

TAAG Meeting Minutes

Date: March 24, 2025

Time: 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Texas Accountability Advisory Group (TAAG) Minutes

Meeting Minutes for March 25, 2025

The purpose of the March 2025 TAAG meeting was to continue to gather feedback on initial considered enhancements to the *A-F system* for the 2028 *A-F Refresh*. First TAAG was provided an update on the public comment received on the *Accountability Manual* for 2025 ratings, and to was reminded of the upcoming public comment period of the *Accountability Manual* for 2026 ratings. The 2028 *A-F* discussion included follow up to a previously shared proposal for recognition of accelerated testers in middle school, a review of proposals and gathering of feedback related to high school accelerated testers, and a review of data modeling aligned to a proposal to include different variables in Domain 2B: Relative Performance. Additionally, TEA provided TAAG a data analysis of changes to *A-F system* methodology implemented during 2023 *A-F system* refresh. The meeting concluded with the review of future topics and meeting dates

Topic 1 – 2025, 2026 Proposed Commissioner’s Rules Public Comment

Summary:

During the meeting members were informed that TEA would post responses to public comments received for *Accountability Manual* for 2025 ratings on the [2025 Accountability Manual](#) webpage. TEA reminded members that public comments for the *Preliminary Accountability Manual* for 2026 ratings would open on April 18, 2025, and close on May 19, 2025. This timeline allows for the adoption and publication of the rules for 2026 rating to be completed prior to the start of the 2025-26 school year and a full year in advance of 2026 ratings. TEA shared that comment related to the *Proposed Accountability Manual* for 2026 ratings would be reviewed at a meeting after the close of the public comment period.

Topic 2 – 2028 A-F Refresh: Consideration #5: Recognition of Accelerated Testers in Middle School Follow-Up

Summary:

TEA reviewed member feedback from the February 2025 meeting that showed two thirds of members supported the proposal to include a bonus point for middle school students who successfully take an EOC in place of a grade-level STAAR test prior to ninth grade. In response to committee feedback gathered during the February 2025 meeting, data modeling was presented for TAAG feedback on setting the threshold at Approaches or better, or Meets or better. TEA also included an analysis of the impact on all EOCs. Data modeling showed that “All Subject” results were consistent with “Algebra Only” modeling shared at the February 2025 meeting. TEA asked for

TAAG feedback on the inclusion of the bonus point methodology in Domain 2b: Relative Performance.

Discussions:

The committee emphasized the importance of excluding bonus points from scaling and cut point calculations. Some members of the committee suggested increasing the size of the bonus to have a greater impact on campus ratings.

Group Feedback:

Polling of members in the meeting showed ninety-one percent of TAAG members agreed with setting threshold at Approaches or better and eighty-three percent were in favor of including bonus points in Domain 2b: Relative Performance.

TEA Response:

TEA assured the committee that scaling and cut points would be addressed at future meeting. TEA reiterated commitment to a single bonus point to maintain balance in the system and not add too much weight to an individual data point. TEA's review of the polling after the meeting finalizes the TAAG recommendation to include a single bonus point at approaches or better, in both domains for all EOC subjects.

Topic 3 – 2028 A–F Refresh: Recognition of Accelerated Testers in High School Part I

Summary:

TEA reviewed current process and methodology for establishing “Approaches”, “Meets”, and “Masters” cut points for the inclusion of SAT or ACT score for accelerated testers as required by the state’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) waiver. TEA reiterated the current methodology is designed to minimize testing requirements and burdens on students and districts.

TEA proposed to change methodology for setting cut points for SAT and ACT while maintaining compliance with the statutory requirement that assessments used as a substitute for STAAR EOC meet TSI college readiness benchmarks established by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). TEA proposed to accomplish this by aligning STAAR EOC “Meets” standard with “Meets/Exceeds” standard for SAT and then utilizing standard deviation in alignment with industry standard practices to establish cut points of “Approaches” and “Masters”. TEA would then use concordance tables to align ACT and SAT performance standards.

Discussion:

Group Feedback:

One hundred percent of committee members were supportive of TEAs proposed methodology and new cut points.

TEA Response:

In a later meeting with the ESC Accountability Group, it was identified that an adjustment was needed to the ACT cut points, as the concordance table did not provide an ACT score for Masters that was higher than the ACT score for substitute assessments/college readiness benchmarks of the THECB used for Meets. The table has been updated in the TAAG slides, based on the same Standard Deviation methodology used to set the SAT Approaches and Masters cut points, and no longer uses a concordance table.

Topic 4 – 2028 A–F Refresh: Recognition of Accelerated Testers in High School Part II

Summary:

In response to stakeholder feedback TEA solicited member feedback on a potential change to offer alternative testing options to districts to satisfy federal testing requirements for accelerated testers. The alternative option would utilize PSAT or PreACT results for students the year they are taken in lieu of SAT or ACT results being utilized when those students are in twelfth grade. TEA noted that utilization of PSAT or PreACT to meet requirements would be subject to federal approval. TEA also noted the agency does not currently collect PreACT data.

