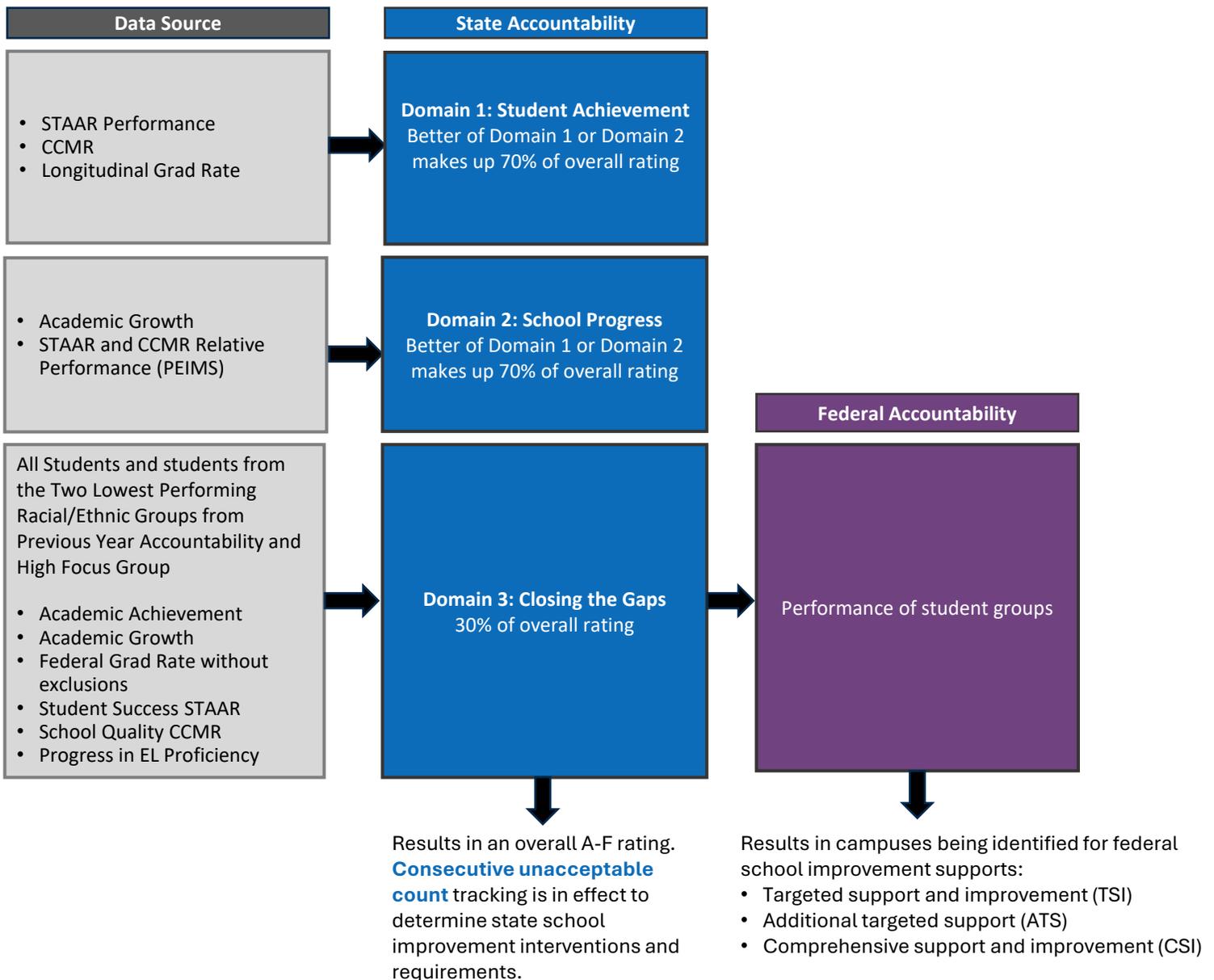# Consecutive Unacceptable Counts Roadmap: A Guide to Accountability and Exit Criteria (2026)

This Consecutive Unacceptable Counts Roadmap explains the consecutive unacceptable counts methodology, the system used to track year-over-year performance identifications within the state accountability system, in accordance with state statute (Texas Education Code §39.0543). As a reminder, there are two accountability systems that can lead to school improvement supports, state and federal, as described in the diagram below. The consecutive unacceptable counts methodology described in this guide reflects **state** accountability and school improvement. For information on federal accountability, please refer to Chapter 10 of the *Accountability Rating System Manual.*

Data Source	State Accountability	Federal Accountability
• STAAR Performance • CCMR • Longitudinal Grad Rate	**Domain 1: Student Achievement** Better of Domain 1 or Domain 2 makes up 70% of overall rating	
• Academic Growth • STAAR and CCMR Relative Performance (PEIMS)	**Domain 2: School Progress** Better of Domain 1 or Domain 2 makes up 70% of overall rating	
All Students and students from the Two Lowest Performing Racial/Ethnic Groups from Previous Year Accountability and High Focus Group • Academic Achievement • Academic Growth • Federal Grad Rate without exclusions • Student Success STAAR • School Quality CCMR • Progress in EL Proficiency	**Domain 3: Closing the Gaps** 30% of overall rating	Performance of student groups

Results in an overall A-F rating. **Consecutive unacceptable count** tracking is in effect to determine state school improvement interventions and requirements.

