

Chapter 11

Options and Issues for Future Accountability System Design

The intent of the upcoming accountability development process is to design a new accountability system rather than to modify the current system to align with the new provisions of House Bill (HB) 3 (81st Texas Legislature, Regular Session). Every aspect of the accountability system will be reevaluated. The resulting accountability system may look very different from the current state accountability system. The defining characteristic of the new accountability system will be the emphasis on college- and career-ready performance on the new State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR).

There are three overarching policy areas that will be addressed in developing the new state accountability system for 2013 and beyond. First is overall design of the state accountability system to address new state goals that expand the scope of the system. Second is defining school district and campus performance in relation to percent of students performing at the satisfactory and college-ready levels, required improvement, and student growth. Third is alignment of state and federal accountability requirements that districts and campuses must meet.

Accountability System Overall Design

The overall design of the accountability system is determined by the way performance indicators are defined and how performance on those indicators is evaluated for ratings. An “all or nothing” design requires districts and campuses to meet accountability standards on each performance measure. Failure to meet one standard results in a lower rating, targeting the lowest-performing subject, student group, or other indicator. A performance index combines performance across measures in such a way that performance on all measures is included but stronger performance in some areas compensates to some extent for weaker performance in other areas. Contribution of measures in the index can be weighted to reflect state goals. The resulting rating reflects overall performance.

Assessment Performance Indicators

The assessment indicators for the new state accountability system will be based on performance on the STAAR, including grade 3–8 tests in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies and high school end-of-course (EOC) tests in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies. Indicators must include the percentage of students meeting either the satisfactory performance standard or the student progress standard and the percentage of students meeting either the college-ready performance standard or college-ready student progress standard. Both current year performance and average performance over three years must be calculated. Districts and campuses must meet either an absolute standard or required improvement on all of the measures on which they meet minimum size criteria. An 85 percent provision ensures that districts and campuses meet the accountability standards on at least 85 percent of the measures on which they are evaluated.

Combining Performance Results. One question in developing indicators is how best to combine test results for different grades, languages, tests, performance levels, and subjects, along with completion and dropout rates and other measures. Table 11-1 shows some of the approaches to combining performance results that will be explored in developing indicators for the new state accountability system.

- **Separate Indicators – All or Nothing.** The current state and federal accountability systems are considered to have “separate indicators” because performance is evaluated separately for each subject and student group. These indicators combine results across grades (now required by statute), languages (English and Spanish), and tests (regular and alternate assessments), and incorporate absolute performance and growth. Under the state accountability system in 2011, there are 25 separate assessment indicators (five subjects times five student groups). One option for the new state accountability system is to preserve this model.
- **Performance Levels Combined.** One of the defining characteristics of the new accountability system will be evaluation of college-ready performance as well as satisfactory performance. One option is to combine satisfactory and college-ready performance for ELA and mathematics, the two subjects for which there will be college-ready performance standards initially, rather than create separate college-ready indicators. For example, a campus or district could receive credit for a student who meets the satisfactory performance standard, a little less credit for a student who does not meet the satisfactory performance standard but meets the growth standard, and a little more credit for a student who meets the college-ready standard or the college-ready growth standard. This would be a way to incorporate college-ready performance into the accountability system without increasing the number of indicators.
- **Subjects Combined.** Combining performance across subjects in a performance index would be a new model for Texas. Stronger performance in some subjects would compensate to some extent for weaker performance in other subjects. Safeguards could ensure a minimal performance level in each subject, however, and fulfill the statutory requirement that the assessment indicators be aggregated by subject. A performance index would focus attention on the state goal of reducing performance gaps among student groups.
- **Performance Index.** The concept of a performance index can be taken further to include performance on other indicators besides assessment results. The state accountability system must include dropout and completion indicators. In addition, in adopting performance indicators for the accountability system, the commissioner is not limited to the indicators defined in statute. Other types of indicators the commissioner might consider are participation rates and progress of English language learners (ELL). All indexes are compensatory in that high performance in one area can to some extent compensate for low performance in another area. Assigning appropriate weights to each component of the index ensures that the index is aligned to state goals. An example of a performance index is shown in Table 11-7 found at the end of this chapter.

Table 11-1: Combining Performance Results

Accountability Indicators (5 student groups evaluated)	Number of Indicators	Characteristics of Accountability System
<p>Separate Indicators – All or Nothing Combine assessment results across grades, languages, tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reading/ELA satisfactory (5) ○ Reading/ELA college-ready (5) ○ Writing satisfactory (5) ○ Mathematics satisfactory (5) ○ Mathematics college-ready (5) ○ Science satisfactory (5) ○ Social Studies satisfactory (5) ○ Completion Rates (5) ○ Dropout Rates (5) ○ English Language Progress (1) 	46	Focuses attention on problem areas and does not allow stronger performance in one area to compensate for weaker performance in another area. Assigns overall rating based on the lowest performing area regardless of how well the district or campus performs in other areas.
<p>Performance Levels Combined Combine satisfactory and college-ready performance in a weighted index for reading/ELA and mathematics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reading/ELA satisfactory/college-ready (5) ○ Writing satisfactory (5) ○ Mathematics satisfactory/college ready (5) ○ Science satisfactory (5) ○ Social Studies satisfactory (5) ○ Completion Rates (5) ○ Dropout Rates (5) ○ English Language Progress (1) 	36	Continues to focus attention on problem areas but incorporates new college-ready performance requirement without increasing the number of separate hurdles large, diverse districts and campuses must meet.
<p>Subjects Combined Combine reading/ELA, mathematics, writing, science, and social studies in a weighted index evaluated for each student group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reading/ELA, Mathematics, Writing, Science, Social Studies satisfactory/college-ready (5) ○ Completion Rates (5) ○ Dropout Rates (5) ○ English Language Progress(1) 	16	Focuses attention on performance gaps between student groups but stronger performance in some subjects compensates to some extent for weaker performance in other subjects.
<p>Performance Index Combine performance on all indicators in a weighted index evaluated for each student group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reading/ELA, Mathematics, Writing, Science, Social Studies satisfactory/college-ready; Completion Rates; Dropout Rates; English Language Progress (5) 	5	Continues to focus attention on performance gaps between student groups and produces an overall measure of campus or district performance.

Longitudinal Assessment Measures. Replacing comprehensive grade level assessments with EOC assessments presents both challenges and opportunities for measuring performance of high schools. The most advanced students will begin taking EOC tests in middle school, which could complicate high school performance measures. However, the EOC graduation requirement, which requires students to meet a minimum performance level on up to twelve EOC tests, also presents new options for high school accountability. A longitudinal measure could track the progress of cohorts of high school students toward meeting the graduation requirement. Cohorts of students are already identified for purposes of calculating

longitudinal completion rates. One accountability decision would be whether to include in the high school measure results for EOC tests students took in middle school. Use of longitudinal accountability indicators, and using different accountability indicators for high schools than those used for elementary and middle schools, represent a potential new direction for Texas. Following are examples of two approaches to calculating a longitudinal EOC indicator.

- **Cumulative Performance.** One approach to developing a longitudinal EOC indicator would be modeled after the requirement that students achieve a minimum cumulative score on EOC assessments in each subject.
- **EOC Progress.** Another approach to developing a longitudinal indicator of progress of high school students toward meeting the new EOC graduation requirements would be to create an indicator that includes only the best EOC record for each student in a high school cohort, weighted to give more credit for higher level tests. Passing Algebra II, for example, would count more in the mathematics indicator than passing Geometry or Algebra I.

Dropout, Graduation, and Completion Performance Indicators

Statute requires that dropout rates, completion rates, and graduation rates be used as indicators in the new accountability system. A summary of the use of indicators in the current system and options and considerations for the new system follows. A comparison of annual dropout rates and longitudinal graduation, completion, and dropout rates, including advantages and disadvantages, is provided in Table 11-2. Because there is some flexibility in the definition and use of those rates, decisions, and options for those decisions, follow.

Dropout Definition. TEA is required to use the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) dropout definition for both state and federal accountability. Thus, under the current system, the dropout definition is the same across all measures. However, beginning with the annual dropout rate for 2010–2011, and completion rates for the Class of 2011 (with the change fully phased in for the Class of 2014), state statute requires that six groups of students be removed from the dropout definition used for state accountability: a) previous dropouts; b) students who are not in membership for purposes of average daily attendance; c) students who have been ordered by courts to attend GED programs but have not earned GED certificates; d) students who are incarcerated in state jails and federal penitentiaries as adults and as persons certified to stand trial as adults; e) students whose initial enrollment in a school in the United States in grades 7–12 was as unschooled refugees or asylees; and f) students detained in county detention facilities that are located outside the students' home districts. Consideration will need to be given to the fact that, in the new system, dropout, completion, and graduation rates calculated for state accountability will no longer align with those calculated for federal accountability.

Dropout Rates. Because the NCES dropout definition is required by statute, with the exclusions mentioned above, the main consideration is not how to define a dropout, but how to measure dropout rates. Either a longitudinal measure, an annual measure, or both could be used. A longitudinal dropout rate measures how many students drop out before graduating and an annual rate measures how many

students drop out in one school year. Currently, an annual dropout rate is used, because a longitudinal rate is inherently part of completion and graduation rates.

Option 1: Use a longitudinal dropout rate for first-time ninth graders. If chosen, alone or in combination with an annual rate, consideration will need to be given as to whether the measure differs from a longitudinal completion or graduation measure for the same cohort.

Option 2: Use an annual dropout rate. Currently, the grade 7–8 annual dropout rate allows the monitoring of students who drop out before they can be included in a longitudinal high school cohort. If chosen, consideration will need to be given to what grades or grade spans to include in an annual rate:

Option 2a: Use selected grades, i.e., grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and/or 12.

Option 2b: Use selected grade spans, i.e., grades 7–8, grades 9–12, and/or grades 7–12.

Table 11-2: Description of Annual Dropout Rates and Longitudinal Rates

	Annual dropout rate	Longitudinal rates: graduation, completion, and dropout
Description	The percentage of students who drop out of school during one school year.	The percentage of students from a class of beginning seventh or ninth graders who graduate (graduation rate); graduate, receive General Educational Development (GED) certificates, or are still enrolled in the fall after the class graduates (completion rates); and the percentage of students from a class of beginning seventh or ninth graders who drop out before completing high school (dropout rate).
Calculation	Divide the number of students who drop out during a school year by the total number of students enrolled that year.	Divide the number of students who graduate, complete, or drop out by the end of grade 12 by the total number of students in the original seventh- or ninth-grade class. Students who enter the Texas public school system over the years are added to the class; students who leave the system are subtracted. For example, the graduation rate is calculated as follows: $\frac{\text{graduates}}{\text{graduates} + \text{continuers} + \text{GED recipients} + \text{dropouts}}$
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure of annual performance. • Requires only one year of data. • Can be calculated for any school or district with students in any of the grades covered. • Can be disaggregated by grade level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduation and completion rates are more positive indicators than the dropout rate, measuring school success rather than failure. • More stable measures over time. • More consistent with the public's understanding of a dropout rate. • Districts have more time to encourage dropouts to return to school before being held accountable.
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produces the lowest rate of any method. • May not correspond to the public's understanding of a dropout rate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires multiple years of data; one year of inaccurate student identification data can remove a student from the measure. • Can only be calculated for schools that have all the grades in the calculation and that have had all those grades for the number of years necessary to calculate the rate. Since few high schools have grades 7 and 8, graduation, completion, and dropout rates are often calculated for grades 9–12. • Program improvements may not be reflected for several years, and districts are not held accountable for some dropouts until years after they drop out. • Does not produce a dropout rate by grade.
Remarks	A grade 7–12 annual dropout rate has been calculated by the TEA since 1987–1988. In 2003, the Texas Legislature required districts and TEA to adopt the national dropout definition beginning with students who left Texas public school in 2005–2006. With the state-mandated exclusions effective in 2010–2011, the annual dropout rates for 2010–2011 and beyond will not be in alignment with the requirements of the national dropout definition.	The completion rate is calculated such that the dropout rate and completion rate add to 100 percent. Dropouts are counted according to the dropout definition in place the year they drop out. The national dropout definition, which was adopted in 2005–2006, has been fully incorporated in the graduation, completion, and dropout rates for the class of 2009. With the state-mandated exclusions effective in 2010–2011, the longitudinal rates for classes of 2011 and beyond will not be in alignment with the requirements of the national dropout definition.

Graduation Rates. Currently, the graduation rate follows a cohort of first-time ninth-graders through their expected graduation three years later. Some states consider GED recipients to be graduates, but in Texas, only students who receive a regular high school diploma from a Texas public school count as graduates. Students, including those served in special education, are awarded diplomas following satisfactory completion of all curriculum, credit, and assessment requirements. The current graduation calculation is below, with decisions, and options for those decisions, following.

$$\frac{\text{graduates}}{\text{graduates} + \text{continuers} + \text{GED recipients} + \text{dropouts}}$$

Who should be evaluated in the graduation rate? Currently, students who graduate, continue in high school, receive GED certificates, or drop out are included in the denominator of the graduation rate. Two groups of students are removed: (1) students who left the Texas public school system for non-dropout reasons (other leavers) and (2) students who cannot be tracked (data errors). Including more students in the cohort allows districts to focus on improving rates by graduating more students rather than by excluding students from the denominator. Although the graduation rates for state and federal accountability can be more closely aligned, complete alignment is not possible so long as six groups of students are statutorily excluded from the state graduation rate.

