

# Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

## May 3, 2021 Zoom Meeting Notes

### Attendees

Juan Cabrera, *PSP Partners*

Julie Conde, *Responsive Education Solutions*

Carolyn Hanschen, *Austin ISD*

Joseph Mena, *Texans Can Academy*

Melissa Ruffin, *University of Texas University Charter School*

Hilda Salguero, *Texans Can Academy*

Theresa Urrabazo, *San Antonio ISD*

Leslie Brady, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Stacy McDonald, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Heather Smalley, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Katelyn Tanis, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Cynthia Wu, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

## **Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce**

### **Reviewed AEA-related Bills from the 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature**

- HB 572
- SB 880
- HB 998
- SB 879

### **Reviewed the 2021 AEA Registration Process updates**

### **Updated AEA Accountability Framework Suggestions**

- Develop a unique, simple accountability system for dropout recovery schools (DRS) that
  - addresses the mission and purpose of DRS;
  - evaluates DRS-specific indicators;
  - focuses on outcomes for retesters, completion, and CCMR; and
  - removes continuously/non-continuously enrolled student groups from accountability (especially for DRS).

### **Unique DRS Accountability System**

- Explore the number of domains that would be most appropriate
  - Two domains (previous recommendation)
    - Domain 1: AEA Progress Measure (Academic Performance and Growth combined)
    - Domain 2: Closing the Gaps (federal requirements)
  - Three domains (current recommendation)
    - The Commissioner requested that the taskforce consider maintaining three domains.
    - Taskforce likes the “better of” methodology (best of Domain 1 or 2) available by maintaining three domains, as well as the emphasis on growth.
    - Domain 1 Performance: Multiple options under consideration
    - Domain 2 Growth: Multiple options under consideration
    - Domain 3: Closing the Gaps (federal requirements)

# Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

## Closing the Gaps Domain Discussion

- DRS-specific indicators that measure outcomes for completion rates and CCMR along with indicators that meet ESSA requirements
- All targets should be set for AEA as the campus type.

### Ideas Related to the Accountability Reset Discussions

- Award partial points based on distance from target. (Example: 0–4 or 1–5 possible points)
  - Members like this idea.
  - Suggested awarding partial credit for maintaining performance.
- Weighting and targets will have to be redone.
  - AECs need specific student group targets to differentiate between AECs/traditional.
- Consider adjusting minimum size requirements for AEA's.
  - Also suggested considering redefining the accountability subset for AEA's.
- Pull AECs out and identify the bottom 5% separately for comprehensive support.
- Rework additional targeted support to comprehensive support escalation.

### Reviewed Current Closing the Gaps Weighting

- A member recommended weighting CTG at 50 percent of overall rating once indicators are appropriate for DRS.

Academic Achievement	50%
Federal Graduation Status or Academic Growth Status <sup>1</sup>	10%
English Language Proficiency	10%
College, Career, and Military Readiness or Student Achievement Domain Score: STAAR Component Only <sup>2</sup>	30%

### Reviewed STAAR Performance and Growth Modeling Crafted for DRS

- Simplicity is preferred.
- Liked the weighting applied to retestesters.
- Suggested that TEA steer away from methodologies that exclude schools with small numbers.
- Which modeling options provide the most accurate DRS evaluation?
- For growth, can we measure retest outcomes on the same EOC?
- Members believe achievement issues will be addressed with unique DRS targets.

### Graduation Rate (evaluated here and not in D1)

- Because of COVID impact, can we evaluate 2019 and 2020 graduation rates?
- Recommend using four-year completer rate as DRS cohorts frequently have overage students enroll which impacts five- and six-year denominators.
- Would an annual measure, instead of a cohort model, be more appropriate?
- Consider completer rate for School Improvement identification.
- Reweight the federally required 4-year rate in conjunction with the use of the completer rate.

## Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

- What is the appropriate weight for DRS?

