

# 2020 AEA Recommendations

## What Data is Used to Determine AEA Eligibility?

Alternative education campuses (AECs), including charter school AECs, must serve students at risk of dropping out of school as defined in TEC §29.081(d), be identified as “alternative instructional” in AskTED, and provide accelerated instructional services to these students.

### At-Risk Percentage

Each registered AEC must have at least 75 percent at-risk student enrollment on the AEC verified through current-year TSDS PEIMS fall enrollment data to be evaluated by alternative education accountability (AEA) provisions. TEC §29.081 defines fourteen criteria used to identify students as “at-risk of dropping out of school.” The at-risk enrollment criterion restricts use of AEA provisions to AECs that serve large populations of at-risk students and enhances at-risk data quality.

### Alternative Instructional

- The AEC must have its own county-district-campus number for which TSDS PEIMS data are submitted and test answer documents are coded. A program operated within or supported by another campus does not qualify.
- The AEC must be identified in AskTED as an alternative instructional campus. This is a self-designation that districts and charter schools request via AskTED. Charter schools may only make AskTED data updates through TEA’s Charter School Division.
- The AEC must offer nontraditional settings and methods of instructional delivery designed to meet the needs of the students served on the AEC.
- The AEC cannot be the only middle school or high school listed for its district in AskTED. (This is not applicable to charter schools.)

### Grade 6–12 Enrollment Percentage

To be evaluated by AEA provisions, each registered AEC must have at least 50 percent student enrollment in grades 6–12 based on total students enrolled (early education–grade 12) verified through current-year TSDS PEIMS fall enrollment data. The grades 6–12 enrollment criterion restricts use of AEA provisions to middle and high schools.

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## Grade 6–12 Enrollment Modeled Scenarios

The following table displays data modeling scenarios where the AEC criteria is evaluated using modified percentages of students grades 6–12 is increased.

|                                     |
|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Percentage ≥ 75%</b>             |
| <i>Alternative Education Campus</i> |
| <b>295</b>                          |
| ↓ 5 Move out of AEA                 |
| <b>Percentage ≥ 90%</b>             |
| <i>Alternative Education Campus</i> |
| <b>287</b>                          |
| ↓ 13 Move out of AEA                |

## Grade 6–12 Enrollment Recommendation

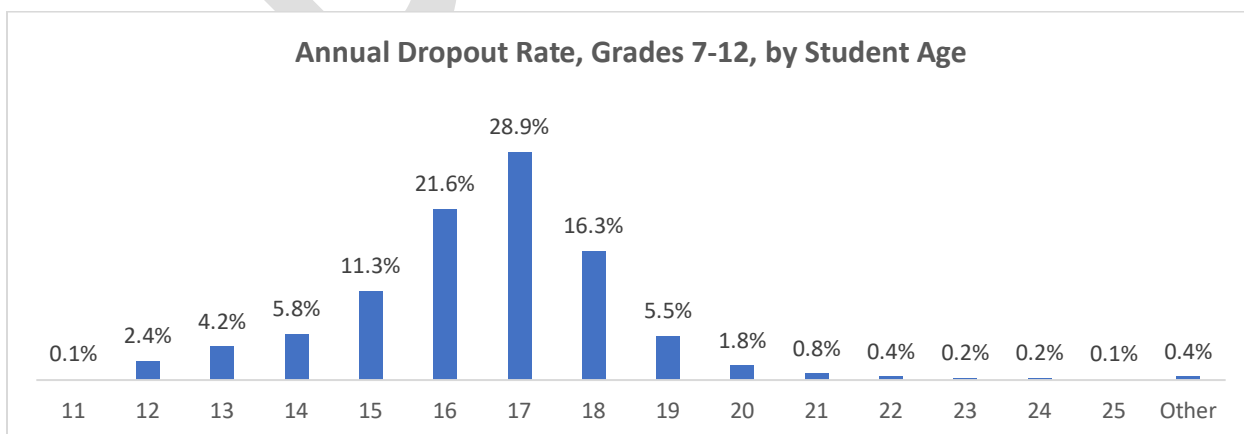
Based on modeled data, Performance Reporting recommends the *2021 Accountability Manual* update the grade 6–12 enrollment percentage to 90 percent. This change would impact 13 campuses’ AEA eligibility. Five of those campuses are in ISDs and have been *Not Rated* for at least three years. The remaining 8 campuses are charter campuses that serve students in grades below 6. This adjustment aligns with the original intent of limiting AEA provisions for middle and high schools.

## Age 17+ Enrollment Percentage

Enrollment data by student age is evaluated to determine if the AEC should be designated a dropout recovery school (DRS). In DRSs, education services are targeted to dropout prevention and recovery of students in grades 9–12, with enrollment consisting of at least 50 percent of the students 17 years of age or older as of September 1, 2019, as reported for the fall semester TSDS PEIMS submission.