Option 1: Graduates + continuers + GED recipients + dropouts (current denominator)

Option 2: Graduates + continuers + GED recipients + dropouts + data errors

Option 3: Graduates + continuers + GED recipients + dropouts + other leavers

Option 4: Graduates + continuers + GED recipients + dropouts + other leavers + data errors

How long should students be tracked? TEA currently uses a four-year graduation rate that measures early or on-time graduation. However, some students take longer than four years to graduate. Those in special education, those with limited English proficiency, and those who have left school and returned are among those who will be counted as graduates in a rate that follows students for a longer period of time. In addition, tracking students for more than four years allows for evaluation of whether students who continue in school past their expected graduation go on to graduate. Because the graduation rate is a prior year measure, consideration will need to be given to the fact that using an extended five-, six-, or seven-year rate expands the time between serving students and being held accountable for them.

Option 1: Four-year rate (current method)

Option 2: Five-year rate

Option 3: Six-year rate

Option 4: Seven-year rate

Completion rates. The agency currently tracks students for the same length of time in completion as in graduation (four years) and uses the same denominator, with the numerator consisting of graduates and continuers (Completion I rate, standard accountability), or graduates, continuers, and GED recipients (Completion II rate, alternative accountability). The Completion I rate calculation is below, with decisions and options for those decisions following.

$$\frac{\text{graduates} + \text{continuers}}{\text{graduates} + \text{continuers} + \text{GED recipients} + \text{dropouts}}$$

Who is a completer? The current accountability system counts the following combinations of students as completers: graduates and continuing students; and graduates, continuing students, and GED recipients. Some advocate counting GED recipients as completers because a GED can be used for entrance into college and to obtain employment.

Option 1: Graduates

Option 2: Graduates + continuing students

Option 3: Graduates + continuing students + GED recipients

Option 4: Graduates + GED recipients

To address the concern that completion rates could be inflated by large portions of students continuing in high school or receiving GED certificates, a system control could be used that requires graduates to comprise a certain portion of the rate. For example, if option 4 is chosen and an acceptable completion rate is 80 percent, graduates must comprise at least 75 percent of the rate.

Who should be evaluated? Currently, the denominator of the completion rate is the same as the denominator of the graduation rate and consists of students who graduate, continue in high school, receive GED certificates, or drop out. Students who left the Texas public school system for non-dropout, non-graduate reasons (other leavers) or who cannot be tracked (data errors) are removed. Including more students in the cohort allows districts to focus on improving rates by graduating more students rather than by excluding students from the denominator.

Option 1: Graduates + continuers + GED recipients + dropouts (current denominator)

Option 2: Graduates + continuers + GED recipients + dropouts + data errors

Option 3: Graduates + continuers + GED recipients + dropouts + other leavers

Option 4: Graduates + continuers + GED recipients + dropouts + other leavers + data errors

How long should students be tracked? TEA currently uses a four-year completion rate. However, some students take longer than four years to graduate. Those in special education, those with limited English proficiency, and those who have left school and returned are among those who will be counted as graduates in a rate that follows students for a longer period of time. In addition, tracking students for more than four years allows for evaluation of whether students who continue in school past their expected graduation go on to graduate. Because the graduation rate is a prior year measure, consideration will need to be given to the fact that using an extended five-, six-, or seven-year rate expands the time between serving students and being held accountable for them.

Option 1: Four-year rate (current method)

Option 2: Five-year rate

Option 3: Six-year rate

Option 4: Seven-year rate

Student Groups

Evaluation of student group performance has been a constant in the Texas accountability system since its inception and is credited with high performance of Texas minority and economically disadvantaged

students on national assessments. Under the current accountability system performance is evaluated for All Students and the following student groups: African American, Hispanic, White, and Economically Disadvantaged. The AYP system also includes evaluation of Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Special Education student group performance. Beginning in 2010, race and ethnicity information used for accountability are collected under new federal standards. Evaluation of performance for student groups based on race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status is required for the new state accountability system. The following considerations regarding student groups will be addressed during the accountability development process.

- **Race/Ethnicity and Socioeconomic Status.** Additional race/ethnicity student groups, such as Asian and Multiracial, will be considered. Adding a Not Economically Disadvantaged student group would bring more attention to the performance gap with Economically Disadvantaged students.
- **Characteristics Used for Grouping.** In addition to race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status, other student characteristics or special program participation could also be used for grouping, such as LEP, at risk, or special education.
- **Minimum Size Criteria.** Decisions about minimum size criteria for evaluation of student group performance will need to address issues of student confidentiality, face validity, test reliability, statistical reliability, effect on standards for small school districts and campuses, and representation for large school districts and campuses.
- **Longitudinal Student Group Definitions.** Defining student group membership longitudinally is a consideration for some groups. Economically Disadvantaged status is based on participation of the student in the National School Lunch Program, which declines as students get older. Limited English proficient status is removed once a student becomes proficient in English, thereby removing successful students from the group. A longitudinal definition could assign a student to a group if the student was ever a member of that group since entering the Texas public school system.
- **Membership in Multiple Groups and Substantially Similar Groups.** The more characteristics that are used for grouping, the greater the overlap in membership of student groups. There is a new provision in statute that allows the commissioner to consider alternate performance criteria for student groups that are substantially similar to All Students. The provision does not address student groups that are substantially similar to other student groups. Other approaches to addressing the overlap in student group membership include removing student groups with substantially similar membership to other student groups, combining groups with overlapping membership, and limiting the number of groups to which a student is assigned.
- **Number of Groups Evaluated.** Expanding the student groups evaluated is one way to acknowledge the diversity of Texas school districts and campuses and better align the state accountability system with AYP. At the same time, additional student groups would disproportionately affect large, diverse school districts and campuses. Proposals to address this inequity could include limiting the number of student groups evaluated for any indicator, limiting the indicators for which student group performance is evaluated, phasing in evaluation of student group performance, and decreasing the percentage of indicators on which districts and campuses must meet accountability standards from the

current 85 percent or increasing the flexibility of this provision. There are two statutory limitations to student group options that can be considered.

- 1) Race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status. There is considerable overlap between the African American and Hispanic race/ethnicity student groups and the Economically Disadvantaged student group. Among grade 3 students in the 2009–2010 school year for example, 82 percent of Hispanic students and 76 percent of African American students were economically disadvantaged. Under current statute both must be evaluated.
- 2) 85 percent provision. The language requiring districts and campuses to meet accountability standards on 85 percent of performance measures is specific and includes provisions designed to limit its use.

Together the decisions about combining performance results, evaluating student groups, and alignment with AYP will determine the number of measures on which districts and campuses must meet accountability standards. There is almost no limit to the number of combinations possible. Tables 11-3A-D illustrate four examples based on the student groups in the current state accountability system and AYP. In the combinations illustrated, student progress is incorporated into the assessment performance measures rather than evaluated separately.

11-3A: Current State Accountability Model
46 separate measures

Indicators	Student Groups						
	All	AA	H	W	ED	SE	LEP
Mathematics Satisfactory with growth	X	X	X	X	X		
Mathematics College-Ready	X	X	X	X	X		
Reading/ELA Satisfactory with growth	X	X	X	X	X		
Reading/ELA College-Ready	X	X	X	X	X		
Writing with growth	X	X	X	X	X		
Science with growth	X	X	X	X	X		
Social Studies w/ growth	X	X	X	X	X		
Compl./Grad. Rates	X	X	X	X	X		
Dropout Rates	X	X	X	X	X		
English Language Progress							X
Mathematics Participation							
Reading/ELA Participation							

11-3B: Combine Performance Levels and ELA
31 separate measures

Student Groups						
All	AA	H	W	ED	SE	LEP
X	X	X	X	X		
X	X	X	X	X		
X	X	X	X	X		
X	X	X	X	X		
X	X	X	X	X		
X	X	X	X	X		
X	X	X	X	X		
						X

Example 11-3A follows the current state accountability model. Grade levels, tests, and performance and growth are combined but each subject, performance level, and student group is evaluated as a separate indicator, as well as completion and dropout rates. In this example all student groups in the system are evaluated for every indicator, with the exception of the English language progress measure, which includes only LEP and monitored LEP students.

Example 11-3B combines writing results with reading/ELA and combines satisfactory and college ready performance, as well as grade levels and tests. Each subject and student group is a separate measure but the maximum number of measures on which a district or campus is evaluated is reduced by fifteen from 46 to 31.

Example 11-3C is one approach to aligning state and federal AYP accountability requirements. The system includes measures of reading/ELA and mathematics participation as well as performance, as required for AYP. It also includes the additional student groups required for AYP, special education and limited English proficient (LEP), but does not evaluate student group performance for all indicators. Even with the additional student groups and indicators, this system has eight fewer separate measures than Example 11-3A. Adding English language progress and dropout rate indicators would increase the number by two for a total of 40 measures.

Example 11-3D is the most different from the current Texas accountability system. Performance on EOC assessments is evaluated separately from the STAAR grades 3–8 performance, as would be required with a longitudinal assessment performance measure. In this example performance across subjects is combined in a performance index rather than separate evaluation of subjects. Inherent in this example are different accountability indicators for high schools than for elementary and middle schools. The result is eleven separate indicators for high schools, although some minimum performance level might be required for each subject. Elementary and middle schools might be evaluated on more separate measures than high schools.

11-3C: Incorporate AYP Required Measures
38 separate measures

Indicators	Student Groups						
	All	AA	H	W	ED	SE	LEP
Mathematics Satisfactory with growth	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mathematics College-Ready	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Reading/ELA Satisfactory with growth	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Reading/ELA College-Ready	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Writing with growth	X						
Science with growth	X						
Social Studies w/ growth	X						
Compl./Grad. Rates	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dropout Rates							
English Language Progress							
Mathematics Participation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Reading/ELA Participation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

11-3D: High School EOC Performance Index
11 separate measures

Indicators	Student Groups						
	All	AA	H	W	ED	SE	LEP
Mathematics Satisfactory with growth	X	X	X	X	X		
Mathematics College-Ready	X	X	X	X	X		
Reading/ELA Satisfactory with growth	X	X	X	X	X		
Reading/ELA College-Ready	X	X	X	X	X		
Writing with growth							
Science with growth							
Social Studies w/ growth							
Compl./Grad. Rates	X	X	X	X	X		
Dropout Rates							
English Language Progress							X
Mathematics Participation							
Reading/ELA Participation							

Student groups abbreviations: AA=African American, H=Hispanic, W=White, ED=Economically Disadvantaged, SE=Special Education, LEP=Limited English Proficient.

Defining School District and Campus Performance

In accountability systems, assessment results are used to measure performance of campuses and districts based on aggregate performance of their students. Table 11-4 shows four models for aggregating student performance into measures of campus and district performance—performance, growth, performance and growth, and improvement.

Most accountability systems have some features of two or more models, although one model tends to dominate the overall design. Models are combined to give districts and campuses more than one way to demonstrate acceptable performance. The purpose of most academic accountability systems is twofold: (1) to identify campuses that do not meet acceptable performance standards, and (2) to distinguish between low-performing campuses that are improving and those that are not improving.

Performance Model. Under the Performance Model, campuses are evaluated on percentage of their students who are performing at the satisfactory or college-ready levels. Annual accountability standards for percentage of students satisfactory or college-ready are set based on initial performance, representing where we are rather than where we want to be. Most districts and campuses demonstrate acceptable performance by meeting the annual accountability standards. Higher accountability standards are phased in over time, requiring the lowest performing campuses, subjects, and/or student groups to show an increase in the percentage of students satisfactory or college ready. Performance Models are often paired with an Improvement Model by allowing campuses, subjects, and student groups that do not meet annual accountability standards to demonstrate acceptable performance by demonstrating required improvement in percentage of students satisfactory or college-ready.

Improvement Model. Under the Improvement Model, annual accountability standards for percentage of students satisfactory or college-ready are set high to represent long-term goals that most districts and campuses do not meet initially. Most campuses must demonstrate acceptable performance by demonstrating required improvement in percentage of students performing at the satisfactory or college-ready levels. The more indicators in the accountability system, the more difficult it is for districts and campuses to show improvement on every indicator every year. For this reason the Improvement Model is most often seen in accountability systems based on a performance index or paired with another model.

Growth Model. A Growth Model measures average progress of all students on a district or campus or percent of students on the district or campus who met or exceeded the student progress standard on the test. Growth Models often rely on statistical calculations that are not as easy to interpret as Performance Models and Improvement Models. The advantage is that they credit each campus with progress of students at all levels. Under a pure Growth Model, all except the very highest performing students must show progress, not just those students who do not pass the test.

Performance with Growth Model. Another way to incorporate growth into accountability indicators is by combining the evaluation of student performance level and student progress before aggregating results for the campus or district. Under the Performance with Growth Model, campuses are evaluated on percentage of their students who meet either the satisfactory/college-ready performance standard or show progress from the prior year. Like the Performance Model, most districts and campuses demonstrate

acceptable performance by meeting annual accountability standards for percentage of students who meet either the satisfactory standard on the test or the student progress standard. Also like the Performance Model, a Performance with Growth Model is often paired with an Improvement Model.

