

TAAG Meeting Minutes

Date: August 25, 2025

Time: 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Texas Accountability Advisory Group (TAAG) Minutes

Meeting Minutes for August 25, 2025

TAAG met in August 2025 to continue discussions on proposed enhancements to the A–F accountability system in preparation for the 2028 A-F Refresh. The meeting addressed the 2028 A–F Refresh, with a focus on Closing the Gaps methodologies, College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR), and Distinction Designations. Members reviewed relevant Distinction Designation data to inform feedback on a proposal for removing the attendance rate indicator from academic achievement distinctions. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) presented an analysis of the Domain 3 scoring methodology changes proposed for new campuses along with a proposal for campuses or districts that allows for dips in performance that continue to demonstrate year over year progress towards interim targets. The agency also shared a proposed timeline for the public release of the 2028 A-F preliminary refresh and continuation of public comment.

The meeting concluded with a review of upcoming discussion topics.

Topic 1- 2028 A-F Refresh Summary of Proposals

Summary:

During the meeting, TAAG members received a summary of all considerations and preliminary proposals, as outlined in the 2028 A-F Refresh Preliminary Framework. The summary of proposal included the integration of Results Driven Accountability (RDA) into the Closing the Gaps domain for districts, differential weighting of CCMR indicators, recognition of accelerated testers in middle school and high school, distinction designations and scoring of Closing the Gaps, Part A for districts and campuses. The agency also stamped the previously shared decision that no changes would be made to methodology for Relative Performance in Domain 2b, following extensive modeling. Lastly, the agency shared that two additional components of the 2028 Refresh will be shared in 2026; updated targets and cut scores, along with report updates and self-reported data on programmatic components from districts.

Discussion:

A question was posed as to what extent the revised ACT/SAT cut scores incentivized accelerated pathways, given the lofty standards of these college entrance exams.

There was also a discussion about the ongoing special legislative session and the potential impacts on the 2028 Refresh. While there are still plans for the 2028 A-F refresh to be shared in late summer of 2025, it will be critical for stakeholders to understand that it is a preliminary framework, which will iterate due to both public comment and legislative mandates.

Member Feedback:

Members emphasized the need to ensure that ACT/SAT cut scores for accelerated testers allow high schools' data to positively reflect student performance, incentivizing districts to offer accelerated pathways. One member voiced their continued perspective that the current proposal only addresses Domain 1, and does not impact where they feel impact is needed most; Domain 3 Academic Achievement component. This is because the 'Meets' for ACT and SAT are unchanged to align to College Readiness standards. Members acknowledged the value of a rigorous bar for students and encouraged further analysis of the ACT/SAT cut scores for accelerated testers. The request was made for consideration of how accelerated pathways could more fully represent both middle and high schools, including analysis of "feeder patterns."

TEA Response:

TEA agrees with the need for ACT/SAT cut scores for students in accelerated pathways to be both rigorous and feasible and are committed to understanding the impact of accelerated pathways on A-F accountability. Additionally, the agency welcomes public comment on the accelerated pathways components of the 2028 A-F Refresh Preliminary Framework.

Topic 2- Closing the Gaps Scoring (0-4pt methodology) – New Campuses

Summary:

TEA followed up on a previously introduced change for Closing the Gaps methodology related to the two lowest performing Racial/Ethnic groups for new campuses. With this proposal, new campuses would be scored according to the districts' prior year 2 lowest performing racial/ethnic groups. This would allow new campuses, who under the current methodology can only earn 0, 3, or 4 points, to have the ability to earn 0-4 points. The agency also shared that in the small number of cases that a new campus was also part of the new district, then the campus's current year 2 lowest performing racial/ethnic groups would be used and the state's average as a prior year baseline. Should a new campus not

meet the minimum size requirements for the district's lowest-performing racial/ethnic subgroups, then the campus's current year two lowest performing groups and district's average a prior baseline would be used in calculations. Modeling with 2024 A-F results demonstrate this would decrease the number of campuses receiving a "0" across domain 3 indicators.

