

2020 Accountability Technical Advisory Committee Summary of Meeting on February 4, 2020

The objective of the February 2020 Accountability Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC) meeting was to recommend improvements for the 2020 accountability system and beyond. 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 and members were introduced.
- Committee members discussed potential Closing the Gaps domain graduation rate methodology changes as proposed in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) state plan amendment.
 - Questions
 - When the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) provides their response to the proposed amendments, is there an opportunity for additional negotiations? **No.**
 - How does Texas' proposed graduation rate methodology compare to other states? **Graduation rate methodology varies greatly by state. Many states use a variety of different weightings for their 4-year, 5-year, and 6-year graduation rates. When we examined the data for Texas, this methodology did not have a large impact unless one of the graduation rate years was given a much greater weight.**
 - Has TEA explored using a 6-year graduation rate only? **Per the USDE, this is not allowable.**
 - Why didn't TEA wait to address this change during the accountability reset? **Our primary goal with this change is to address the requirement that even if a student group is above the long-term target, they must improve from the previous year.**
 - Are graduation rates at Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools (P-TECHs) going to be a challenge? **Those campuses will code their students as graduates once they meet the state graduation requirements (four years). Any adjustments prior to the new coding taking effect should be addressed during the 2020 appeals process.**
 - Is this going to begin for 2020 accountability? **The new methodology will begin in 2020 unless we do not receive approval from the USDE. The USDE provided favorable feedback on this proposed amendment prior to submission.**
 - How will TEA communicate this change to education service centers (ESCs)? **TEA will communicate this change through To the Administrator Addressed (TAA) letters, TETNs, Performance Reporting weekly bulletins, and ESC trainings.**

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- How many campuses would have an improved overall rating using the proposed graduation rate methodology? **The following charts summarize the overall impact of the graduation rate amendment.**

Non-AEA Campuses

2019 overall rating	modeling overall rating					
	A	B	C	D	F	Total
A	495	0	0	0	0	495
B	26	864	0	0	0	890
C	1	21	241	0	0	263
D	0	3	25	55	0	83
F	0	0	0	3	13	16
Total	522	888	266	58	13	1747

AEA Campuses

2019 overall rating	modeling overall rating					
	A	B	C	D	F	Total
A	23	0	0	0	0	23
B	4	17	0	0	0	21
C	1	9	19	0	0	29
D	0	3	21	25	0	49
F	0	0	0	2	6	8
Total	28	29	40	27	6	130

- Could TEA explore weighting the 4-year graduation rate at 1% and 6-year graduation rate at 99% like Colorado’s current methodology? **We can explore this option for the reset.**
 - Concerns
 - The perception is that other states have methodologies approved that the USDE denies for Texas.
 - The graduation rate growth target is unattainable for many campuses.
- The committee discussed school improvement identification methodology as proposed in the ESSA state plan amendment.
 - Questions
 - Could this change be retroactively applied to adjust the school improvement labels? **The agency does not have the authority**

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retroactively apply methodologies updated in the amendment to former years.

- What is the proportion of campuses that have exited additional targeted support? In 2019, 1,570 campuses exited additional targeted support.
 - Can we add a minimum number of indicators evaluated? TEA has explored this option. In general, this had a net negative effect for campuses.
 - Could TEA propose making targeted support the more severe label with the greatest chance of escalation to comprehensive funding instead of additional targeted Support? No, the labels and subsequent intervention requirements are based on ESSA. During planning for the reset, we can continue discussions on refining identification methodologies.
 - Is it possible to use the climate survey administered by the School Improvement Division as a different indicator in School Quality School Success? The survey administered by School Improvement cannot be used as an indicator because it is not distributed to every campus statewide. We are exploring the possibility of using climate surveys in the future.
 - How many of the comprehensive schools that are below the 67% graduation rate are dropout recovery schools? We can provide this data.
 - Could TEA offer dropout recovery schools an alternative to the 67% graduation rate used for school improvement identification? Per the USDE, this is not allowable. All campuses must be identified uniformly regardless of campus type.
- Concerns
 - Federal funding does not appropriately finance the amount of improvement needed for campuses identified for school improvement. Many identified campuses would rather opt out of the funding to remove the school improvement label. We can share this concern with the School Improvement Division.
 - There are significant challenges for small elementary campuses.
 - The identification labels don't make sense. ESSA drives the school improvement identification methodology. The Closing the Gaps domain may change significantly during the reset, which would affect school improvement identification.