Table 11-4: Assessment Indicators for Campus and District Accountability

	Performance Level	Combination	Student Progress
Student Performance	Student met or exceeded the satisfactory or college-ready performance standard on the test.	Student met or exceeded the satisfactory or college-ready performance standard on the test or met or exceeded the student progress standard on the test.	Student met or exceeded the student progress standard on the test (regardless of whether or not the student met the satisfactory or college-ready performance standard on the test in either the prior year or current year).
Campus and District Performance Indicators	PERFORMANCE Percent of students on the campus or district who met or exceeded the satisfactory or college-ready performance standard on the test.	PERFORMANCE WITH GROWTH Percent of students on the campus or district who met or exceeded either the satisfactory/college-ready performance standard or the student progress standard on the test.	GROWTH Percent of students on the campus or district who met or exceeded the student progress standard on the test, or average student progress of all students on the campus or district.
	REQUIRED IMPROVEMENT Change from prior year in campus or district Performance or Performance with Growth.		

Required Improvement Definitions

The new Texas state accountability system defined in statute combines features of the Performance with Growth Model and Improvement Model. Regardless of which model dominates, Required Improvement will be a feature of the system. Following are some approaches to defining Required Improvement for the assessment indicators. As with other accountability standards, the objective is to set required improvement standards that are both rigorous and attainable.

- **Improvement to Long-Term Goal.** Most accountability systems use required improvement calculations that require more improvement of districts and campuses the further their performance is from the state performance goal.
- **Improvement to Annual Accountability Standard.** Another approach to the improvement calculation is to tie the amount of required improvement to the annual accountability standard rather than the long-term goal. This approach requires less improvement when performance is very close to the annual accountability standard compared to calculations that are tied to a long-term goal.
- **Reduction in Performance Gaps.** Under this approach the performance goal against which required improvement is measured is the performance level of the higher-performing student group. Safeguards ensure that the performance gap is not reduced by a decline in the performance of the highest-performing student group, but improvement by the highest performing student group is not required. The lower performing student groups must improve more than the highest performing student group.
- **Increasing Annual Standards.** A Performance Model or Performance with Growth Model sets annual accountability standards based on initial performance on the tests and phases in higher annual accountability standards over time. Performance of the lowest performing districts, campuses, subjects and/or student groups must improve to stay ahead of the increasing standards.
- **Improvement Across Multiple Years.** Measuring required improvement from two years ago rather than from the prior year gives the district or campus more time to show improvement. This approach can be used with any required improvement definition and addresses the difficulty of showing improvement on every indicator for every student group every year.
- **Any Improvement or No Decline.** This approach has been used by some states with indicators such as graduation rates on which very small gains are significant. Giving credit for no improvement addresses the difficulty of showing improvement for every student group every year but does not allow declines in performance.
- **Multi-Year Average Performance.** Averaging performance across multiple years provides a safeguard for districts and campuses whose performance fluctuates in one year. However, multi-year averaging effectively allows districts and campuses whose performance is declining to meet accountability standards.
 - **Three-Year Average Performance.** A new statutory provision gives districts and campuses the option to use three-year average performance to meet an accountability standard when current year performance does not meet the standard. This option will complicate setting required improvement standards because it can result in an acceptable performance rating when current year performance is below the acceptable performance standard and performance is declining.

Options for Alternative Education Accountability Procedures

As described earlier, an alternative set of performance measures for alternative education campuses (AECs) serving at-risk students were developed in late 1994 and first implemented in the 1995–1996 school year. When the standard procedures for the 2004–2011 accountability system were implemented in 2004, alternative education accountability (AEA) procedures followed in 2005.

During the development of previous and current AEA procedures, the following characteristics of AECs serving at-risk students have been identified that affect many components of the accountability system. These AECs provide non-traditional learning environments that are responsive to the unique needs of students, offer options to enhance student achievement, and ensure that at-risk students demonstrate proficiency on the state assessments and meet graduation requirements.

- Small numbers of test results – AECs are smaller on average than regular campuses.
- Mobility – AECs have higher mobility rates than regular campuses.
- Attribution of data – High mobility rates complicate evaluation of AEC data.
- Residential Facilities – Education services are provided to students in residential programs and facilities operated under contract with the Texas Youth Commission (TYC), detention centers and correctional facilities that are registered with the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission (TJPC), and private residential treatment centers.

In order to address these unique characteristics, AEA procedures were developed based on the following guidelines:

- Base the AEA indicators on data submitted through standard data submission processes [such as the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS)] or by the state testing contractor.
- Develop indicators appropriate for alternative education programs offered on AECs rather than just setting lower standards on the same indicators used in the regular accountability ratings. AEA procedures must contain appropriate indicators for AECs with increased rigor phased in over time. However, these indicators must be cognizant that all students are required to demonstrate proficiency on the state assessments in order to graduate.
- Incorporate growth measures in the base indicator.
- Use additional criteria, such as requiring AECs to have a minimum percentage of at-risk students (based on PEIMS data reported on the current year student enrollment records) in order to be evaluated under AEA procedures.

In the 2009–2010 school year, Texas had a total of 689 alternative campuses of which 460 were evaluated under AEA procedures. These 460 AECs served 52,718 students from 199 districts and 75 charter operators. Of the 460 AECs, 187 were charter campuses and 273 were non-charter campuses. NCLB requires that all campuses, including AECs, are evaluated in the federal accountability system. Conversely, the state accountability system has the option of including AEA procedures designed specifically to evaluate AECs.

The following options will be explored during the development of the new accountability system to identify the most suitable way to evaluate AECs:

- Use Same Indicators and Standards as Regular Campuses. This option would require AECs to meet the same criteria as traditional campuses.
- Use Same Indicators, but Different Standards, as Regular Campuses. Like the option above, this option would not require the development of alternative procedures, but would require that AECs be evaluated on the same indicators as regular campuses.
- Develop Alternative Education Accountability Procedures. This option continues the use of AEA procedures that are designed to address the unique challenges of alternative campuses that primarily serve students identified as at-risk of dropping out of school. Table 11-5 provides two possible timelines for the development of new AEA procedures. The first timeline delays implementing new AEA procedures until the 2014 ratings. The second allows for evaluation of registered AECs and charter districts in 2012–2013, possibly with a delayed release in fall 2013.

Table 11-5: Timeline Options for Development of AEA Procedures

Date	Option 1 Timeline for New AEA Procedures for 2014	Option 2 Timeline for New AEA Procedures for 2013
2010–2011	2011 ratings are the last issued under the current AEA procedures.	2011 ratings are the last issued under the current AEA procedures.
2011–2012	Performance ratings are suspended while the new accountability system is developed with advice from educator advisory groups.	Performance ratings are suspended while the new accountability system is developed with advice from educator advisory groups.
2012–2013	District and campus performance ratings for regular campuses are issued for the first time under the new system, based on percent proficient indicators. Registered AECs and some charter operators receive a 2013 rating of <i>Not Rated: Alternative Education</i> while new AEA procedures are developed for 2014 and beyond with advice from advisory groups.	District and campus performance ratings for regular campuses are issued for the first time under the new system, based on percent proficient indicators. District and campus performance ratings for registered AECs and some charter operators are issued for the first time under the new AEA procedures, possibly with a delayed release in fall 2013.
2013–2014	District and campus performance ratings for regular campuses are issued for the second time and will be based on both percent proficient and percent college-ready indicators. AEA ratings are issued for the first time under new AEA procedures on the same calendar as ratings assigned under standard procedures.	District and campus performance ratings for regular campuses are issued for the second time and will be based on both percent proficient and percent college-ready indicators. AEA ratings are issued for the second time under new AEA procedures on the same calendar as ratings assigned under standard procedures.

Alignment of State and Federal Accountability Systems

Development of a new state accountability system presents an ideal opportunity to align state and federal accountability provisions that Texas school districts and campuses must meet. The state accountability system must meet state statutory requirements of Texas Education Code, Chapter 39, Public School Accountability System. Texas public school districts and campuses must also meet federal AYP accountability provisions of Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

The Performance-Based Monitoring Analysis System (PBMAS) is a comprehensive system to monitor the performance and program effectiveness of school districts and charter schools in selected program areas (bilingual education/English as a second language, career and technical education, special education, and certain Title programs under the ESEA) to meet requirements for state monitoring of federally funded programs. To ensure data integrity, the performance-based monitoring system also includes annual Data Validation analyses. Data Validation analyses examine district leaver data, student assessment data, and discipline data. The process that districts must engage in to either validate the accuracy of their data or determine that erroneous data were submitted to TEA is fundamental to the integrity of the entire system of results-based accountability.

Alignment with Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Alignment of the state accountability ratings and federal AYP will have to be addressed from both the state and federal positions. Introduction of STAAR end-of-course (EOC) assessments for Texas high school students will require a major revision to the Texas AYP Plan while the new state accountability rating system is being developed. In addition, changes to federal AYP requirements are anticipated when ESEA is reauthorized. A major obstacle to alignment of the state and federal accountability provisions, however, will be the timing of ESEA reauthorization. State accountability policy decisions must be made before required changes to AYP will be known. Based on past experience, USDE may require immediate implementation of new AYP requirements outside the state accountability development process.

Nevertheless, some of the differences between the two accountability systems can be resolved under current state and federal statute. For example, science and social studies performance could be added to AYP to meet state accountability requirements. Likewise, reading/ELA and mathematics participation, required in AYP, could be included in the state accountability system. Implementing the federal cap on use of results from alternate assessments in the state accountability system would remove one of the primary differences in reading and mathematics performance indicator definitions.

Table 11-6 outlines approaches to aligning the state accountability system and AYP that range from minimal alignment that preserves two separate systems to development of a single academic accountability system that meets both state and federal requirements. Some of the options presented would require additional flexibility in state statute; any changes to the federal AYP system must be approved by the USDE.

Another aspect of the accountability system is interventions and sanctions that are triggered by failure to meet standards. Under AYP the interventions and sanctions apply only to Title I campuses and districts. Some of the approaches to alignment presented in Table 11-6 would need to be implemented in conjunction with aligned state and federal interventions.

Table 11-6: Aligning State Accountability System and AYP

Degree of Alignment	Approaches to Alignment of State and Federal Systems	Statutory Constraints and Limitations
Separate Accountability Systems	<p>Separate State Accountability and Federal AYP Systems Maintain separate state and federal academic accountability systems and processes.</p>	
	<p>Underlying Performance Data Produce a single set of underlying performance results that can be used to calculate indicators for both systems.</p>	
Aligned State and Federal Accountability Systems	<p>Common Indicators Include the same indicators in both systems even if those indicators are defined differently and evaluated for different student groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Include state-required indicators (science and social studies performance) in AYP. – Include AYP-required indicators (reading/ELA and mathematics participation) in state accountability system. 	No state or federal statutory changes required
	<p>Performance Designations or Ratings Include the performance designation from one system as an additional indicator in the other system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – State rating of Acceptable Performance is an additional requirement for a designation of Meets AYP. – Meets AYP is an eligibility requirement for state Distinction Designations. 	
	<p>Indicator Definitions For the three indicators that are in both systems, define the indicators in both systems to meet both state and federal requirements to the extent possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reading/ELA Performance – Mathematics Performance – Graduation Rate 	Reauthorization of ESEA and amendment to state law could remove differences
Single Accountability System	<p>Integrated Accountability Systems Use AYP as the base system so that a designation of Meets AYP is equivalent to a state rating of Acceptable Performance. Additional state requirements, such as science and social studies performance, are additional indicators in AYP or eligibility requirements for state Distinction Designations.</p>	Statutory differences in accountability system overall design

Statutory Constraints and Limitations. The primary statutory difference in indicator definitions for reading/ELA and mathematics performance is the assessment performance level evaluated. The new state accountability system must include evaluation of student performance at satisfactory and college-ready levels. Currently AYP evaluates student performance on assessments at the proficient level, which is defined as the Met the Standard student passing standard on the TAKS. This may change with

reauthorization of ESEA. One of the key priorities in the blueprint for ESEA reauthorization published by USDE in March 2010 is a focus on college- and career-readiness.

Another difference in the two systems is that new state legislation excludes certain students from state accountability indicators, exclusions that are not allowed under AYP. Although the numbers of students, campuses, and districts affected is relatively small, these state exclusions may complicate the development of indicators that can be used in both accountability systems.

- 1) Dropout exclusions. Certain students must be excluded from the state dropout/completion indicator calculations beginning with the rates reported in the 2011–2012 school year. For example, students who are court ordered to attend a general educational development (GED) preparation program must be excluded from the dropout/completion rates used for state accountability. However, those students must be included in the graduation rates used for AYP to be consistent with the standards and definitions of the U.S. Department of Education.
- 2) LEP students. Linguistically accommodated tests (LAT) were developed to assess LEP students who are not required to be tested under state statute but whose performance must be included in AYP. Performance of students with limited English proficiency (LEP) who are asylees or refugees must be excluded from all state accountability indicators, but cannot be removed from the AYP results.

In addition to the differences in indicator definitions described above, there are constraints and limitations to aligning other accountability provisions. Although the reauthorization of ESEA may remove these barriers, the following two statutory requirements cannot currently be aligned.

