

2016 Accountability Technical Advisory Committee

Summary of meeting on September 28–29, 2015

Meeting Objective

The objective for the first meeting of the 2016 Accountability Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC) was to review the preliminary 2015 accountability results, discuss topics related to 2016 accountability, and begin planning for House Bill (HB) 2804 implementation.

Overview of Accountability Results

Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff shared the preliminary 2015 accountability results, comparing this year's results to those of previous years. Staff also talked briefly about the effects of excluding results from STAAR assessments in mathematics, grades 3–8; STAAR Accommodated (STAAR A); and STAAR Alternate 2 (STAAR Alt 2) and pointed out that the decisions on the student performance standards for STAAR for 2016 had yet to be made.

Feedback on 2015 Performance Indices and Distinction Designations

ATAC members expressed a desire to continue allowing districts and campuses to earn a Met Standard rating by meeting Index 1 or Index 2 and Index 3 and Index 4. Members commented that this approach is more closely aligned with their original intent when the index framework was initially developed – failure to meet one target does not necessarily result in an unacceptable accountability rating.

The members discussed how having a high cut score (70%) for the district postsecondary readiness distinction designation increases the likelihood of year-to-year changes in which districts earn the distinction and that it's difficult to tell if these changes are random events or the result of changes in performance.

Staff explained that two sets of data are being used for 2015 accountability products. One set that excludes the results of STAAR assessments in mathematics, grades 3–8; STAAR A; and STAAR Alt 2 and one set that includes these assessment results. The data set that excludes the results was used for 2015 state accountability ratings and will be used for the Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR), school report cards, and the identification of Public Education Grant (PEG) campuses. The data set that includes these results will be used for Texas Performance Reporting System (TPRS) reports, federal report card, and federal data submissions. ATAC members also commented that they would like for the Consolidated Accountability File (CAF) to provide a single outcome for each student that could be applied across each index.

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Review changes to Assessment Program for 2015–16

ATAC members reviewed the September 4, 2015, letter that explains the changes to the assessment program for 2015–16. Members also asked how the limit on the duration of assessments—put in place by HB 743 (84th Texas Legislature)—might affect assessment results. Staff explained that it might impact progress measures for some grades, adding that it's possible that some grades won't have progress measures.

State Assessments in 2016 Performance Indices

Staff presented preliminary charts showing which assessments are going to be included in which index. The charts compared the plan for 2016 to previous years. Members expressed concern that STAAR A and STAAR Alt 2 may be too difficult for students and perhaps students should earn credit for growth irrespective of whether they achieve the passing standard. Others raised the idea of lowering the passing standard for STAAR A or treating the outcomes differently, but there was concern that this might be discriminatory. The committee asked that staff explore the development of a STAAR A progress measure with the test contractor. There was also discussion about removing STAAR A from Index 3 and Index 4. Members felt that the assessment is not an appropriate measure of higher level performance. They also believed that prior-year STAAR Modified students are struggling with the full curriculum required for STAAR A. By a vote of 14 to 8, the committee recommended that the results of STAAR A be excluded from Index 3 and Index 4. Members also voted unanimously to recommend continuing the ratings criteria from 2015 in 2016: districts and campuses earn a *Met Standard* rating by meeting Index 1 or Index 2 and Index 3 and Index 4.

The committee discussed how ELLs are included in the indices and, by consensus, decided to recommend that ELLs who are not receiving services because of parental denials and ELLs without a progress measure because their number of years in U.S. schools exceeds their ELL plan years be included in Index 4 after their first year of enrollment in U.S. schools. Members of the committee also expressed a desire to include the results for STAAR L students with no ELL progress measure at the appropriate STAAR standard for each index. Also by consensus, the committee recommended to continue into 2016 the 2015 provision that ELLs who take STAAR Alt 2 are included in accountability identically to non-ELL, STAAR Alt 2 takers.

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Finally, the committee voted 17 to 5 to recommend the removal of student attendance rates as an indicator for distinction designations, citing the passage of HB 2398 (84th Texas Legislature) on student truancy and the fact that attendance rates are usually between 95% and 96%, preventing attendance from being a meaningful indicator to distinguish among schools.

Recommendations on Options to Determine 2016 Targets

Staff presented a document showing the percentiles of districts and campuses—broken down by AEA and non-AEA—that met each index target. The document compares the 2015 results to those of 2014 and 2013. ATAC was informed that they will be asked to make recommendations for 2016 targets at the next meeting after student performance standards for STAAR are finalized.

Index 4—Review of FSHP Transition and TSI Requirements

Staff discussed the transition to the FHSP and the changes to the TSI requirements. Staff also explained that students who graduated at the recommendation of an Individual Graduation Committee (authorized by SB 149 [84th Texas Legislature]) would be counted as graduates for the purpose of accountability. Committee members asked whether IGC graduates could earn the distinguished level of achievement or receive an endorsement. An FAQ document on the TEA website indicates that IGC graduates can earn the distinguished level of achievement or an endorsement (under the FHSP). Member discussed how the graduation plan component of Index 4 should be defined for 2016. The committee voted 25 to 0 to use the integrated graduation plan component as follows beginning with the 2016(?) accountability cycle:

Integrated Graduation Plan Component

$$\frac{(RHSP + DAP) + (FHSP-E + FHSP-DLA)}{(MHSP + RHSP + DAP) + (FHSP + FHSP-E + FHSP-DLA)}$$

Notes:

- FHSP: Foundation High School Program (FHSP) without endorsement
- FHSP-E: FHSP with endorsement, and no distinguished level of achievement
- FHSP-DLA: FHSP with endorsement and Distinguished Level of Achievement

The committee asked how HB 1867 (excluding from completion rate calculations those students who are at least 18 years old, have satisfied graduation requirements, and have not completed their IEPs) would affect accountability in 2016. Staff explained that, while the data would be captured for 2016 graduates, it wouldn't be used in accountability until 2017 because graduation indicators lag by a year. Staff further explained that an *Improvement Required* rating resulting from the inability to exclude these students in 2016 accountability could be remedied during appeals.

