

## Commissioner of Education's Preliminary Recommendations for Accountability 2001 – 2005

Preliminary recommendations of the commissioner of education for the public school accountability system for 2001 through 2005 are presented in this document. Largely due to the development of a new state assessment system to be in place by 2003, there are still many unknowns. However, to the extent possible, this document attempts to provide specific information for 2001 and 2002, and a blueprint for 2003 and beyond. A chart follows the text showing year-by-year recommendations. Performance expectations will become more rigorous, both in terms of the percent of students included in the system, the rigor of the indicators themselves, and the standards applied to those indicators.

The commissioner considered advice from a focus group of educators and an advisory group of legislative staff, educators, and representatives from professional educator associations, business, and community associations. These groups considered all aspects of system characteristics before making their recommendations to the commissioner. Appendix A summarizes information on the overall system structure. An opinion survey for your use is also provided in Appendix B to assist the commissioner in finalizing decisions for 2001 and 2002 later this summer.

**Goals for the Accountability System:** These recommendations were developed with the following goals in mind:

- ◆ PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE MORE RIGOROUS EXIT-LEVEL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS: Legislation passed by the 76<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature requires the development of a new system of assessments based on the required curriculum and anchored to new exit-level examinations administered at grade 11. The assessments will be based wholly on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). This new system, first administered in 2003, will modify the grades at which subjects are tested for more than just exit-level. Tests for grades 3 through 10 will be developed in:
  - ❑ mathematics at grades 3 through 7 without the aid of technology, and at grades 8 through 10 with the aid of technology;
  - ❑ reading at grades 3 through 9;
  - ❑ writing, including spelling and grammar, at grades 4 and 7;
  - ❑ English language arts, including writing, at grade 10;
  - ❑ social studies at grades 8 and 10; and
  - ❑ science at grades 5 and 10.

These new examinations at all grades are expected to be more rigorous than the TAAS tests, due to both the increased requirements for exit-level and the assessment of the TEKS curriculum. The change will be particularly felt at exit-level. Unlike the current exit tests administered in 10<sup>th</sup> grade in reading, writing, and mathematics, the new grade 11 tests will test English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, and require knowledge of Algebra I and Geometry, Biology I and integrated chemistry and physics, English III, and United States History. The class of 2005 (students who were 7<sup>th</sup> graders in 1999-2000) will be the first class required to meet the graduation testing requirement in 2004 based on the new assessments.

- ◆ **INCREASING THE RIGOR OF THE DROPOUT RATE STANDARDS:** Dropout rate standards have remained unchanged since the accountability system was first implemented in 1994. The *1999 Accountability Manual* alerted districts and schools a year ago that these standards would be made more rigorous beginning in 2001 to further encourage schools to retain their students. These preliminary recommendations adjust standards at each rating level in both 2001 and 2002.
- ◆ **IMPLEMENTING CURRENT STATUTE:** In addition to assessment, other sections of the *Texas Education Code* were modified during the 76<sup>th</sup> legislative session which affect the accountability system. Further, some statutory requirements enacted prior to 1999, such as the alternative assessment for special education students, have implementation dates within the next five years. These recommendations were designed to keep the accountability system in compliance with statute.
- ◆ **ADDRESSING SPECIAL ISSUES:** These recommendations also address special topic issues such as minimum size criteria and alternatives for dropout-related measures.

**Planning for 2003:** The new assessment system beginning in 2003 will be more difficult than TAAS. School districts and campuses must make certain that they inform and adequately prepare students for this increased rigor. As described below, the TEA will prepare both new and pre-existing reports to assist districts in planning for the higher performance expectations for the state assessment to be implemented in 2003.