### School Quality/Student Success (evaluated here and not in D1)

- Determine more appropriate CCMR indicators.
  - Consider attendance (AEA specific targets).
  - Consider chronic absenteeism.
    - Concern was expressed about excused/unexcused absences.
  - Consider on-track to graduate.
    - Credit for student returning to home campus in order to graduate with cohort.
    - What does this look like?
  - IGC (individual graduation committees) use at DRS.
    - Are they used more frequently than at a comprehensive high school?
    - How can we evaluate those for DRS?
- Appropriate weight for calculating domain rating?
  - Currently 30%

### English Language Proficiency

- Determine targets by campus type (elementary, middle, high, and AEA).
- Appropriate weight for calculating domain rating?
  - Currently 10%

### Other Topics

It is very important that we do something for AEAs in 2022. We are working on the system. Everyone acknowledges it needs improvements for AEAs. How can we keep from assigning failing grades again in 2022?

# Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

## Previous AEA-Specific Indicator Discussion

### Student Achievement Domain

- Consider an AEA Progress Measure using Approaches, progress, or retest passers.
  - October 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.
    - This would need to have scaling set based on the modeled data. *The increase in the number of campuses evaluated using this measure, including SNA, is positive.*
    - What are CMM’s thoughts on retesters only at Approaches? *Would need appropriate scaling methodology for appropriate distribution.*
  - Consider using the percentage at Approaches and weighting more heavily points for Meets/Masters.
    - Data run—Data for probability for retester outcomes.
    - Data run—What do the highest performing AECs show us? *Data demonstrate that DRS have success with retests at the Approaches level (EOCs), equal to or above the non-AEA averages for three EOC subjects.*
  - Consider using first-time tester data only.
    - Explore which numerator will be most appropriate for AEA.
    - January data run results:
      - 1.5 points for Masters, 1.25 for Meets, 1 for Approaches. *30 fewer campuses rated, 10 campuses with score > 100, average score increases to 61 (compared to 29 in 2019).*
      - Regular Domain 1A methodology including first-time testers only. *30 fewer campuses rated, average score increases to 47 (compared to 29 in 2019).*
- College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR)
  - Recommend moving to Closing the Gaps (see below).
  - If AEAs must keep in Domain 1, revise the indicators to be AEA-appropriate.
  - If AEAs must keep in Domain 1 and use same CCMR indicators as traditional schools, decrease the CCMR weighting.
- Graduation Rate
  - Recommend moving to Closing the Gaps (see below).
  - If AEAs must keep in Domain 1, ensure credit is given for graduating a previous dropout.

### School Progress Domain

#### Part A: Academic Growth

- Consider AEA Progress Measure as described above to simplify system into 2 domains.
- Reconsider growth calculation.
  - Measure of improvement for retesters on the same subject area test.

## Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

- Data Run—Frequency on how many times students retest over whole testing history. *Data demonstrate that 45% of Spring 2019 EOCs in DRs were a student's first attempt. The percentage of DRs students that were on their first EOC attempt in Spring 2019 varies widely by subject, ranging from 21% for English I to 80% for U.S. History.*
- Academic Growth matrix revised to utilize STAAR Performance Levels (Did Not Meet, Approaches, Meets, Masters) each split into high and low categories.
  - Data run: Explore and model most appropriate methodology for points assignment, as well as students to include (possibly add in retesters, English I to English II, retesters within the same school year).
  - English I to English II testers even within the same year.
  - Measure of improvement for retesters on the same subject area test.
- Consider a stabilization rate (kept a year).
  - Could this be a measure of “grit”?
  - How to measure? Same campus one snapshot to the next? Same campus snapshot & 6<sup>th</sup> six weeks attendance?)
- Consider using retester data only.
  - Explore which numerator will be most appropriate for AEA.
  - January data run results:
    - 1.5 points for Approaches on 1<sup>st</sup> retester, 1 point for 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> retest. *79 more campuses rated, 7 campuses with a score > 100, average score increases to 62 (compared to 55 in 2019).*
    - 1.5 points for Masters on any retest, 1.25 points for Meets on any retest, 1 point for Approaches on any retest. *79 more campuses rated, average score decreases to 43 (compared to 55 in 2019).*
    - AEA STAAR Bonus Points methodology. *79 more campuses rated, average score decreases to 40 (compared to 55 in 2019).*

