

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

February 28, 2020 Meeting Notes

During the January meeting, the AEA taskforce identified the following issues as crucial to the mission and purpose of Texas alternative education campuses (AECs). The taskforce confirmed these issues were to be a focus for the taskforce's work.

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

Data Requests

- For the reduction of 31 campuses in targeted support resulting from the removal of the all students group, how many of these campuses went into additional targeted support? Can the agency provide the full data for excluding the all students group that shows the movement from one identification to the other? **We will work on this.**
- Data to back up that the age of dropouts has decreased over time and/or showing that the dropout age is lower than 17 **(see page 7)**
- For the modeled dropout data, is this showing previous dropouts over all time or previous year dropouts? **From Research: A student was considered to be a previous dropout if he/she was determined by the agency to have dropped out of a Texas public school at any time during grades 7-12, in any year back to 1994. So the data we provided already reflects students who were previous dropouts from Texas public schools at any time, as long as the student was in grades 7-12 when he/she left school and the dropout did not occur prior to 1994.**
- Can the agency identify students who have not been enrolled or not in attendance in the last 6 months (for example, if their leaver code is not dropout, but they did not attend a Texas public school within the previous semester)? **(see notes on page 8. 45.4% of dropouts are reported before hitting age 17)**

Suggestions

- TEA needs staff and/or a division dedicated to supporting AECs on the front end (programs, curriculum, evaluation, planning, PD). See which states have an AEC department.
- Look at other predictors of dropout – attendance, STAAR failure, etc.

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

- Survey the AECs of choice to see what their purposes/types are. What is the population you serve? What are your challenges? Etc.
- Waiver (like a pre-appeal) that permits exceptional campuses to demonstrate how the accountability system is not appropriate for them, and additionally, that they do not fit into the AEA framework
- Data for AEC graduates to see who is paying into Social Security, which would show postsecondary outcomes for these students (see notes on page 8)
- Evaluate individual graduation committee (IGC) reduction due to STAAR outcomes (for non-AECs too).
- Add in the mission statement/explanation of what an AEC is in ratings reports.
- Pass/fail rating for AECs rather than an A-F rating, with AEA-specific distinctions
- Is there a link between higher dropout rates and increased homeless rates in cities? If we can tie dropout to something undesirable in our communities that people care about, we could get more traction in changing federal expectations of rating AECs.
- Show the return on investment (ROI) of students costing/providing money to the economy. How much money does the state save for every dropout that receives a diploma? Texans CAN will provide some of the data they have.

Charter Issues

- TEA staff needs to talk to the charter division about AECs being at risk of closure because of academic ratings.
- *Not Rated* is considered a non-passing rating for the charter framework. The framework determines which charters can continue operations and/or expand.

General Comments

- Previous dropouts being excluded from graduation rate calculations is detrimental to AECs.
- Often AECs receive a *D* or *F* in their first year, as they only receive a Student Achievement rating. The *D/F* cap for the district rating disincentivizes districts for opening new, innovative campuses or partnering with charters.
- Applying the same accountability system for schools in their first year of opening is not appropriate, both for AECs and non-AECs.
- Dropout prevention and recovery are two different things.
- Accelerated instruction can be a method of dropout prevention.
- Consider using census block at the district/school level is not appropriate for campuses that pull students from across the state.
- Consider bonus points for AECs based on federal versus state graduation rate comparison. Or consider for an indicator in future systems.

AEC Types and Definition

- On page 77 of the accountability manual, the wording “expedite progress” seems more specific to DRSs and is not as appropriate for all AEC types. Maybe “exceptional population” is a more appropriate term.
- DRSs are recovering freshmen that have dropped out. The DRS criteria of age 17 is too high.

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

- Some schools shouldn't be rated. They should not have to appeal every year. See waiver suggestion in Suggestions section.
- Create new categories that are not rated, such as RTFs.
- Due to its specialized nature, UT Charter would support being categorized like the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind.
- Expand the definition of the leaver code for psychiatric care. Capture the students that are receiving psychiatric therapy (day or partial program), not narrowed to just those in full time residential psychiatric hospital. (see notes on page 8)
- There are non-alternative campuses with high proportions of special education students, but an AEC designation hurts the school because parents don't want to send their children there.
- Possible AEC types:
 - Special education campuses
 - Virtual campuses
 - Newcomer campuses
 - Residential campuses
 - Campuses serving students who are pregnant/parenting
 - Mental health/psychiatric/acute mental health issues/substance abuse centers
 - Partial hospitalization programs