- ◆ **AEIS REPORTS:** Annual AEIS reports currently present information which should prove helpful in planning for the new assessments. These are described below:
  - ❑ End-of-course examinations are now given to students in the year they complete the following courses: Algebra I, Biology, U. S. History, and English II. Results from these tests can be used as a partial preview of passing rates on the new exit-level assessment to be first administered in 2003. Analysis of 1999 end-of-course examination results shows that, as a state, Texas is not ready for these new, more rigorous tests, particularly in mathematics. AEIS reports will continue to include the most recent two years of passing rate results until the tests are eliminated after the 2002 administration.
  - ❑ Students in grade 8 are tested in reading, mathematics, writing, science, and social studies. The “all tests taken” passing rate for grade 8 can serve as another preview of passing rates on the new exit-level assessment to be first administered in 2003. These data also show that there is much work to be done; in 1999, over 63 percent of all 8<sup>th</sup> graders passed all tests they took, however, at the student group level, passing rates for three of the four student groups were less than 50 percent.
- ◆ **PLANNING REPORT:** Beginning in 2000, the commissioner will issue a planning report to superintendents each year until 2003 which will provide a variety of analyses to assist in preparing for the new tests. Likely information to be included is described below:
  - ❑ passing rates on each of the four end-of-course examinations, in an accountability data table format;
  - ❑ the percent of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who passed all four end-of-course tests (an estimate of the percentage of students who would meet the testing requirement for graduation over four tests, if such a requirement had been in place);

- ❑ the percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders who have passed all five TAAS subject tests (another estimate of the percentage of students who would meet the testing requirement for graduation on the new tests); and
- ❑ beginning in 2001, the percent of students performing at or above specified levels of performance which are higher than the current passing standard (an estimate of passing rates on more rigorous assessments.) TEA will create points of reference on the 2001 and 2002 assessments that can serve as estimates of proficient performance levels on the 2003 assessments and beyond. These estimates will not be used for accountability purposes in 2001. However, the commissioner reserves the right to use the estimates in some manner in the 2002 system after reviewing the 2001 results.

## **I. Preliminary Recommendations for 2001** *[Changes from 2000 are noted.]*

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### **TAAS:**

- ◆ SUBJECTS: Reading, Writing, Mathematics, grades 3-8, and 10, all students and all student groups. Credit for 10<sup>th</sup> graders meeting the testing requirement for graduation via end-of-course tests is applied as in 1999 and 2000.
- ◆ STANDARDS: *Exemplary*: 90%; *Recognized*: 80%; *Acceptable / Academically Acceptable*: 50%.
- ◆ MINIMUM SIZE REQUIREMENTS: **New!!!** A student group must have at least 30 test takers who comprise at least 10% of all test takers. However, if the group has at least 50 test takers, then the group will be evaluated, regardless of the percent of the total the group represents.
- ◆ LEP EXEMPTIONS: **New!!!** The SBOE rule regarding LEP exemptions will be fully implemented in 2001. Beginning that year, all LEP students in grades 3 - 8, regardless of primary language, will be required to take either the English or Spanish version of TAAS. *Only* recent unschooled immigrants get exemptions — they are not required to take an assessment in the 12 months following their enrollment in US schools.

### **Dropout Rate:**

- ◆ MEASURE: 1999-2000 annual dropout rate, based on grades 7-12.
- ◆ STANDARDS: **New!!!** *Exemplary*: 0.7%; *Recognized*: 3.0%; *Acceptable / Academically Acceptable*: 5.0%.
- ◆ MINIMUM SIZE REQUIREMENTS: **New!!!** Ten dropouts must be reported and a student group must have at least 30 students in grades 7-12 membership who comprise at least 10% of the total. However, if the group has at least 50 students in membership, then the group will be evaluated, regardless of the percent of the total that the group represents.

**Attendance Rate:** **New!!!** Beginning in 2001, the attendance rate will no longer be used for ratings; however, it will be used for additional acknowledgment. Many educators have argued that the attendance rate is not a true performance indicator, but rather a process indicator. Districts already have strong incentives to maximize attendance rates since those are the primary driver of state aid. Standards for additional acknowledgment for the attendance rate will be set this fall.

**Special Education Compliance Status:** As required by statute, a district's special education compliance status can affect a district rating if it is determined that there are serious and unresolved problems in this area. This year, 2001, is the first year that ARD exemption rates will be analyzed against targets set in statute.

