

As part of the 2023 A–F System Refresh, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) submitted an amendment to the state’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan to adjust the methodology within the Closing the Gaps domain.

## Student Group Targets

The agency is updating federal student group targets and setting them by school type: elementary, middle, and high school. The targets are available in Appendix A on TEA’s [ESSA webpage](#).

- Overall
  - To increase fairness and accuracy of ratings, all targets are differentiated by school type.
  - To account for the impact of COVID-19, all long-term targets are pushed back five years to 2037–38.
  - The first five years of interim targets align with each school type’s baseline rates and increase at five-year increments until reaching the long-term targets.
- Academic Achievement (Performance at Meets Grade Level disaggregated for reading/language arts [RLA] and mathematics)
  - To account for the impact of COVID-19 and the STAAR redesign, Academic Achievement used the original 2017 baseline dataset at Meets Grade Level with disaggregated targets by school type.
- Growth or Graduation
  - To account for the impact of COVID-19, Academic Growth Status used an average of 2019 and 2022 growth outcomes incorporating the updated methodology from the School Progress, Part A domain. Long-term targets were adjusted to account for the updated methodology.
  - Federal Graduation Status used the Class of 2021 statewide federal four-year graduation, disaggregated for each student group. Long-term targets were updated to ensure all students groups could demonstrate growth to target.
- English Language Proficiency (ELP)
  - To account for the TELPAS Writing change, ELP used 2021 and 2022 TELPAS baseline data for the listening, speaking, and reading domains only.
  - For 2024, targets will be updated to include writing and will shift back to evaluating the composite rating.
- School Quality or Student Success
  - The Student Achievement Domain Score: STAAR Component Only used the original 2017 baseline dataset with disaggregated targets by school type.
  - College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) Performance Status used the 2022 statewide outcomes (2021 annual graduates) disaggregated for each student group.

## Graded Points Methodology

In addition to updating interim student group targets, the agency is awarding graded outcomes for performance and growth toward these targets. The methodology used between 2018 and 2022 evaluated group performance on a yes/no basis; using a 0–4 points methodology provides further

differentiation for groups demonstrating growth but not yet achieving target performance. The graded point methodology follows.

*Proposed Points Definitions*

Points	Definition
4	Met long-term target
3	Met interim target
2	Did not meet interim target but showed expected growth toward next interim target
1	Did not meet interim target but showed minimal growth
0	Did not meet interim target and did not show minimal growth

Expected growth to interim target (for 2 points) is defined as on-track growth to reach the next interim target. The expected growth calculation is rounded to one decimal point. The denominator for 2023 is six years. The denominator for 2024 will be five years and so forth.

$$\text{Current year rate} - \text{prior year rate} \geq \frac{\text{Next interim target} - \text{prior year rate}}{6}$$

Minimal growth (for 1 point) is defined as at least 1.0 percent growth for STAAR and CCMR indicators. Minimal growth is at least 0.1 percent growth for graduation indicators.

**Student Groups Reported and Student Groups Evaluated**

As part of changes to narrow the focus to the lowest-performing groups, the agency is using super groups to calculate the Closing the Gaps domain score. Super groups consist of an unduplicated count of students from the state’s traditionally underperforming student groups. If a student meets one or more of the following criteria, s/he is included in the new super group. The Highly Mobile super group replaces the current non-continuously enrolled student group. Based on feedback and analysis, the agency is reducing the current 25 student group minimum size to 10 to measure the outcomes for additional students and to monitor achievement gaps more closely.

All Students	Two Lowest Performing Racial/Ethnic Groups from Prior Year							High Focus (Eco Dis, EB <sup>1</sup> , SpEd, Highly Mobile)
	African American	Hispanic	White	American Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	

- High Focus—an unduplicated grouping of students identified as emergent bilingual/English learner, economically disadvantaged, highly mobile, and/or served by special education programs
  - Highly Mobile—an unduplicated grouping of students identified as homeless, migrant, and/or foster
- Two Lowest-Performing Racial Ethnic Groups—determined by averaging the Academic Achievement RLA and mathematics indicators. 2022 data are used to determine the two 2023 groups.
  - The minimum size of 10 is applied to 2022 data when identifying the two groups.
  - For a new campus, the prior year two lowest-performing racial/ethnic groups at the state-level are evaluated.
  - If a campus only has one racial/ethnic group that meets minimum size, that group is evaluated.

### Closing the Gaps: Components

- No changes are proposed for the Academic Achievement component (Meets Grade Level standard or above in RLA and mathematics) methodology.
- No changes are proposed for the Four-Year Graduation Rate (without state exclusions) component methodology for high schools and K–12s with graduation rates.
- No changes are proposed for the CCMR Performance component for high schools and K–12s. This component continues to evaluate non-graduating twelfth graders to align with ESSA requirements.
- The Academic Growth in RLA and Mathematics component for elementary and middle schools is updated to align with growth methodology changes made in the School Progress, Part A: Academic Growth domain. To be included, students must meet the accountability subset and have a non-zero STAAR assessment result in both the prior year and current year.
- No changes are proposed for the Student Achievement Domain Score: STAAR Component Only methodology for elementary and middle schools.
- As the TELPAS writing domain is being updated for 2023, TEA is evaluating the ELP component differently for 2023 accountability.
  - TELPAS results are evaluated at the domain level in place of the composite rating.
  - A student is considered having made progress if the student advances, or is scored as Advanced High or Basic Fluency, in at least two of the three domains from the prior year (2022) to the current year (2023).
  - The three evaluated domains are listening, speaking, and reading.
  - Only students evaluated in all three domains in both 2022 and 2023 are evaluated.
  - For 2024, the ELP methodology will return to the use of the TELPAS composite rating.