- 1) Long-term Goals for Assessment Performance
State: By 2020, standards that rank in the top 10 states in terms of college readiness for reading/ELA and mathematics
AYP: By 2014, 100 percent of students proficient in reading/ELA and mathematics
- 2) Improvement Standard for Assessment
State: Defined by commissioner of education for satisfactory and college-ready performance
AYP: Ten percent decrease in percent not proficient and meet improvement criteria on other indicator (attendance rate or graduation rate)

Alignment with the Performance-Based Monitoring (PBM) System

Findings from both components of the PBM system (the Performance-Based Monitoring Analysis System [PBMAS] and the PBM Data Validation System) have been incorporated into state accountability appeal decisions made after the ratings releases. For example, data quality is a consideration in evaluating dropout rate and completion rate appeals. In addition, one Data Validation indicator (underreported students) is included in the current state accountability system. In order to maintain a rating of *Exemplary* or *Recognized*, districts evaluated under the standard accountability system must not exceed the accountability standards for underreported students. However, persistently poor performance on the PBMAS indicators or Data Validation indicators does not directly affect state accountability ratings.

The PBM system is a complementary system to the state and federal accountability ratings, and it can be used to some extent as a system safeguard to those two systems. However, all three systems are, by design, different and serve fundamentally different purposes. Over the last decade, the three systems have been implemented based on a variety of statutory requirements and policy considerations that are unique to each but that ultimately have ensured the three systems are neither duplicative nor redundant. At the same time, integration and coordination of those systems in ways that are meaningful has been a priority and will continue to be a focus during the development of the new state accountability system. A new accountability system design will also modify options that are available for the PBM system to continue to be used as a system safeguard for the entire accountability system.

All of the approaches for using the PBM system as a system safeguard to the state accountability system described below will be discussed during the development of the new state accountability system. Two issues must be addressed with any of the approaches—application of system safeguards to alternative education accountability procedures as well as standard accountability procedures and consequences for campuses of district performance on system safeguards.

Accreditation Status. To determine accreditation status and sanctions, TEA is required to take into account the district’s state accountability rating and its financial accountability rating. Accreditation status is assigned in the spring following release of the academic and financial ratings. Other factors that may be considered in determination of accreditation status include serious and persistent deficiencies in programs monitored in the PBMAS and data integrity issues. At the present time, a district’s deficiencies in these areas may impact its accreditation status subsequent to a special accreditation investigation under TEC §39.057. One approach for greater integration of the accountability system safeguards available in the PBM system with the state’s accreditation system is to begin directly including PBMAS and Data Validation results in the determination of accreditation statuses.

Accountability Rating Changes. State and federal accountability results are released annually. The Commissioner of Education can change a rating to *Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues* in the rare situation where the accuracy and/or integrity of performance results have been compromised, and it is not possible to assign a rating based on the evaluation of performance. The Commissioner also has the authority to lower a rating or assign an *Academically Unacceptable* or *Missed AYP* rating due to data quality issues. Greater use of rating changes based on PBMAS and Data Validation findings could be incorporated into the new accountability system. However, to the extent possible, ratings for the year are finalized when updated ratings are released following the resolution of appeals because changes after this time are not considered to be an effective sanction and they add an element of instability to the accountability system.

Accountability Ratings. Rather than using PBMAS and Data Validation findings to change state and federal accountability outcomes, review of these findings could be incorporated into the initial assignment of accountability ratings. Timing is the primary drawback to integrating the two systems in this way—the current year PBMAS and Data Validation findings are not available early enough to be incorporated into the summer release of state accountability ratings.

Safeguard Indicators. Another approach to integrating system safeguards into the accountability ratings is to include selected safeguard indicators in the accountability system. As noted above, the underreported students indicators can prevent a district from receiving an *Exemplary* or *Recognized* rating in the current state accountability system. Another example is the AYP participation rate indicators that are evaluated for both districts and campuses, which ensure performance rates include the performance of at least 95 percent of students. Performance on safeguard indicators could be used as an eligibility requirement for an acceptable rating or distinction designations in the new accountability.

Indicator Definitions. Rather than including separate safeguard indicators, accountability indicators can be defined to incorporate more safeguards. An example of this is the cap on use of TAKS proficient results from alternate assessments in the AYP performance measures. The cap removes any unintended incentive for districts to test more students on modified and alternative assessments as a way of achieving higher accountability performance rates. Another example is retaining leaver records with data errors in the completion rate calculation to provide a greater incentive for districts to correct data errors in dropout records.

Accountability Systems in Other States

Assessment and accountability systems in 25 states are profiled at the end of this chapter. The 16 states whose 2010 state assessment programs included EOC assessments are among the profiled states. Four states that are in the process of implementing EOC testing, as well as other large and diverse states are also included. Each state profile lists grades and subjects tested in the state assessment program and graduation requirements. Accountability information includes a brief description of the state accountability system and AYP, student groups evaluated and minimum size criteria, improvement definitions, and use of student progress measures in state-defined accountability systems. Information about use of student progress measures in AYP is summarized in a separate table. Finally, a review of alternative education accountability systems in other states was conducted. Following are highlights from the research on other states.

End-of-Course Assessments

EOC Assessments and Graduation Requirements. The number of different EOC assessments administered by states in 2010 ranged from two in New Jersey to sixteen in Virginia. Nine of the EOC states include passing one or more EOC tests as part of their graduation requirements. Virginia requires students to pass six EOC tests, the most of any state; however, New York, North Carolina, and Oklahoma require students to pass five EOC tests. In Tennessee students must pass 10 courses in which EOC tests count as 25 percent of the course grade, but passing the EOC test is not a graduation requirement.

EOC in Accountability. Eleven states use results of the EOC assessments in their accountability systems. Some states combine EOC results with results from grade level assessments for the subject; this approach is common in states that use a performance index for accountability. States that use EOC results in state-defined indicators do not necessarily use EOC results in the AYP indicators. Three states (Maryland, Mississippi, and New York) use a longitudinal EOC performance indicator for AYP in which

performance of a cohort or class of students is evaluated on EOC assessment results from tests taken throughout their high school years. States have different policies on whether to include results from retests and whether to include middle school EOC results in high school indicators.

Accountability Systems

Performance Index. Sixteen of the 25 states profiled use a performance index in their accountability systems. A number of states have a separate index for each subject and assign partial credit for students who do not pass the test but meet a lower performance standard. This is the only type of performance index that has been approved by USDE for use in AYP. Six states, including California, Florida, and North Carolina, combine performance across subjects in an index. Several states include performance on indicators other than test results in the index. Louisiana’s performance index, for example, combines performance on assessments and other indicators such as attendance rates, dropout rates, and graduation rates.

Student Groups. All states evaluate reading and mathematics performance of student groups for AYP, including groups based on race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, special education program participation, and limited English proficiency. Six states that have a separate state-defined accountability rating system do not evaluate performance of student groups. Washington state evaluates performance of the economically disadvantaged student group for state-defined ratings.

Alignment with AYP. States have taken different approaches to aligning state-defined accountability systems with AYP. Following are examples:

- States that did not have a state-defined accountability rating system before AYP and implemented AYP as the only accountability system. Alabama issues only AYP determinations.
- States that did have a state-defined accountability rating system that has been completely integrated into or replaced by AYP. Arkansas integrated their state-defined rating system into AYP.
- States that incorporate AYP status into the state-defined rating system. In Ohio and Indiana, AYP status can prevent a campus from receiving the highest rating in the state-defined system.
- States that incorporate the state-defined rating into AYP. In Florida all campuses are subject to AYP interventions but the level of intervention is differentiated based on a state-assigned letter grade.
- Some states that have a separate state-defined rating system that is aligned with AYP have developed state indicators that complement rather than duplicate the AYP indicators. The Tennessee state-defined indicator, for example is a student progress measure that is not evaluated for student groups. Several states combine test results across subjects in an index that is not evaluated for student groups.

Required Improvement Measures in Accountability Systems

Improvement Definitions. All states compute campus improvement for AYP “safe harbor” calculations and many states do not use any other improvement definition in their accountability systems. Eight of the states that use a performance index also measure campus and district improvement on the performance index. Two of the 24 states profiled use a cohort improvement definition—comparing

performance of students in one grade to prior year performance of students in the previous grade. A few states look at improvement over two or three years.

Student Progress Measures in Accountability Systems

State Student Progress Measures. Eight states in addition to Texas use a student progress measure in their state-defined accountability systems. Many more states are developing or reporting student progress measures that are not used in accountability rating systems. States that use a student progress measure for accountability do not necessarily use the same measure in their state-defined accountability system and federal AYP system.

AYP Growth Measures. Fifteen states have been approved by USDE to use student progress measures in AYP. The USDE has approved three types of measures, all of which they refer to as “growth” measures: growth to standard, value tables, and projection measures. All of the states that use a growth measure for AYP give districts and campuses two ways to meet annual accountability standards – a proficiency measure that does not include growth and a growth measure that includes growth or projection to proficiency. Most AYP growth measures give credit for students who meet either a satisfactory performance standard or growth standard.

Alternative Education Accountability in Other States

A review of alternative education systems in other states has been conducted. Many states have programs and/or separate campuses that serve students at risk of dropping out of school. However, few states include specific procedures for alternative education accountability (AEA). The states of California, Colorado, Florida, Kentucky, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, and Wisconsin were chosen for review because they offer accessible documentation on AEA procedures.

The AEA systems in other states have several common features. These features include the evaluation of at-risk student performance with multiple criteria such as school-level performance on state tests as well as additional indicators of enrollment, attendance, completion, and graduation. Emphasis is on improvement and/or performance trends rather than meeting an absolute performance standard in the accountability systems reviewed. Also, all other states allow schools to select indicators that are most appropriate for their alternative education program or school, in some cases requiring additional data submission.

California. In 2000, California developed a comprehensive Alternative Schools Accountability Model (ASAM) that provides accountability for alternative schools serving highly mobile and highly at-risk students. ASAM emphasized three central concepts: (1) student and school performance measures should be based on multiple indicators that assess a school’s ability to serve high-risk students; (2) schools should be able to choose from a variety of indicators, those most appropriate to their goals and student population; and (3) a school’s performance should not be compared with that of other schools, but rather with its own performance over time. Schools participating in the ASAM choose 3 of 17 indicators on which their school report is comprised. There are three categories of indicators: (1) readiness indicators;

(2) contextual indicators; and (3) academic and completion indicators, specifically pre- and post-assessments in reading, writing, and mathematics.

The ASAM system has been successful at measuring whether schools are meeting local goals. However, since schools elect which indicators to report, there is little consistency across schools making it difficult to compare performance across schools and hold schools equitably accountable. Therefore, in 2006 the ASAM Subcommittee recommended that a stronger accountability system be phased in by 2009–2010 and called for the development of a system that is more rigorous, academically-based, and consistent across sites to facilitate comparisons. In 2008, the California State Board approved a framework for redesigning the existing ASAM. Beginning with the 2009–2010 school year, baseline data for three types of indicators were collected: (1) learning readiness indicators to measure student engagement and preparedness (e.g., attendance); (2) academic achievement indicators to measure student achievement (status) and academic progress (growth on statewide assessments); and (3) transition indicators to measure whether a student graduated or remained in school (e.g., graduation rate, course completion, and promotion to next grade). ASAM schools were asked to collect attendance data if they did not do so already. All other data for the revised ASAM was gathered from existing statewide databases. In May 2011, the California Department of Education will make recommendations for a revised ASAM based on the 2009–2010 baseline results. Use of pre- and post-assessment data in the revised ASAM is still being discussed.

Colorado. Colorado has optional accountability procedures for campuses that meet the state criteria for designation as an alternative education campus. Requests for AEC designation must be approved each year by the State Board. Annually, the performance of each AEC is reviewed. AECs must establish baseline levels of performance and meet annual benchmarks on four indicators: (1) student achievement on standardized assessment, (2) longitudinal student academic growth, (3) postsecondary/workforce readiness, and (4) student engagement. More emphasis is placed on the student academic growth and postsecondary/workforce readiness indicators.

Florida. In Florida, alternative schools that provide dropout prevention and academic intervention services are identified annually and may elect to receive a school improvement rating in lieu of a school grade like traditional schools. Alternative school improvement ratings are based on a comparison of current and prior year learning gains for eligible students in reading and mathematics. Annual student learning gains are based on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) developmental scores in reading and mathematics for grades 3–10. The following school improvement ratings are assigned: (1) *Improving* means at least a 5 percent increase in the percent making gains; (2) *Maintaining* means less than a 5 percent increase or decrease in the percent making gains; and (3) *Declining* means at least a 5 percent decrease in the percent making gains.

New York. The New York System of Accountability for Student Success (SASS) requires districts that operate Alternative High School Equivalency Programs (AHSEP) or High School Equivalency Programs (HSEP) to report performance data regarding these programs. Performance measures and standards used for AHSEP and HSEP are: (1) GED Success Rate with a 56 percent standard; (2) Student Success Rate with a 64 percent standard; and (3) Dropout Rate with a 31 percent standard.

North Carolina. In North Carolina, alternative schools participate in the ABCs Accountability Model which is based on achievement and the degree of success that the alternative school has in meeting certain objectives outlined in its school improvement plan. Accountability status consists of the following five criteria: (1) end of course and/or end of grade test results, (2) change in competency passing rate, and (3) three of the following eight local options: attendance, dropouts, school safety/student conduct, higher expectations for student achievement, student progress and proficiency, parent involvement, community involvement, and customer satisfaction. Among the eight local options, all alternative schools must select either the higher expectations for student achievement or the student progress and proficiency option as one of the three local options. The local superintendent and school board must approve the school improvement plan.