## II. Preliminary Recommendations for 2002 *[Changes from 2001 are noted.]*

### **TAAS:**

- ◆ **SUBJECTS AND STANDARDS:** **New!!!** Beginning in 2002, schools and districts will be held responsible for student performance on the TAAS grade 8 social studies test. Recall that, beginning in 2004, the graduation testing requirement for 11<sup>th</sup> graders includes social studies. Both the current grade 8 TAAS test and the new exit-level test will focus on United States history. Under the new testing system, social studies will remain tested at grade 8.

Analysis of past performance shows that the overall passing rate on the TAAS social studies examination, as well as the gap in performance among student groups, has changed very little since the test was first administered in 1995. This is in stark contrast to significant improvements in reading, writing, and mathematics. The performance gap in 1999 between the highest performance student group and the lowest was almost 42 percentage points. The "all students" state average passing rate is about 70 percent.

Although science will also become a graduation requirement with the tests administered in 2004, the grades at which that subject is tested will change with the implementation of the new assessment system. Therefore, schools and districts will not be held accountable in the rating system for science until 2004, after there is some experience with the new tests.

The commissioner presents two options for implementing a social studies ratings requirement. Option A requires that performance standards be met for all students and all student groups on the TAAS grade 8 social studies test. Option B requires higher performance standards at the *Acceptable* level for TAAS reading, writing, and mathematics, but evaluates social studies only at the 'all students' level. Impact models indicate performance on reading, writing, and mathematics is generally higher than performance on social studies. The two options for comment are illustrated below:

#### *Option 2002-A*

Subject	Grades Tested	Groups	<i>Exemplary</i> Standard	<i>Recognized</i> Standard	<i>Acceptable</i> Standard
Reading	3-8, 10	all students and all student groups	90%	80%	50%
Writing	4, 8, 10				
Mathematics	3-8, 10				
Social Studies	8				

#### *Option 2002-B*

Subject	Grades Tested	Groups	<i>Exemplary</i> Standard	<i>Recognized</i> Standard	<i>Acceptable</i> Standard
Reading	3-8, 10	all students and all student groups	90%	80%	55%
Writing	4, 8, 10				
Mathematics	3-8, 10				50%
Social Studies	8	all students			

- ♦ EOC CREDIT: Credit for 10<sup>th</sup> graders meeting the testing requirement for graduation via end-of-course tests is applied.
- ♦ MINIMUM SIZE REQUIREMENTS: **New!!!** Recommendations from a special topic focus group meeting in the fall of 2000 will be considered by the commissioner for implementation in 2002.

**Dropout Rate:**

- ♦ MEASURE: 2000-2001 annual dropout rate, based on grades 7-12. PEIMS instructions for reporting dropouts will be further refined and clarified as a result of research conducted during 2000.
- ♦ STANDARDS: **New!!!** *Exemplary: 0.5%; Recognized: 2.5%; Acceptable / Academically Acceptable: 4.0%*
- ♦ MINIMUM SIZE REQUIREMENTS: **New!!!** Recommendations from a special topic focus group meeting in fall 2000 will be considered by the commissioner for implementation in 2002.

**Attendance Rate:** Not used for ratings, but evaluated for additional acknowledgment.

**Special Education Compliance Status:** As required by statute, a district's special education compliance status can affect a district rating if it is determined that there are serious and unresolved problems in this area.

### III. 2003 — 2005

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**Background Information**

- ♦ NEW STATE ASSESSMENTS ADMINISTERED: The new state assessments will be administered in the following grades, beginning in 2003:

Reading	Writing	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
3 - 9	4, 7	10, 11(exit)	3 - 11 (exit)	5, 10, 11 (exit)	8, 10, 11 (exit)

- ☐ End-of-course tests are no longer administered.
- ☐ Growth on the TLI cannot be calculated in 2003. For accountability purposes, this means that Comparable Improvement cannot be calculated that year.
- ♦ STUDENT PASSING STANDARD: The State Board of Education (SBOE) is responsible for setting the passing standard for students on each new assessment. According to current plans, the new tests will be field-tested in 2002, and administered in 2003.

