

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

January 29, 2021 Zoom Meeting Notes

Attendees

Melissa Chavez, *University of Texas University Charter School*

Julie Conde, *Responsive Education Solutions*

Chris Duke, *Office of the Lt. Governor*

Carolyn Hanschen, *Austin ISD*

Joseph Mena, *Texans Can Academy*

James Ponce, *Texans Can Academy*

Melissa Ruffin, *University of Texas University Charter School*

Daniel Warner, *Speaker of the House*

Nicole Whetstone, *University of Texas University Charter School*

Kayla Fairchild, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Sarah Harrington, *TEA: Governmental Relations*

Stacy McDonald, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Heather Smalley, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Katelyn Tanis, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Cynthia Wu, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Li-Chin Wu, *TEA: Performance Reporting*

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

Updated AEA Accountability Framework Suggestions

- Develop a unique, simple accountability system for dropout recovery schools (DRS) that
 - addresses the mission and purpose of DRS;
 - evaluates DRS-specific indicators;
 - focuses on outcomes for retesters, completion, and CCMR; and
 - removes continuously/non-continuously enrolled student groups from accountability (especially for DRS).

Unique DRS Accountability System

- Explore the number of domains that would be most appropriate
 - Two domains (previous recommendation)
 - Domain 1: AEA Progress Measure (Academic Performance and Growth combined)
 - Domain 2: Closing the Gaps (federal requirements)
 - Three domains (current recommendation)
 - CMM has asked us to examine keeping 3.
 - Taskforce likes the “better of” methodology (best of Domain 1 or 2) available by maintaining three domains, as well as the emphasis on growth.
 - Domain 1 Performance: Multiple options under consideration
 - Domain 2 Growth: Multiple options under consideration
 - Domain 3: Closing the Gaps (federal requirements)

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

AEA-Specific Indicator Discussion

Student Achievement Domain

- Consider an AEA Progress Measure using Approaches, progress, or retest passers.
 - October data run—Methodology
 - Numerator: growth or met approaches (first time testers) and then add in Approaches for retesters.
 - Denominator: # all first-time tests plus tests for retesters who met Approaches.
 - This would need to have scaling set based on the modeled data. *The increase in the number of campuses evaluated using this measure, including SNA, is positive.*
 - What are CMM's thoughts on retesters only at Approaches? *Would need appropriate scaling methodology for appropriate distribution.*
- Consider using the percentage at Approaches and weighting more heavily points for Meets/Masters.
 - Data run—Data for probability for retester outcomes.
 - Data run—What do the highest performing AECs show us? *Data demonstrate that DRS have success with retests at the Approaches level (EOCs), equal to or above the non-AEA averages for three EOC subjects.*
- Consider using first-time tester data only.
 - Explore which numerator will be most appropriate for AEA.
 - January data run results:
 - 1.5 points for Masters, 1.25 for Meets, 1 for Approaches. *30 fewer campuses rated, 10 campuses with score > 100, average score increases to 61 (compared to 29 in 2019).*
 - Regular Domain 1A methodology including first-time testers only. *30 fewer campuses rated, average score increases to 47 (compared to 29 in 2019).*
- College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR)
 - Recommend moving to Closing the Gaps (see below).
 - If AEAs must keep in Domain 1, revise the indicators to be AEA-appropriate.
 - If AEAs must keep in Domain 1 and use same CCMR indicators as traditional schools, decrease the CCMR weighting.
- Graduation Rate
 - Recommend moving to Closing the Gaps (see below).
 - If AEAs must keep in Domain 1, ensure credit is given for graduating a previous dropout.

School Progress Domain

Part A: Academic Growth

- Consider AEA Progress Measure as described above to simplify system into 2 domains.
- Reconsider growth calculation.
 - Measure of improvement for retesters on the same subject area test.

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

- Data Run—Frequency on how many times students retest over whole testing history. *Data demonstrate that 45% of Spring 2019 EOCs in DRSs were a student's first attempt. The percentage of DRS students that were on their first EOC attempt in Spring 2019 varies widely by subject, ranging from 21% for English I to 80% for U.S. History.*
- Academic Growth matrix revised to utilize STAAR Performance Levels (Did Not Meet, Approaches, Meets, Masters) each split into high and low categories.
 - Data run: Explore and model most appropriate methodology for points assignment, as well as students to include (possibly add in retesters, English I to English II, retesters within the same school year).
 - English I to English II testers even within the same year.
 - Measure of improvement for retesters on the same subject area test.
- Consider a stabilization rate (kept a year).
 - Could this be a measure of “grit”?
 - How to measure? Same campus one snapshot to the next? Same campus snapshot & 6th six weeks attendance?)
- Consider using retester data only.
 - Explore which numerator will be most appropriate for AEA.
 - January data run results:
 - 1.5 points for Approaches on 1st retester, 1 point for 2nd or 3rd retest. *79 more campuses rated, 7 campuses with a score > 100, average score increases to 62 (compared to 55 in 2019).*
 - 1.5 points for Masters on any retest, 1.25 points for Meets on any retest, 1 point for Approaches on any retest. *79 more campuses rated, average score decreases to 43 (compared to 55 in 2019).*
 - AEA STAAR Bonus Points methodology. *79 more campuses rated, average score decreases to 40 (compared to 55 in 2019).*

Part B: Relative Performance

- Taskforce recommends the continued exclusion of this domain for AECs.