Other States. Other states have taken a program evaluation approach to accountability for AECs. Kentucky has developed an Alternative Education Program Evaluation Instrument with 58 indicators covering academic performance, learning environment, and efficiency. States like New Jersey and Wisconsin have different curriculum standards or alternative graduation options for students in alternative education programs, but hold alternative programs to the same standards in the accountability system.

**Table 11-7: Sample Performance Index
with State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) End-of-Course (EOC)
and Graduation Rate**

	Reading/ELA 0.20 ¹		Mathematics 0.20		Science 0.20	Social Studies 0.20	Graduation Rate 0.20	Total Index Points ³
	Satisfactory 0.15	College-Ready 0.05	Satisfactory 0.15	College-Ready 0.05	Satisfactory	Satisfactory		
Maximum Index Points	15.00	5.00	15.00	5.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	100.00
Sample High School A								
Performance Rate	80%	15%	80%	15%	80%	80%	85.0%	74.50
Index Points ²	12.00	0.75	12.00	0.75	16.00	16.00	17.00	
Sample High School B ⁴								
Performance Rate	90%	40%	80%	15%	50%	80%	85.0%	71.25
Index Points	13.50	2.00	12.00	0.75	10.00	16.00	17.00	
Sample High School C								
Performance Rate	80%	40%	80%	40%	80%	80%	70.0%	74.00
Index Points	12.00	2.00	12.00	2.00	16.00	16.00	14.00	

- ¹ The numbers in these cells indicate the weight assigned to the measure.
- ² Index points are calculated by multiplying performance on the measure by the weight (e.g. 0.15 X 80 = 12.00 for satisfactory performance in reading/ELA for High School A).
- ³ Total Index Points are the sum of the index points calculated for each measure.
- ⁴ If these three sample high schools were rank ordered on their total index points, High School B would rank the lowest.

Sample Performance Index Features

- Performance on EOC assessments in four subjects and graduation rate are included in a single index. Alternatively the index could include only assessment results or could include additional assessments or other measures.
- Stronger performance in some areas compensates to some extent weaker performance in other areas as illustrated by the three sample high schools whose performance varies but all have similar index scores.
- Total index points add to 100 in this example. This is not a requirement.
- All assessment subjects and the graduation rate are weighted equally. Alternatively, measures could be weighted differently by adjusting the weight or maximum number of index points.
- Satisfactory performance and college-ready performance are separate performance rates in the index in this example. Student progress is included in the performance rates. Alternatively, satisfactory and college-ready performance could be combined in a single performance rate.
- The performance index could be calculated for All Students only or also for student group performance. Alternatively, student group performance could be included in a single index by expanding the table for a maximum of 100 points for each student group, for example.

State Profiles

States chosen for profiling include states whose 2009-2010 state assessment programs included end-of-course (EOC) assessments and others that are in the process of implementing EOC testing, states using a student progress measure in a state-defined accountability system, and other large and diverse states.

	AYP/State Alignment	AYP Only	EOC Exams	EOCs for Accountability	Performance Index	Student Progress (Growth) Measure Used For		Graduation Requirement
						State Accountability	AYP	
Alabama		•			•			Pass state exit exam
Arkansas		•	•	•			•	Pass 1 EOC exam
California	•				•			Pass state exit exam
Connecticut		•	<i>Under development</i>					No state exit exam
Delaware	•		<i>Beginning 2011</i>				•	No state exit exam
Florida	•		<i>Beginning 2011</i>		•	•	•	Pass state exit exam
Georgia		•	•		•			Pass state exit exams
Indiana	•		•		•			Pass state exit exam
Louisiana	•		•		•			Pass state exit exam
Maryland		•	•	•				Composite score over 4 EOC exams
Massachusetts		•	•		•			Pass exit exams + 1 EOC exam
Mississippi			•	•	•	•		Pass 4 EOC exams
Missouri		•	•	•			•	No state exit exam
New Jersey			•					Pass state exit exam
New York		•	•	•	•			Pass 5 EOC exams
North Carolina	•		•	•	•	•	•	Pass 5 EOC exams
Ohio	•				•	•	•	Pass state exit exams
Oklahoma			•	•	•			Pass 4 EOC exams
Oregon	•				•	•		No state exit exam
Pennsylvania		•			•		•	No state exit exam
South Carolina			•	•	•			Pass exit exams
Tennessee	•		•	•		•	•	No state exit exam
Utah			•	•	•	•		No state exit exam
Virginia			•	•				Pass 6 EOC exams
Washington			<i>Beginning 2011</i>		•			Pass state exit exam

Alabama

Key Provisions. Performance Index

Assessment Program

Alabama administers the criterion-referenced Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test (ARMT) in

- Reading in grades 3–8
- Mathematics in grades 3–8

This assessment combines elements from the Stanford Achievement Test (Stanford 10) with items designed to measure mastery of Alabama state content standards.

Alabama also administers the:

- Alabama Science Assessment (ASA) in grades 5 and 7
- Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing (ADAW) in grades 5, 7, and 10

For graduation, the state administers the

- Alabama High School Graduation Exam (AHSGE), which covers reading, mathematics, language, science, and social studies

In September 2009, the Alabama board of education approved a plan to replace the AHSGE with end-of-course exams, but they have not been phased in yet.

Graduation Requirement. For graduation, students must pass three of the five subject area tests (i.e., reading; mathematics; and either science, language, or social studies) on the Alabama High School Graduation Test (AHSGE). There are no alternate paths to graduation.

Accountability System

Alabama issues only Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations for accountability. The AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics for grades 3-8 and the reading/ELA and mathematics sections of the AHSGE, high school graduation rates, and elementary and middle school attendance rates. The AYP performance indicator is a performance index that assigns partial credit for students performing below the proficient level. Alabama calculates AYP separately for each grade; campus and district results are aggregated across grades.

Student Groups. For AYP, Alabama evaluates the following student groups: All Students, African-American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited

English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Student groups of 40 or more, with a confidence interval, are evaluated for academic performance.

Improvement Definition. The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent.

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Arkansas

Key Provisions. EOC, EOC for Accountability, Student Progress Measure

Assessment Program

The state administers Augmented Benchmark Exams in:

- Literacy in grades 3–8 and 11
- Mathematics in grades 3–8
- Science in grades 5 and 7

The Augmented Benchmark Exams include criterion-referenced questions as well as norm-referenced sections for grades K–2 (sounds, letters and math) and grade 9 (reading comprehension and math problem solving).

High school assessments include end-of-course assessments in Algebra I, Geometry, and Biology. An English II EOC test is being developed.

Graduation Requirement. Beginning with the class of 2010, students must pass the Algebra I EOC exam in order to graduate. Beginning with the class of 2014, students will be required to pass the English II EOC as well.

Accountability System

Arkansas merged their state accountability system with AYP in 2003. The AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and elementary and middle school attendance rates. Arkansas combines Algebra I and Geometry EOC results for the current year and averages performance across three years for the AYP mathematics performance indicator for high schools. The method (one year or three year) that produces the best result for the campus or district is used but the same method must be used for all measures for the subject. Arkansas is one of the states approved by USDE to use a student progress measure as another way for campuses and districts to meet AYP. Reading/ELA is based on performance on the grade 11 literacy test. AYP determinations are the basis of sanctions and interventions.

Arkansas was one of the states approved by USDE to pilot differentiated sanctions for schools designated as in need of improvement because they do not make AYP for two or more consecutive years. AYP results are used to differentiate school improvement campuses as Achieving, Targeted Improvement, Targeted Intensive Improvement, Whole School Improvement, Whole School Intensive Improvement, and State Directed. State indicators are used for rewards.

Student Groups. Arkansas evaluates performance for the following student groups for AYP: African American, Hispanic, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with

Disabilities. For campuses and districts with 800 students or fewer in total enrollment, the minimum size criteria for student groups is 40 students with a confidence interval. For campuses and districts with more than 800 students in total enrollment the minimum size criteria is 5 percent or 200 students.

Improvement Definition. The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. State indicators used for rewards include improvement measures. Cohort trends are calculated by comparing aggregate performance of students by grade with prior year performance of students in the previous grade. Data are averaged across three years.

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California

Key Provisions: AYP/State Alignment, Improvement Model, Performance Index

Assessment Program

The California state assessment program includes the following tests.

- California Standards Tests (CST), criterion-referenced tests in English-language arts (ELA), mathematics, history/social science, and science at grades 2-11
- California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) in ELA and mathematics first administered in grade 10

California does not administer end-of-course (EOC) exams.

Graduation Requirement. Students must pass both the ELA and mathematics parts of the CAHSEE as a graduation requirement.

Accountability System

The California state accountability system is based on the Academic Performance Index (API). The API combines assessment results on the state criterion-referenced tests for grades 2-12 across subjects (ELA, mathematics, science, history/social science) weighted according to test (standard, modified, alternate, and exit), content area, and grade span. The API is calculated for all students and student groups. Standards for improvement from the prior year are based on prior year performance levels. In addition, schools are ranked on the index by campus type and campus characteristics. The API results are used for both recognition and state sanctions. Campuses and districts do not receive a state accountability rating label other than a report showing whether they have met or not met state API improvement targets and the API ranking.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and the state API indicator for elementary, middle, and high schools. Student groups are not evaluated on the API in AYP. The API improvement standard is same for all campuses and is lower than the state standard.

Student Groups. Performance of the following student groups is evaluated for state accountability and AYP: All Students, African American, Asian, Filipino, Hispanic, Native American, Pacific Islander, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. In addition to students who participate in the National School Lunch Program, students are included in the Economically Disadvantaged student group if neither parent has a high school diploma. The minimum size criteria in both the state accountability system and AYP is 50/15%/100—50 students and the group represents at least 15 percent of total students, or 100 students.

Improvement Definition. If the prior year composite score is less than 690, required improvement on the state API indicator is a 5 percent decrease in the difference between the prior year score and the state goal of 800 (out of 1000). If the index score is above 690, the amount of improvement required does not continue to decrease. For AYP, the improvement standard on the API index is an increase of 1 point if prior year performance is below 650.

The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent. A 75% confidence interval is applied when determining if the student group made safe harbor.

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Connecticut

Key Provisions. EOC

Assessment Program

The Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) includes the following assessments:

- Reading/ELA in grades 3–8
- Mathematics in grades 3–8
- Science in grades 5 and 8

The Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) program includes the following assessments:

- reading, writing, mathematics, and science at grade 10

These tests have no passing score, although four performance levels are reported. Students who meet the Goal performance level on all tests receive a Certificate of Mastery.

Connecticut has a plan for secondary school reform that includes development of end-of-course (EOC) assessments by the state that will be scored locally for Algebra I, Geometry, Biological/Life Science, English Language Arts II, and American History.

Graduation Requirement. Connecticut does not have a state high school graduation testing requirement and CAPT performance cannot be used as the sole local criterion for graduation.

Accountability System

Connecticut has a single accountability system with no separate state rating designations. The AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and elementary and middle writing performance.

Student Groups. For AYP, Connecticut evaluates the following student groups: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Student groups of 40 or more are evaluated for academic performance, with a confidence interval.

Improvement Definition. The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent.

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Delaware

Key Provisions. AYP/State Alignment, Student Progress Measure

The Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP) includes assessments in:

- Reading in grades 2–10
- Writing in grades 2–10
- Mathematics in grades 2–10
- Science in grades 4, 6, 8, and 11
- Social studies in grades 4, 6, 8, and 11

The new Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) will become fully operational in the 2010–2011 school year and will include end-of-course (EOC) assessments in: English II, Algebra I, Integrated Mathematics I, Biology, U.S. History.

Graduation Requirement. Delaware does not have an exit exam.

Accountability System

Delaware merged their state and federal accountability systems in 2004. For state accountability Delaware calculates a State Progress Determination (SPD), which measures improvement of the composite scale score in the core content areas of reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. Schools receive an SPD based on whether they perform above performance targets (A), meet performance targets (M), or score below performance targets (B) on the state assessments. The AYP determinations and SPD values are combined to produce state accountability rating designations (Superior, Commendable, Academic Review, Academic Progress, or Academic Watch).

Delaware Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and elementary and middle school improvements in reading and math scale scores. Delaware was one of 15 states approved by USDE to use a growth model for AYP. All of the states that use a growth model for AYP give districts and campuses two ways to meet annual accountability standards—a performance measure that does not include growth and a growth measure. Delaware’s growth measure gives full credit for students who meet the proficiency standard on the state assessment and partial credit for students who fail the test but meet the growth standard.

Student Groups. For AYP, Delaware evaluates the following student groups: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Student groups of 40 or more are evaluated for academic performance, with a confidence interval.

Improvement Definition. The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent.

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Florida

Key Provisions: AYP/State Alignment, EOC, Performance Index, Student Progress Measure

Assessment Program

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Tests (FCAT) include the following assessments.

- Mathematics in grades 3–8
- Writing in grades 4, 8, and 10
- Science in grades 5, 8, and 11
- Reading in grades 3–10

Florida field tested its first end-of-course (EOC) assessment in Spring 2010—an online assessment for Algebra I.

Graduation Requirement. Florida students must pass the grade 10 reading and mathematics assessments to receive a regular high school diploma. Students who fail the FCAT tests can meet the graduation requirement through national high school achievement tests such as SAT and ACT.