If the board follows past practice, it will set student passing standards for the new assessments using data from the benchmark administration in 2003. A passing standard for grade 3 reading may need to be set earlier, perhaps based on field test results from 2002, in order to implement the Student Success Initiative in 2003. If the board waits until after the spring administration in 2003 to set passing standards, then the following schedule will apply:

Tests will be administered in the spring, statewide results will be analyzed for decision-making, the board will set standards, then individual performance will be evaluated against the standard to determine whether a student passed or failed. That process will extend past mid-summer so accountability ratings cannot be issued on the schedule used in the past.

- ◆ **USE OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS:** Although the new tests must be administered by 2003, statute does not require their use in the accountability system until 2005. Therefore, the grades tested that are evaluated for ratings purposes may be phased in until 2005.
- ◆ **ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION:** Growth results on the alternative assessment for special education students in grades 3-8 must be used for accountability as of 2003. Legislation passed in the most recent session requires the development of an alternative assessment for grades 9 and 10 (baseline administration) by 2005, with use in accountability by 2007.

**Further Study:** Once results on the 2003 administration are available, there are a series of topics to be explored for further development of the public school accountability system.

- ◆ **ASSESSMENT STANDARDS FOR RATINGS.** Standards to be applied to the passing rate on the new assessments must be determined. The working assumption is that *Exemplary* and *Recognized* standards will remain fixed at 90% and 80%, respectively. However, the standard for the *Academically Acceptable / Acceptable* will likely be set initially at a similar difficulty to standards applied in 2002. Until more information about the new assessment system is known, it is premature to speculate what the *Acceptable* standard may be.
- ◆ **CALCULATING A COMBINED PASSING RATE FOR READING, WRITING, AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS.** Expanding the assessment system to six subjects has the potential to significantly increase the number of “hurdles” evaluated to determine a rating. Recall that up to four student groups: African American, Hispanic, White, and Economically Disadvantaged, can be evaluated in addition to all students results for TAAS and the dropout rate. In 2000, the maximum hurdles to be evaluated are 22, if a district meets minimum size requirements for *all* student groups on every indicator: TAAS reading (5), TAAS writing (5), TAAS mathematics (5), the dropout rate (5), attendance rate (1), and the special education compliance status (1). Campuses have a maximum of 21 because their ratings are unaffected by the district special education compliance status.

Since there will be six assessment subjects (reading, writing, English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies), combining the language results into one indicator may be a way to even out the rating criteria for schools with different grade configurations. If language arts assessments are not combined into a single “subject,” the largest possible number of “hurdles” that a district could be evaluated on in 2003 and beyond is 37 [six subjects (6 x 5), plus the dropout rate (5), plus the alternative assessment for special education students (1), plus special education compliance status (1)]. For campuses, the number varies by grade configuration because not all subjects are tested at every school configuration. The maximum number of “hurdles” would range from 21 at the elementary level (no social studies or dropouts), to 26 for middle schools (no science), to 30 for high schools. Diverse schools and districts will meet minimum size requirements for more student groups and thus be evaluated on more hurdles.

Once results from the 2003 administration are available, this issue will be further explored. The number of subjects evaluated with and without the combination are illustrated below:

	Elementary	Middle School	High School	K-12 / District
<b><i>Without Combination</i></b>				
Reading	√	√	√	√
Writing	√	√		√
English Language Arts	–	–	√	√
Mathematics	√	√	√	√
Science	√	–	√	√
Social Studies	–	√	√	√
TOTAL SUBJECTS	4	4	5	6
<b><i>With Combination</i></b>				
Language Arts	√	√	√	√
Mathematics	√	√	√	√
Science	√	–	√	√
Social Studies	–	√	√	√
TOTAL SUBJECTS	3	3	4	4

*Each check mark can represent up to five performance “hurdles”, depending on how many student groups meet minimum size requirements.*

- ◆ **EXPLORE WHETHER TO DEVELOP A WEIGHTED SYSTEM FOR DETERMINING RATINGS.** Additional subjects, additional assessments, and additional indicators create more standards to meet to receive a particular rating. The higher the number of indicators evaluated, the more likely it is that there will be little differentiation among the ratings assigned. The current system is “all or nothing.” That is, to receive a particular rating, all indicators evaluated must meet all standards for that rating. However, it is important to note that the current system shares some characteristics with a weighted system in that student group performance is not evaluated if minimum size requirements are not met.