## Dropout Data

Dropout data shows that statewide, students predominantly drop out at the ages associated with high school (i.e., age 14 or above). The highest percentages of dropouts are ages 16 and 17.



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## Current Methodology

As outlined above, student age data is used to differentiate the two types of AECs that receive ratings, DRSs and AECs of Choice. The criteria for an AEC to be designated a DRS is that 50% or greater of their students are ages 17 or above. In 2020, the AEC counts by AEC type are as follows:

|                                |                      |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Dropout Recovery School</i> | <i>AEC of Choice</i> |
| <b>211</b>                     | <b>89</b>            |

## Modeled Scenarios

### Age 16+ Enrollment Percentage

The following table displays data modeling scenarios where the DRS criteria is evaluated using percentages of students age 16 or above in a campus.

| Percentage ≥ 50%  |  |
|---|--|
| <i>Dropout Recovery School</i><br><b>260</b>                                  | <i>AEC of Choice</i><br><b>40</b>                                    |
| ↔ <b>0</b> Move to AEC of Choice<br>↑ <b>49</b> Net Change from Current Model | ↓ <b>49</b> Move to DRS<br>↓ <b>49</b> Net Change from Current Model |
| Percentage ≥ 60%  |  |
| <i>Dropout Recovery School</i><br><b>246</b>                                  | <i>AEC of Choice</i><br><b>54</b>                                    |
| ↓ <b>1</b> Move to AEC of Choice<br>↑ <b>35</b> Net Change from Current Model | ↓ <b>36</b> Move to DRS<br>↓ <b>35</b> Net Change from Current Model |
| Percentage ≥ 70%  |  |
| <i>Dropout Recovery School</i><br><b>240</b>                                  | <i>AEC of Choice</i><br><b>60</b>                                    |
| ↓ <b>1</b> Move to AEC of Choice<br>↑ <b>29</b> Net Change from Current Model | ↓ <b>30</b> Move to DRS<br>↓ <b>29</b> Net Change from Current Model |
| Percentage ≥ 75%  |  |
| <i>Dropout Recovery School</i><br><b>230</b>                                  | <i>AEC of Choice</i><br><b>70</b>                                    |
| ↓ <b>4</b> Move to AEC of Choice<br>↑ <b>19</b> Net Change from Current Model | ↓ <b>23</b> Move to DRS<br>↓ <b>19</b> Net Change from Current Model |

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| Percentage ≥ 90%   |   |
|--|---|
| <i>Dropout Recovery School</i><br><b>139</b>                                   | <i>AEC of Choice</i><br><b>161</b>                                  |
| ↓ <b>75</b> Move to AEC of Choice<br>↓ <b>72</b> Net Change from Current Model | ↓ <b>3</b> Move to DRS<br>↑ <b>72</b> Net Change from Current Model |

## Age 17+ Enrollment Recommendation

Based on modeled data and a recommendation from the AEA Taskforce, Performance Reporting recommends the 50 percent/age 17+ enrollment criteria defined TEC §39.0548 be updated to 60 percent/age 16+. This change would push 36 campuses AEC of Choice to DRS and one campus from DRS to AEC of Choice. Approximately 20 campuses a year fluctuate between DRS and AEC of Choice solely as their population of age 17+ hovers at the current 50 percent criteria. This adjustment aligns with the feedback from the AEA Taskforce and data provided by Research and Analysis that 45.4 percent of reported dropouts are 16 or younger when leaving school. Renaming these campuses as “Dropout Prevention and Recovery Schools” may more accurately reflect their mission.

Follow up action with the AEA taskforce and PR staff would be to further analyze and classify the programs run by the remaining 54 AECs of Choice. Currently, these programs include (but are not limited to) pregnancy-related services, newcomer academies, and special education programs. Additional accountability recommendations for these campuses would be forthcoming.

## September 2, 2020 Follow up DPRS Recommendation

Research in conjunction with TEA’s Charter School Division found most AECs of choice operate specialized dropout prevention services for exceptional populations. The campuses do not meet the age criteria for dropout prevention or recovery school (DPRS), as they target early dropout prevention for younger populations. For example, Houston ISD has two middle school AECs for overage students to prepare them for success in high school. The remaining campuses do not appear to provide any specialized dropout or alternative programs. For this reason, Performance Reporting proposes adopting an application process to allow campuses that do not meet the statutory definition of DPRS to apply for DPRS status. In the application, the campus would provide TEA a program description and data to support a discretionary designation as a DPRS. This process would eliminate the separation of DRS and AEC of choice. All campuses evaluated under alternative accountability would meet the criteria or demonstrate eligibility for designation as a dropout prevention or recovery school.