Chapter 1—Accountability Overview

About this Manual

The *Accountability Manual* is a technical guide that explains how the Texas Education Agency (TEA) uses the accountability system to evaluate the academic performance of Texas public districts. Districts include public school districts and open-enrollment charter schools. The manual describes the accountability system and explains how TEA processes information from different sources to produce accountability data reports. The processes outlined in this manual apply beginning with the 2025 accountability year and remain in place until otherwise notified.

Accountability Advisory Groups

Educators, school board members, business and community representatives, professional organizations, and legislative representatives from across the state have been instrumental in developing the current accountability system.

Texas Accountability Advisory Group (TAAG) includes representatives from school districts, legislative offices, and the business community. Members identify issues critical to the accountability system, make recommendations, and provide feedback on major policy issues.

ESC Accountability Group (EAG) includes representatives from each regional education service center (ESC) in the state. Members identify issues critical to the accountability system and make recommendations/provide feedback on major policy issues.

The accountability development proposals and supporting materials that were reviewed and discussed at each advisory group meeting are available online at https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting/accountability-system-development.

Overview of the Accountability System

The overall design of the accountability system evaluates performance according to three domains:

Student Achievement evaluates performance across all subjects for all students on both general and alternate assessments; College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) indicators; and graduation rates.

School Progress measures outcomes in two areas:

- Part A: Academic Growth
    - Percentage of students who grew at least one year academically as measured by STAAR results (Annual Growth).
    - Percentage of students who earned Did Not Meet Grade Level in the prior year and Approaches Grade Level or above in the current year (Accelerated Learning).
- Part B: Relative Performance
    - The achievement of students relative to campuses with similar economically disadvantaged percentages.
    - For AEA campuses, Part B: Retest Growth is the percentage of students who earned Approaches Grade Level or above on an EOC retest during the accountability cycle.

Closing the Gaps uses disaggregated data to demonstrate differentials in progress to interim and long-term goals among racial/ethnic groups, socioeconomic backgrounds, and other factors. The indicators included in this domain, as well as the domain's construction, align the state accountability system with

the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Who is Rated?

Districts and campuses that report students enrolled on the Fall Snapshot date in the accountability year are assigned a state accountability rating. For example, for the 2024 accountability year districts and campuses that report students enrolled on the Fall Snapshot date of the 2023-2024 school year are rated. For this purpose, students are considered enrolled if they are in membership. In order for a student to be in membership they must be scheduled to attend at least two hours of instruction each school day or participate in an alternative attendance accounting program.

Students instructed virtually are included in accountability calculations in the same manner as in-person students. Students enrolled in virtual courses under an agreement described by Texas Education Code (TEC), Section 29.9091, are considered enrolled in the sending district or school for purposes of average daily attendance and accountability.

Districts

School districts are rated beginning the first year they report fall enrollment. Districts without any students enrolled in the grades for which STAAR assessments are administered (3–12) are assigned the rating label of *Not Rated.* Districts are rated using proportionally weighted domain scores of each campus, based on the number of students enrolled in grades 3–12 at each campus in the Texas Student Data System/Public Education Information Management System (TSDS PEIMS) October Snapshot. Please see "Chapter 5—Calculating Ratings" for more on District Proportional Domain Methodology.

State-administered school districts, including Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Texas School for the Deaf, Texas Juvenile Justice Department, and Windham School District, are not assigned a state accountability rating.

Campuses

Beginning the first year they report fall enrollment, campuses, including alternative education campuses (AECs), are rated based on the performance of their students. To assign accountability ratings, campuses that do not serve any grade level for which the STAAR assessments are administered are paired with campuses in their district that serve students who take STAAR. Please see "Chapter 7—Other Accountability System Processes" for information on pairing.

Rating Labels

Districts and campuses receive an overall rating, as well as a rating for each domain. The rating labels for districts and campuses are as follows.

- *A, B, C, D, or F:* Assigned for overall performance and for performance in each domain to districts and campuses (including those evaluated under alternative education accountability [AEA]) that meet the performance target for the letter grade.
- *Not Rated:* Indicates that a district or campus does not receive a rating for one or more of the following reasons:
    - o The district or campus has insufficient data to assign a rating.
    - o The district operates only residential facilities.
    - o The campus is a juvenile justice alternative education program (JJAEP).
    - o The campus is a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP).
    - o The campus is a residential facility.

