

2020 Accountability Advisory Committees

Summary of Meeting on October 27, 2020

The objective of the October 27, 2020 Accountability Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC) and Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) meeting was to solicit feedback on 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 2021 accountability system context and considerations.
 - Incomplete data
 - Pandemic-influenced data
 - Stifled continuous improvement efforts
 - Remote learning implications
 - Concerns
 - Many districts have disproportionately more economically disadvantaged students participating in remote learning.
 - Parents of students receiving special education services and 504 services have informed many districts that their children will not attend campus in-person for state testing.
- The committee reviewed potential 2021 accountability system adjustments.
 - STAAR Components
 - Questions
 - Will students be offered the opportunity to take the STAAR assessment virtually? **Student Assessment provided [guidance](#) for the December end-of-course (EOC) administrations. Final guidance regarding spring assessments is under development and will be shared with stakeholders when available.**
 - Will the cut point adjustments be based solely on the statewide average performance of the All Students group? **In the current draft proposal, yes. However, the ideas presented during the meeting are simply ideas and may not reflect final decisions.**
 - Will the cut point adjustments take into consideration whether a student is learning remotely or in-person? **Adjustments cannot be made separately for remote and in-person learners. This data will be collected through TSDS PEIMS attendance codes and will not be available until fall 2021 after ratings are released.**
 - How will post-equating be impacted? **Post-equating will only occur with assessments that contain constructed responses.**

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- Can the economically disadvantaged student group be considered for adjustments since they are disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 crisis? **We can consider this.**
- Concerns
 - If STAAR cut points are adjusted based solely on the state average, there may be a significant discrepancy between remote and in-person students as well as economically disadvantaged and non-economically disadvantaged students.
 - The adjustment will not capture district and campus circumstances such as high economically disadvantaged populations or high populations of English language learners.
- College, Career, and Military (CCMR) Readiness Components
 - Questions
 - Will the better of each CCMR indicator or the overall CCMR scaled score be used? ? **In the current draft proposal, the overall CCMR scaled score would determine which year of CCMR data would be applied. Selecting the better of 2019 or 2020 CCMR for each indicator for every student group in Closing the Gaps would be incredibly complex to explain and report to stakeholders.**
 - Will there be any adjustments made to 2019 CCMR scaled scores? **No.**
 - Will Career and Technical Education (CTE) half points be included in 2020? **CTE half points will be included for 2019 graduates, the agency will consider the usage for 2020 graduates.**
 - Can we consider selecting the better of 2019 and 2020 CCMR results separately in Student Achievement and Closing the Gaps since the denominators are different? **We can consider this.**
 - Can we consider selecting the better of 2019 and 2020 for each CCMR indicator in Closing the Gaps since school improvement status is based on meeting the targets for student groups? It is important to credit campuses if there was improvement. **Selecting the better of 2019 or 2020 CCMR for each indicator for every student group in Closing the Gaps would be incredibly complex to explain and report to stakeholders.**
- Graduation Rate
- Academic Growth
 - Questions
 - How will STAAR EOC waivers impact the number of EOC exams students are required to pass under Individual Graduation

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Committees (IGC)? **Student Assessment can provide IGC-related guidance.**

- Will you be using the same matrix previously used for growth points for the two-year model? **In the current draft proposal, yes.**
- How is hold harmless different from the current system where the better of Academic Growth or Relative Performance is used? **In the current draft proposal, TEA would not report the Academic Growth scaled score if it was not the better of Academic Growth or Relative Performance.**
- Can students be excluded from growth if they moved between districts within the two-year period so that districts are not held accountable for students they did not teach for both years? **In the current draft proposal, no. Progress measures have always been a student-level measure that is independent of mobility.**
- How would growth be calculated for a kindergarten through grade 4 campus? **In the current draft proposal, with a two-year growth measure, a kindergarten through grade 4 campus would not receive an Academic Growth score.**
- Concerns
 - A two-year growth measure causes campuses and districts to be held accountable for the growth of a student who may not have attended that campus or district over the two-year period.
 - Compared to a one-year growth model, a two-year growth model will impact each grade level uniquely.
 - Using a hold harmless model for Academic Growth does not repair a system with many challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Relative Performance
 - Concerns
 - The percentage of economically disadvantaged students reported in fall snapshot may not match the percentage of economically disadvantaged students that come in person to take STAAR.
 - We are trying to piece together a system based on unreliable and invalid data due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Suggestions
 - Could we use a multi-year economically disadvantaged average (such as a 2-year or 3-year average) since 2020–21 reporting may be affected by COVID-19? **We can consider this.**

