

2019 Accountability Policy Advisory Committee Summary of Meeting on November 5, 2018

The objective for the first meeting of the 2019 Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) was to review 2018 accountability results and recommend improvements for the 2019 accountability system and beyond. TEA responses to questions and concerns given during the meeting are provided in red. Some questions will require staff research and are yet to be answered. The following is a summary of the discussion at the meeting.

- TEA welcomed the committee and introduced new members.
- Committee members reviewed results from the 2018 accountability cycle.
 - ◆ Questions
 - What were the data integrity issues? [We had reason to believe data submitted by a district were not accurate, and there is an ongoing investigation.]
 - Did TEA successfully negotiate to receive the highest instead of the most recent SAT/ACT scores? [Yes. Beginning with 2019 accountability ratings, TEA will use the best SAT/ACT score from the previous four years for each 2018 graduate.]
 - What was the rationale for the “three of four” rule and will it continue in 2019? [This was in response to a public comment and was adopted into the final manual. Whether this rule will be applied for 2019 ratings is still under discussion.]
 - How many of the campuses affected by the “three out of four” rule were significantly economically disadvantaged? [23 of the 57 campuses affected by this rule were at least 80% economically disadvantaged.]
 - Of the 92 Hurricane Harvey-affected districts, how many fell in each grade band? [Please see the table below.]

Grade	Count	Percentage
B	43	46.74
C	33	35.87
D	12	13.04
F	4	4.35

- When will the system allow for inclusion of substitute assessments at the Meets and Masters performance levels? [The agency is working on this currently. It is our goal to have three performance levels for substitute assessments in place for 2020 accountability ratings.]
 - ◆ Concerns
 - The “three of four” rule resembles a “forced failure” situation.
 - Since D rated campuses already have sanctions for poor performance, the “three of four” rule seems excessive.
 - This new system, which combines state and federal accountability, incentivizes ignoring at-risk students.

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- An *F* rating for an alternative education accountability (AEA) campus will cap the district rating at a *B*. It is not clear that outcome was the original intention of the rule.
- ♦ Suggestions
 - Consider reinstating bonus points and graduation plans for AEAs while keeping the AEA system rigorous.
- Commissioner Mike Morath addressed the committee.
 - ♦ Questions
 - What has been the feedback on the A–F accountability system from the public? [Parent feedback has been largely positive, however not a single stakeholder group has had a uniform opinion.]
 - Why do we have graduation plans if we don't use them in accountability? [This is something we may revisit at the 5-year reset.]
 - Why can't we use the Texas Success Initiative assessment (TSIA) to fulfill the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requirement to administer a more rigorous assessment in high school? [TSIA would have to go through peer review and its use would require a waiver to satisfy ESSA. ESSA requires the use of either state-administered assessments or nationally-recognized assessments.]
 - Who will cover the cost if districts are required to use SAT/ACT to meet the ESSA requirement? [This is still under discussion.]
 - Are we sure the public wants substitute assessments incorporated at three performance levels?
 - ♦ Concerns
 - The “three of four” rule is a step backwards, as it emphasizes achievement over growth.
 - Variable student group targets allow for a scenario where the exact same students could be measured against three different sets of targets. Consider a campus composed of 100 percent economically disadvantaged Hispanic students.
 - If the release date for accountability ratings is moved to November, the importance of the ratings could get lost in the holiday and election seasons.
 - Any change in the release date for accountability ratings should be compatible with local accountability systems and school improvement as well as district planning and budgeting processes.
 - ♦ Suggestions
 - As College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) is the ultimate goal of our education system, we should weight the Closing the Gaps CCMR component at 50 percent for districts and high schools.

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- Commissioner Morath suggested, if possible, adjusting the timing of the accountability system to allow for the use of graduation rates, CCMR data, and STAAR results from the same academic year.
 - Figure out a summer preliminary ratings release if the official accountability ratings release date is moved to November.
 - AEA campuses could benefit from bonus points.
 - Look at the impact of averaging parts A and B in the School Progress domain for all campus and district types for 2019 accountability.
 - Commissioner Morath suggested studying the effect of rating districts as a collection of campuses instead of a collection of student data.
 - Continue to offer one-half point CCMR credit for CTE in an extended transition period to align with the adoption of the updated industry-based certifications list.
 - Accelerate collection and application of campus enrollment type data.
 - Study the use of smaller minimum sizes to calculate growth in the Closing the Gaps domain.
 - Ensure the agency receives OnRamps college credit data for students who decline having college credit transcribed.
- Jarrad Toussant from the College, Career, and Military Prep Division addressed the committee regarding certification programs.
 - ♦ Questions
 - What are you doing in terms of stackable credentials? [The agency is gathering industry feedback.]
 - What kind of support is being offered to rural schools? Is financial support available? [This is in the vetting process.]
 - Is there any focus on promoting soft skills? [It varies by industry. There are some that must have soft skills to even start, but we don't know if that will be reflected in assessments.]
 - ♦ Concerns
 - These certifications are too tech heavy.
 - Districts are dropping valuable programs because there is no certification for them.
 - There is value here in narrowing college choices which goes beyond earning a credential.
 - Not all CTE programs should be required to lead to a certification.
- Sara Kohn, Manager of School Financial Performance, addressed the committee regarding financial reporting.
 - ♦ Questions

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- Are fiscal peer groups required by ESSA?
- Will borrowed funds be included in the fiscal reports?
- Will charters be identified as such in the fiscal reports?
- Will these reports show one or multiple years?
- How will outliers be handled?
- ♦ Suggestions
 - Break out state and federal funding on the financial report card.
 - Adjust figures for the districts that give a local homestead exemption.
 - Don't mix charters and ISDs in fiscal peer groups.
- Michele Stahl, Director of Local Accountability Systems in the Division of Performance Reporting, addressed the committee.
- Committee members considered developments for the 2019 accountability system and beyond.
 - ♦ Questions
 - Can districts use a released version of the SAT and just administer it locally to cover the ESSA requirement? **[No.]**
 - What year in high school will the SAT/ACT outcomes be applied for accountability purposes? **[TBD]**
 - Is Algebra II sufficient to cover the ESSA mathematics requirement? **[This would require statutory changes as the agency is prohibited from using Algebra II outcomes in accountability.]**
 - Can we make TSIA a prerequisite before taking an OnRamps course? **[The agency would have to work with UT to make changes to the program's requirements.]**
 - ♦ Suggestions
 - Share assessment data the agency acquires from the College Board and ACT with districts and charters.
 - Use the EL performance measure for the Student Achievement domain and include it at all three performance standards.
 - For School Progress, Part A, continue to use the STAAR progress measure for year two EL students.
 - The OnRamps indicator should be implemented next fall since it is a lagging indicator and OnRamps decisions are not yet final.
- Committee members reviewed accountability reports.
 - ♦ Questions
 - Why are these HTML instead of PDFs? **[The agency is moving to dynamic, online data reporting. Batched PDFs and/or Excel downloads will still be available for districts in TEASE based on feedback.]**

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- Will there ever be pluses and minuses in the A–F ratings? [There are no plans at present to include plusses and minuses along with letter grades.]
- Will you be producing a polished one-pager summary report? [Yes. We are working to update the overall summary page in order to make it more visually appealing.]

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