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- Growth is sometimes not included because of minimum size requirements. This negatively impacts small schools for school improvement identification. **While lowering the minimum size requirements may help some campuses, it may hurt others.**
- Removing the all students column in Closing the Gaps is going to have an impact on the minimum number of indicators met. **All students will not be considered for school improvement identification, but it will still be considered when determined minimum number of indicators for Closing the Gaps calculations.**
- 50 percent of campuses are below any given target when we're using the state average as the target. **Baseline targets are based on state averages. However, they are not reset on a yearly basis meaning after baselines are set, there is not a 50/50 split.**
- Poverty is an important factor for a racial/ethnic group versus all students excluding that race/ethnicity.
- State statute has now given dropout recovery schools a label, flexibility, and their own accountability reporting for interventions; however, there is no adjustment in accountability calculations.
 - Recommendations
 - Hold a two day ATAC meeting in summer 2020 specifically to address potential changes to the Closing the Gaps domain related to the accountability reset.
- The committee discussed awarding partial points for the English Language Proficiency (ELP) component in the Closing the Gaps domain.
 - Questions
 - Can we see the impact for AEA versus non-AEA campuses? **We can provide this data.**
 - Is this change for 2020 accountability? **Yes, potentially.**
- TEA discussed the feasibility of calculating School Progress, Part B: Relative Performance for alternative education accountability (AEA) campuses.
 - Concerns
 - The accountability system is incentivizing many AEAs to turn their campuses into programs.
 - There is an issue of students who have not been present at school for an extended period, but we can't code them as at-risk unless they meet the specific at-risk criteria.
 - Comments
 - In our district, we have modeled data using the number of at-risk indicators each student meets, which was a good predictor of

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- performance. **The agency doesn't have that level of data. We would have to explore how to collect it from districts.**
- The tiers of economically disadvantaged used by finance show the variation in students' circumstances. There are varying degrees of poverty and at-risk factors experienced by each student within a campus.
- Using census block data rather than factor analysis could paint a more accurate picture of the students served by these campuses.
- TEA staff notes the rescore request deadline for 2020 accountability.
 - Questions
 - Would districts have the ability to appeal accountability outcomes related to rescore requested submitted after the deadline? **No.**
 - Concerns
 - There could be legitimate rescore requests that impact school outcomes. **Yes; however, the request must be submitted prior to the rescore request deadline.**
- Committee members discussed School Progress, Part A: Academic Growth for campuses serving grade 3.
 - Questions
 - If a growth measure is created for grade 3, can the agency only publish it if it has a positive impact? **It's possible, but this would likely cause confusion and is therefore seen as an unfavorable approach.**
 - Can we find out how many campuses overall, regardless of type, don't have a rating in the Academic Growth domain? **In 2019, 225 campuses did not have an Academic Growth domain rating.**
 - Concerns
 - At what point is high achievement good enough? There can be a ceiling effect with this methodology. **We are considering options similar to our approach for Masters to Masters performance or a hold harmless. Keep in mind that the Relative Performance domain may still be used for the campus rating.**
 - There is not a mathematical possibility for every campus to get an A rating.
 - This is shifting from a student model to a systems model.
 - This would cause unfair scrutiny of grade 3 teachers, especially if there is one or few.
 - This is really a K–3 growth measure.
 - Suggestions

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- Use the Texas Kindergarten Entry Assessment System (TX-KEA) for kindergarten readiness.
- Look at using this methodology for AEAs since high mobility doesn't lend itself to growth.
- This should be applied for every grade level. It shows improvement of the school at the systems level.
- This could be done as a hold harmless.
- This should be discussed with the campuses that it would affect prior to being implemented.
- Vote
 - Committee member voted unanimously to shelve this topic for 2020 accountability and reconsider this change for the reset.
- Committee members discussed the Spanish to English proxy for students transitioning from the Spanish STAAR to the English STAAR in reading.
 - Questions
 - Could we look at this data by grade level? **We can explore this.**
 - Is one point for achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard appropriate? **This would recognize that a student acquired language and knowledge.**
 - Concerns
 - Grade 6 is lower performing statewide. We want to be sure to account for the language mastery of these students. This could have a negative impact on the perception of language performance, when in actuality it is just lower a performing grade level overall.
 - Students may remain in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program longer than needed due to accountability driven decision making.
 - Comments
 - There have been districts that have voiced they are in favor of the proxy despite possible negative impacts.
 - Whether and how the proxy will be used needs to be reported prior the start of the school year to allow campuses to determine their instructional approaches
 - Suggestions
 - Use this as a report-only metric for 2020.
 - Pilot this in a district with a large bilingual population to see the impact of this methodology.
 - Recommendations