### Closing the Gaps Domain Calculation

TEA is reducing the minimum number of indicators that meet minimum size to be included in the Closing the Gaps calculation from five to four for the following components:

- Academic Achievement
- Academic Growth Status
- Student Achievement Domain Score: STAAR Component Only

The remaining components, Federal Graduation Status and CCMR Performance Status, only require one evaluated indicator.

To calculate a score for each of the Closing the Gaps components, sum the total points earned for each evaluated indicator. Divide the number of earned points by the number of possible points (those indicators that met minimum size). The points earned for each component is then weighted based on the following table.

Component points are rounded to one decimal place. Total points for each component are determined by multiplying the points earned by the corresponding weight and rounding to one decimal place. The Closing the Gaps domain score is the sum of the total points rounded to the nearest whole number. The domain score is then scaled based on school type.

All Students	Two Lowest Performing Racial/Ethnic Groups from Prior Year							High Focus (Eco Dis, EB <sup>1</sup> , SpEd, Highly Mobile)	Component Points	EL/MS Weight	HS/K-12 Weight	Weighted Points
	African American	Hispanic	White	American Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Two or More Races					
Academic Achievement (RLA)												
0-4	0-4		0-4		0-4		0-4	Earned + Possible (rounded to 0.1)	30%	50%	Academic Achievement Points (rounded to 0.1)	
Academic Achievement (Mathematics)												
0-4	0-4		0-4		0-4		0-4	Earned + Possible (rounded to 0.1)	10%	Graduation Rate Points (rounded to 0.1)		
Federal Graduation Status (HS/K-12)												
0-4	0-4		0-4		0-4		0-4	Earned + Possible (rounded to 0.1)	50%	Growth Points (rounded to 0.1)		
Academic Growth in RLA (EL/MS)												
0-4	0-4		0-4		0-4		0-4	Earned + Possible (rounded to 0.1)	30%	SQSS Points (rounded to 0.1)		
Academic Growth in Mathematics (EL/MS)												
0-4	0-4		0-4		0-4		0-4	Earned + Possible (rounded to 0.1)	10%	SQSS Points (rounded to 0.1)		
SQSS: CCMR (HS/K-12)												
0-4	0-4		0-4		0-4		0-4	Earned + Possible (rounded to 0.1)	10%	SQSS Points (rounded to 0.1)		
SQSS: STAAR ONLY (EL/MS)												
English Language Proficiency <sup>2</sup>								Earned + Possible (rounded to 0.1)	10%	10%	ELP Points (rounded to 0.1)	
Closing the Gaps Score											Sum of Weighted Points (whole number)	

<sup>1</sup>EB=Current & Monitored (through year 4); ELP=Current EB only

### Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)

To identify schools for CSI, TEA will rank order Closing the Gaps scaled scores of Title I campuses by school type—elementary, middle, high school/K–12, and alternative education accountability. TEA will identify the lowest five percent of each school type for CSI.

Campuses that do not rank in their school type’s bottom five percent of the Closing the Gaps domain for two consecutive years and have a scaled score that is higher than when originally identified are considered as having successfully exited.

With the shift to the 0–4 points methodology in Closing the Gaps, TEA will not use the overall scaled score as either a CSI identification or exit criterion.

TEA is updating the threshold for CSI identification based on the six-year federal graduation rate from 67.0 percent to 66.7 percent for the all students group to align with reporting graduation rates to the tenth of a percentage.

### Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and Additional Targeted Support (ATS)

TSI and ATS methodologies are updated to focus on campuses with student groups that earn zeros and ones in the Closing the Gaps domain. No changes are being made to the existing three, consecutive years methodologies. Data from 2019, 2022, and 2023 are considered consecutive years for 2023 TSI and ATS identifications.

Per ESSA, TSI and ATS identifications are determined using the outcomes of the following student groups. Super groups are not evaluated for TSI or ATS.

- African American
- American Indian
- Asian
- Hispanic

- Pacific Islander
- White
- Two or more races
- Economically disadvantaged
- Special education
- Emergent bilingual (EB) students/English learners(EL)
- Continuously Enrolled (beginning with 2023)
- Former Special Education (beginning with 2023)

The continuously enrolled and former special education groups will be evaluated for ATS/TSI for the first time in 2023. These two groups could potentially be identified as “consistently underperforming” in August 2025 based on data from 2023, 2024, and 2025.

### For Further Information

A full draft of the ESSA amendment, comments and responses, and appendices are available [here](#). If you have any questions regarding the proposed ESSA amendment, please contact TEA’s Performance Reporting Division at (512) 463-9704 or [performance.reporting@tea.texas.gov](mailto:performance.reporting@tea.texas.gov).