Discussion:

Members shared concerns that adding additional testing and timing options would increase testing requirements for students, as students would still be taking the SAT or ACT for college entrance requirements. Committee members called attention to potential funding issues for districts as House Bill 3 only provides funding for one additional assessment. Members also expressed concerns about instructional and curricular implications associated with adding an additional test.

Group Feedback:

Polling of members show 60% of TAAG members were opposed to (“vetoed”) adding PSAT or PreACT citing previously discussed concerns. 1 member was “in support with reservations”.

TEA Response:

Based on TEA’s review of the polling results and the comments included after the meeting which indicate the addition of “high stakes on pre-assessments” and the “additional tracking, especially for transfer students”, the “real concerns with choice of test, mobility, funding, etc.”

, the potential change is not likely to be further pursued. Additional stakeholders may also be consulted.

Topic 5 – 2028 A–F Refresh Consideration: Inclusion of Special Education as variable for Relative Performance

Summary:

TEA replicated previous modeling of the impact of including both a campus’s economically disadvantaged percentage and Special Education (SPED) percentage in Domain 2b to see if the conclusion still holds that SPED explains very little of the variance of STAAR performance that economically disadvantaged doesn’t explain. Data modeling shows SPED has a small distribution

and has little explanatory power over percent Economically Disadvantaged. Data showed that even amongst campuses with the highest percentages of SPED students, Domain 2b scores are distributed across all A-F ratings. Current methodology is not disproportionately negatively impacting the highest SPED campuses in Domain 2b or Overall ratings. Based upon data modeling TEA recommended not to include SPED percentage in Domain 2b.

Discussion:

Members inquired about other variables that are being considered for inclusion in Domain 2b.

Group Feedback:

Polling of members showed all voting members in support of TEA's proposal to not include SPED as a variable in Domain 2b.

TEA Response:

TEA confirmed that additional variables including prior year performance would be made available.

Topic 6 - 2028 A-F Refresh Consideration: Revisit Distinction Designations

Summary:

TEA provided members with an overview of statutory requirements and current methodology for calculating and assigning Distinction Designations. A review of past considerations and current stakeholder feedback was shared with members. Feedback was solicited to assess member interest in further consideration of publicly submitted enhancements: creation of an AEA/DRS specific designation, inclusion of annual growth as an indicator of Academic Achievement in RLA and Math, removal of attendance rate as indicator for designations, removal of SAT and ACT participation rates as an indicator, and creation of a post-secondary outcomes designation.

Discussion:

Members inquired about the appropriateness of adding growth as an indicator of Academic Achievement citing concerns that it would be duplicative of the current Top 25 Percent: Comparative Academic Growth distinction designation. Members sought clarification of potential indicators for a post-secondary outcomes designation and noted concerns about lagging data and the suitability of awarding a distinction to campuses or districts for student outcomes after they are no longer enrolled.

TEA Response:

TEA will use member feedback and public comment to create formal proposal for committee review at a future TAAG meeting.

Topic 7 - A-F System Data Checks

Summary:

TEA has performed data analyses to assess previously enacted enhancements to the A-F system. Specifically, the inclusion of different language testers in Domain 2A Academic Growth campus

ratings, and changes implemented to increase the number of campuses and districts rated under Domain 3, Closing the Gaps.

Elementary Domain 2A Academic Growth methodology changed in 2023 for campuses with different language testers. Prior to 2023, students who tested in different languages from one year to another were not included in Domain 2A Academic Growth. Data analysis shows that students whose growth was measured with tests of different languages have a higher percentage of testers earning accelerated learning points and most campuses experience no change or receive a higher Academic Growth score in 2024 due to including different language testers. 95% of campuses with different language testers receive the same Academic Growth letter grade or better when different language testers are included.

Domain 3 methodology changed in 2023 with the purpose of ensuring more campuses are being rated for Closing the Gaps. Specific enhancements implemented included, reducing minimum group size from twenty-five to ten, measuring only two race-ethnicity groups based on prior year minimum size, and combining several demographic groups into a single “high focus” group. Data analysis shows a 1.47% increase in the number of campuses rated in Closing the Gaps in 2024 compared to 2022, which amounted to one hundred and nineteen additional campuses being evaluated in Domain 3. Regarding districts, there was a 1.66% increase in the number of districts rated in Domain 3 in 2024 compared to 2022, amounting to twenty-three more districts receiving Domain 3 ratings in 2024 compared to 2022.

Discussion:

Members inquired about additional data checks and in future meetings. TEA confirmed additional data checks would be shared at future meetings. Members acknowledged the enhancements reviewed were having an expected impact and enabled the *A-F system* to better meet statutory requirements.
