2018 Local Accountability System Meeting
Summary of Meeting on February 12, 2018

The objective for the second meeting of the Local Accountability System (LAS) pilot participant meeting was to discuss the guiding principles and review subcommittee work to begin to develop a framework for a local accountability plan. Commissioner Mike Morath led the discussion of the guiding principles of LAS. Commissioner Morath and TEA staff welcomed pilot participants and discussed expectations for the meeting.

- The commissioner asked pilot participants to think about why they want local accountability systems. Participants expressed their strong desire to recognize measures of progress unique to their districts and communities and to provide a richer reflection of the work that they are doing in schools above and beyond STAAR performance. Participants were then asked to consider whether potential indicators would be equitable and whether the methods for measuring these indicators would prove to be valid, reliable, and auditable.
  The commissioner observed that the pilot districts are in different stages of gathering data and asked the participants for examples of the data that is being collected. The commissioner and the participants discussed that LAS will need measurable components. In discussing surveys, the commissioner remarked that along with a high response rate, it is also necessary to make sure random sampling is included.

- The commissioner asked the participants what consideration of equity should be expected in LAS. The commissioner shared the example of CaSE ratings and how they did not reflect equity in the ratings the districts gave themselves, as self-grading is inherently difficult. TEA staff noted that only three campuses statewide rated themselves as unacceptable through CaSE ratings.

- He also discussed with the participants that there is solid research that can guide a goal-setting process. The reason for local accountability is that if districts and campuses set their own goals, based on their local needs, then the data collected and analyzed as a part of LAS will be more beneficial as it will drive human behavior. It is easier to align local behavior with local goals. A few participants weighed in and agreed but do not want pressure from the state in how they design their LAS. The commissioner shared that the idea of the state not having any involvement with LAS was not what the legislators intended to create.

- The commissioner shared his thoughts regarding campus types and local accountability plans. He believes the rational choice is that there is consistency among the five most common campus types (Elementary, Middle, High, K-12 and Alternative), within and across districts. Several participants believe that consistency does not need to always occur from district to district, and that cut points and methodology should be completely compartmentalized within each district. A few other participants did not think that same campus types, even within a district, should have to be consistent.

- The commissioner asked for feedback regarding consistent testing windows and following the same types of standardized testing procedures for some of the data collected for LAS.

- The commissioner shared that TEA will produce the scorecards, but there must be a limit on the number of domains. He believes nine would be the cap and one would be the minimum.

- The next topic of discussion was about measures based on inputs versus outcomes. The commissioner shared the example of implementing a dual-language program (input) versus actual student outcomes (output) based on proficiency of English language acquisition. The commissioner stated that we need to focus on outcome-based measures for the purposes of LAS. It is important to measure the outcome of the program, not the execution.

The following section describes specific questions (and responses), suggestions, and concerns that surfaced during the discussion. TEA responses are highlighted in red, and American Institutes of Research (AIR) responses are highlighted in blue.

- Questions
  - Are the LAS measures equitable? Are they accurately representing the various subpopulations? [TEA -The measures will be equitable if all campuses of the same school type in the district are using the same plans, metrics and goals. All campuses should be expected to include all subpopulations.] [AIR - Perhaps have pilot districts' recommendations reflect balance between equity for students and freedom to choose campuses to be included.]

  - How is equity defined as it relates to a local accountability system? [TEA - Equity is defined as including all subpopulations using the same plans, metrics and goals for all schools.] [AIR- agree]

  - Should the system focus on growth or absolute performance? [TEA - That should be determined by the district, but every component should be related to absolute performance or growth and should have a goal.] [AIR - Growth should always be a focus. Absolute measures should still be coupled with growth in some way. Chess club is an example.]

  - What if, when we decide to broaden the scope of evaluation, campus outcomes appear to decrease? [TEA - It is a district and/or campus decision how to evaluate the use of those components and find solutions for improvement.] [AIR - Work toward reaching goals set even if there is decline. Don't change goals based on results even if they decrease.]