Options for a weighted system will be considered once 2003 results are available. The required assessment changes will necessitate a new system design so that is the logical time to reconsider this aspect of the system structure. Given the number of requirements scheduled for 2003 and beyond, the probability of passing each and every hurdle decreases as the number of hurdles grows. It will become increasingly more difficult for high schools to attain the highest rating levels. A weighted system does make allowances for minor variability in performance in a given year. However, drawbacks include the possibility of manipulation when using a weighted system, the possibility that some subjects and / or groups of students could suffer neglect under such a model if not carefully designed, and the difficulty of explaining and understanding a more complex system.

- ◆ RESULTS OF THE STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVE (grade 3 only). Beginning in 2003, 3<sup>rd</sup> graders must pass the reading section of the state assessment system in order to avoid having their promotion status determined by a grade promotion decision-making committee. Statute defines an indicator with multiple components based on this initiative. How this indicator should be used in the accountability system must be discussed when data are available. The initiative will also affect 5<sup>th</sup> graders and 8<sup>th</sup> graders in 2005, and 2008, respectively.
- ◆ GROWTH MEASURES BASED ON A NEW TLI-LIKE MEASURES. Growth on the TLI is determined by comparing TLI values between two years. In 2003, the new assessment system will be administered and the TLI as it is currently known will no longer exist. There are plans to develop a measure for computing growth on the new assessments but 2004 would be the first year that such growth could be calculated. Therefore, Comparable Improvement, a measure based on TLI growth, will have to be reexamined and potentially redefined once this new growth measure is available.
- ◆ COMPLETION RATE STANDARDS. If a completion rate is selected for rating use in 2004 or beyond, then standards must be developed to apply to that indicator.

#### IV. Preliminary Recommendations for 2003

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**Issuing Ratings:** Converting to the new assessment system will require adjustments in how ratings are issued and characterized in 2003. Because passing rates on the new assessments are unlikely to be available before mid-summer, the agency will be unable to issue accountability ratings on its usual mid-August schedule. The commissioner presents two options for comment on how to deal with this circumstance.

- ◆ Option 2003-A: No ratings will be issued this first year of the new state assessment. It is possible and even likely that the student passing standard for the tests will not be set until mid-summer, therefore, predicting performance on these tests will be difficult. AEIS reports will be issued as soon as practicable after passing status can be determined.
- ◆ Option 2003-B: Issue ratings in late fall 2003, after AEIS reports are prepared and transmitted. A rating of *Academically Unacceptable* or *Low-performing* will result in minimal sanctions, *i.e.*, a letter of warning. The ratings would be assigned as follows:
  - ❑ Evaluate reading, writing, mathematics, and social studies in grades 3-9, as appropriate, at standards yet to be determined. (Note the phase-in of the evaluation of grades tested, namely that no grade 10, exit-level, or science results will be included.)
  - ❑ As required by statute, evaluate the 2003 results of alternative special education assessments, grades 3-8, at standards yet to be determined. Statute prohibits the disaggregation of this indicator by subject and grade. (Growth results on this assessment will be available in 2002.)
  - ❑ As required by statute, evaluate annual dropout rates, in this case, 2001-2002 rates.



## V. Preliminary Recommendations for 2004

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If option 2003-A is selected by the commissioner, then 2004 would be the first year that ratings are issued based on the new assessments. This would also be the first year that a completion rate based solely on the PEIMS Leaver collection could be evaluated as a rating indicator. Note that the grades tested that are evaluated for ratings purposes would be phased in until 2005. Districts and schools will also be held accountable for science performance for the first time in this year.

### **New State Assessment:**

- ◆ SUBJECTS: Reading, Writing, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, grades 3-10, all students and all student groups.
- ◆ STANDARDS: *Exemplary*: 90%; *Recognized*: 80%; *Acceptable / Academically Acceptable*: *To Be Determined*.

### **Alternative Assessment for Special Education Students:**

- ◆ SUBJECTS: Growth on Reading and Mathematics, grades 3-8, all students and subjects combined.
- ◆ STANDARDS: *To be determined*.