Results in campuses being identified for federal school improvement supports:
• Targeted support and improvement (TSI)
• Additional targeted support (ATS)
• Comprehensive support and improvement (CSI)

Part 1: Introduction to Consecutive Unacceptable Counts

What are Consecutive Unacceptable Counts? Consecutive unacceptable counts is how TEA tracks the number of years a district, open-enrollment charter school, or campus receives an unacceptable accountability rating. Under state law, an unacceptable identification includes a rating of F, a historical rating of Improvement Required, or a rating of D once specific thresholds are met under [Senate Bill (SB) 1365](#). Beginning in 2019, a third overall D rating and any D rating after is defined as unacceptable and increases the consecutive unacceptable count. These consecutive unacceptable counts begin with the 2014 accountability year, which established the baseline for the current accountability system, to provide a consistent starting point for determining the total years of unacceptable performance.

Why are Consecutive Unacceptable Counts tracked? Consecutive unacceptable counts are used to monitor performance over a multi-year period and identify where long-term support is needed the most. In 2021, SB1365 required that the number of consecutive years of unacceptable performance be reported annually. These counts maintain transparency and ensure that schools receive the appropriate interventions[1] and level of support over time.

What is the Exit Criteria? The goal of the tracking system is to provide a clear pathway back to Acceptable performance. By achieving an overall rating of A, B, or C, a campus meets the Exit Criteria, resets the unacceptable count to zero, and returns to an Acceptable performance. This guide outlines the specific criteria and resources required to navigate this exit.

Part 2: How Ratings Determine Consecutive Unacceptable Counts and Interventions

Table 1. Determination of the consecutive unacceptable count based on the rating received.

Rating Received	Impact on Consecutive Unacceptable Count
A, B, or C[2]	Resets an unacceptable count and D count to 0
D on the 1st or 2nd time since 2019	Pauses the unacceptable count and stays at the current number
D on the 3rd time since 2019, and each additional	Increases the unacceptable count by 1
F[2]	Increases the unacceptable count by 1
Not Rated	Pauses the unacceptable count and stays at the current number

Table 2. Impact of the unacceptable counts on interventions and requirements.

Count of Unacceptable Performance	Interventions and Requirements[1]
Unacceptable Count of 1	**Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP):** Campus must develop a plan to address performance, approved by the local board and submitted to TEA for review.
Unacceptable Count of 2	**Develop and Implement a Turnaround Plan (TAP):** Campus must notify stakeholders and develop a formal turnaround plan for commissioner approval. Campus must also begin implementing the TAP with fidelity.
Unacceptable Count of 3	**Continued TAP Implementation:** Ongoing monitoring of the turnaround plan.
Unacceptable Count of 4	**Continued TAP Implementation:** Ongoing monitoring of the turnaround plan. If performance does not improve during this year, the campus moves toward final statutory sanctions.
Unacceptable Count of 5	**Statutory Sanction:** The Commissioner must either order Campus Closure or appoint a Board of Managers (BOM) to govern the entire district.

[1]Texas Education Code (TEC), §§ 39A.051, 39A.101, 39A.107, and 39A.111
[2]For 2018 and earlier, Met Standard and Met Alternative Standard are considered Acceptable and reset the count to zero. Improvement Required is considered Unacceptable and increases the count by 1.

Part 3: Examples of Consecutive Unacceptable Count Scenarios

Example 1: The D count begins with 2018-19 ratings. In this example, the designation remains Acceptable until the third D count. The third D rating moves the campus to a count of 1, and each additional D rating that follows increases the unacceptable count.

YEAR	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Rating	Met Standard	D	Not Rated	Not Rated	Not Rated	D	D	D	D
Statutory Designation	Acceptable	Acceptable	-	-	-	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
Unacceptable Count	0	0 (One D)	0 (One D)	0 (One D)	0 (One D)	0 (Two Ds)	1 (Three Ds)	2 (Four Ds)	3 (Five Ds)

Example 2: An A, B, or C rating resets the unacceptable count to a zero. In this example, a D rating following a B rating starts the D count again and the designation would remain as Acceptable until a third D count or an F rating.

YEAR	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Rating	Met Standard	D	Not Rated	Not Rated	Not Rated	D	D	B	D
Statutory Designation	Acceptable	Acceptable	-	-	-	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Unacceptable Count	0	0 (One D)	0 (One D)	0 (One D)	0 (One D)	0 (Two Ds)	1 (Three Ds)	0 (Zero Ds)	0 (One D)

Example 3: One F rating always increases the unacceptable count by one and does not reset the D count. A D rating following an unacceptable designation, does not reset the count but maintains it at its current level. In this example, the campus's second D following an F maintains the count at 1, and the subsequent F rating then increases the unacceptable count to 2.

