

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

April 30, 2020 Zoom Meeting Notes

Attendees

Melissa Chavez, *University of Texas University Charter School*

Julie Conde, *Responsive Education Solutions*

Megan Evans, *Clear Creek ISD*

Carolyn Hanschen, *Austin ISD*

Joseph Mena, *Texans Can Academy*

James Ponce, *Texans Can Academy*

Melissa Ruffin, *University of Texas University Charter School*

Theresa Urrabazo, *San Antonio ISD*

Donald Webb, *Hudson ISD*

Garrett Black, *TEA: School Improvement*

Leslie Brady, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Jamie Crowe, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Kayla Fairchild, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Peggie Garcia, *TEA: Charter Schools*

Stacy McDonald, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Hilda Salguero, *TEA: School Improvement*

Heather Smalley, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Katelyn Tanis, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

Mission Established in January 2020

The AEA taskforce identified the following issues as crucial to the mission and purpose of Texas AECs.

1. Provide at-risk students opportunities to meet graduation requirements
2. Craft individualized education services for at-risk students
3. Serve students for whom traditional campuses did not or could not meet their needs
4. Maintain a focus on post-secondary potential
5. Remain mindful of the short-term placement that many of these students have on specialized campuses
6. Provide dropout prevention and recovery
7. Provide credit recovery opportunities
8. Create a system where the “student wins”
9. Provide an environment where the student actively participates in their experience
10. Maintain rigor and do not “water down” programs
11. Meet the social and emotional needs to the students
12. Message and communicate the essential nature of these programs for the most at-risk students
13. Maintain an awareness of social justice issues, as AECs often serve students who are from minority and economically disadvantaged backgrounds

Statutory Recommendations

- Remove continuously/non-continuously enrolled groups (especially for AECs).
- Update DRS definition (based on research outcomes of current age of dropouts).
- Work toward identifying the newly emerging exceptional campus types.
- Consider using pass/fail for AECs. Is A–F appropriate?
- Add AEA specific distinction designations.
- Develop a unique AEA accountability system:
 - A simple system (fewer domains) that addresses the mission and purpose of AECs
 - Combine growth/performance. (explore small campus vs. large campus impact)
 - Measure used in previous system for AEA
 - CCMR-like with all the buckets available to meet an indicator that demonstrates a student’s success
 - Specific indicators in Closing the Gaps
 - Focus on retesters, outcomes for previous dropouts, completion, and CCMR
 - Account for homogenous populations

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AEA-Specific Indicator Suggestions

As a reminder, the AEA Taskforce, first and foremost, advocates for a separate and unique accountability system for AECs. The indicators suggested below fit within the current accountability system framework but could also be used in an AEA-specific system.

Data runs (in purple) will be disaggregated by AEA type with a focus on outcomes for DRS.

Student Achievement Domain

STAAR

- Evaluate minimum size criteria (minimum number required to receive a rating).
 - Need to research
 - Based on student count. Minimum number of tests versus minimum number of students (*research the original reasoning for tests vs. students*).
 - Or adjust minimum number of tests (*research other states' ESSA plan minimum numbers for evaluation*).
 - Look back at previous minimum sizes (*10% rule*).
- Consider using the percentage at Approaches and awarding additional points for Meets/Masters.
 - Craft for AEA appropriateness as current methodology doesn't align with the AECs.
 - Consider a multiplier for Meets/Masters to accommodate AEA retester populations.
 - Data run—Data for probability for retester outcomes.
 - Data run—What do the highest performing AECs show us?
- Consider an AEA Progress Measure using Approaches, progress, or retest passers.
 - Data run—Methodology
 - Numerator: growth or met approaches (first time testers) and then add in Approaches for retesters.
 - Denominator: # all first-time tests plus tests for retesters who met Approaches.

College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR)

(If AEA must use same CCMR indicators as traditional schools, decrease the weighting from 40%.)

- Consider reengagement.
 - Outcomes for previous dropouts. (returning and reengaging is a major success)
 - How can we measure and evaluate this? Include those students who were chronically absent but not coded as dropouts.
- Consider using auto-coded CTE data (at concentrator level).
- Consider two-, four-, or technical school enrollment. (current data timing hurdle)
- Consider workforce readiness/work study. (current data timing hurdle)
- Consider using workforce data as appropriate. (current data timing hurdle)
- Consider on-track to high school graduation. (define/refine this)
 - Maintenance of students who were on-track and staying on-track.
 - Improvement demonstrated for those off track.
 - Define denominator and how to credit numerator.