### **Dropout Rate:**

- ◆ MEASURE: 2002-2003 annual dropout rate, based on grades 7-12, and / or 2000-2003 completion rate (4-year), based on grades 9-12.
- ◆ DROPOUT RATE STANDARDS: *Exemplary*: 0.5%; *Recognized*: 2.5%; *Acceptable / Academically Acceptable*: 4.0%
- ◆ COMPLETION RATE STANDARDS: *To be determined*.

**Other:** This is the first year that all components of the Student Success Initiative indicator at grade 3 reading will be available. These data will be analyzed and decisions considered about how to use this indicator in the accountability system beginning in 2005.

## VI. Preliminary Recommendations for 2005

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Statute requires that results of the new assessment be used for accountability by this date; therefore, all grades and subjects will be evaluated beginning in 2005.

### **New State Assessment:**

- ◆ SUBJECTS: Reading, Writing, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, grades 3-11, all students and all student groups.
- ◆ STANDARDS: *Exemplary*: 90%; *Recognized*: 80%; *Acceptable / Academically Acceptable*: *To Be Determined*.

**Alternative Assessment for Special Education Students:**

- ◆ SUBJECTS: Growth on Reading and Mathematics, grades 3-8, all students and subjects combined.
- ◆ STANDARDS: *To be determined.*

**Dropout Rate:**

- ◆ MEASURE: 2003-2004 annual dropout rate, based on grades 7-12; and / or 2001-2004 completion rate (4 year), based on grades 9-12.
- ◆ DROPOUT RATE STANDARDS: *Exemplary: 0.5%; Recognized: 2.5%; Acceptable / Academically Acceptable: 4.0%*
- ◆ COMPLETION RATE STANDARDS: *To be determined.*

**Other:** This is the first year that the Student Success Initiative indicator at grade 3 reading can be used in the accountability system.

## Commissioner's Preliminary Recommendations for Accountability Indicators and Standards 2001 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>STATE ASSESSMENTS EVALUATED FOR RATINGS</b>						
TAAS	Gr. 3-8, 10: R, W, M, all students & all student groups	Gr. 3-8, 10: R, W, M, all students & all student groups	Gr. 3-8, 10: Option 2002-A: R, W, M, SS, all students & all student groups Option 2002-B: R, W, M, all students & all student groups, SS, all students	—	—	—
New State Assessment	—	—	—	Option 2003-A: none Option 2003-B: Gr. 3-9: R, W, M, SS	Gr. 3-10: R, W, M, SS, Sc	Gr. 3-11: R, W, M, SS, Sc
Alternative Assessment for Special Education Students	—	—	—	Option 2003-A: none Option 2003-B: Gr. 3-8: R, M	Gr. 3-8: R, M,	Gr. 3-8: R, M,
<b>TAAS / NEW STATE ASSESSMENT PASSING RATE STANDARDS</b>						
Exemplary	>=90.0%	>=90.0%	>=90.0%	Option 2003-A: N / A Option 2003-B: Exemplary: 90% Recognized: 80% Acceptable: TBD Low-performing: < Acceptable	>=90.0%	>=90.0%
Recognized	>=80.0%	>=80.0%	>=80.0%		>=80.0%	>=80.0%
Academically Acceptable / Acceptable	>= 50.0%	>= 50.0%	Option 2002-A: 50%: R, W, M, SS Option 2002-B: 55%: R, W, M; 50%: SS		TBD	TBD
Academically Unacceptable / Low-performing	<50.0%	<50.0%	< Acceptable		< Acceptable	< Acceptable
<b>ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STANDARDS</b>	—	—	—	Option 2003-A: N / A Option 2003-B: TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>MINIMUM SIZE REQUIREMENTS FOR EVALUATION OF STUDENT GROUPS</b>	30 – 10% - 200	30 – 10% - 50	TBD	Option 2003-A: N / A Option 2003-B: TBD	TBD	TBD

Legend: TBD = To Be Determined; N / A = Not Applicable; R = Reading; W = Writing; M = Mathematics; SS = Social Studies; Sc = Science

