

2020 Accountability Advisory Committees

Summary of Meeting on July 21, 2020

The objective of the July 21, 2020 Accountability Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC) and Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) meeting was to solicit possible solutions to address the unique challenges facing the 2021 accountability system and beyond, due to COVID-19. TEA responses to questions and concerns are provided in red. Some questions require staff research and are yet to be answered. The following is a summary of the discussion at the meeting.

- TEA welcomed the committee members to the virtual meeting.
- The committee reviewed ATAC/APAC survey results.
- The committee reviewed potential approaches to 2021 accountability.
- The committee reviewed U.S. Department of Education (USDE) guidance regarding 2021 accountability.
- The committee reviewed what actions other states are currently taking regarding 2021 accountability.
 - Questions
 - Are other states who have already submitted a 2021 waiver now being told to utilize the addendum? **The USDE has not responded to any submitted waivers. Once a waiver is submitted, it could take up to 120 days to receive a response.**
 - Do Texas' accountability concerns for 2021 align similarly with any other states? **Yes, most states have the same concerns and challenges as Texas. There is concern with the lack of assessment data for 2020, growth calculations, and the ability of schools to meet current targets set in 2017. Some states use chronic absenteeism in their accountability systems and, therefore, had concerns about that data set.**
 - Are any states discussing the vulnerability measures since they relate to state level funding? **Yes, some states discussed how to report or layer these measures.**
 - Roughly how many states will use this as an opportunity for a complete system redesign? **At this point, approximately 10 states.**
 - Which states are expected to request waivers from the USDE? **Georgia, Michigan, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Oklahoma have submitted a waiver, indicated that they plan to submit a waiver, or are discussing the possibility of submitting a waiver request.**
 - Were the states discussing accountability or assessment waivers? **Currently, there has only been discussion of submitting assessment waivers to the USDE.**

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- Has there been any further discussion regarding purchasing a formative assessment product, such as NWEA MAP, to measure growth? **No. However, the Student Assessment Division is currently working on an optional beginning-of-year (BOY) assessment tool. Their area can provide more information.**
- Are there any House Bill 3906 updates? Texans Advocating for Meaningful Student Assessment (TAMSA) is interested in providing Student Assessment with feedback. **Assessment is still pursuing all available options, but fully online testing is still the main goal. We will forward this request to them.**
- Concerns
 - According to the agency’s guidelines, for students in an all virtual program, the district must deliver all materials online. If STAAR or TELPAS testing occurs online this year, the agency would have to have a system for remote proctoring for parents who elect to be in an all virtual program.
 - Given the technology and connectivity issues our state is experiencing, an online instructional goal may not be realistic.
 - As school starts, assessment and accountability will move to the forefront of stakeholders’ minds. TEA should be mindful of how assessment results will be used for accountability purposes versus as a district diagnostic tool.
 - If the STAAR assessment is administered online, the validity of assessment results could be affected by stressors of testing at home including lack of suitable testing environment, internet connectivity, etc.
- Suggestions
 - TEA should utilize this unique opportunity to improve methodology for exiting Comprehensive Progress campuses.
- The committee reviewed the commissioner’s input regarding 2021 accountability.
- The committee discussed input on using the 2021 data to set targets. In this scenario, targets would be established relative to state performance after the data has been collected.
- Questions
 - Has there been continued consideration of “Met Standard” or “Not Met Standard” considering targets will be unknown until end of the 2021 school year? Many committee members strongly support this option for 2021. **In order to implement these labels, a proclamation from either the legislature or the governor would be**

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required. It could then be adopted in the *2021 Accountability Manual*. In addition, we would need 2021 data to justify this type of system along with rulemaking.

- Concerns
 - Given the possible variation in school start dates and instructional delivery modes, comparing data from district to district may take some context.
 - It is difficult to take a strong stance on assessments and accountability during the uncertainty of school openings, instructional methods, etc.
- Suggestions
 - If target adjustments are necessary, TEA should consider awarding partial points on distance from target, not strictly a yes/no.
 - The Met Standard/Did Not Meet Standard option would be the most reasonable and fair option for 2021 given the unique circumstances of each district.
- The committee discussed thoughts on increased mobility and the potential impact on accountability measures.
 - Concerns
 - Districts will have a better understanding of student mobility after the start of the school year. Mobility will be affected by the economic impact of the pandemic. Families may move temporarily due to job loss or job change.
 - Teachers may leave because of COVID-19 or feel unprepared to teach remotely. These factors will affect instruction and STAAR assessment scores.
 - An increase in online testing will create issues with validity, since many households will experience online disruptions and connectivity issues.
 - Campuses with high percentages of economically disadvantaged students expect issues with virtual learning, which will impact mobility rates.
 - Suggestions
 - Once school begins, analyze the data we have available regarding mobility, including how many students are not enrolled in any public schools compared to 2020. This will provide a clearer picture of student mobility.
- The committee discussed other factors to potentially account for that are outside of district control.

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- Questions
 - When must the addendum be submitted to the USDE? **December 31, 2020 is the deadline to make addendum requests to the USDE.**
 - Are there plans for all states to meet again before the December deadline? **Yes. The next Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) meeting will take place in October 2020.**
- Suggestions
 - The data we have for the 2020–21 school year should be used to inform instruction and performance, not accountability for 2021.
- The committee reviewed data requests from the June 8–9, 2020 APAC/ATAC meeting.
 - Questions
 - How many students took the optional end-of-year (EOY) assessment TEA offered? **Response from Student Assessment: We don't have an accurate number of how many students took the optional EOY assessments, since they could be taken either online or on paper and districts and parents weren't required to report scores to TEA. We're hopeful to have more accurate numbers from the optional BOY assessments.**
 - Has TEA given any thought to the possibility of changes to USDE stance given the upcoming election? **Yes. There are many long-established members at the USDE that have been through multiple presidential administrations. We believe any changes resulting from the November election would be long-term and not require immediate action.**
- The committee discussed future meeting length and dates.