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

AEA Specific Accountability Development Ideas

Student Achievement Domain

STAAR

- Evaluate minimum size criteria
- Consider using the percentage at Approaches and awarding additional points for Meets/Masters
- Consider an AEA “progress measure” using Approaches, progress, or retest passers (appropriate for AEA)

College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) (keep weight if we can make AEA-appropriate CCMR list or increase weight)

- Consider more appropriate measures for AECs (meeting one TSI criteria [reading or math] instead of both for AEA students)
- Consider bonus points for SAT/ACT participation/performance
- Consider reengagement (attempts at postsecondary tests)
- Consider enrolling in OnRamps and dual credit (bonus for completion)
- Consider outcomes for previous dropouts (from dropping out to setting them up for success)
- Consider dual credit (completion of one course) for AEA
- Consider using auto-coded CTE data (at concentrator level)
- Consider two-, four-, or technical school enrollment
- Consider workforce readiness/work study
- Consider using workforce data as appropriate
- Consider associate degree
- Consider AP/IB/dual credit
- Consider on-track to high school graduation (define/refine this)
- What data can we get that aligns with timeline?

Graduation Rate (could this be better of?)

- Consider how to reweight to reflect strengths
- Consider annual completion rate (define denominator)
- Consider specific dropout rate (for AEA)
- 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

School Progress Domain

Part A: Academic Growth

- Consider a stabilization rate (kept a year)
- Consider attendance improvement (student level)
- Consider credit growth (recovery) (this would need more credit recovery program uniformity statewide)

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

- Consider STAAR Progress Measure when available or a point for each retester who passed (treat them the same) (denominator similar to Student Achievement recommendation [passers])
- Consider chance scale score student improvement
- Consider same year growth calculation for English I to English II testers
- Consider retester outcomes (like current bonus points)

Part B: Relative Performance

- Compare DRS to DRS (separately)
- Consider having the x axis as completion rate, retesters, and growth and the y-axis as census socio-economic block data
- What do we want to measure and compare for DRSs?

Closing the Gaps Domain

STAAR

- Limit to first time testers only or retester-passers only
- Do we have to have the all students group for Closing the Gaps?
- Can we account for the impact of economically disadvantaged status on the all student groups?
- Meets is not appropriate for AEA's. Consider using Approaches, as it aligns with the mission and graduation requirements.

Graduation Rate

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

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

- Determine more appropriate CCMR indicators.
- Consider attendance.
- Consider reengagement.
- Consider stability.
- Consider completer rate.
- Consider advanced degree plan.
- Consider culture and climate surveys (engagement, academic attitude).
- Consider credit attainment.
- Consider on-track to graduate.
- Consider access to participation/well-rounded education (arts, STEM, etc.).
- Consider postsecondary opportunities/introduction to postsecondary activities.
- Consider literacy (not STAAR). What data do we have available?
- Consider FAFSA/ASVAB/workforce readiness.
- Consider counseling. What data do we have available?
- Consider postsecondary preparation, career opportunity education, and transition planning.
- Consider responsive services, individualizes services, personalized, and system support.
- Consider social emotional learning.

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

- Consider Money Matters and real-life skills training.
- Consider a link to economic outcomes for graduates (TWC), such as filling needs in the workforce, evaluating and filling local needs, apprenticeships, work studies, linking students to jobs directly from school, etc. Also consider how to collect data on ½ day for students who are enrolled ½ and working other ½.

English Language Proficiency

- Determine targets by campus type (elementary, middle, high, and AEA).

Other Accountability Notes

- Weighting and targets will have to be re-done. Targets for all schools need to be rerun.
- AEAs need specific targets to differentiate between AEAs/traditional.
- Award partial points based on distance from target.

School Improvement/Interventions

- Consider AEA specific interventions
- Consider additional indicators to truly distinguish between AEAs
- Implement a waiver before ratings to distinguish exceptional campuses/programs
- Pull AEAs out and identify the bottom 5% separately for comprehensive support
- Develop an intervention framework specifically for AEAs
- Rework additional targeted support to comprehensive support escalation

Bonus Point Ideas

- Award additional points for STAAR at Meets/Masters
- Award points for IGC reduction as a result of improved STAAR outcomes (don't require as many IGCs)

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 AEAs. 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.
 - 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, completion, and CCMR
 - Account for homogenous populations