Closing the Gaps Domain (Next meeting)

- DRS-specific indicators that measure outcomes for completion rates, and CCMR along with indicators that meet ESSA requirements
- All targets should be set for AEA as the campus type.

Ideas from previous meetings to revisit

- Weighting and targets will have to be redone. Targets for all schools need to be rerun.
 - AECs need specific student group targets to differentiate between AECs/traditional.
 - Research—Are there any other ESSA plans approved with student targets by campus type? *Yes. Multiple states have approved targets by elementary, middle school, and high school type. Other states including Maine have individualized targets for each campus by each student group. Idaho includes alternative schools as one of their campus types. We can consider this for an amendment.*

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

- Award partial points based on distance from target. Example: 1–5 possible points.
- Pull AECs out and identify the bottom 5% separately for comprehensive support.
- Rework additional targeted support to comprehensive support escalation.

Current Closing the Gaps Methodology/Weighting

Academic Achievement	50%
Federal Graduation Status or Academic Growth Status ¹	10%
English Language Proficiency	10%
College, Career, and Military Readiness or Student Achievement Domain Score: STAAR Component Only ²	30%

STAAR

- Limit to first time testers only or retester-passers only.
 - Research—Are there any other ESSA plans approved with a similar exclusion? *(Haven't found any yet.)*
- Can we account for the impact of economically disadvantaged status on the all student groups?
 - Research—Are there any other ESSA plans approved with a similar exclusion? *(Haven't found any yet.)*
- Meets is not appropriate for AECs. Consider using Approaches, as it aligns with the mission and graduation requirements. (any adjustments in Student Achievement for AECs would carry over).
 - Research – Are there any other ESSA plans approved with Approaches (or equivalent performance level with state-specific terminology) as the target? *Yes. Approved methods used by other states include awarding partial points at the Approaches level, and utilizing two sets of targets (i.e., Approaches or above target, Meets or above target). Further research is needed.*
- **NEW Discussion**
 - Appropriate weight for calculating domain rating?
 - Currently 50%

Graduation Rate (evaluated here and not in D1)

- Previous suggestions:
 - Consider how to reweight to reflect strengths.
 - Consider annual completion rate. (define denominator)
 - Consider specific dropout rate. (for AECs which includes previous dropouts)
 - Consider reengagement. (previous dropouts and graduation rate—include students in denominator who haven't been attending for X months/3 six weeks, etc.)
 - Previous dropouts from the class of 2019 that attended DRSs had a higher continuer rate and a lower dropout rate when compared to the other AEC types and non-AEA campuses.
 - Consider longitudinal completion rates.
 - Consider modified denominator using only grade 12 students. *(coding issues)*

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

- Consider completer rate for School Improvement identification.
 - Research – Are there any other ESSA plans approved that use a completer rate instead of graduation rate for School Improvement identification? *Yes. Oregon utilizes a five-year completion rate for their alternative schools.*
- Reduce the weight of the federally required 4-year rate.
 - Research – How do other ESSA plans handle 4-year rate? *Colorado utilizes a 4-year graduation rate weighted at 1% and a 7-year extended graduation rate weighted at 99%, with the graduation component being 15% of the overall rating. Nevada utilizes a 4- and 5- year graduation rate equally weighted, but only worth 2.5% of the overall rating. Multiple states utilize a completion rate as an additional indicator.*
- **NEW Discussion**
 - Should we adjust the graduation rate component for AEAs to include both graduation and completion rates?
 - Indicator 1: Graduation rate
 - Use 4-year federal rates weighted at lower percentage? (example: 5% of component weight?)
 - Indicator 2: Continuer rate
 - Use continuer rate weighted at higher percentage? (example: 95% of component weight?)
 - Combine outcomes for 4-year grad rate plus continuer rate for component score.
 - Should we keep federal graduation rate as a component, lower weight, and add continuer as an additional component (5 total for AEAs)?
 - Appropriate weight for calculating domain rating?
 - Currently 10%

School Quality/Student Success (evaluated here and not in D1).

