Final Decisions for 2017 Accountability

This document presents the commissioner of education's final decisions for 2017 accountability.

1. 2017 Overall System

Rigor   The overall design of the accountability system will remain the same, evaluating performance according to four indices:

- Index 1: Student Achievement
- Index 2: Student Progress
- Index 3: Closing Performance Gaps
- Index 4: Postsecondary Readiness

2. Accountability Rating Labels, Criterion, and Targets

Rating Labels   The 2017 rating labels remain the same as those used from 2013 through 2016.

- *Met Standard*: Assigned to districts and campuses that meet the required performance index targets and other accountability rating criteria
- *Improvement Required*: Assigned to districts and campuses (including AEAs) that do not meet the required performance index targets or other accountability rating criteria
- *Met Alternative Standard*: Assigned to charter operators and alternative education campuses evaluated under alternative education accountability (AEA) provisions that meet the required performance index targets and other accountability rating criteria
- *Not Rated*: Assigned to districts and campuses that—under certain, specific circumstances—do not receive a rating

Ratings Criterion   In order to receive a *Met Standard* or *Met Alternative Standard* rating, districts and campuses must meet the performance index target on the following indices, if they have performance data for evaluation:

<p style="text-align:center">Index 1 OR Index 2 AND Index 3 AND Index 4</p>

Rationale: This criterion—used in 2015 and 2016—was the original intent when the index framework was developed. Districts and campuses must either show satisfactory student achievement or show that they are making progress toward satisfactory student achievement. This also addresses the limited availability of progress measures on the EOC assessments for use in Index 2 for high schools and K–12 campuses and districts.

Final Decisions for 2017 Accountability

2017 Performance Index Targets   The performance index targets for 2017 are unchanged from 2016, as shown in the tables below.

Rationale: Changes in the state assessment program in 2017, including revised test blueprints and the new online test platform for STAAR L and STAAR A, are the primary reasons for maintaining the 2016 targets. In addition, holding index targets constant allows performance comparisons between 2017 and 2016 to be more meaningful.

2017 Index Targets for Non-AEA Districts and Campuses

	Index 1	Index 2	Index 3	Index 4	
				All Components	**STAAR Component Only**
District Targets	60	22	28	60	13
Campus Targets					
Elementary	60	32	28	n/a	12
Middle		30	26	n/a	13
High School/K–12 and Elementary/Secondary		17	30	60	21

2017 Index Targets for AEA Charter Districts and Campuses

	Index 1	Index 2	Index 3	Index 4	
				Both Components	**Graduation/Dropout Rate Only**
AEA Charter Districts and Campuses	35	8	13	33	45

Final Decisions for 2017 Accountability

3. Performance Indices

Index 1: Student Achievement   Provides a snapshot of performance across subjects, on both general and alternative assessments

Indicators, student assessment results included/excluded, and methodology remain unchanged from 2016.

Index 2: Student Progress   Measures student progress and provides an opportunity for districts and campuses to receive credit for improving student performance independent of overall student achievement

Indicators, student assessment results included/excluded, and methodology remain unchanged from 2016.

Index 3: Closing Performance Gaps   Emphasizes the academic achievement of economically disadvantaged students and the two lowest-performing racial/ethnic student groups

- STAAR results of students who receive linguistic accommodations will be included in Index 3.

  Rationale Beginning with the March 2017 administrations, the STAAR online testing platform will include embedded accommodations and other accessibility features. These enhancements eliminate the need for separate STAAR L test forms. Therefore, students receiving linguistic accommodations are included in Index 3 in the same manner as other English language learners receiving bilingual education or ESL instructional services.

Index 4: Postsecondary Readiness   Emphasizes the role of elementary and middle schools in preparing students for the rigors of high school, and the importance of earning a high school diploma that provides students with the foundation necessary for success in college, the workforce, job training programs, or the military

- STAAR results of students who receive linguistic accommodations will be included in Index 4.

  Rationale: Beginning with the March 2017 administrations, the STAAR online testing platform will include embedded accommodations and other accessibility features. These enhancements eliminate the need for separate STAAR L test forms. Therefore, students receiving linguistic accommodations are included in Index 4 in the same manner as other English language learners receiving bilingual education or ESL instructional services.

- Results of STAAR Alternate 2 assessments will be included in Index 4.

  Rationale: Including STAAR Alternate 2 results in Index 4 ensures that results for students with disabilities are included in all four performance indices and produces a more comprehensive measure that is better aligned with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

4. Distinction Designations

Campus Comparison Groups   In 2017, two new variables will be added to the calculation that determines campus comparison groups: the percentage of students served by special education and the percentage of students enrolled in an early college high school program.

Rationale: Adding these two variables refines the calculation that determines campus comparison groups; campuses will be grouped with more comparable peers than they would be otherwise.

District Distinction Designations   The percentage of a district's campuses that must have postsecondary indicators in the top quartile in order for the district to earn this distinction will be reduced from 70 to 55.

Rationale: In previous years, only approximately 2 percent of districts were able to earn this distinction. Lowering the percentage threshold slightly will allow the accountability system to recognize a greater percentage of districts with high-achieving campuses that outperform their peers in terms of postsecondary readiness.