

Chapter 8 – System Safeguards and Other Federal Requirements

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) reauthorized and amended federal programs established under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA). Under NCLB, accountability provisions that formerly applied to only districts and campuses receiving Title I, Part A funds were applied to all districts and campuses. All districts and campuses were evaluated annually for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) from the 2002–03 school year through the 2011–12 school year.

On September 30, 2013, the U.S. Secretary of Education approved the request of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to waive specific provisions of ESEA/NCLB. The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) waived the 2012–13 and 2013–14 AYP calculations, allowing the state’s existing systems of interventions to guide the support and improvement of schools. Texas has since received two, one-year extensions; the current waiver is effective through the 2015–16 school year.

On December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) reauthorized the ESEA and provides states with new flexibility to develop a state accountability system to meet federal accountability requirements. However, the new accountability provisions of ESSA are not in effect for the 2015–16 school year.

State Accountability System Safeguards

System safeguards have been established to meet state accountability-related intervention requirements. Performance results are disaggregated to show the performance of each student group on each of the indicators. The purpose of the system safeguard report is to ensure that—in an aggregated district or campus report—substandard performance in one or more areas or by one or more student groups is not disguised by higher performance in other areas or by other student groups.

On August 15, 2016, the state accountability ratings will be released on the TEA website. Distinction designations and system safeguard reports will be released on the website on or before September 16, 2016. The system safeguard reports provide disaggregated results for four components (performance rates, participation rates, graduation rates, and limits on the use of the alternative assessment) for eleven student groups: all students, African American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, White, two or more races, economically disadvantaged, students served by special education, and English language learners (ELLs). The ELL student group includes both students currently identified as limited English proficient (LEP) and students who have met the criteria for exiting bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. These students are no longer classified as LEP for Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) reporting and are in the first or second year of monitoring. District- and campus-level system safeguard results will be reported for any student group that meets minimum-size criteria. All student groups have the same target for each of the four components.

The table below shows the 2016 performance targets for both AEAs and non-AEAs that will be used for state system safeguards and federal accountability evaluations.

Accountability System Safeguard Measures and Targets (Non-AEAs and AEAs)											
	All	African Amer.	Hispanic	White	Amer. Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	Econ. Disadv.	Special Ed	ELLs*
Performance Rate Targets - State											
Reading	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%
Mathematics	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%
Writing	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%
Science	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%
Social Studies	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%
Performance Rate Targets - Federal											
Reading	87%	87%	87%	87%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	87%	87%	87%
Mathematics	87%	87%	87%	87%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	87%	87%	87%
Participation Rate Targets - Federal											
Reading	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Mathematics	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Graduation Rate Targets - Federal **											
4-year	88%	88%	88%	88%	88%	88%	88%	88%	88%	88%	88%
5-year	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%
District Limits on Use of Alternative Assessment Results											
Reading-STAAR Alt 2	1%	Not Applicable									
Mathematics-STAAR Alt 2	1%	Not Applicable									

* Both current and monitored ELLs are included in the performance rates, current ELLs only are included in the participation rates, and EVER ELLs in high school are included in the federal graduation rates.

** Federal graduation rate targets are applied to state system safeguards and include an improvement target.

State Performance Targets

Performance rates calculated for system safeguards for state accountability are the disaggregated results used to calculate the Index 1 score for reading, mathematics, writing, science, and social studies. The performance target for 2016 is 60 percent of tests meeting or exceeding the satisfactory standard. It corresponds to the target of 60 on *Index 1: Student Achievement*. While AEAs have a target of 35 for Index 1, the system safeguard target for AEAs is 60. System safeguard targets are the same for AEAs and non-AEAs.

Federal Performance Targets

Performance rates calculated for system safeguards for federal accountability are the disaggregated results used to calculate the Index 1 score for reading and mathematics only. The performance target for 2016 is 87 percent of tests meeting or exceeding the satisfactory standard. The targets are required for only seven student groups: all students, African American, Hispanic, White, economically disadvantaged, students served by special education, and ELLs.