### Part B: Relative Performance

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

### Other Accountability Suggestions

*Italicized items are currently being explored by TEA.*

- *Implement a waiver before ratings to distinguish exceptional campuses/programs. (This could possibility be addressed via the DPRS application process.)*
  - Encourage these exceptional campuses that would be Not Rated to participate in Local Accountability System (LAS).
  - Taskforce supports this idea. Part of the application should include evidence of board approval, stakeholder input and feedback, etc.
- *Updates to DRs (DPRS) criteria & registration process.*
- First year campuses—How to process when STAAR is frequently the only data?
- DPRS campuses that don't serve grade 12? How to process those?
- Include a value add for recovering dropouts.

## Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

- *Adopt into rule a definition of “alternative instruction.”*
  - The AEC must offer nontraditional settings and methods of instructional delivery designed to meet the needs of the students served in the AEC.
- We need clear definitions of previous dropout and retester for accountability purposes. Previous dropouts need to be identified based off data other than the PEIMS code.

### Other Suggestions

#### School Improvement/Interventions

- Consider AEA specific interventions.
- Develop an intervention framework specifically for AECs.
- Streamline interventions between RDA and SI to reduce time and paperwork burdens.

#### AEA Distinction Designations Ideas

- Award additional points for STAAR at Meets/Masters if not incorporated as indicator.
- Award points for IGC reduction because of improved STAAR outcomes.
- Award points for retester outcomes based on DRS averages.
- Recognize SAT/ACT participation/performance and/or TSIA performance.

#### Misc.

- 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.
  - Idea: Ever enrolled in an AEC could be added as an at-risk indicator.
- Implement as many changes as possible before 2023 reset.
- How do we better support AECs?
  - Alternative instruction unit at TEA to support AECs
  - Guidebook for opening/operating an AEC
  - Mentoring program
  - Exemplar AEA campuses list
- AECs and their districts need better access to their data, and the ability to make comparisons to non-AEA, for example.
  - TEA is producing a new data dashboard product and we will be sure to include the functionality to filter to non-AEA and AEA.

#### Ideas from previous meetings to revisit

- 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*).

# Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

## Summary of Data Modeling Requests

- How can the current bonus points be scaled to award credit to more campuses? Is there a way to adjust the current methodology to award points to more campuses? (Will bring this back to the table for 2022 considerations)
- Probability of retester outcomes.
  - What percentage of tests in DRS are retests? (combined across all subject areas)
  - What percentage of retests in DRS are at Meets & Masters? Compare with non-DRS.
  - What is the percent at Approaches or above, broken out by attempt number (TEST\_COUNT). Utilize Spring 2019, DRS only, break out by each subject and also report all subjects combined.
- Explore the possible definitions for retester and first-time tester.
  - Differences in counts and STAAR outcomes for *first-time testers* defined with 2 scenarios: EOC\_1ST=Y, TEST\_COUNT=1.
  - Compare counts and STAAR outcomes for *retesters* defined with 2 scenarios: EOC\_1ST=N, TEST\_COUNT>1.
- Run possible domain configurations.
  - AEA Progress Measure
    - Explore possibility of incorporating high/low performance level split for Did Not Meet and Approaches.
  - Academic Growth matrix with split performance levels
    - Explore and model most appropriate methodology for points assignment.
      - Definitely give 1 point for DNM low to DNM high to align with STAAR PM awarded within this range.
    - Explore and model which students to include (possibly add in retesters, English I to English II, retesters within the same school year).
    - Provide 2019 Domain 2A data in DRSs for comparison: matrix, minimum, maximum, mean, median.
  - First-time testers
    - Model possible variations. Explore giving points for DNM high.
  - Retesters
    - Model possible variations. Explore giving points for DNM high.

\*Note for all data runs: Disaggregate by AEA type and include non-AEA for comparison.