- o The commissioner otherwise determines that the district or campus will not be rated.
- *Data Under Review* indicates that a district or campus was issued a compliance review related to data concerns and the concerns were not resolved. In this case, the matter may be referred to TEA's Special Investigations Unit for review and TEA may elect to assign the district or campus with a temporary *Data Under Review* label. This label may be applied at any point, including to either a preliminary or final rating. TEA will take the response provided by the district or campus into consideration before making any final determination about possible wrongdoing. For more information, see "Compliance Reviews and Special Investigations Related to Data Concerns" in the "Ensuring Data Integrity" section of this chapter.
- *Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues* indicates that a special investigation has found data accuracy or integrity have compromised performance results (whether intentional or not), making it impossible to assign the district or campus a rating. The assignment of a *Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues* label is permanent.
- *Not Rated: Annexation* indicates that the campus is in its first school year after annexation by another district and, therefore, is not rated, as allowed by the annexation agreement with the agency.

See "Chapter 9—Responsibilities and Consequences" for more information on how these ratings impact sanctions and interventions.

Distinction Designations

Districts and campuses that receive acceptable accountability ratings are eligible to earn distinction designations (acceptable performance is defined as an overall rating of *A, B,* or *C*). Distinction designations are awarded for achievement in several areas and are based on performance relative to a group of campuses of similar type, size, grade span, and student demographics. Districts are eligible for a distinction designation in postsecondary readiness. Please see "Chapter 6—Distinction Designations" for more information.

Accountability System School Types

Every campus is labeled as one of four school types according to its grade span based on enrollment data reported in the fall TSDS PEIMS submission. The four types—elementary school, middle school, elementary/secondary (also referred to as K-12), and high school—are illustrated by the following table. The table shows combinations of grade levels served by campuses in Texas. The shading indicates the corresponding school type.

To find out how a campus that serves a certain grade span is labeled, find the lowest grade level reported as being served by that campus along the leftmost column and the highest grade level reported as being served along the top row. The shading of the cell where the two grade levels intersect indicates which of the four school types that campus is considered. For example, a campus that serves early elementary (EE) through grade four is labeled elementary school. A campus that serves grades five and six only is labeled middle school. Below is a sample chart from the 2024 accountability framework, illustrating the number of campuses serving each of these combinations. For other accountability cycles, refer to "Appendix E—School Types and Campus Comparison Groups."

2024 Accountability System School Types
(9,082 Total Campuses)

Elementary	Elementary/Secondary	Middle School	High School
■ (blue)	■ (green)	■ (yellow)	■ (gray)
4,942 Campuses	618 Campuses	1,706 Campuses	1,816 Campuses

Highest Grade Level Served →

Lowest Grade Level Served ↓

	EE	PK	KG	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
EE	9	92	60	39	89	31	185	1240	118	0	10	0	0	0	36
PK		51	20	8	33	10	139	1215	183	16	136	5	2	2	184
KG			0	4	14	8	100	614	63	10	41	5	7	3	55
1				0	10	15	6	96	15	2	3	0	1	2	10
2					1	9	7	35	1	2	2	0	1	0	6
3						1	6	117	7	1	6	0	1	1	7
4							1	34	22	0	5	2	1	0	7
5								5	111	2	75	2	3	4	18
6									25	5	1237	18	15	31	209
7										5	195	7	7	22	109
8											11	8	8	21	40
9												38	25	27	1398
10													18	8	46
11														15	15
12															19

TEA Division of Performance Reporting

STAAR-Based Indicators

Accountability Subset Rule

A subset of assessment results is used to calculate each domain. The calculation includes only assessment results for students enrolled in the campus in a previous fall, as reported on the TSDS PEIMS October snapshot (for additional information see section in this chapter on TSDS PEIMS-Based Indicators). Across all three domains, STAAR performance results must meet the accountability subset rules to be included. In order to be included in the Progress to English Language Proficiency component of Closing the Gaps, TELPAS scores also must meet the accountability subset rules.