- Determine more appropriate CCMR indicators.
 - Consider attendance (AEA specific targets).
 - Consider chronic absenteeism.
 - Consider on-track to graduate. (tie into 16/17 age run)
 - Consider reengagement.
 - Outcomes for previous dropouts. (returning and reengaging is a major success)
 - How can we measure and evaluate this? Include those students who were not present for extended periods of time but not coded as dropouts.
 - *Previous data runs showed us there are such small numbers here. This may not be realistic.*
 - Consider on-track to high school graduation. (define/refine this)
 - Maintenance of students who were on-track and staying on-track.
 - Improvement demonstrated for those off track.
 - Define denominator and how to credit numerator.
- **NEW Discussion**
 - Appropriate weight for calculating domain rating?
 - Currently 30%

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

English Language Proficiency

- Determine targets by campus type (elementary, middle, high, and AEA).
 - Research—Are there any other ESSA plans approved with targets by campus type? Yes.
We can consider this for an amendment.
- **NEW Discussion**
 - Appropriate weight for calculating domain rating?
 - Currently 10%

Other Accountability Suggestions

Italicized items are currently being explored by TEA.

- *Implement a waiver before ratings to distinguish exceptional campuses/programs. (This could possibility be addressed via the DPRS application process.)*
 - Encourage these exceptional campuses that would be Not Rated to participate in Local Accountability System (LAS).
 - Taskforce supports this idea. Part of the application should include evidence of board approval, stakeholder input and feedback, etc.
- *Updates to DRS (DPRS) criteria & registration process.*
- First year campuses—How to process when STAAR is frequently the only data?
- DPRS campuses that don't serve grade 12? How to process those?
- Include a value add for recovering dropouts.
- *Adopt into rule a definition of "alternative instruction."*
 - The AEC must offer nontraditional settings and methods of instructional delivery designed to meet the needs of the students served in the AEC.
- We need clear definitions of previous dropout and retester for accountability purposes. Previous dropouts need to be identified based off data other than the PEIMS code.

Other Suggestions

School Improvement/Interventions

- Consider AEA specific interventions.
- Develop an intervention framework specifically for AECs.
- Streamline interventions between RDA and SI to reduce time and paperwork burdens.

AEA Distinction Designations Ideas

- Award additional points for STAAR at Meets/Masters if not incorporated as indicator.
- Award points for IGC reduction because of improved STAAR outcomes.
- Award points for retester outcomes based on DRS averages.
- Recognize SAT/ACT participation/performance and/or TSIA performance.

Misc.

- Partner with research institution/university to finalize AEA taskforce recommendations.
- Is it possible for a student to maintain his/her at-risk status once enrolled in AEA? The AEA may address an immediate need, but the student may have ongoing needs.

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

- Idea: Ever enrolled in an AEC could be added as an at-risk indicator.
- Implement as many changes as possible before 2023 reset.
- How do we better support AECs?
 - Alternative instruction unit at TEA to support AECs
 - Guidebook
 - Mentoring program
 - Exemplar AEA campuses list
- AECs and their districts need better access to their data, and the ability to make comparisons to non-AEA, for example.
 - TEA is producing a new data dashboard product and we will be sure to include the functionality to filter to non-AEA and AEA.

Ideas from previous meetings to revisit

- Evaluate minimum size criteria (minimum number required to receive a rating).
 - Need to research
 - Based on student count. Minimum number of tests versus minimum number of students (*research the original reasoning for tests vs. students*).
 - Or adjust minimum number of tests (*research other states' ESSA plan minimum numbers for evaluation*).
 - Look back at previous minimum sizes (*10% rule*).

Summary of Data Modeling Requests

- How can the current bonus points be scaled to award credit to more campuses? Is there a way to adjust the current methodology to award points to more campuses? (Will bring this back to the table for 2022 considerations)
- Probability of retester outcomes.
 - What percentage of tests in DRS are retests? (combined across all subject areas)
 - What percentage of retests in DRS are at Meets & Masters? Compare with non-DRS.
 - What is the percent at Approaches or above, broken out by attempt number (TEST_COUNT). Utilize Spring 2019, DRS only, break out by each subject and also report all subjects combined.
- Explore the possible definitions for retester and first-time tester.
 - Differences in counts and STAAR outcomes for *first-time testers* defined with 2 scenarios: EOC_1ST=Y, TEST_COUNT=1.
 - Compare counts and STAAR outcomes for *retesters* defined with 2 scenarios: EOC_1ST=N, TEST_COUNT>1.
- Run possible domain configurations.
 - AEA Progress Measure
 - Explore possibility of incorporating high/low performance level split for Did Not Meet and Approaches.
 - Academic Growth matrix with split performance levels
 - Explore and model most appropriate methodology for points assignment.
 - Definitely give 1 point for DNM low to DNM high to align with STAAR PM awarded within this range.

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) Taskforce

- Explore and model which students to include (possibly add in retesters, English I to English II, retesters within the same school year).
- Provide 2019 Domain 2A data in DRSs for comparison: matrix, minimum, maximum, mean, median.
- First-time testers
 - Model possible variations. Explore giving points for DNM high.
- Retesters
 - Model possible variations. Explore giving points for DNM high.

*Note for all data runs: Disaggregate by AEA type and include non-AEA for comparison.