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVE</b>	—	—	—	—	data for grade 3; use: report	data for grade 3; use: TBD
<b>DROPOUT MEASURES AVAILABLE</b>						
<i>Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12</i> [district and campus]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Completion Rate, Grades 9-12, four year rates based solely on the Leaver Collection</i> [districts and campuses serving grades 9-12 inclusive]	—	—	—	✓	✓	✓
<b>DROPOUT RATE STANDARDS (Gr. 7–12) [for all students and each individual student group]</b>						
<i>Exemplary</i>	<=1.0%	<=0.7%	<=0.5%	<b>Option 2003-A:</b> N / A <b>Option 2003-B:</b> same as 2002	TBD	TBD
<i>Recognized</i>	<=3.5%	<=3.0%	<=2.5%		TBD	TBD
<i>Academically Acceptable / Acceptable</i>	< = 6.0%	< = 5.0%	< = 4.0%		TBD	TBD
<i>Academically Unacceptable / Low-performing</i>	>6.0%	>5.0%	>4.0%		TBD	TBD
<b>ATTENDANCE RATE STANDARD (Gr. 1-12)</b>	>=94.0%	N / A	N / A	N / A	N / A	N / A
<b>DISTRICT SPECIAL EDUCATION COMPLIANCE STATUS</b> (beginning in 2001, statutorily required ARD exemption analysis will contribute to compliance status)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Legend: TBD = To Be Determined; N / A = Not Applicable

## **Appendix A**

### **System Characteristics**

This section describes recommendations pertaining to system characteristics of the accountability system. The educator focus group considered every aspect of the system as they made recommendations to the commissioner. Based on the advice received, in most cases, the commissioner recommends that current practice be maintained. Where changes are recommended, explanations are provided.

#### 1. Statutory Indicators:

- ◆ Rate schools and districts on state assessment results and dropout rates.
- ◆ Award Additional Acknowledgment on College Admissions Results, TAAS/TASP Equivalency, Participation in the Recommended High School Program, Attendance Rate, Comparable Improvement for Reading, and Comparable Improvement for Mathematics.
- ◆ Report other statutory indicators on AEIS: analysis of prior-year failer results, end-of-course results, TAAS exemptions, and State Board of Education-adopted indicators.

#### 2. Structure: To the extent possible, district and campus ratings will be determined on the same criteria.

District ratings will include evaluation of special education compliance status, and may in the future evaluate completion rates rather than dropout rates.

#### 3. Rating Category Differences: The same indicators will be used for all rating levels; higher standards on the same indicators must be met to earn the higher ratings.

#### 4. Student Groups: The current student groups used for ratings and acknowledgments will be maintained: African American, Hispanic, White, and Economically Disadvantaged.

#### 5. Assessment: Summing Across Grades: Assessment results will continue to be summed by subject, across all grades tested.

#### 6. Meeting Every Expectation: At least through 2003, accountability ratings will continue to be assigned based on meeting every applicable criteria for a rating category, *i.e.*, every standard must be met or the next lower rating is assigned.

#### 7. Increased Inclusion:

- ◆ The district mobility adjustment will be applied to all assessment results. This creates the "October subset" used to assign ratings.
- ◆ Only assessment results required by statute to be used for ratings will be evaluated for ratings purposes. These include the state assessment program (TAAS and the new program implemented in 2003), the alternative assessment for special education students, and state assessments in Spanish. Other assessments authorized by statute such as the Reading Proficiency Test in English (RPTE) and end-of-course examinations will be reported on AEIS and may be used for Additional Acknowledgment.

- ♦ Move to completion rates when four years of leaver data (beginning with the 2000 collection) are available. In 1999, had the completion rate been used to rate districts, 994 districts could have been evaluated, compared to the 336 evaluated on the annual dropout rate. Completion rates are currently based on grades 9-12. A four-year rate would be based on an examination of a student's status at the end of his or her expected graduation year.
- ♦ Reconsider minimum size requirements used to determine which student groups are evaluated. There is widespread interest in expanding the number of student groups whose results count towards assigning a rating or acknowledgment.