Three assessment administration periods are considered for accountability purposes:
- Grades 3–8: campuses are responsible for students in the spring assessment results reported as

enrolled at that campus in the fall (referred to as TSDS PEIMS October Snapshot).
- End-of-Course (EOC): campuses are responsible for
    - summer assessment results from the summer prior to the current accountability year for students reported as enrolled at that campus in the prior year TSDS PEIMS October Snapshot;
    - fall assessment results from the fall of the current accountability year for students reported as enrolled at that campus in the fall TSDS PEIMS October Snapshot; and
    - spring assessment results for students reported as enrolled at that campus in the fall TSDS PEIMS October Snapshot.

For example, the 2024 accountability year uses student assessment results from summer 2023 for students in the TSDS PEIMS October 2022 Snapshot and student assessment results from fall 2023 and spring 2024 for students in the TSDS PEIMS October 2023 Snapshot.

Accountability Year	STAAR results are included in the subset of district/campus accountability	If the student was enrolled in the district/campus on this date:
2024	EOC summer 2023 administration	October 2022 enrollment snapshot
	EOC fall 2023 administration	October 2023 enrollment snapshot
	EOC spring 2024 administration	
	Grades 3–8 spring 2024 administration	

STAAR EOC Retest Performance

The opportunity to retest is available to students who have taken EOC assessments in any subject.

EOC retesters are counted as passers based on the passing standard in place when they were first eligible to take any EOC assessment. For example, for the 2024 accountability year:

Step 1: Find the best result from each administration for each subject retested (Summer 2023, Fall 2023, and Spring 2024).

Step 2: Determine whether the result is part of the accountability subset (was the student enrolled at Snapshot and tested on the same campus).

Step 3: If the result meets the accountability subset, then it is included. If the result does not meet the accountability subset, then it is not included.

If all results have the same level of performance, then the most recent result is selected for performance calculation.

The following charts provide examples of how the accountability subset is applied to EOC retesters for the 2024 accountability year.

2024 Accountability Subset Examples for EOC Retesters in STAAR Based Indicators

Enrolled SY 22-23	Tested SY 22-23	Enrolled SY 23-24	Tested SY 23-24	Tested SY 23-24
October 2022 Snapshot **Campus A**	Summer 2023 **Campus A**	October 2023 Snapshot **Campus A**	Fall 2023 **Campus A**	Spring 2024 **Campus A**
The best result is selected. Each result meets the accountability subset rule.				

The best result is found for performance (most recent result) and growth (only available), considered separately. The selected result is only applied to the campus that administered the assessment if the student meets the accountability subset rule (discussed above).

Enrolled SY 22-23	Tested SY 22-23	Enrolled SY 23-24	Tested SY 23-24	Tested SY 23-24
October 2022 Snapshot **Campus A**	Summer 2023 **Campus B**	October 2023 Snapshot **Campus B**	Fall 2023 **Campus B**	Spring 2024 **Campus C**
The best result is selected. Only the fall 2023 result meets the accountability subset rule. If spring 2024 was selected as the best result, the result would not meet the accountability subset rule for inclusion at Campus B or Campus C.				

School Progress, Part A: Academic Growth is only calculated using first-time tests. Please see "Chapter 3 – School Progress Domain" for more information.

SAT/ACT Inclusion in STAAR Based Indicators—Accountability Subset

The SAT/ACT results of accelerated testers (or the non-participation of accelerated testers in SAT/ACT) are attributed to the campus at which the student was reported as enrolled on the current TSDS PEIMS October Snapshot. Please see "Chapter 2—Student Achievement Domain" for additional information on accelerated testers and the inclusion of SAT/ACT results.

TSDS PEIMS-Based Indicators

One of the primary sources of data used in the accountability system is the Texas Student Data System/Public Education Information Management System (TSDS PEIMS) data collection. The TSDS PEIMS data collection has a prescribed process and timeline that offers school districts the opportunity to correct data submission errors or data omissions discovered following the initial data submission.