YEAR	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Rating	Met Standard	C	Not Rated	Not Rated	Not Rated	D	F	D	F
Statutory Designation	Acceptable	Acceptable	-	-	-	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
Unacceptable Count	0	0 (Zero Ds)	0 (Zero Ds)	0 (Zero Ds)	0 (Zero Ds)	0 (One D)	1 (One D)	1 (Two Ds)	2 (Two Ds)

Example 4: One F rating increases the count by one and does not reset the D count. In this example, the campus's third D following the F rating increased the count.

YEAR	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Rating	Met Standard	C	Not Rated	Not Rated	Not Rated	D	D	F	D
Statutory Designation	Acceptable	Acceptable	-	-	-	Acceptable	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
Unacceptable Count	0	0 (Zero Ds)	0 (Zero Ds)	0 (Zero Ds)	0 (One D)	0 (One D)	0 (Two Ds)	1 (Two Ds)	2 (Three Ds)

Part 4: Exiting the Consecutive Unacceptable Count

A district or campus exits a consecutive unacceptable count upon being assigned an overall performance rating of an **A, B, or C**. Once a reset occurs, the district or campus is no longer subject to the intervention requirements of the previous unacceptable count. If a campus receives an unacceptable rating in the year following a reset, the consecutive unacceptable count begins again at Unacceptable Count 1.

Certain designations can maintain, or pause, the existing count from the prior rated year without resulting in a full reset:

- **Overall D Ratings:** Per SB1365, an overall rating of a D is considered acceptable performance for the first and second occurrences. However, a D rating following an F rating does not reset the count but maintains it at its current level. The third D rating increases the count by 1, and each additional D rating that follows increases the unacceptable count.

- **Not Rated Designations:** A Not Rated label neither increases nor resets the consecutive unacceptable count. During a non-rated year, the prior year's rating is preserved and carried forward to the next year in which an accountability rating is assigned. Districts and campuses must continue to implement all previously ordered sanctions and interventions during Not Rated years.

- **No Ratings Issued:** In years when TEA does not issue accountability ratings statewide, the consecutive unacceptable count is paused. The prior year's rating is preserved and carried forward.

- **Special Programs:** Campuses approved for Texas Partnerships under Texas Education Code (TEC), §11.174 (SB1882) and Math Innovation Zones under TEC, §28.020 pause the consecutive unacceptable count during the partnership year.

Part 5: Helpful Resources

Refer to the resources and contacts below for additional guidance on accountability methodology and intervention requirements.

Topic	Resource
Consecutive Counts and Interventions	Chapter 9 of the *2026 Accountability Ratings Manual*
SB 1365 Impact on Accountability	Senate Bill 1365 Accountability System Impact
Federal Accountability (CSI, TSI, and ATS)	Chapter 10 of the *2026 Accountability Rating System Manual*
Paired Campuses	Intervention and Ratings Guidance For Paired Campuses
Contact the School Improvement Division	SIDivision@tea.texas.gov
Contact the Performance Reporting Division	Performance Reporting Help Desk

Part 6: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: What is the difference between the count of consecutive unacceptable years and the D Count?

A: An unacceptable accountability rating is assigned when a district or campus receives an F, an Improvement Required rating, or—beginning in 2019—three Ds. Under SB1365, as of 2019, the third D results in an unacceptable identification. The D count refers to the total number of D ratings up to the third D, which results in the unacceptable rating. Each additional D rating received after the third rating continues to increase the unacceptable count.

Q: Does a Not Rated label reset my campus's unacceptable count?

A: No. Not Rated labels act as a pause. It neither increases nor resets the consecutive unacceptable count. During a non-rated year, the previous year's rating is preserved and carried forward to the next year.

Q: If my campus moves from an F to a D, does our count reset?

A: No. Only an A, B, or C meets the criteria to reset the count.

Q: I have questions about Federal school improvement, where can I find more information?

A: Please refer to Chapter 10 of the *Accountability Rating System Manual.*

Q: When a campus transitions from being paired to receiving its own rating, does the consecutive unacceptable count reset?

A: No, the count does not reset during this transition.

Q: If a district closes a campus and reassigns students to another campus, could the receiving campus inherit the closed campus's accountability history?

A: Yes. Pending updates with TAC §97.1066, when a campus closes, accountability ratings may be linked across CDC numbers to determine consecutive years of unacceptable performance. In certain circumstances, the receiving CDC number may assume the closed campus's rating history, including consecutive years of an unacceptable rating

Q: Where can I find more information on how campus pairings affect consecutive unacceptable counts?

A: Please refer to *Intervention and Ratings Guidance for Paired Campuses* for additional guidance for paired campuses.

Q: If a campus receives a D rating following an F, how is the academic descriptor label "Needs Improvement" when its statutory status is "Acceptable?

A: The academic descriptor is the label assigned to the letter grade, where a D is always described as "Needs Improvement" regardless of the D count. The statutory designation is the legal status that determines the consecutive unacceptable count. For example, for the first two occurrences, a D is statutorily Acceptable. Please refer to *Senate Bill 1365 Accountability System Impact* for more information.