  - If LAS appears to inflate accountability outcomes, how will the reliability and credibility of the system be perceived by the public? [TEA - It is difficult to know how the public will perceive LAS. However, districts run the risk of an LAS being perceived as invalid if all campuses' outcomes are consistently raised or if districts are picking only certain

campuses to evaluate.] [AIR - If all results appear inflated, consider increasing goals.]

- What is the meaning behind "local" in local accountability system? To what degree is the system locally controlled? [TEA - Districts and campuses will be able to choose the domains, the components to measure within a domain, and the panel-approved metrics based on a goal that is set by the district or campus.] [AIR - agree]

- What if districts submit plans with the same indicators, that are evaluated in the same manner, but they use different cut points? [TEA - This gets back to equity. Districts will need to ensure that campuses are evaluated with same cut points based on the school types.] [AIR - agree]

- Suggestions
  - Use data such as surveys, programmatic evaluations, or campus improvement plans as data for LAS.
  - Broaden the scope of accountability through LAS, and thus districts will strive to improve the areas that the community has established to be important.
  - Common language should be established (e.g., categories vs. domains).
  - Establish a clearer picture of what is required and what is recommended.

- Concerns
  - Communities want to holistically evaluate their students, which may not always lend itself to quantifiable measures.
  - The current focus is on STAAR rather than the other areas the districts they want to emphasize and improve upon.
  - Districts would like to see more compromise regarding the use of indicators.
  - Districts are concerned how to balance the motivation to continuously improve through the implementation of LAS without creating punitive measures evaluated by the state.
  - If the negative consequences of using LAS for official ratings are too great, districts may choose to continue to use their own local system independently rather than marrying it to the state system.
  - The pilot is rushing through the process without deliberately considering the approach that districts within the pilot have taken in their own local systems or the route that other states have taken. The timeline is too short.
  - Campuses within a district may not be able to have a plan unique to their needs if the decision is to use the same plan across campus types.

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The commissioner and members of the pilot program reviewed challenging questions about local accountability plan development.

- Campus Plans
  - Can each campus submit a different plan? [The commissioner has decided that within each school district, each school type (Elementary, Middle School, High School, K-12, or Alternative must submit the same plan.]
  - Can each district require that the same campus type use the same plan? [Yes, that is the expectation as described above, with the exception for special campus population groupings.]

- Data Collection
  - How does the campus data get shared with TEA? [Districts will send the following to TEA:
    - Domains
    - Components
    - Metrics
    - Cut points of metrics
    - Goals of each component
    - Weights of Domains
    - Scaled scores for each Domain
    - Grades for each Domain
    - Any additional information requested by the Panel
  - Will TEA collect and run data through programs to check the data, or will that be part of the audit? [Data runs would fit into an audit process, not an approval process.] If not, can the districts house all data and the superintendent just sign off on submission? [TEA will use the grades and weights provided by the district to combine them with the state accountability rating to arrive at the outcome.]
  - Can the annual cycle for reporting LAS outcomes be changed? This is a concern since the results must be combined with the state's calculations. There may be a delay in the reporting of final outcomes. [This would require approval from the commissioner for a different process than is currently in place for August 15th ratings.]
  - Is it reasonable to expect that all data will be sent to TEA? [TEA will not require that all data be sent to be analyzed unless there is an audit which requires verification of campus data.]

- Standardization
  - Do districts need to have the same methodology when using the same indicator (components)? [Per the commissioner's rational argument, yes.]
  - What type of validation does TEA expect to support using indicators (components)? [Components will be associated with a goal and the metric has been approved by TEA during the pilot year and the panel in subsequent years.]
  - Would TEA consider adding administrative points to those districts who use a standardized plan created by a group of pilot districts? [This is to be determined.]

- Panel
  - Will a panel approve these plans before implementation? [Yes, they will be approved by TEA during the pilot year and the panel in subsequent years.]
  - Will the panel complete a post-check, which may lead to audits? [Yes.]