Discussion:

The question was raised as to whether campuses with new configurations would be scored under this proposed methodology, which is only applicable under a new campus identification number. Members also shared that Domain 3 is already complex, and this proposed methodology could create additional complexities and confusion for stakeholders. The balance between rigor, transparency, and fairness was discussed; while this proposal does more fairly assess performance for a new campus, it is less easy to understand. As this proposal stemmed from public comment, the agency will continue to receive public feedback on the interest in this proposal. Also, members shared that it would be challenging for new schools to not know their two lowest performing racial/ethnic groups before the start of the school year (this only applies to the very rare cases of new campuses that do not meet minimum size for their district's prior performing groups and need to use their own current lowest-performing groups).

Feedback:

TAAG members suggested that the agency also consider the revised methodology for any campus that does not meet the minimum requirements for size for their prior year's 2 lowest performing racial/ethnic groups. Members also shared that school consolidations have impacted configurations; the example was given of a school shifting from a K-5 school to a K-8 school, where this revised methodology could potentially positively impact non-new schools with vastly different student populations in their first year.

TEA Response:

The agency agreed to provide data on how often each 'rare circumstance' methodology was used and how often non-new campuses do not meet the minimum size requirements for their prior year groups, to analyze the potential addition of revised methodology for non-new campuses.

Topic 3- Closing the Gaps Scoring (0-4pt methodology): Non-New Campus

Summary:

TEA followed up on a previously introduced proposal that would allow for a “tolerable” or “allowable” regression in Domain 3, in cases where a campus continues to make long-term growth toward 5-year interim targets. This “Safe Harbor” methodology would allow for a minor dip in annual growth without dropping to zero points awarded, so long as the school continues a year-over-year positive trajectory toward current targets. Modeling demonstrates that this proposal would result in a 3% decrease in student groups earning 0s across all components on average, with the most marked shift in Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency.

Discussion:

Members sought clarity on how this methodology would be applied and TEA clarified that current methodology would be used primarily, and then the new “Safe Harbor” methodology would be applied in the case that campuses earned a 0.

Feedback:

TAAG members recommended that the campus’s amount of allowable dip would need to be published, allowing campuses to make accurate predictions of their Domain 3 performance through points earned. TAAG members also recommended further detail on how often these allowable dips occurred using 2025 A-F ratings data as a baseline.

TEA Response:

TEA will consider providing the individual campus ‘safe zones’ after 2027 accountability, and agreed to determine the number of schools that would be positively impacted by this proposal.

Topic 4- Revisit Distinction Designations

Summary:

TEA followed up on a previously introduced change to distinction designations. The agency shared three revisions included in the preliminary framework that shift indicators for distinction designations. The first is the addition of four additional indicators to the postsecondary readiness distinction, which will leverage the 6-year cohort rate for determination of indicators earned. Secondly, the formation of campus comparison groups for AEA/DRS high schools, allowing these school types to also be eligible for the postsecondary readiness distinction. The methodology was shared of how campus comparison groups are determined, to verify the validity of campus comparison groups for AEA/DRS high schools only. Finally, the removal of attendance rate as an indicator for all

academic achievement distinctions was discussed. The agency shared modeling, based on 2024 results, which demonstrates the impact of the removal of the attendance rate from the list of potential indicators to earn an academic achievement distinction. This modeling shows a low impact on campuses gaining and earning distinctions across math and reading cross campus bands, with a slightly higher shift for science and social studies at the high school level. Additionally, data show that schools with a higher percentage of students that are economically disadvantaged tend to earn distinctions for academic achievement with slightly higher rates.

