STAAR. (Please See *Chapter 6 – Other Accountability System Processes* for information on pairing.)

The following campuses are assigned the rating label of *Not Rated* in 2015:

- **Residential facilities:** For AECs identified as residential facilities, and AEA charter districts that operate only residential facilities, performance index results are reported, but a rating label is not assigned. Students enrolled in AECs and charter districts operating as residential facilities are excluded from accountability only if the student attribution codes are entered and submitted accurately during the fall 2014 Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) submission. (Please see *Appendix G – Inclusion or Exclusion of Performance Data.*)
- **Campuses that close mid-year:** If data for an accountability index exists for a campus that closes mid-year, the data are included in the district's accountability rating. A campus that closes after the end of the school year is assigned a rating for that school year.
- **JJAEPs and DAEPs:** Attendance and performance data for students served in JJAEPs and DAEPs are reported to the students' home campuses, and the HOME CAMPUS is evaluated based on the results.
- **Campuses that have no students in the accountability subset:** Campuses that serve students in grades 3–12, but have no test results due to the accountability subset are not rated. This includes AECs with short-term student placements.
- **Charter campuses with no students in grades tested:** Open-enrollment charter schools without any students enrolled in the grades for which STAAR assessments are administered (3–12) are not rated.

Timeline for Ratings Release

Thursday, July 30, 2015: Data used to calculate the 2015 accountability ratings are released to districts and campuses through the TEA Secure Environment (TEASE) website. (Please see *Appendix E – TEASE Accountability*.)

Thursday, August 6, 2015: Accountability ratings are released to districts and campuses through the TEASE website.

Friday, August 7, 2015: Accountability ratings and distinction designations are released to the public on the TEA website.

Early November 2015: Final accountability ratings that reflect the outcome of any ratings appeals are released to the public on the TEA website.

TEA Data Integrity Activities

Accurate data is fundamental to accountability ratings. The system depends on the responsible collection and submission of assessment and PEIMS information by school districts and charter operators. Responsibility for the accuracy and quality of data used to determine campus and district ratings, therefore, rests with local authorities. Any appeal of an *Improvement Required* rating that are based on a district's submission of inaccurate data will be denied.

Because accurate and reliable data are the foundation of the accountability system, TEA has established several steps to protect the quality and integrity of the data and the accountability ratings that are based on that data.

- **Campus Number Tracking** Requests for campus number changes are approved in light of prior state accountability ratings. An *Improvement Required* rating for the same campus assigned two different campus numbers may be considered to be consecutive years of low ratings for accountability interventions and sanctions.

- **Data Validation Monitoring** The Performance-Based Monitoring (PBM) system is a comprehensive system designed to improve student performance and program effectiveness. The PBM system, like the state accountability system, is a data-driven system based on data submitted by districts; therefore, the integrity of districts' data is critical. The PBM system includes annual data validation analyses that examine districts' leaver and dropout data, student assessment data, and discipline data. Districts identified with potential data integrity concerns engage in a process to either validate the accuracy of its data or determine that erroneous data were submitted. This process is fundamental to the integrity of all the agency's evaluation systems. For more information, see the Data Validation Manuals on the PBM website at http://tea.texas.gov/pbm/DVManuals.aspx.

- **Test Security** As part of ongoing efforts to improve security measures surrounding the assessment program, TEA uses a comprehensive set of test security procedures designed to assure parents, students, and the public that test results are meaningful and valid. Among other measures, districts are required to implement seating charts during all administrations, conduct annual training for all testing personnel, and maintain test security materials for five years. Detailed information about test security policies for the state assessment program is available online at http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/security/.

- *Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues* This rating is used when the accuracy and/or integrity of performance results have been compromised, preventing the assignment of a rating. This label may be assigned temporarily pending an on-site investigation or may be the final rating for the year. It is not equivalent to an *Improvement Required* rating, though the commissioner of education has the authority to lower a rating, assign an *Improvement*

Required rating due to data quality issues, or consider the rating of *Improvement Required* for purposes of determining consecutive years of low ratings for accountability interventions and sanctions. All districts and campuses with a final rating label of *Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues* are automatically subject to desk audits the following year.

These steps can occur either before or after the ratings release, and sanctions can be imposed at any time. To the extent possible, ratings for the year are finalized when updated ratings are released following the resolution of appeals. A rating change resulting from an imposed sanction will stand as the final rating for the year.

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