

DATE:	August 4, 2022
SUBJECT:	Preliminary 2021–2022 School FIRST Ratings
CATEGORY:	Accreditation Information
NEXT STEPS:	Share with appropriate staff

Your school district's preliminary 2021–2022 School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) rating is now available online. To access your district's School FIRST rating:

- access the Texas Education Agency (TEA) website by using this link <https://tea.texas.gov/>;
- click the Finance and Grants webpage tab link <https://tea.texas.gov/finance-and-grants/>;
- click the Financial Compliance link <https://tea.texas.gov/finance-and-grants/financial-compliance/>;
- click the [Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas](#) link; and
- click the School District FIRST Ratings link.

Basis for School FIRST Rating

Your district's rating is based on an analysis of the district's financial data for fiscal year 2021 (the fiscal period ended June 30, 2021, or August 31, 2021, depending on the ending date of your district's fiscal year). We determined your district's rating using the financial indicators specified in [19 Texas Administrative Code \(TAC\) §109.1001\(e\)\(6\)](#).

Please carefully review your district's preliminary School FIRST rating and the data associated with each of the indicators.

Opportunity for Appeal

If your district wishes to appeal an adverse issue it identifies in the preliminary rating, your district may submit a written appeal with supporting evidence to the TEA Financial Compliance Division. For the appeal to be considered, we must receive it by **September 6, 2022**. Send your appeal and supporting documentation to the following email address: FinancialAccountability@tea.texas.gov.

Please note, all appeal requests, including supporting documentation, must be submitted through email to FinancialAccountability@tea.texas.gov on or before September 6, 2022. Appeals and supporting documentation that are not submitted to the Financial Accountability email address by the required deadline will not be considered or processed.

Please see [19 TAC §109.1001\(n\)](#) for the rules regarding the filing of an appeal. As stated in that section, we will consider only an appeal that would result in a change to your district's rating. If no appeal is submitted by your district, your district's preliminary rating becomes final on the 31st day after the preliminary ratings are released (September 7, 2022).

Final School FIRST Rating and Required Reporting

We will issue final ratings to school districts after we have reviewed any submitted appeals. Final 2021–2022 School FIRST ratings are anticipated to be released in November 2022.

Within two months of the release of your school district's final School FIRST rating, your district must announce and hold a public meeting to distribute a financial management report that explains the district'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 TAC §109.1001(q)(3). We encourage your district to include in the report additional information that will be beneficial to stakeholders, especially information explaining any special circumstances that may have affected the district'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 district 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 district can use in developing its financial management report, see the TEA [School FIRST](#) web page.

To access additional rules concerning financial accountability ratings, please see [19 TAC §109.1001](#).

Accreditation Status

Please note that the TEA considers a district's School 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 district's School FIRST rating, please contact Robin Aldridge at (512) 463-3940 or by email at Robin.Aldridge@tea.texas.gov.