Discussion:

Reflections and feedback from TAAG members related to the removal of attendance rate was positive, as attendance rate disproportionately impacts campuses with higher rates of students that are economically disadvantaged. Additionally, the team discussed the impact on schools with smaller ranges of grade levels, such as those that only had K-3 students. In this case, while there are a relatively small number of applicable indicators, they are still eligible for math and reading academic achievement distinction designations. TAAG members also asked questions regarding the availability and validity of data related to the 6-year cohort, which is available through the Tri-Agency Partnership and is currently leveraged in a variety of reporting formats.

Feedback:

The request was posed for TEA to consider Early College High Schools as unique in terms of their campus comparison groups and for scaling related to the Relative Performance Domain.

Topic 5- College, Career, Military Readiness

Summary:

TEA followed up on a previously introduced change to CCMR weighting. The agency shared the philosophical differences between CCMR weighting across indicators and within a CCMR indicator, and that while both are valid methods of increasing the rigor of CCMR ratings, weighting across indicators has a much larger systemic impact. As such, the agency shared that CCMR weighting across indicators will not be implemented until the 2033 A-F Refresh. However, the plans for 2033 Refresh related to across indicators weighting will be shared in the 2028 A-F Refresh Preliminary Framework, allowing campuses and schools ample time to plan strategically. Instead, within indicator weighting is proposed for the 2028 Refresh, through a proposed 5% cap on tier 3 Industry Based

Certifications (IBCs). The agency shared previously shared slides related to the timeline for a finalized IBC list v.4, as well as the methodology used for tiering. Additionally, the agency stamped a previously stated provision that, beginning in 2028, students will only earn CCMR credit through a college prep course through an agency-approved college-prep course while the student is in 12th grade.

Discussion:

TAAG members shared their approval of the implementation of across indicator weighting for CCMR being implemented with the 2033 Refresh, allowing additional time for campuses and schools to plan and build capacity. Extensive discussion on the methods and impact of tiering IBCs was held, which is a process mandated by statute and led by the College, Career, and Military Prep team. TAAG members affirmed that capping Tier 3 IBCs ensures a high bar of rigor for students and is a good mechanism for ensuring there isn't an oversupply of certifications in low wage on non-high demand industries. Some members also shared concern as to why IBCs that were deemed Tier 3 were allowable at all, which is driven by legislation. The impact on various school types was discussed, and the CCMP team shared the Commissioner of Education is able to revise the final tiering based on knowledge and context of various settings. TEA also shared that all tiers of IBCs will be weighted equally in CCMR scoring, after the 5% cap is applied. There were also questions related to how CCMR cut points will be reevaluated, which will be based on 2025 baseline data and released in Summer of 2026.

Feedback:

Concerns were shared on how the 5% cap could disproportionately impact rural schools and the recommendation was made to provide a list of "replacement IBCs," similar to the list provided for IBCs that were sunseting. TAAG members also asked for the number of students that would not have been eligible for CCMR credit under the new 5% cap. The concern was also raised that no math college prep courses currently met the standard for the TEA-approved list that will go into effect with the class of 2027.

Agency Response:

The agency team agreed to provide the number of students impacted by the 5% cap. The agency will continue to gather feedback about what support is needed in order to implement the 5% cap on Tier 3 IBCs, which could include a variety of responses. Additionally, the agency is currently working with College Prep course providers, to ensure options are available.

Topic 6- Release of Framework

Summary:

The agency shared a tentative communications plan for the public release of the 2028 A-F Refresh Preliminary Framework and available public informational sessions. The timeline for release of a revised framework, preliminary manual, and final manual was also reviewed, along with the plan to collect and respond to public comment.

Discussion:

Key differences between a framework and manual were discussed and the agency shared that the manual would include cut scores and additional details on methodologies and scoring. TAAG members affirmed that the framework should be shared with the public, allowing stakeholders ample time to review, internalize, and provide public comment. TAAG was also asked to come prepared to next TAAG meeting prepared to discuss a communications strategy aligned to the goals of the “Refresh Roadshow.” A date for introductory public webinars was shared.