

TAAG Meeting Minutes

Date: February 10, 2025

Time: 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Texas Accountability Advisory Group (TAAG) Minutes

Meeting Minutes for February 10, 2025

The purpose of the February 2025 TAAG meeting was to provide updates and clarity related to the proposed re-adoption of the *Accountability Manual* for 2025 ratings and to begin discussing the 2028 A-F Refresh. The 2028 A-F discussion included the A-F Refresh Goals and Theory of Action, the A-F Refresh Timeline, and the initial list of considerations for continuous improvement of the A-F system. TEA gathered TAAG's feedback on a Middle School Accelerated Testers proposal and presented the current state of the RDA/A-F Integration with the RDA Taskforce. The meeting concluded with the announcement of the launch of the 2028 A-F Refresh Public Feedback form.

Topic 1 – Proposed Commissioner's Rules

Summary:

At the time of the meeting, eight written public comments had been received addressing the *Accountability Manual* for 2025 ratings. No public comment was received for the 2025 ESSA amendment. Additionally, the proposed amendment to §74.1003 (2025-2030 Industry-Based Certification List for Public School Accountability) was reviewed; TEA clarified the proposed tiering of IBCs in the rule does not impact the measures of CCMR in A-F at this time but is a topic of discussion at a future TAAG Meeting.

Discussion:

The committee sought answers and clarity regarding several aspects of the tiering of Industry-Based Certifications (IBCs), including the issue being addressed and who is guiding the process. They inquired about the possibility of weighting for IBCs in CCMR in accountability and requested documentation on IBC success rates for that discussion.

TEA Response:

TEA urged committee members to utilize the open public comment period to communicate their concerns regarding the tiering of IBCs, to be reviewed by the Division of College, Career and Military Preparation.

The committee was reminded that the current tiering of IBCs is for programmatic purposes at this time and committee feedback on a CCMR proposal will be gathered in a future TAAG meeting.

Topic 2 – 2028 A-F Refresh: Goals and Theory of Action

Summary:

Before introducing the A-F refresh timeline and initial considerations, TEA reminded the committee

of the purposes and design commitments that will continue to drive system design in the 2028 refresh.

By effectively evaluating, refining, and evolving A-F, the rigor, transparency, and fairness of the system improves over time, and remains aligned to the purpose of the A-F system as required by statutes: to continuously improve student performance, eliminate achievement gaps, and prepare students for postsecondary success. To meet that purpose TEA will maintain the established designing commitments of the A-F Accountability System specifically; Ratings reflect the better of achievement or progress; school performance is evaluated through multiple valid measures; ratings are based on set criteria, not a fixed distribution; the system design remains static in most years.

The committee was also reminded to consider the whole accountability system as a part of the refresh. This includes not just *A-F* ratings and methodology, but the committee will be asked to evaluate, refine and evolve other areas including distinction designations, TXschools.gov reports, other data reported on TXschools.gov, and data reported on TPRS.

Discussions:

The committee emphasized the importance of cross-agency collaboration when making decisions that impact accountability. Additionally, there was a request for updates on TXschools.gov, highlighting its value in providing financial information such as revenue and expenses per student.

TEA Response:

TEA assured the committee it has positive collaboration across the agency to align on decisions made regarding data used in accountability. As was the case in 2023 refresh, new baselines for cut points across the *A-F* system will be discussed with TAAG.

TXschools.gov has not been updated recently due to ongoing litigation and will be updated upon the next release of ratings.

Topic 3 – 2028 A-F Refresh Timeline

Summary:

TEA shared the timeline for the 2028 *A-F* refresh. Initial refresh considerations will be discussed in monthly TAAG meetings with the purpose of developing a Preliminary 2028 *A-F* Refresh Framework to be published in the Summer of 2025, followed by a period of public comments and feedback to create a Final Framework to be published Spring of 2026. The Proposed *A-F Accountability Manual* for 2028 ratings, including refreshed cut points will be published Summer 2026, with a Final Manual adopted in to rule Fall of 2026. This timeline affords LEAs an opportunity to take action to address “lagging indicator data” for the Class of 2027 graduates before they are utilized in 2028 ratings. All estimated dates are tentative and subject to change.

Discussion:

Committee members sought clarity on whether STAAR data from Spring 2025 will be included in any modeled or proposed achievement targets and what data will form the basis for cut points in

the refresh plan. They appreciated the transparency of the plan and emphasized the need for a strategy to handle unavoidable changes. The committee strongly agreed with the importance of adopting the manual in 2026 to give LEAs time to adjust.

TEA Response:

TEA confirmed 2025 *A-F* data will be the baseline data used to model and set cut points, as it will be the most recent available data in order to meet the feedback from stakeholders for the publication of the final manual and cut points prior to the start of the 2026-27 school year. This affords LEAs an opportunity to act on lagging indicator data from the class of 2027, to be used in 2028 *A-F* ratings.

The agency agrees that unexpected issues can surface, but the agency will work to maintain these milestones and communicate with TAAG (and LEAs, stakeholders) if any adjustments are needed.

Topic 4 – 2028 *A-F* Refresh Initial Considerations

Summary:

Based on recommendations and feedback from the previous refresh and public comments on previous rules, the agency has identified seven initial considerations for the 2028 *A-F* Refresh.

Discussion:

Regarding consideration of changes to CCMR some members raised concerns about tiered weighting for industry-based certifications and other indicators, which they believe might negatively impact rural school districts by favoring urban or suburban workforce demands, thus undervaluing rural-relevant certifications and potentially create inequities in accountability system ratings. Some committee members reiterated concerns with CCMR weighting, highlighting unintended consequences, such as shifting focus to programs that not all districts offer or would not have resources to implement prior to rules going in to affect. Members requested Q&A session with the CCMP team to learn more about the tiering process and expected outcomes.

