

DATE:	November 7, 2024
SUBJECT:	Official Notification of the 2023-2024 Release of Final FIRST Ratings
CATEGORY:	Information Update
NEXT STEPS:	Required reporting

Texas’s school financial accountability rating system, known as the School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST), provides accountability for Texas public schools on the quality of their financial management practices and improvement of those practices. The purpose of this letter is to inform Texas public school systems that their *Final* 2023–2024 FIRST ratings based on fiscal year 2023 are now publicly available on the Texas Education Agency (TEA) website:

- [School districts](#)
- [Open-enrollment charter schools and charter schools operated by Institutions of Higher Education \(IHE\)](#)

A previous “To the Administrator Addressed” letter dated August 8, 2024, instructed your school district or charter school to view its *preliminary* FIRST rating. The letter also provided information about the data the TEA analyzes to produce the rating and described the appeal process available to your school system. This appeals process is now complete, and the FIRST ratings are final.

Required Reporting

Within two months of the release of its final FIRST rating, your school system must announce and hold a public meeting to distribute a financial management report that explains the school system’s rating and its performance under each indicator for the current and previous year’s ratings. The report also must provide the financial information described in [19 Texas Administrative Code \(TAC\) §109.1001\(q\)\(3\)](#). We encourage your school system to include in the report additional information that will be beneficial to stakeholders, especially information explaining any special circumstances that may have affected the school system’s performance under one or more of the indicators.

The required newspaper notice to inform taxpayers of the meeting must be published no more than 30 days and no fewer than 10 days before the public meeting. Your school system may combine the meeting with a scheduled regular meeting of the board of trustees.

For full requirements related to the report and meeting, see [19 TAC §109.1001\(q\)](#). For a template that your school system can use in developing its financial management report, visit the TEA [School FIRST](#) web page for school districts or [Charter FIRST](#) web page for charter schools.

Accreditation Status

Please note that the TEA considers a school system’s FIRST rating when assigning an accreditation status, as required by the accreditation status rules in [19 TAC §97.1055](#).

Contact for Further Information

If you have questions about your school system’s FIRST rating, please contact financialaccountability@tea.texas.gov.

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