Accountability System

The Florida state accountability system is based on a performance index. School districts and campuses accumulate index points for students who meet specified performance levels on state assessments in reading, mathematics, science, and writing. They also receive points for students with learning gains, defined as increasing achievement level on the test, maintaining a high achievement level, or for students in the lowest achievement levels showing growth. Districts and campuses are assigned letter grades A, B, C, D, or F. School grades can be lowered based on test participation rates of all students and performance gains in reading and mathematics of the lowest performing students.

The state accountability system and AYP are aligned. Florida AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and performance on the writing test for elementary, middle, and high schools. Florida is one of the 15 states approved by USDE to use a student progress measure as another way for campuses and districts to meet AYP. Three-fourths of Florida campuses did not make AYP in 2009. Florida was one of the states approved by USDE to pilot differentiated corrective actions for schools designated as in need of improvement because they do not make AYP for two or more consecutive years. Schools are placed into improvement categories based on their state-assigned letter grade, the percentage of AYP requirements met, and the number of years they have failed to make AYP. Under new state legislation, the differentiated corrective actions apply to non-Title I as well as Title I campuses.

Student Groups. Student groups are not evaluated as part of the state accountability system. For AYP, Florida evaluates the following student groups: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. The minimum size criteria for AYP is 30 students and more than 15% of the school population or 100 students.

Improvement Definition. The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent. Florida does not use improvement in the state accountability system.

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Georgia

Key Provisions. AYP/State Alignment, EOC, Performance Index

Assessment Program

The Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT) include assessments in:

- Reading in grades 1–8
- English language arts (ELA) in grades 1–8
- Mathematics in grades 1–8
- Science in grades 3–8
- Social studies in grades 3–8

High school assessments include:

- Georgia High School Graduation Tests (GHSGT) in ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies; and Georgia High School Writing Tests (GHSWT) at grade 11
- End-of-course (EOC) tests in Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Statistics, U.S. History, Economics, Biology, Physical Science, Ninth Grade Literature and Composition, and American Literature and Composition

Graduation Requirement. Students must pass the GHSGT and the GHSWT. (A student may be granted a variance from this requirement if they have passed at least three sections of the GHSGT and the GHSWT, have a score within one standard deviation of passing a remaining section, have successfully passed each related EOC, if applicable, and have a high school attendance record of 90% or better.) Also, the EOC counts as 15 percent of the final course grade for courses that students must pass to graduate. The Georgia Department of Education is working on a proposal to phase out the GHSGT and replace it with a series of EOC tests.

Accountability System

Georgia merged its state and federal accountability systems in 2004, creating a Single Statewide Accountability System (SSAS). Georgia AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and one other indicator for elementary and middle schools. Elementary and middle schools select the other indicator from a state-approved list that includes attendance rates, science or social studies performance, and higher levels of performance in reading, ELA, mathematics, science, or social studies.

Under SASS, all schools (Title I and Non-Title I) are subject to AYP sanctions and interventions. The AYP performance indicators are based on the grades 3–8 CRCT in reading, ELA, and mathematics and the GHSGT in ELA and mathematics. Georgia does not currently use EOC exams for accountability. Campuses are also eligible for award designations (Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze) based on AYP

status and student performance and gains on a performance index. The index includes performance in all tested subjects and is based on percent of students performing at the meets standard or exceeds standard levels on the state assessments.

Student Groups. Georgia evaluates performance of the following student groups for AYP: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Multiracial, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Minimum size criteria is 40/10%/75—40 students and at least 10 percent of All Students, or 75 students. A confidence interval is applied if the subgroup does not meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) based on the initial analysis of assessment results.

Improvement Definition. The AYP safe harbor provision requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. In addition to the safe harbor provision, Georgia calculates improvement from the prior year on the state performance index. Campuses are eligible for award designations if they are in the top percentiles of improvement and meet other criteria including AYP status.

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Indiana

Key Provisions: AYP/State Alignment, EOC, Performance Index

Assessment Program

As part of the Indiana Statewide Testing for Education Progress – Plus (ISTEP+), Indiana administers the following assessments for elementary and middle school students.

- English/language arts (ELA) in grades 3–8
- Mathematics in grades 3–8
- Science in grades 4–7
- Social studies in grades 5 and 7

Assessments for high school students include:

- Graduation Qualifying Exams (GQE) in ELA and mathematics at grade 10
- End-of-course (EOC) assessments in Algebra I, Algebra II, English 10, English 11, and Biology I

Graduation Requirement. Students through the class of 2011 must pass the GQE in ELA and mathematics to satisfy the graduation test requirement. Beginning with the class of 2012, students must pass EOC assessments in Algebra I and English 10 to satisfy the graduation test requirement. There are two alternate paths to a regular diploma for students who do not pass the exit-level tests—an evidence-based waiver based on performance on other tests and classroom work, and a work-readiness waiver that includes performance on a workforce readiness assessment and internship, cooperative education, or workforce credential.

Accountability System

Based on improvement and performance data from the state’s ISTEP+ and GQE assessments, Indiana schools are placed into one of five categories [Exemplary Progress, Commendable Progress, Academic Progress, Academic Watch (priority), Academic Probation (high priority)]. The state accountability system uses a performance index that combines performance across grades and subjects. Currently ELA and mathematics performance are used in the index but there are plans to add science and social studies performance. State designations are used to identify schools for interventions and rewards.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) designations for Indiana school districts and schools are determined by student performance and participation rates on the ISTEP+ and GQE assessments in ELA and mathematics; student attendance rates (for elementary and middle schools); and graduation rates (for high schools).

School AYP status is incorporated into the state accountability designation—schools that miss AYP for the same student group for two consecutive years cannot receive a state designation higher than Academic Progress.

Student Groups. Indiana does not disaggregate student groups for state accountability. For AYP, Indiana evaluates the following student groups: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Student groups of 30 or more (with a test of statistical significance) are evaluated for performance. A confidence interval is applied when determining if the subgroup met the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO).

Improvement Definition. The state improvement calculation is based on cohorts of students. For example, in calculating improvement in percent passing, the performance of grade 5 students is compared to percent passing in grade 4 the prior year. Improvement is calculated over a three-year period. The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition, the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent. A confidence interval is applied when determining if a subgroup met safe harbor.

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Louisiana

Key Provisions. AYP/State Alignment, EOC, Improvement Model, Performance Index

Assessment Program

The Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP) includes the following assessments:

- Reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies for grades 3–8
- Reading/language arts and mathematics for grade 9

For students in grades 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9, the assessment is the integrated LEAP (*i*LEAP), a combined norm-referenced and criterion-referenced exam.

High school students are administered:

- Reading/language arts and mathematics portions of the Graduation Exit Exam (GEE) in grade 10
- Science and social studies portions of the GEE in grade 11

Louisiana began phasing in end-of-course (EOC) testing in 2007.

Graduation Requirement. Currently students must pass the GEE in four subjects in grades 10–11. Starting in 2010–2011, incoming freshmen must pass EOC exams in three categories: English II or English III, Algebra I or Geometry, and Biology or American History.

Accountability System

Under Louisiana’s state accountability system campuses and districts are assigned one of six performance labels (Academically Unacceptable or one to five stars) based on their score on a performance index known as School Performance Scores (SPS). The SPS produces a single numerical score based on All Students performance. For elementary schools the index combines performance on assessments and attendance rates; for middle schools assessments, attendance rates, and dropout rates; and for high schools assessments and graduation rates. (The EOC exams are not currently used in the state accountability system or AYP.) Schools must also show annual improvement in SPS scores and are assigned a second accountability label for improvement: School in Decline, No Growth, Minimal Academic Growth, Recognized Academic Growth, or Exemplary Academic Growth.

The AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and elementary and middle school attendance rates. Louisiana’s state accountability and AYP designations are aligned in one direction—campuses and districts that are Academically Unacceptable under the state accountability system are considered to miss AYP. Both Title I and non-Title I campuses and districts must implement AYP school improvement

provisions, except that non-Title I campuses are not required to offer supplemental education services due to state budgetary constraints.

Student Groups. For AYP, Louisiana evaluates the following student groups: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Student groups of 10 or more are evaluated for academic performance. A confidence interval is applied when determining if the subgroup met the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO).

Improvement Definition. The state accountability system requires schools to show annual improvement on the state SPS index. The improvement target, called the state growth target, is the amount of annual improvement required to meet the state goal of 120 on the SPS (a four star rating) by 2014. The minimum amount of improvement required is 2 points. Schools with a large improvement target (more than 7 points) are considered unlikely to reach the 2014 goal and are placed in Academic Assistance status. Schools exit Academic Assistance when their improvement targets are 5 points or less. The Academic Assistance status effectively sets an absolute performance floor on the SPS; the school district must provide additional supports to schools in Academic Assistance status.

The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent. A confidence interval is applied when determining if the subgroup met the safe harbor criteria.

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Maryland

Key Provisions: EOC, EOC for Accountability

Assessment Program

The Maryland School Assessment (MSA) program and High School Assessment (HSA) include tests of:

- Reading in grades 3–8
- Mathematics in grades 3–8
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- End-of-course assessments in English II, Algebra/Data Analysis, Government, and Biology

Graduation Requirement. Students must achieve a minimum composite score on the four EOC assessments as a requirement for a regular diploma. There is no minimum score requirement for any individual assessment. Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exams can be used in place of the HSA.

Accountability System

Maryland does not have a state academic accountability system separate from federal AYP. The AYP determinations are based on MSA reading and mathematics assessments and English II and Algebra/Data Analysis EOC assessments, high school graduation rates, and middle and elementary school attendance rates. The English II and Algebra/Data Analysis EOC exams are used for high school AYP. For students enrolled in Grade 12 in the current school year, the best score on each test is used, including banked scores for EOC tests taken in middle school and AP and IB exams. There are separate performance targets for elementary, middle, and high schools. School districts miss AYP if they miss their target for the same indicator at all three levels.

Student Groups. Student groups evaluated for AYP are: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, or Special Education. Minimum size criteria for performance is five students with a confidence interval. Minimum size criteria for participation is 30 if one grade is tested and 60 if two or more grades are tested.

Improvement Definition. The only improvement definition used is AYP safe harbor, which requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator.

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Massachusetts

Key Provisions: EOC, Performance Index

Assessment Program

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) includes:

- English language arts (ELA) in grades 3–8, 10
- Mathematics in grades 3–8, 10
- Technology/engineering in grades 5 and 8
- High school end-of-course (EOC) assessments in science and technology/engineering: Biology, Chemistry, Introductory Physics, and Technology/Engineering

In addition, Massachusetts is a member of the America Diploma Project (ADP), which is developing end-of-course tests for a consortium of states.

Graduation Requirement. Beginning with the class of 2010, high school students must earn a proficient score on the grade 10 ELA and mathematics tests or earn a Needs Improvement score and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan. High school students must also earn a Needs Improvement score on one science and technology/engineering EOC. In addition to the Educational Proficiency Plan alternative, there is an appeals process for eligible students who do not meet the graduation testing requirement.

Accountability System

Massachusetts merged its state accountability system with federal adequate yearly progress (AYP). The AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and elementary and middle school attendance rates. The AYP performance indicators are a Composite Performance Index that assigns partial credit for students performing below the Proficient level on the MCAS mathematics and ELA assessments. Massachusetts does not currently use EOC exams for accountability.

Student Groups. Massachusetts evaluates performance of the following student groups for AYP: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Special Education. Minimum size criteria is 40/5%/200- student groups are evaluated if there are at least 40 students and the student group represents at least five percent of All Students, or at least 200 students.

Improvement Definition. The only improvement definition used is AYP safe harbor, which requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. A confidence interval is applied to the evaluation of improvement for safe harbor.

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Mississippi

Key Provisions. EOC, EOC for Accountability, Performance Index, Student Progress Measure

Assessment Program

The state administers the Mississippi Curriculum Test, Second Edition in:

- English language arts in grades 3–8
- Mathematics in grades 3–8

At the secondary level, Mississippi administers the Subject Area Testing Program, Second Edition (SATP2) which includes end-of-course assessments in:

- Algebra I
- Biology
- English II
- U.S. History

Graduation Requirement. Students must pass all four EOC assessments to graduate. But students who fail a subject area twice can appeal for an alternate evaluation to demonstrate their mastery of the subject.

Accountability System

State accountability ratings are based on results from statewide assessments (the student testing programs) and data on school completion for a cohort of students tracked over five years. At the high school level, the accountability system uses only the score from the student's first attempt on the EOC exams. School and district ratings are based on three measures: 1) Achievement, a determination of overall performance during the previous school year on a performance index that gives partial credit for students who score at lower proficiency levels on the state assessments; 2) Growth, the degree to which a school or district met its expected performance; and 3) High School Completion, including a five-year graduation rate and a completion index that gives partial credit for students who receive a certificate of completion or general educational development (GED) certificate and students still enrolled after five years. Based on these measures, schools and districts are assigned one of seven labels (Star School / Star District, High Performing, Successful, Academic Watch, At Risk of Failing, Low Performing, Failing).

The AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, elementary and middle school attendance rates, and high school graduation rates. At the high school level, scores from Algebra I and English II EOC exams are included in AYP calculations. High school participation and performance rates are based on current year and banked

EOC results for grade 12 students who were enrolled in the state for grades 10 through 12. Mississippi calculates performance separately for each grade and aggregates results across grades.

Student Groups. For AYP, Mississippi evaluates the following student groups: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Student groups of 40 or more are evaluated for academic performance. A confidence interval is applied when determining if the subgroup met the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO).