These timelines are strict, and the data submitted during the corrections window are final. TSDS PEIMS submission timelines can be found at https://tealprod.tea.state.tx.us/TWEDSAPI/23/0/0/Overview/List/TimeLine/697.

TSDS PEIMS data provided by school districts and used to create specific indicators are listed in the 2024 example below. For more information see the Accountability Data Sources webpage at https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting/accountability-data-resources and "Appendix H—Data Sources."

TSDS PEIMS data used for accountability indicators	Data for 2024 accountability
4-year Longitudinal Graduation Rate	Class of 2023
5-year Longitudinal Graduation Rate	Class of 2022
6-year Longitudinal Graduation Rate	Class of 2021
Annual Dropout Rate	2022–23 school year
Graduate with Completed IEP and Workforce Readiness	
Graduate Under an Advanced Diploma Plan and be Identified as a Current Special Education Student	
Earn an Industry-Based Certification	Earned from grade 9 through 2022-23 school year
Complete College Prep Course*	
Dual Credit Course Completion	
Earn an Associate Degree	

*For 2024 and 2025 accountability, successfully completing and earning credit for a college prep course in grades 9-12 will still earn CCMR credit. For 2026 accountability, courses completed in the 11th or 12th grades will be eligible for CCMR credit. For 2027 accountability and subsequent years, only courses completed in the 12th grade will be eligible for CCMR credit through college prep.

Other Indicators

The CCMR component of the accountability system includes data from ACT, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), SAT, Texas Success Initiative (TSI) assessment results, OnRamps, and level I and level II certificates. Data used to create specific CCMR indicators are listed in the 2024 example below. For more information see the Accountability Data Sources webpage at https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting/accountability-data-resources and "Appendix H—Data Sources."

Other data used for College, Career, and Military Readiness	Data for 2024 accountability reported for
ACT college admissions test	Tests from grade 9 through July 2023 administration
AP examination	Tests from grade 9 through 2022-23 school year
IB examination	Tests from grade 9 through May 2023
TSI assessment	Tests from June 2013 through October 2023 administration
SAT college admissions test	Tests from grade 9 through June 2023 administration
OnRamps dual enrollment course completion	Courses completed from grade 9 through 2022-23 school year
Level I and level II certificates	Certificates earned from grade 9 through 2022-23 school year
Military Enlistment	Department of Defense (DoD) Form 4 Submissions from LEAs for military enlistment as of December 31, 2023.

Ensuring Data Integrity

Accurate data is fundamental to accountability ratings. The system depends on the responsible collection and submission of assessment and TSDS PEIMS information by school districts. The Texas Education Data Standards (TEDS) describe the data reporting requirements, responsibilities, and specifications and are published annually at https://www.texasstudentdatasystem.org/tsds/teds/tweds-upgrade. Per 19 TAC §61.1025(b), these data standards shall be used by districts to submit data to the agency. Responsibility for the accuracy and quality of data used to determine district and campus ratings, therefore, rests with local authorities. The Texas Education Code (TEC) provides specific authority for TEA to monitor TSDS PEIMS data integrity (TEC, §7.028). An appeal that is solely based on a district's submission of inaccurate data will likely be denied.

Because accurate and reliable data are the foundation of the accountability system, TEA has established several steps to protect the quality and integrity of the data and the accountability ratings that are based on that data.

- **Campus Number Tracking:** Requests for campus number changes may be approved with consideration of prior state accountability ratings. Ratings of *D or F* for the same campus assigned two different campus numbers may be considered as consecutive years of unacceptable ratings for accountability interventions and sanctions, if the commissioner determines this is necessary to preserve the integrity of the accountability system.

- **Data Validation System:** Data Validation is a data-driven system designed to confirm the integrity of district submitted data. Annual data validation analyses examine districts' leaver and dropout data, student assessment data, and discipline data and may also validate other district submitted data. Districts identified with potential data integrity concerns engage in a process with the agency to either validate the accuracy of their data or determine that erroneous data were submitted. This process is fundamental to the integrity of all the agency's evaluation systems and is authorized by Texas Education Code (TEC §39.308, §37.008, §39.003). For more information, see the Data Validation Manuals at http://tea.texas.gov/pbm/DVManuals.aspx.