Federal Participation Targets

The target of 95 percent of students taking a state-administered assessment in reading and mathematics is unchanged from the federal accountability target in prior years. Participation measures are based on STAAR and TELPAS assessment results. For more information on how participation is calculated, please see *Appendix K – Data Sources*.

Federal Graduation Rate Goals and Targets

Texas is required by state law to use the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) dropout definition and the federal calculation for graduation rate.

The long-term statewide goal for the four-year graduation rate is 90.0 percent. Districts and high schools that do not meet this goal must meet either meet an annual target toward the four-year graduation rate or an annual target for the five-year graduation rate.

Four-Year Graduation Rate Annual Target. For 2016, the annual target is 88 percent of students graduate with a regular high school diploma in four years.

Four-Year Graduation Rate Growth Target. The growth target is a 10 percent decrease in the difference between prior year graduation rate and the 90 percent goal.

Five-Year Graduation Rate Annual Target. For 2016, the annual target is 90 percent of students graduate with a regular high school diploma in five years.

Limits on Use of Alternative Assessments

The system safeguard reports indicate whether a school district has exceeded the federal limit on use of alternative assessments. Federal limitations require that the number of scores that meet the STAAR Alternate 2 satisfactory standard not exceed one percent of the district's total participation. The measures—reported only at the district level—are shown separately for reading and mathematics.

Consequences and Interventions

Interventions pertain to activities that result from the issuance of ratings under the state accountability system. State accountability-related interventions require engaging in the continuous improvement process within the Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS). Intervention activities reflect an emphasis on increased student performance, targeted improvement planning, data analysis, needs assessment, and data integrity. Required levels of intervention are determined based on the requirements of the Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 39. See the Division of Program Monitoring and Interventions website at <http://tea.texas.gov/pmi/> for more information.

Failure to meet the accountability safeguard target for any one target will be addressed through the TAIS continuous improvement process. If the campus or district is already identified for assistance or intervention in the TAIS based on the current-year state accountability rating or prior-year state or federal accountability designations, performance on the safeguard indicators will be incorporated into that improvement effort. If the campus or district received a rating of *Met Standard*, performance on the safeguard indicators will be addressed through intervention activities in TEC Chapter 11 improvement plans. The level of intervention and support the campus or district receives is based on performance history as well as current-year state accountability rating and performance on the safeguard measures.

Federal Accountability Requirements

Where applicable, the data used to calculate state system safeguard results are also used to meet federal accountability requirements, such as district evaluations for Title III Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs), the USDE Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) State Performance Plan (SPP), and the State Annual Performance Report (APR). These federal requirements are limited to the English language arts/reading and mathematics performance and participation indicators for the required ELL and special education programs at the 2015–16 federal performance target of 87 percent.

The minimum-size criteria used for federal accountability requirements, however, differs from the minimum-size criteria used for state accountability. The table below compares the criteria for state and federal accountability.

2016 System Safeguard Minimum Size Criteria			
		State System Safeguards	Federal Accountability Requirements*
Performance Rates	All Students	None (Small Numbers Analysis applied)	25 (No Small Numbers Analysis applied)
	Student Groups	25	25 and 10%; or 200
Participation Rates	All Students	None (Small Numbers Analysis applied)	25 (No Small Numbers Analysis applied)
	Student Groups	25	25 and 10%; or 200
Federal Graduation Rates	All Students	None (Small Numbers Analysis applied)	10 (No Small Numbers Analysis applied)
	Student Groups	25	25 and 10%; or 200

* Where applicable, these minimum-size criteria are applied to meet the assessment and accountability requirements of the Title III Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) and USDE Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

The approved ESEA flexibility waiver is available online at http://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Schools/Waivers/NCLB-ESEA_Waiver_Information/.

The current Priority, Focus, and Reward Schools lists, methodology, and student groups evaluated are available at http://tea.texas.gov/Student_Testing_and_Accountability/Monitoring_and_Interventions/School_Improvement_and_Support/Priority_Focus_and_Reward_Schools/.