Improvement Definition. The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement at the All Students level on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent.

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Missouri

Key Provisions. EOC, EOC for Accountability, Student Progress Measure

Assessment Program

The Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) includes the following assessments:

- Mathematics and in grades 3–8
- English language arts (communication arts) in grades 3–8
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- End-of-course (EOC) exams in Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, English I, English II, Biology, Government, American History

Graduation Requirement. All students must take Algebra I, English II, Biology, and Government before graduation but are not required to pass the exams to receive a diploma.

Accountability System

Missouri does not have a state accountability rating system other than federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and elementary and middle school attendance rates. Algebra I and English II EOC results are used for high schools. Students tested on an EOC in grades 9–12, as well as banked scores for students in grade 9 who took one of the assessments in an earlier grade, are included in the indicators. The AYP performance indicator assigns credit for students who meet either the proficiency standard or a growth standard.

Student Groups. For AYP, Missouri evaluates the following student groups: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Other (includes non-response), Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Student groups of 30 or more are evaluated with a confidence interval for academic performance.

Improvement Definition. The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent.

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New Jersey

Key Provisions. EOC

Assessment Program

New Jersey's assessment program for grades is titled the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK). Students are administered assessments in:

- Mathematics in grades 3–8
- Language arts literacy (including reading and writing) in grades 3–8
- Science in grades 4 and 8

Secondary assessments are administered under the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) and include:

- Mathematics in grade 11;
- Language arts literacy (including reading and writing) in grade 11;
- End-of-course (EOC) assessments in Algebra I and Biology.

The state department of education is planning to move to an end-of-course test model for all content areas of the high school assessment.

Graduation Requirement. Currently, students are not required to pass EOC assessments to graduate, but this is expected to change in the future. The HSPA is the current exit-level test. Students who fail one or more sections of the HSPA may take the Alternative High School Assessment to satisfy the state's graduation requirement. In addition, students who have met all other graduation requirements except passing the HSPA can either return to school at testing time the following year and retake the HSPA or pass the General Education Diploma (GED) test.

Accountability System

New Jersey's monitoring and evaluation system for public school districts is known as New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) and focuses attention on 1) Instruction and Program; 2) Personnel; 3) Fiscal management; 4) Operations; and 5) Governance. The NJQSAC includes provisions for rewards and sanctions for Title I and non-Title I school districts. AYP determinations are used in the Instruction and Program component. The AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and elementary and middle school attendance rates. The first administration of the HSPA in grade 11 in language arts literacy and mathematics is used for AYP determinations.

Student Groups. For AYP, New Jersey evaluates the following student groups: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Student groups of 30 or more are evaluated for academic performance. New Jersey uses a confidence interval of 95 percent around the school's or district's proficiency level for determining AYP and a confidence interval of 75 percent around a school's or district's proficiency level for determining safe harbor.

Improvement Definition. The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent.

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New York

Key Provisions: AYP/State Alignment, EOC, EOC in Accountability

Assessment Program

The New York State Testing Program (NYSTP) includes the following assessments for elementary and middle school students:

- English language arts (ELA) in grades 3–8
- Mathematics in grades 3–8
- Science in grades 4 and 8
- Social studies in grades 5 and 8

High school students take the Regents Examinations:

- End-of-course (EOC) assessments in English and writing, mathematics, U.S. history and government, global history and geography, science, and second language proficiency

Graduation Requirement. In order to graduate, New York high school students must pass five Regents Examinations in English language arts, mathematics, science, global history and geography, and U.S. history and government.

Accountability System

New York does not have a separate state accountability system. New York AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and elementary and middle school science participation and performance. The AYP performance indicator for elementary and middle schools is a performance index that assigns partial credit for students who do not meet the proficiency standard on the state assessments but who meet a lower performance standard.

For secondary schools, exit test performance in ELA and mathematics EOC assessments of a cohort of students is evaluated. For example, 2008–2009 AYP determinations for high schools are based on performance of students who are enrolled by the fall snapshot date of the 2008–2009 school year and first entered grade 9 anywhere during the 2005–2006 school year. Students who transfer out during the current school year are removed from the cohort. There are additional rules regarding inclusion of test results for students who withdraw for other reasons. If a student in the cohort takes more than one assessment in a subject during their high school career, the best score is used. Participation rates are based on all current year grade 12 students rather than the cohort.

District AYP determinations are based on aggregate performance on the elementary/middle school participation and performance indicators, high school participation and performance, elementary/middle school science, and graduation rate. To miss AYP for ELA or mathematics, the district must fail to make the standards at both instructional levels.

New York merged their state and federal accountability interventions as part of the USDE approved differentiated accountability pilot for AYP. Previously the lowest performing non-Title I campuses and districts were subject to state interventions.

Student Groups. New York evaluates the following student groups for AYP: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. For participation criteria, student groups must number 40 or more. Student groups of 30 or more are evaluated for academic performance and graduation rate. A confidence interval is applied when determining if the subgroup met the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO).

Improvement Definition. The AYP Safe Harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent.

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North Carolina

Key Provisions. AYP/State Alignment, EOC, EOC for Accountability, Performance Index, Student Progress Measure

Assessment Program

The North Carolina state assessment program includes testing in the following grades and subjects:

- Reading in grades 3–8
- Mathematics in grades 3–8
- Writing in grades 4, 7, and 10
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- End-of-course (EOC) tests for English I, Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology, Physical Science, U.S. History, and Civics and Economics

Graduation Requirement. Beginning with students entering ninth grade in 2006–2007, students must pass the following five EOC exams as a graduation requirement: Algebra I, English I, U.S. History, Civics and Economics, and Biology. This replaces a requirement based on comprehensive assessments in reading comprehension, mathematics, and computer skills.

Accountability System

The North Carolina state accountability system is called the ABCs and assigns school status labels and recognition for performance on a Performance Composite measure and a Growth measure. The Performance Composite measure combines test results across subjects, grades, and tests. The Growth measure requires students to show one year of growth for a year of instruction. Both measures include EOC performance and both are evaluated for All Students only. Campuses in the lowest performance group that do not meet the growth standard receive assistance. Campuses in the three highest performance groups that also meet the growth standard receive recognition.

The AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and elementary and middle school attendance rates. The assessment results included in AYP are reading and mathematics for grades 3–8 and English I and Algebra I EOC. Since 2006 North Carolina has used a growth measure for AYP—students who either perform at the proficient level on the test or meet a growth standard are counted as proficient in the performance measure. Meeting AYP is an additional requirement for the highest status label under the state ABCs accountability system.

Student Groups. For AYP, North Carolina evaluates the following student groups: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Multiracial, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Student groups are evaluated for academic performance if there are 40 students or the group is one percent of all students, whichever is larger. A confidence interval is applied to determine if the subgroup met the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO).

Improvement Definition. The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent.

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Ohio

Key Provisions: AYP/State Alignment, Performance Index, Student Progress Measure

Assessment Program

The Ohio Achievement Tests include the following comprehensive assessments:

- Reading in grades 3–8 and 10
- Mathematics in grades 3–8 and 10
- Science in grades 5, 8, and 10
- Social studies in grades 5, 8, and 10
- Writing in grades 4, 7, and 10

Ohio does not have an end-of-course testing program.

Graduation Requirement. The grade 10 Ohio Achievement Tests and the Ohio Graduation Tests (OGT). Students must pass all five parts of the OGT to receive high school diplomas. Students can graduate by passing four of the five OGT if they meet additional criteria such as minimum performance level on the failed test, attendance rate, grade point average, teacher recommendations, and participation in intervention programs.

Accountability System

The Ohio state accountability system assigns districts and campuses one of six rating designations [Excellent with Distinction, Excellent, Effective, Continuous Improvement, Academic Watch, and Academic Emergency] based on four separate sets of performance criteria:

- 1) state indicators for each grade and subject test (all tested subjects), rated based on percentage of indicators on which standards are met;
- 2) performance index that weights student results according to performance levels on the tests (all tested subjects);
- 3) federal AYP; and
- 4) value-added growth in mathematics and reading for grades 4–8 or improvement on the performance index for high schools.

Districts and campuses must meet a standard on either the state indicators or performance index. The preliminary state accountability designation can be raised or lowered based on AYP designation. For those whose designation does not change based on AYP, performance on the growth or improvement component is used to further refine the designation.

The AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and elementary and middle school attendance rates. Ohio is one of the 15 states approved by USDE to use a student progress measure as another way for campuses and districts to meet AYP. The AYP designations are integrated into the state accountability ratings as described above. All districts and campuses are subject to the AYP school improvement corrective actions except that the non-Title I schools are not subject to sanctions that require expenditure of Title I funds (school choice, supplemental education services, and set asides for professional development).

Student Groups. Student groups are evaluated only for the AYP component. The following student groups are evaluated for AYP: All Students, African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Native American, White, Multiracial, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Minimum size criteria for student group evaluation is 30 students.

Improvement Definition. As part of the value-added growth component for high schools, for whom value-added growth cannot be calculated: improve the performance index by at least 10 points over two years, with at least a three-point increase in the current year. Improvement allows high schools to move up from the two lowest rating designations to the middle designation, but they cannot move to the highest two ratings designations.

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Oklahoma

Key Provisions. EOC, EOC for Accountability, Performance Index

Assessment Program

Oklahoma administers the following criterion-referenced exams as part of the Oklahoma Core Curriculum Tests (OCCT):

- Mathematics and reading in grades 3–8
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social studies in grade 5
- Writing in grades 5 and 8
- Geography in grade 7
- U.S. History in grade 8

High school students are administered:

- Achieving Classroom Excellence (ACE) end-of-course (EOC) exams in Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology I, English II, English III, Geometry, and U.S. History.

Graduation Requirement. Beginning with the freshman class of 2008–09, students must pass EOC exams in English II, Algebra I, and any two of the other five exams in order to graduate. Students who do not meet the exit exam requirements may receive a high school diploma by demonstrating mastery of state academic content standards through alternate methods approved by the state board of education. Alternate methods include alternate tests and end-of-course projects approved by the state board of education.

Accountability System

For each school and district in the state, Oklahoma calculates an Academic Performance Index (API). The API is based on reading and mathematics test results from grades 3–8 and the first administration of the Algebra I and English II EOC exams, school completion (attendance, dropout, or graduation rates), and for high schools, ACT scores with percent participation, Advanced Placement credit, and college remediation rates in reading and mathematics. Test performance is weighted to give partial credit for students who perform below the proficient level. API values range from 0 to 1500. Performance on the API and each component is reported but the state does not issue accountability ratings.

AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and elementary and middle school attendance rates. The performance indicators are the reading and mathematics assessment components of the API adjusted to retain the value range of 0 to 1500.

Student Groups. For AYP, Oklahoma evaluates the following student groups: All Students, Regular Education Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Other Race, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Student groups of 30 or more are evaluated for academic performance with a 95 percent confidence interval applied.

Improvement Definition. The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent. Approved amendments include an option to make safe harbor by demonstrating a ten percent increase in reading and mathematics performance index scores (compared to the maximum score of 1500) and the use of a 75 percent confidence interval.

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Oregon

Key Provisions. AYP/State Alignment, Student Progress Measure, Performance Index

Assessment Program

The state administers the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) in:

- Reading/literature in grades 3–8, 11
- Mathematics in grades 3–8, 11
- Writing in grades 4, 7, 11
- Science in grades 5, 8, 11
- Social sciences (optional) in grades 5, 8, 11

Oregon does not administer end-of-course exams.

Graduation Requirement. Oregon does not have a state exit exam. Beginning with the graduating class of 2012, students must demonstrate proficiency in certain Essential Skills, defined as process skills that can be applied in a variety of courses, subjects, experiences, and settings. For the class of 2012, proficiency in the reading Essential Skill is required. For the class of 2013, proficiency is required in the reading and writing Essential Skills. The class of 2014 must demonstrate proficiency for the Essential Skills of reading, writing, and mathematics.

Accountability System

School ratings under the state accountability system are based on 1) student performance on statewide assessments; 2) improvement in student performance; 3) participation rates on statewide assessments and 4) student attendance or graduation rates. Some schools do not receive ratings; generally, these are small schools or newly opened or reconfigured schools. Schools that do receive a report card rating are assigned a value of Outstanding, Satisfactory, or In Need of Improvement. The school rating formula includes an Achievement Index that rewards schools for students that exceed their target, meet their target, or meet their growth target. Students who fail to meet the performance standard, but who are successful in meeting their growth target, are given full credit in the Achievement Index. For elementary and middle school students in grades 3-8, improvement is measured by the Student Centered Growth Model, a growth-to-proficiency model that evaluates student performance from year to year. For high school students, improvement is based on year-to-year improvement in the performance of the school as a whole, rather than on a growth model. High schools with significant improvement have their Achievement rating raised by one level. A school's rating may be lowered if it does not meet minimum targets for attendance, graduation, or participation.

The AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, elementary and middle school attendance rates and high school graduation rates. Oregon combines scores from two years to make an annual determination of AYP. Schools with a 2009-2010 AYP rating of Met will have an overall report card rating of no lower than Satisfactory.

Student Groups. For AYP, Oregon evaluates the following student groups: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Multiracial, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Student groups of 42 or more are evaluated for academic performance. A confidence interval is applied when determining if the subgroup met the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO).