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- The higher of this year’s economically disadvantaged percentage or a three-year average should be used for Relative Performance.
- Closing the Gaps
 - Questions
 - Will English Language Proficiency (ELP) only include students who test in 2021? **In the current draft proposal, yes.**
 - Are partial points for ELP being discussed? **We were waiting until the accountability reset to discuss partial ELP points. We will consider it at that time.**
 - Can we consider establishing targets based only on Title I students? **No. Historically, the United States Department of Education (USDE) has not been amenable to this.**
 - Can the economically disadvantaged student group be considered for adjustments separate from the other student groups since they are disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic? **We can consider this.**
 - Concerns
 - In data modeling previously provided by TEA, we looked at every race/ethnicity group by economically disadvantaged and non-economically disadvantaged, and there were gaps in every group by economically disadvantaged status. Adjusting targets at the state level all student group would be inequitable for schools with high percentages of economically disadvantaged students because of the gaps that already existed pre-COVID-19.
 - Suggestions
 - Closing the Gaps should take all student group outcomes into consideration when determining cut point adjustments, not just the All Students group.
- Participation
 - Questions
 - When submitting the waiver request, do we have to provide the USDE with a participation percentage? **No. If we receive a waiver, campuses and districts will not be penalized for any participation rates below 95%.**
 - How can we prevent students who were receiving in-person instruction from staying home on STAAR administration days? **We will likely need to report participation data to the USDE. Additionally, we will examine attendance data in fall 2021 for remote and in-person student coding to see if there are**

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discrepancies between the students who were attending in-person and participation. We will address any potential issues after evaluating the data.

○ Other

▪ Questions

- Have conversations with the governor's office occurred regarding waiving accountability for 2020–21? Existing requirements may evolve during the legislative session. TEA will consult with legislators during session regarding COVID-19 implications and recommendations for the 2020–21 accountability system. Currently, there is no federal or state guidance that waives accountability requirements.
- Which venue should be used to discuss future concerns about the accountability system? APAC and ATAC meetings are appropriate venues. Our current focus is on the 2021 accountability system, but as soon as possible we'd like to resume conversations about the accountability reset.
- Are you reaching out to other states regarding their 2020–21 accountability plans? Yes. We are working with the Chief Council of State School Officers (CCSSO) and are monitoring the plans of other states. Currently, the USDE has communicated that states are required to complete state testing this year and is offering states the opportunity to submit waivers, addendums, and amendments to their legacy accountability systems to accommodate for interruptions due to COVID-19.
- When will accountability ratings be released? Statute requires ratings be released annually by August 15.
- Will there be a preview of ratings in 2020–21? No. The agency will not receive test results until mid-July due to the extended testing window. This does not allow sufficient time to prepare preview ratings to stakeholders.
- Will there be an updated A–F estimator? No. There will not be sufficient time to recreate this tool for 2021 accountability.
- When will the federal waiver, amendment, and addendum be available for public comment? The public comment period is scheduled to begin the first of December.

▪ Concerns

- The agency can come up with some sort of system, but we all need to ask ourselves whether it's meaningful. It can diminish the credibility of the system for future use.

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- Fifty percent of APAC and ATAC survey respondents reported their remote learning rates at 41% or greater.
- Some remote learners have reported that they will not attend in-person to complete the state assessment.
- Pandemic influenced data (e.g., low participation rates, incomplete data) will cause significant challenges to the 2020–21 accountability system and beyond.
- We need to be mindful that, due to COVID, denominator and numerators may look different from previous years.
- Campuses with school improvement designations need a way to exit school improvement if gains are made.
- Utilizing a hold harmless for sections of the accountability system does not appropriately reflect pandemic impacted data.
- ATAC and APAC members expressed significant concern regarding the reliability and validity of data used in accountability and assigning ratings based off potentially flawed, incomplete data. Ratings could be artificially higher or lower than previous years.
- Data is needed to establish high academic standards and to ensure students are on track. However, an accountability system needs to focus more on students and less on statutes.
- Suggestions
 - ATAC and APAC members expressed support for hold harmless measures, as they only improve scores. This could interrupt school improvement efforts by exiting a campus in 2021 and then reidentifying the campus in 2022.
 - Utilize a *Met Standard/Improvement Required* rating system for 2020–21.
 - Assign *Not Rated: Declared State of Disaster* label for all districts and campuses in 2021.
 - Reset school improvement by dropping all current labels.
 - Utilize the hold harmless approach for the overall A–F rating.
 - Report data to districts and the public, but do not hold districts and campuses to interventions and sanctions.
- The committee reviewed the timeline for decision making.