#### 8. Improvement Measures:

- ♦ Further development work will be undertaken to develop a Required Improvement (RI) measure for any indicator than can cause a district or campus to receive the lowest rating.
- ♦ Explore whether to seek legislative change to eliminate Required Improvement for the *Recognized* rating. RI has not been applied at this level since the TAAS standard reached 80 percent passing.
- ♦ Maintain the use of Comparable Improvement for additional acknowledgment and the Texas Successful Schools Awards System.

Other Information: Special Topics Focus Groups: The agency plans to convene four special topic focus groups this fall to address some of the more detailed issues raised during the system development efforts conducted this spring. The topics are described below:

- ♦ MINIMUM SIZE REQUIREMENTS. This group will explore minimum size criteria for state assessment results and dropout-related measures for implementation in 2002 and beyond. The charge to this group will be to explore whether further reductions in the minimum size requirements should be implemented. They may also address possible legislative recommendations related to the student group disaggregations required by statute.
- ♦ IMPROVEMENT MEASURES. This group will explore options for Required Improvement measures, and possible legislative recommendations related to further differentiation and rewards among rating categories. They may also discuss options related to the use of the Student Success Initiative indicator.
- ♦ DROPOUT MEASURES AND ATTENDANCE RATE. This group may address: the definition of a dropout; possible future use of (and standards for) completion rates; and standards for additional acknowledgment on the attendance rate.
- ♦ SPECIAL ACCREDITATION INVESTIGATION (SAI) PROCEDURES. This group will consider whether criteria for assigning the *Academically Unacceptable*: SAI rating need to be more strictly defined, and whether there should be campus consequences for special education compliance issues.

**Appendix B**  
**Accountability Issues 2001-2005**  
**Preliminary Recommendations Survey**

<b>Association:</b> (circle one) Professional Organization    School District    ESC    State Government Other _____	<b>Title:</b>			
<b>School Level:</b> (if applicable)    HS    MS/JH    ELEM    OTH	<b>Date:</b>			
<b>TOPICS</b>	<i>Circle your response</i>	<b>COMMENTS?</b> (use back of page)		
<b>I. Recommendations Specifically Related to 2001</b>				
<b>Change dropout rate standards in 2001.</b>				
<i>Exemplary from 1.0% to 0.7%</i>	Agree	Disagree		
<i>Recognized from 3.5% to 3.0%</i>	Agree	Disagree		
<i>Acceptable from 6.0% to 5.0%</i>	Agree	Disagree		
<b>Eliminate attendance rate as a rating indicator.</b>	Agree	Disagree		
<b>Change minimum size requirements to 30-10%-50.</b>	Agree	Disagree		
<b>II. Recommendations Specifically Related to 2002</b>				
<b>Subjects / Standards Evaluated:</b> Add Social Studies as a base indicator in 2002		Option A	Option B	
<i>Option A: R, W, M, SS: 50% Acceptable standard, all students and groups</i>				
<i>Option B: R, W, M: 55% Acceptable standard, all students and groups / SS: 50% Acceptable standard, all students</i>				
<b>Change dropout rate standards in 2002.</b>				
<i>Exemplary from 0.7% to 0.5%</i>	Agree	Disagree		
<i>Recognized from 3.0% to 2.5%</i>	Agree	Disagree		
<i>Acceptable from 5.0% to 4.0%</i>	Agree	Disagree		
<b>III. Recommendations Specifically Related to 2003</b>				
<b>Issuing Ratings in 2003</b>		Option A	Option B	
<i>Option A: Do not issue ratings, only reports, once passing standards are set</i>				
<i>Option B: Issue ratings late in the year using R, W, M, SS, grades 3-9, with minimal sanctions</i>				
<b>IV. Recommendations Specifically Related to 2004</b>				
<b>Subjects Evaluated:</b> Add Science as a base indicator in 2004.		Agree	Disagree	
<b>Grades Evaluated:</b> Evaluate assessments in grades 3-10 only.		Agree	Disagree	
<b>Replace the annual dropout rate measure with a completion rate measure.</b>		Agree	Disagree	

**Thank you for your response!**

**Please return by July 7, 2000 to:**

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**Texas Education Agency**  
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