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

Post-Meeting Notes

Data responses from Research & Analysis

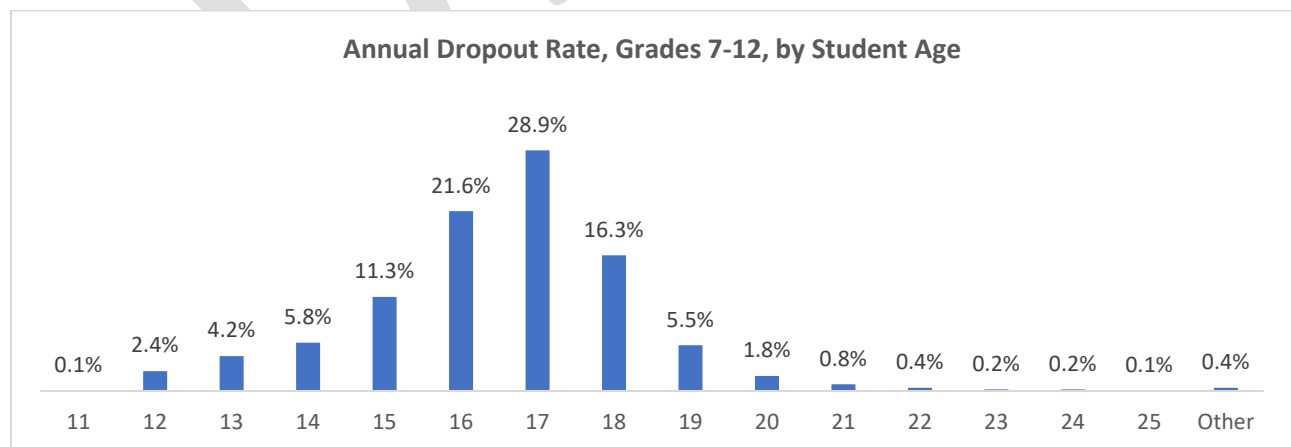
- The current statute defines a DRS as having at least 50% of students age 17 by September 1. The taskforce was curious if we could run data on age when reported as a dropout. The group has experienced a lot of dropouts in grade 9 that are well below age 17. Is that data you all have available or could run for us providing updated data tied to age when the student drops out?

We report on dropouts by age; see below.

Table 16
Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12, by Student Age, Texas Public Schools, 2017-18

September 1 age	Students		Dropouts		Annual dropout rate (%)
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
11	6,130	0.3	35	0.1	0.6
12	341,150	14.2	809	2.4	0.2
13	400,914	16.6	1,422	4.2	0.4
14	402,506	16.7	1,949	5.8	0.5
15	400,645	16.6	3,811	11.3	1.0
16	394,725	16.4	7,293	21.6	1.8
17	368,258	15.3	9,722	28.9	2.6
18	76,569	3.2	5,487	16.3	7.2
19	12,099	0.5	1,855	5.5	15.3
20	4,106	0.2	605	1.8	14.7
21	2,127	0.1	284	0.8	13.4
22	419	<0.1	118	0.4	28.2
23	271	<0.1	66	0.2	24.4
24	276	<0.1	64	0.2	23.2
25	190	<0.1	48	0.1	25.3
Other	467	<0.1	129	0.4	27.6
State	2,410,852	100	33,697	100	1.4

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.



Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

- The other request is tied to students who haven't been coded as a dropout in the leaver record but also haven't been reported in attendance for 6 months (or so...flexible on that range). I remember that was going to be a new PEIMS code. Any data related to this available?

PEIMS will be implementing a new code for 2020-21 that identifies students who are 18-25 years old, have not been reported as dropouts, are being served in a dropout recovery school, and who enroll in school after not attending school for the previous nine months. We don't have any data readily available that mimics this situation, but we could use cohort data to look for students who left in one year with a non-dropout code, were not in Texas public schools the next year, and came back to school in a subsequent year. I'm not sure what that count would tell us. We don't know if students are returning because the private school didn't work out, if the school out of state did work out but the family returned to Texas, or if the student dropped out of the other educational setting and returned to Texas public schools. Would you like us to look for how many times this situation happens in class of 2018 cohort data?

- Workforce data-how can we tie that back to AEA graduates? When and what is available? Any economic outcomes for the students that support "investments in these programs are investments in the Texas economy"?

TEA receives quarterly wage data from TWC. It has a number of limitations to it: we can only use it for the purpose specified in our contract with TWC (for TPEIR reports) but we can ask to use it for other purposes – so that is a hurdle not an obstacle; it is merely quarterly wages with a work sector – we don't have information on full-time or part-time, whether the wages represent 3 months or work or 1 week of really high earnings, not all employees report data to TWC. The data are pretty much real time – we can pull down the data every quarter.

- Another item of feedback from UT Charter was related to an attribution code (or is a leaver code?) that is defined as "residing in a residential treatment facility". They have students who are served in day programs but insurance will not cover the residential portion or the students are undergoing "partial hospitalization."

This is an attribution code. It is typically used by districts that, usually by no choice of their own, have a residential program operating within their geographic boundaries.