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Graduation Rate

- Consider how to reweight to reflect strengths.
- Consider annual completion rate. (define denominator)
- Consider specific dropout rate. (for AECs which includes previous dropouts)
- Consider reengagement. (previous dropouts and graduation rate—Include students in denominator who haven't been attending for X months/3 six weeks, etc.)
- Consider longitudinal completion rates.
 - Data Run/Research—Previous dropout success (test outcomes/graduation rates)
- Update DRS definition. (based on research outcomes of current age of dropouts)
 - Responsive Ed-population of 16 and older by Sept 1/Snapshot (Julie will share her data.)

School Progress Domain

Part A: Academic Growth

- Consider a stabilization rate (kept a year). (Could this be a measure of “grit”?)
- Consider attendance improvement/growth. (student level)
 - Present in current attendance cycles versus previously chronically absent.
 - Taps into dropout prevention. Students who are coming to school are not dropping out. (research links absences to dropouts)
- Consider AEA Progress Measure as described above.
- Reconsider growth calculation.
 - English I to English II testers even within the same year.
 - Retester outcomes. (like current bonus points)
 - Consider student growth percentiles? Other growth measures?
 - Measure of improvement for retesters on the same subject area test.
 - Data Run—Frequency on how many times students retest over whole testing history.

Part B: Relative Performance

- Taskforce recommends the continued exclusion of this domain for AECs.

Closing the Gaps Domain

STAAR

- Limit to first time testers only or retester-passers only.
 - Research—Are there any other ESSA plans approved with a similar exclusion?
- Can we account for the impact of economically disadvantaged status on the all student groups?
 - Research—Are there any other ESSA plans approved with a similar exclusion?
- Meets is not appropriate for AECs. Consider using Approaches, as it aligns with the mission and graduation requirements. (any adjustments in Student Achievement for AECs would carry over)

Graduation Rate

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- Consider completer rate for School Improvement identification.
- Continue to work out better graduation rate methodology, especially for AECs.

School Quality/Student Success (bucket-like concept similar to CCMR)

- Determine more appropriate CCMR indicators.
 - Consider attendance.
 - Consider reengagement.
 - Consider completer rate.
 - Consider on-track to graduate. (tie into 16/17 age run)
 - Consider FAFSA/ASVAB/workforce readiness. (current data timing hurdle)
 - Consider postsecondary preparation, career opportunity education, apprenticeships, work studies, and transition planning. (current data timing hurdle)
 - Consider a link to Texas Workforce Commission economic outcomes for graduates. (current data timing hurdle)

English Language Proficiency

- Determine targets by campus type (elementary, middle, high, and AEA).
 - Research—Are there any other ESSA plans approved with targets by campus type?

Other Accountability Suggestions

Italicized items are currently been explored by TEA.

- *Weighting and targets will have to be redone. Targets for all schools need to be rerun.*
 - AECs need specific targets to differentiate between AECs/traditional.
 - Research—Are there any other ESSA plans approved with targets by campus type?
- *Award partial points based on distance from target.*
- *First year campuses—How to process when STAAR is frequently the only data?*
- *Implement a waiver before ratings to distinguish exceptional campuses/programs.*
- *Consider additional indicators to truly distinguish between AECs.*
- *Pull AECs out and identify the bottom 5% separately for comprehensive support.*
- *Rework additional targeted support to comprehensive support escalation.*
- *Include a value add for recovering dropouts.*

Other Suggestions

- Partner with research institution/university to finalize AEA taskforce recommendations.
- Is it possible for a student to maintain his/her at-risk status once enrolled in AEA? The AEA may address an immediate need, but the student may have ongoing needs.
- The Taskforce needs commissioner buy in on the mission and goals of AECs and a clear understanding of the population served.

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School Improvement/Interventions

Garrett and Hilda provided an update on the work being done on interventions.

- Consider AEA specific interventions.
- Develop an intervention framework specifically for AECs.

Bonus Points or AEA Distinction Designations Ideas

- Award additional points for STAAR at Meets/Masters.
- Award points for IGC reduction as a result of improved STAAR outcomes.
- Award points for retester outcomes based on DRS averages.
- Update bonus point methodology with updated indicators.
- Recognize SAT/ACT participation/performance and/or TSIA performance.

Summary of Data Runs*

- Distribution of EOC performance levels on retests.
- Distribution of EOC performance levels on retests in the highest performing AECs.
- Model the AEA progress measure.
 - Numerator: growth or met approaches (first time testers) and then add in Approaches for retesters.
 - Denominator: # all first-time tests plus tests for retesters who met Approaches.
- Distribution of EOC performance levels for previous dropouts.
- Graduation rates for previous dropouts.
- Frequency of the number of attempts on the same subject area EOC.

*Note for all data runs: Disaggregate by AEA type.