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- Report it on the TAPR for 2020. Do not include it in 2020 accountability calculations.
- Committee members discussed potential changes to the district rating methodology for the accountability reset.
 - Questions
 - Should a district even have a rating? We could have the district data presented in a dashboard format instead. **District ratings are currently required by statute.**
 - Where did this concern originate from? **TEA has heard concerns from a wide variety of stakeholders, including parents, State Board of Education (SBOE) members, the commissioner, legislators, and staff from the governor's office.**
 - Could TEA explore how many district ratings did not align with high school ratings? **TEA can provide this data.**
 - Could the proposed district weighting methodology be based on the number of campuses by campus type instead of campus enrollment? **We can explore this.**
 - Concerns
 - The College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) portion of a district rating could be devalued. This methodology is more STAAR dependent.
 - Reducing the impact of CCMR is contrary to the 60x30TX plan.
 - The current system doesn't create a sense of urgency to improve the lower performing elementary and middle school campuses. The current message being communicated is that high schools have a higher importance for districts.
 - If the focus of education is graduating students who are college, career, or military ready, then heavily weighting graduation and CCMR is more reflective of a district's purpose.
 - There is confusion in many communities as to how there are very low performing schools, yet the district rating is high.
 - If there is no district rating, districts could potentially move students from campus to campus to manipulate their campus level outcomes.
 - Mobile students within the district would not be recognized in the suggested methodology.
 - Some limitations are already in place to limit district ratings (*D* or *F* in a domain or overall for a campus results in 89 max for district).
 - The proposed methodology could potentially limit the possibility for all districts and campuses to earn an *A*.

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- In order to determine the appropriate methodology, committee members and TEA staff need to decide whether a district is an entity of its own or the “sum” of its campuses.
- Suggestions
 - Weight CCMR less for the district rating.
 - Track student mobility in Results Driven Accountability (RDA).
 - Pull out STAAR End-of-Course (EOC) into its own category for the district calculation.
 - Address this concern by educating the public more thoroughly on accountability methodology and goals.
- Recommendations
 - Revisit this issue during the summer meeting.
- TEA modeled the impact of reducing the minimum number of indicators needed for evaluation in the Closing the Gaps domain.
 - Questions
 - Have we looked at reducing minimum size across the board in the Closing the Gaps domain? **Yes. It would resemble the modeled data for reducing the minimum number of indicators.**
 - Would this be for 2020 accountability? **No. This would be at the reset.**
 - Of the comprehensive support campuses, who has performance and growth in Closing the Gaps versus just performance? **TEA can provide this data.**
 - Concerns
 - Consider how this methodology could impact school improvement identifications.
 - When there are four indicators evaluated, the all students group is likely the same as or very similar to any other student groups evaluated.
 - Suggestions
 - Look at a three-year average for the individual indicators for the campuses currently not evaluated.
- Committee members discussed topics related to AEA accountability and were provided an update on the AEA taskforce.
 - Questions
 - How strong is our voice at the federal level? **Texas has a new federal contact group that has been supportive.**
 - Has TEA been meeting federal waiver deadlines? **Yes.**
 - Suggestions

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- Running data by economically disadvantaged census block may be an alternative for AEA's.
- TEA could consider looking at this data for use in Relative Performance.
- Consider utilizing the attribution code of students over 26 years of age.
- Committee members discussed possible changes to school improvement identification methodology.
 - Suggestions
 - Instead of doing this by school type, we could do this by economically disadvantaged levels.
- Committee members discussed the House Bill (HB) 3 CCMR Outcome Bonus.
 - Questions
 - Will TEA be receiving enlistment data from the Department of Defense (DoD) in 2020? **We are currently on track to receive the data this year.**
 - Will districts continue to report military readiness for CCMR purposes through TSDS PEIMS? **Once enlistment data is received from the DoD, military readiness for accountability purposes will no longer be reported through TSDS PEIMS. TEA will use the DoD data for both accountability and CCMR Outcomes Bonus data sources. In the meantime, districts should continue to report intent to enlist in TSDS PEIMS.**
 - Could TEA delay using DoD data for CCMR accountability by one year to allow districts to compensate for possible over-inflated military enlistment reporting? **No. TEA will provide a preview listing to districts through the TEAL Accountability application and allow districts a correction window to address any errors with proper documentation.**
 - Will military readiness become a two-year lagging indicator? **No. It will remain a one-year lagging indicator.**
 - Is there a possibility that districts could be credited for college enrollers as verified through National School Clearinghouse (NSC) data that did not meet accountability CCMR indicators? **Not at this time.**
 - Do all colleges report to the NSC? **Most accredited colleges do report to the NSC. It is possible there are technical schools or private institutions that do not. As with military enlistment data, districts**

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- will have a validation window to provide evidence for any data discrepancies.
- Could TEA provide resources for differentiating the CCMR Outcomes Bonus and CCMR for accountability? **Yes.**
- Concerns
 - The term “military ready” is misleading if we are looking at actual “military enlistment.”
- Committee members participated in an open forum.
 - Questions
 - Could TEA only display distinction designations earned on the School Report Card (SRC) instead of those earned and those not? **We can explore this option.**
 - Could TEA assist districts in tracking former special education students? **We could provide a listing through the TEAL Accountability application.**
 - Suggestions
 - TEA should include HB 3 goals related to accountability on a dashboard. **We are currently working on a new interactive dashboard and will solicit feedback regarding this from the committee in the future.**
 - TEA should continue to communicate any CCMR changes in a timely manner to allow districts time to adjust their practices.