Committee members called attention to potential impact of closing schools in Domain III: Closing the Gaps, noting that new campus ID numbers prevent comparison with previous data and significantly different student populations attributed to the combining of campuses may potentially disadvantaging schools in earning points. Multiple members supported the idea of using district averages in Domain III to address this issue. Additionally, mobility concerns were noted, with students potentially falling through the cracks due to frequent moves.

TEA Response:

TEA will refer to this feedback in the development of proposals to be presented at future TAAG meetings and urged the committee to re-surface these concerns when the consideration is discussed.

Topic 5 – 2028 *A-F* Refresh Consideration #5: Recognition of Accelerated Testers in Middle School & High School

Summary:

TEA provided TAAG members modeling of bonus point methodology for middle school students who successfully pass an EOC in place of a grade-level STAAR test. The specific methodology adds a bonus point for students who earn Approaches or above on an EOC in middle school as calculated for Domain I: Student Achievement. Initial modeling, based on Algebra I data shows adding a bonus point would not change overall scale scores for 54% of middle school campuses with 46% of middle school campuses seeing an increase of 1 or more points in Overall A-F scale scores. Scale scores in excess of 100 hundred would be scaled to 100.

Additionally in response to public comment, TEA is revisiting the methodology for including accelerated testers in High School accountability. Specifically, feedback indicated that the A-F system should revisit the performance level standards (i.e., Meets, Masters, Approaches) for accelerated testers in high school taking ACT/SAT instead of EOCs. As such, TEA will review the SAT and ACT cut score ranges used for students taking SAT and ACT in place of a STAAR EOC in high school. Additional considerations provided for TAAG feedback included seeking federal approval for another national recognized test such as PSAT, adjusting the required time frame for accelerated testing to 9th or 10th grade, or providing bonus points similar to the middle school proposal.

Discussion:

Regarding the middle school accelerated testers proposal, committee members inquired if scaling should be done on pre-bonus data to ensure bonuses remain effective, emphasizing that rescaling could negate the bonus effect. Some members questioned if a single bonus point is sufficient to incentivize students and sought clarification on its application across other subjects like Biology and English I. A committee member questioned awarding bonus points for "Approaches" level achievements. Additionally, members inquired about the impact on Domain 2B. The committee also highlighted the implications for Domain III, where extra incentives cannot be given, and the need for districts to consider high school implications when making middle school course enrollment decisions. It was also discussed if the incentive for successful 8th grade advanced mathematics should be in a similar system as Outcomes Bonus, rather than through the Accountability system.

Regarding high school accelerated testers, members inquired about the possibility of utilizing TSIA in addition to SAT/ACT to satisfy accelerated testing requirements. An additional inquiry was made about the possibility of allowing for all possible substitute assessments. Members specifically noted impacts on high school ratings due to the standards currently in place for accelerated testers compared to that of Algebra I EOC.

Group Feedback: Polling of TAAG members indicated that 8 of 12 respondent members supported the bonus point methodology as presented with limited reservation. 3 of 12 respondent members requested additional discussion on the topic and one member voiced serious disagreement with the proposal.

TEA Response:

The majority of TAAG feedback indicates support for moving forward with further consideration of bonus points for Middle School Accelerated Testers. The bonus point methodology can be applied

to Domain 2b, but cannot be applied to Domain 3, because Domain 3 must meet federal ESSA requirements. To finalize the proposal, TEA will confirm the results shared with TAAG in the meeting (based on Algebra I) are consistent when the bonus point is applied to all STAAR EOC assessments taken by middle schoolers (that includes Algebra I, Biology, US History, English I, and English II). To finalize the proposal, TEA will also confirm the data under Approaches+ compared to the committee member's suggestion of Meets+.

At a future TAAG meeting, Consideration #1: Targets and Cut Scores Update Using New Baselines" discussion will include the modeling of cut points under this new bonus-point methodology.

TEA will also discuss changes to the SAT and ACT Assessment Score Ranges for Performance Level Standards used for high school accelerated testers at a future meeting with TAAG.

Topic 6 - Refresh Consideration #2: Integration of RDA into A-F

Summary:

TEA shared the current state of proposal to merge RDA into the District A-F rating system by developing a Closing the Gaps, Part B domain, serving the purpose of aligning federal reporting requirements, reducing duplication of data reporting, and creating consistent focus across the state on special population performance improvements. Members were provided an overview of similarity and differences of the current systems. TEA provided insight into the next series of recommendations to be addressed by the RDA Integration Taskforce, specifically whether to combine or separate STAAR 3-8 & EOC, whether to use student success or RDA methodology, and whether to combine all four subjects or look at subjects as individual measures.

Group Feedback:

Feedback collected through exit survey emphasized the need for timely data release for accountability purposes, noting its potential implications for districts. Concerns were raised about the complexity of the RDA process, the need to streamline and avoid duplication, and the importance of clear explanations for each indicator. The need for data modeling to understand the impact of proposed changes was shared as well.

TEA Response:

TAAG feedback will be shared with RDA Integration taskforce for consideration in the continued refinement of the A-F and RDA Integration proposal.

Topic 7 - Announcement of release of feedback form

TEA announced the release of the [2028 A-F Refresh Public Feedback](#) available on the [Accountability System Development](#)

This survey will remain open through spring 2026 to assist with the publication of the Preliminary 2028 Accountability Manual in summer 2026.