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The committee discussed the TSI portion of the postsecondary component of Index 4 and voted unanimously to give credit for meeting the TSI requirement for every student who

- meets the TSI requirement in reading on the TSI assessment, SAT, or ACT;
- meets the TSI requirement in writing on the TSI assessment, SAT, or ACT; and
- meets the TSI requirement in mathematics on the TSI assessment, SAT, or ACT.

A student needs to meet the TSI requirement for each subject but does not need to meet them all on the same assessment. The committee did not suggest any changes to the two postsecondary components of Index 4 that were included for the first time in 2015: graduates who earned credit for at least two advanced/dual-credit courses and graduates who were enrolled in coherent sequence of CTE courses.

Review of HB 2804 Requirements

Staff presented a document that previews sections of chapter 39 of the Texas Education Code following the passage of HB 2804. Committee members reviewed the document and discussed it in small groups. When asked to list possible challenges in implementing the legislation, members mentioned the following:

- The increase in data collection
- Domain 3 doesn't specifically address closing gaps
- Designing Domain 3 to give credit for growth even for students who don't meet the passing standard
- Data collection limitations and "any additional indicator" in Domain 4
- Campuses may choose different indicators than their district for Domain 5
- For Domain I, differentiating college readiness from progress toward college readiness when already measuring growth towards college readiness
- Weighting of first three domains
- Domain 2 leaves flexibility in how to determine growth
- Deciding how to differentiate between postsecondary readiness at the Phase-in Level II and Level III in Domain 2
- Using an A–F rating system may diminish the value of distinction designations
- Dropout recovery campuses may need special consideration. Some campuses won't meet criteria for AEA.

Staff pointed out §39.053 (a-1), which gives insight into the legislative intent of HB 2804 and the state academic accountability system.

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Review of New Indicators and Data Collection Requirements

Staff presented a document that analyzes HB 2804, showing what indicators the statute requires for each domain and also listed several indicators for which data collection could be difficult. Members reviewed the document and discussed it in small groups. The first indicator discussed was the percentage of students who enlist in the armed forces. Members offered several possible options, such as exit surveys for graduating students or getting the information from JROTC programs. Members decided to form a workgroup to explore this indicator further. The ATAC members who volunteered for the workgroup are Julie Conde, Lisa Diserens, Frank Rivera, and Sue Thompson.

The next indicator was the percentage of students who earn an industry certification. Staff suggested using the definition for the performance acknowledgment for certification/licensures as described in the 2015–16 TREx data standards; the committee agreed. The next indicator was the percentage of students in grades 7 and 8 who receive instruction in preparing for high school, college, and a career. Following a discussion of how and when to collect the data, the committee agreed that districts would report the data in the PEIMS fall submission and that this would need to be an indicator based on prior-year information.

The ATAC members discussed options for additional Domain 4 indicators that will comprise thirty-five percent of the overall rating in the A–F system. The ATAC agreed that HB 2804 provides a comprehensive list of Domain 4 indicators for high schools. The committee listed several possible indicators that could be used for elementary and middle schools:

- Student engagement survey
- Participation in clubs
- Participation in UIL
- Participation in Fine Arts
- Fitnessgram®
- Teacher turnover rate
- Accelerated instruction rate
- Participation in science fair
- Disciplinary data
- Participation in GT programs
- School climate survey
- AB Honor Roll rates
- Retention rates (student)
- Student Success Initiative (SSI) data
- Professional development opportunities
- STAAR participation rates

The committee discussed the various advantages and disadvantages of each possible indicator noting that indicators based on data that are already being collected and readily available have a

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distinct advantage over indicators that will require a new data collection. Members also discussed the different types of student and parent surveys that are administered in their local districts.

Transition Issues from Four Indices to Five Domains and Preliminary Options for Assigning A–F Ratings to Domains 1–4 and the Overall Rating for Districts and Campuses

Staff presented a side-by-side comparison of indices and domains. Members reviewed the document and discussed it in small groups. The committee discussed options for calculating the score for Domain 1 but never reached agreement. They will discuss it again at the December meeting. For Domain 2, the committee believed that it is very similar to Index 2 but would like to revisit the targets and progress measures. The committee discussed several options for Domain 3 and decided to have a workgroup examine Domain 3 further. The ATAC members who volunteered for the workgroup are Lisa Diserens, Keith Haffey, Elvia Noriega, Audra Ude, Theresa Urrabazo, and Dash Weerasinghe. The committee also briefly discussed the weighting of the two required components of Domain 4.

Next Steps

ATAC members agreed to a two-day meeting scheduled for Wednesday, December 2 and Thursday, December 3. At that meeting, members will address further topics related to the 2016 accountability ratings, review data, and develop recommendations related to 2016 index targets. ATAC will also continue its work on the implementation of HB 2804 in December.