Improvement Definition. In the state accountability system at the high school level, Oregon calculates a Performance Index for two years of data. An Improvement Index is the difference or change in Performance Index values. A school's Achievement Rating can be raised one level for an Improvement Index value of five or greater.

The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement at the All Students level on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent.

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Pennsylvania

Key Provisions: Performance Index, Student Progress Measure

Assessment Program

The Pennsylvania System of School Assessments (PSSA) includes the following tests.

- Reading in grades 3–8 and 11
- Mathematics in grades 3–8 and 11
- Writing in grades 5, 8, and 11
- Science in grades 4, 8, and 11

Pennsylvania does not currently administer end-of-course (EOC) exams.

Graduation Requirement. Pennsylvania does not have a state required exit-level test.

Pennsylvania students must demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing, and mathematics but school districts are not required to use the PSSA to meet this requirement. The Pennsylvania State Board of Education has recently approved new high school graduation requirements that include end-of-course testing.

Accountability System

Pennsylvania does not have a separate state accountability rating system. The federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) designations are used for both federal and state interventions and recognition. The AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and middle and elementary school attendance rates. Pennsylvania is one of the 15 states approved by USDE to use a student progress measure as another way for campuses and districts to meet AYP. Pennsylvania has received approval from USDE to use the Pennsylvania Performance Index (PPI) as an additional safe-harbor provision for campuses that fail to meet AYP.

The PPI is a combined participation and performance index calculated for All Students and each student group for reading and mathematics. Campuses receive full credit in the index for students who perform at the proficient or advanced level on the test and partial credit for students who perform below the proficient level, including the lowest performing students. Students who are not tested are included in the index but do not count in the numerator total.

Student Groups. For AYP, Pennsylvania evaluates the following student groups: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Multiracial, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Student groups of 40 or more are evaluated for academic performance. A confidence interval is applied when determining if the subgroup met the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO).

Improvement Definition. The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent. The PPI is considered an improvement index because performance must increase each year from the baseline performance level that is set separately for each campus and each student group, to 100 percent in 2014. A confidence interval is applied when determining if a subgroup met the requirement for safe harbor.

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South Carolina

Key Provisions. EOC, EOC in Accountability, Performance Index

Assessment Program

The South Carolina Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS) includes assessments in the following subjects and grades:

- English language arts (ELA), writing, and mathematics for students in grades 3–8
- Science and social studies for all students in grades 4 and 7; for grades 3, 5, 6, and 8 approximately half of students are tested in each subject

The High School Assessment Program (HSAP) includes the following assessments:

- English language arts and mathematics assessments in the spring of students' second year after entering grade 9 (usually grade 10).
- End-of-course (EOC) exams in Algebra I/Math for the Technologies 2, English 1, Physical Science, Biology/Applied Biology 2, and U.S. History and the Constitution

Graduation Requirement. Beginning with the class of 2010, students must achieve passing scores on the HSAP English language arts and mathematics tests. The passing score is lower than the proficient score used in federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Students must also pass a science course in which an EOC is administered. The EOC counts as 20 percent of the grade. A separate diploma is not offered for those students who do not pass the HSAP exams, but the state does issue a certificate of completion.

Accountability System

Schools and districts receive two state accountability ratings, an Absolute Rating based on a performance index and a Growth Rating based on a growth index. The five rating labels are Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and School/District at Risk. For campuses with only grades K–2 the performance index is made up of indicators other than assessment results and growth is change in the performance index. For elementary and middle schools the performance index combines performance across all subjects weighted for student achievement level. The growth index is based on average student growth from one achievement level to the next across five achievement levels. For high schools the performance index includes HSAP results, longitudinal HSAP results, EOC results, and graduation rates. The Growth Rating for high schools is based on improvement in the performance index and improvement of historically low-performing student groups.

The AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and elementary and middle school attendance rates. High

school performance is based on the grade 10 ELA and mathematics tests. South Carolina received approval to consider use of a performance index as an option for meeting AYP for 2009-2010. The AYP index uses the same logic as the state performance index but is a different calculation that meets federal requirements. South Carolina calculates AYP separately for elementary, middle, and high school grades. For districts results are aggregated across grade spans.

Student Groups. For the state accountability Growth Rating for high schools, performance of the following student groups is evaluated: All Students, African American, Hispanic, Native American, Limited English Proficient, Economically Disadvantaged, Students with Disabilities (excluding students receiving speech services), and Migrant. For AYP, performance of the following student groups is evaluated: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. For both state ratings and AYP, student groups of 40 are evaluated for academic performance with a confidence interval.

Improvement Definition. The growth index used for the state Growth Rating for K–2 schools and high schools is a measure of improvement from the previous year on the performance index. The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent. If South Carolina implements the performance index for 2009–2010, campuses and districts can meet AYP by showing sufficient improvement on the index to meet the 100 percent goal by 2014.

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Tennessee

Key Provisions: AYP/State Alignment, EOC, EOC for Accountability, Student Progress Measure

Assessment Program

The Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) includes:

- Mathematics in grades 3–8
- Reading in grades 3–8
- Language arts in grades 3–8
- Social studies in grades 3–8
- Science in grades 3–8
- Writing in grades 5, 8, and 11
- End-of-course (EOC) assessments: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, English I, English II, English III, Biology I, Chemistry, Physics, and U.S. History in high school.

Graduation Requirement. Students entering grade 9 in 2009–2010 must pass ten courses that have EOC tests. Failing the EOC test does not prevent a student from graduating but the EOC counts for 25 percent of the course grade.

Accountability System

Tennessee assigns school districts and campuses grades A–F for achievement and for value-added performance on the state TCAP assessments for reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The state accountability grading system includes performance and growth on high school EOC tests.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) designations are based on participation and performance in reading and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and middle and elementary school attendance rates. High school AYP determinations are based on Algebra I and English II EOC performance. Tennessee AYP uses results from the first time a student is tested and “banks” scores for students who take the Algebra I EOC in middle school. Tennessee has received approval to use a growth model as an alternative way for campuses and districts to meet AYP. (The AYP growth model is not the state value-added growth measure.) Tennessee calculates AYP separately for elementary/middle schools and high schools. School districts miss AYP if they miss the target for the same indicator at both levels.

The state accountability system and AYP are integrated. State interventions are linked to federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) designations rather than the grades under the state system. State and federal interventions are aligned but Title I schools are subject to additional federal sanctions.

Performance on the state indicators is used to differentiate interventions for schools designated as in need of improvement because they do not make AYP for two or more consecutive years.

Student Groups. Tennessee does not evaluate student group performance for the state achievement and value-added indicators. The student groups for AYP are: All Students, African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Native American, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Special Education. Minimum size criteria are 45 students or 1 percent of total, whichever is larger. A confidence interval is applied when determining if the subgroup met the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO).

Improvement Definitions. Tennessee has received approval to calculate AYP safe harbor from the previous year (10 percent reduction in percent not proficient), from two years previous (19 percent reduction), and from three years previous (27 percent reduction).

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Utah

Key Provisions. EOC, EOC for Accountability, Performance Index, Student Progress Measure

Assessment Program

The Utah criterion-referenced testing program, the Core CRTs, include the following tests:

- English language arts (ELA) in grades 2–11
- Mathematics in grades 2–7
- Science tests in grades 4–6
- End-of-Course (EOC) exams in Pre-Algebra, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, and Physics

The following tests are also administered as part of the Utah state assessment program:

- Direct Writing Test in grades 6 and 9
- Utah Basic Skills Competency Test (UBSCT) in high school

Graduation Requirement. Utah does not have an assessment graduation requirement.

Accountability System

Under the Utah state accountability system—U-PASS—campuses must meet performance standards on a participation rate, and either a performance index or progress index. Both the performance index and progress index include weighted performance in ELA, mathematics, science, attendance rate, and the graduation rate. The progress index gives campuses points for students who move from one performance level to a higher level on the assessments from one school year to the next. Performance on the EOC exams is included in both indicators. Campuses are assigned one of the following labels: U-PASS Achieved or U-PASS Not Achieved.

Utah AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and elementary and middle school attendance rates. High school mathematics performance is based on Algebra I and Geometry EOC results. Utah calculates AYP separately for elementary/middle schools and high schools. For districts and campuses with students in more than one grade span, results are aggregated across grade spans. The state accountability system and AYP are not aligned.

Student Groups. The following student groups are evaluated for AYP: All Students, African American, Hispanic, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient (LEP), and Students with Disabilities. For the state U-PASS accountability system, two student groups are evaluated: All Students and a Subgroup that includes students who are non-white or economically

disadvantaged or LEP or students with disabilities. Minimum size criteria for both AYP and U-PASS is 10 students for performance and 40 students for participation.

Improvement Definition. The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent.

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Virginia

Key Provisions. EOC, EOC for Accountability

Assessment Program

Virginia administers the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments in the following subjects and grades:

- Reading in grades 3–8
- Mathematics in grades 3–8
- Writing in grades 5, 8
- Science in grades 3, 5, 8
- History and social science in grade 3

Middle school and high school students take end-of-course assessments in:

- Algebra I
- Geometry
- Algebra II
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Earth Science
- English: Reading
- English: Writing
- Virginia Studies
- United States History to 1877
- United States History: 1877 to present
- Civics and Economics
- Virginia and United States History
- World History I
- World History II
- World Geography

Graduation Requirement. To earn a standard diploma, students must pass at least six EOC exams (or approved substitutes), including two in English, one in mathematics, one in science, and one in history/social studies. Students who do not pass the exit exams may receive a certificate of program completion, a general achievement diploma, or earn a General Educational Development (GED) certificate.

Accountability System

For state accountability, schools are rated on their performance on state assessments in English, history/social science, mathematics, and science. Based on their success in meeting or exceeding achievement objectives, schools can be rated as Fully Accredited, Accredited with Warning,

Accreditation Denied, or Conditionally Accredited. State accountability ratings may reflect credit awarded for successful remediation efforts, as well as the exclusion of failing scores from LEP and transfer students.

AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics and high school graduation rates. Elementary and middle schools select from attendance, science, writing, or history/social science as their additional indicator. The EOC tests used for AYP are English: Reading, Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II. Passing scores of all students who retake tests needed for graduation are counted in AYP determinations. Participation is based on students enrolled in a grade or course for which a state assessment is administered.

Student Groups. For AYP, Virginia evaluates the following student groups: All Students, African American, Hispanic, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Student groups of 50 or one percent of the enrolled student population, whichever is greater, or 200 students, are evaluated for academic performance.

Improvement Definition. The AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent.

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Washington

Key Provisions. EOC, Performance Index

Assessment Program

The Washington Comprehensive Assessment Program (WCAP) includes the following assessments beginning with the 2009–2010 school year:

- Measurements of Student Progress (MSP) in reading in grades 3–8
- MSP in mathematics in grades 3–8
- MSP in writing in grades 4 and 7
- MSP in science in grades 5 and 8
- High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE) in reading, writing, mathematics, and science in grade 10

End-of-course (EOC) exams will be implemented in 2011 in:

- Algebra I / Integrated Math I
- Geometry / Integrated Math II

Graduation Requirement. Washington is implementing a new assessment program beginning in 2009–2010. Students in the classes of 2010 through 2012 must pass the reading and writing portions of the HSPE as a graduation requirement. Beginning with the class of 2013, students must pass all four sections of the exam (reading, writing, mathematics, and science). Students can pass the two end-of-course assessments in mathematics (Algebra I / Integrated Math I or Geometry / Integrated Math II) to meet the mathematics graduation requirement.

Alternative ways to meet the testing requirement for a regular diploma that are used by about three percent of students include evidence of proficiency, AP/college admissions test scores, and a comparison of class grades to those of students who passed the HSPE.

Accountability System

The Washington State Board of Education has developed an Accountability Index that is used to identify both exemplary schools and low-performing schools. The index combines performance from four assessed subjects (reading, writing, mathematics, and science) on four indicators (achievement of economically disadvantaged students, achievement of not economically disadvantaged students, achievement compared to similar campuses on Learning Index, and improvement from the prior year on Learning Index). On each of the 16 measures (plus graduation rates for high schools) campuses receive a rating from 1 to 7 and the Accountability Index is an

average of the ratings. The Learning Index indicator gives more points for students who score at higher achievement levels on the state assessments and fewer points for students who score below the passing standard. A simplified matrix is used to create an Accountability Index score for student groups.

The AYP determinations are based on participation and performance in reading/ELA and mathematics, high school graduation rates, and elementary and middle school attendance rates. Washington calculates AYP separately for elementary, middle, and high school grades. For districts and campuses with more than one grade span, results are aggregated across grade spans. Currently the state Accountability Index and AYP are not aligned.

Student Groups. The state Accountability Index incorporates evaluation of performance of Economically Disadvantaged and Not Economically Disadvantaged student groups. The simplified Accountability Index is calculated for the following student groups: African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, Pacific Islander, White, Multiracial, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities.

For AYP, Washington evaluates the following student groups: All Students, African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities. Student groups of 30 students or one percent of total enrollment are evaluated for academic performance. A confidence interval is applied when determining if the subgroup met the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO).

Improvement Definition. The improvement indicator in the state Accountability Index is change from the prior year on the Learning Index. AYP safe harbor requires a 10 percent decrease in the percentage of students not proficient and improvement on the other indicator. Under this definition the amount of improvement required decreases the closer performance is to the long-term goal of 100 percent.

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