- **Test Security:** As part of ongoing efforts to improve security measures surrounding the

assessment program, the TEA Student Assessment Division uses a comprehensive set of test security procedures designed to assure parents, students, and the public that assessment results are meaningful and valid. Among other measures, districts are required to implement seating charts during all administrations and maintain certain test administration materials for five years. All testing personnel are required to be trained in test security and administration procedures at least once. However, annual test administration training is strongly encouraged, especially for policies and procedures that have changed. Detailed information about test security policies for the state assessment program is available online at https://txassessmentdocs.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/ODCCM/pages/2793212784/Test+Security.

- **Compliance Reviews and Special Investigations Related to Data Concerns:** TEA's compliance reviews are a collaborative review process with districts to ensure they are acting in accordance with state law and other regulatory requirements. A district or campus may be issued a compliance review if they have data that fell outside of an expected range or have otherwise been identified for having local practices potentially inconsistent with TEA guidelines which could impact performance results within TEA's discretion to identify. The reviews are based on data submitted by districts (or other sources) that could impact performance data, including information used in the state accountability system, such as (but not limited to) data related to CCMR indicators, graduates and leavers, individual graduation committee (IGC) reviews, or STAAR. The Self-Reported Data Unit (SRDU) within the Compliance and Investigations Department at the agency requests documentation and other information from districts to validate the data reported and then reviews and determines whether there has been a violation and commonly works with the districts to bring them into compliance and/or to establish better local practices. The agency will regularly update or clarify guidance to the field as a result of these reviews to ensure that districts have access to the information and tools necessary to establish better local practices and accurately report data to the agency.
  - TEA may take any of the following actions as a result of compliance reviews:
    - TEA may close its review with no further action if the district's response satisfies TEA's concerns;
    - TEA may work with the district to complete corrective actions to ensure more accurate information is provided and/or appropriate policies are implemented in the future; and/or
    - TEA may enter into an agreement with the district to issue a rating consistent with the actual performance of the district.
  - If the compliance reviews do not resolve the concerns raised, SRDU may refer the matter to the Special Investigations Unit for further investigation on these more consequential concerns.
  - If TEA makes a preliminary determination that the accuracy and/or integrity of performance results may have been compromised (whether intentional or not), TEA may issue a temporary *Data Under Review* label at any point, including on either a preliminary or final rating. If the results of a special investigation determine that the accuracy and/or integrity of performance results have been compromised (whether intentional or not), TEA may elect to issue the district or campus a ***Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues*** final accountability rating label. A *Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues* accountability rating label does not break the chain of consecutive years of unacceptable accountability ratings for accountability sanctions and intervention purposes. All districts and campuses with a final rating label of *Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues* are automatically subject to desk audits the following year. As a result of a special

investigation, TEA may elect to take actions and interventions under Texas Education Code Chapters 39 and 39A, including (but not limited to) lowering an accountability rating.

- These steps can occur either before or after the ratings release, and sanctions can be imposed at any time. To the extent possible, ratings are finalized when updated ratings are released following the resolution of appeals. A rating change resulting from an imposed sanction as a result of a compliance review and/or subsequent review by the Special Investigations Unit will stand as the final rating for the year, and will be reflected on all final accountability rating data files and reports (including TXschools.gov and the district's Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR)), with a statement representing this change, "Overall score or rating updated as a result of a Data Compliance Review". Accountability data are subject to scrutiny by the Office of the State Auditor.

Interpretation of the Manual for Ratings and Distinction Designations

The *Accountability Manual* attempts to address all possible scenarios; however, because of the number and diversity of districts and campuses in Texas, there could be unforeseen circumstances that are not anticipated in the manual. If a data source used to determine district or campus performance is unintentionally affected by unforeseen circumstances, including natural disasters or test administration issues, the commissioner of education will consider those circumstances and their impact in determining whether or how that data source will be used to assign accountability ratings and award distinction designations. In such instances, the commissioner will interpret the manual as needed to assign the appropriate ratings and/or award distinction designations that preserve both the intent and the integrity of the accountability system.