

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) proposes an amendment to §97.1001, concerning the accountability rating system. The proposed amendment would adopt in rule applicable excerpts of the *2024 Accountability Manual*. Earlier versions of the manuals will remain in effect with respect to the school years for which they were developed.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND JUSTIFICATION: TEA has adopted its academic accountability manual in rule since 2000 under §97.1001. The accountability system evolves from year to year, so the criteria and standards for rating and acknowledging schools in the most current year differ to some degree from those applied in the prior year.

The proposed amendment to §97.1001 would adopt excerpts of the *2024 Accountability Manual* into rule as a figure. The excerpts, Chapters 1-12 of the *2024 Accountability Manual*, specify the indicators, standards, and procedures used by the commissioner of education to determine accountability ratings for districts, campuses, and charter schools. These chapters also specify indicators, standards, and procedures used to determine distinction designations on additional indicators for Texas public school campuses and districts. Chapter 12 describes the specific criteria and calculations that will be used to assign 2024 Results Driven Accountability (RDA) performance levels. Ratings may be revised as a result of investigative activities by the commissioner as authorized under Texas Education Code (TEC), §39.056 and §39.003.

Following is a chapter-by-chapter summary of the changes for this year's manual. In every chapter, dates and years for which data are considered would be updated to align with 2024 accountability and RDA. Edits for clarity regarding consistent language and terminology throughout each chapter are embedded within the proposed *2024 Accountability Manual*.

Chapter 1 gives an overview of the entire accountability system. Dates and years for which data are considered would be updated. Edits for clarity regarding consistent language and terminology would be made. Language would be adjusted to clarify the existing processes and implications of data compliance reviews and special investigations related to data concerns. Detailed language would be added to clarify compliance reviews, results, and special investigations.

Chapter 2 describes the "Student Achievement" domain. Dates and years for which data are considered would be updated. Edits for clarity regarding consistent language and terminology would be made. Detailed language on the phase-in timeline for approved industry-based certifications (IBCs) and their aligned programs of study would be added. The updated IBC list revision cycle timeline would be added. Detailed language clarifying the expectations and future process for approving college prep courses would be added. Detailed language regarding the purpose and requirements of individual graduation committees would be added. Language describing the Military Enlistment Data Collection process would be added. Language describing the alignment of college, career, and military readiness to the Texas Success Initiative Assessment exemption criteria benchmarks for ACT would be added.

Chapter 3 describes the "School Progress" domain. Dates and years for which data are considered would be updated. Edits for clarity regarding consistent language and terminology would be made.

Chapter 4 describes the "Closing the Gaps" domain. Dates and years for which data are considered would be updated. Edits for clarity regarding consistent language and terminology would be made. The language for methodology for English language proficiency would be updated.

Chapter 5 describes how the overall ratings are calculated. Dates and years for which data are considered would be updated. Edits for clarity regarding consistent language and terminology would be made.

Chapter 6 describes distinction designations. Dates and years for which data are considered would be updated. Edits for clarity regarding consistent language and terminology would be made.

Chapter 7 describes the pairing process and the alternative education accountability provisions. Dates and years for which data are considered would be updated. Edits for clarity regarding consistent language and terminology would be made.

Chapter 8 describes the process for appealing ratings. Dates and years for which data are considered would be updated. Edits for clarity regarding consistent language and terminology would be made.

Chapter 9 describes the responsibilities of TEA, the responsibilities of school districts and open-enrollment charter schools, and the consequences to school districts and open-enrollment charter schools related to accountability and interventions. Dates and years for which data are considered would be updated. Edits for clarity regarding consistent language and terminology would be made.

Chapter 10 provides information on the federally required identification of schools for improvement. Dates and years for which data are considered would be updated. Edits for clarity regarding consistent language and terminology would be made.

Chapter 11 describes the local accountability system. The changes to this chapter would be restricted to updating date and year references.

Chapter 12 describes the RDA system. Dates and years for which data are considered would be updated. Edits for clarity regarding consistent language and terminology would be made. Detailed language regarding the change of report only to performance level assignment indicators for Bilingual Education/ English as a Second Language/ Emergent Bilingual would be added.

FISCAL IMPACT: Iris Tian, deputy commissioner for analytics, assessment, and reporting, has determined that for the first five-year period the proposal is in effect, there are no additional costs to state or local government, including school districts and open-enrollment charter schools, required to comply with the proposal.

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT IMPACT: The proposal has no effect on local economy; therefore, no local employment impact statement is required under Texas Government Code, §2001.022.

SMALL BUSINESS, MICROBUSINESS, AND RURAL COMMUNITY IMPACT: The proposal has no direct adverse economic impact for small businesses, microbusinesses, or rural communities; therefore, no regulatory flexibility analysis, specified in Texas Government Code, §2006.002, is required.

COST INCREASE TO REGULATED PERSONS: The proposal does not impose a cost on regulated persons, another state agency, a special district, or a local government and, therefore, is not subject to Texas Government Code, §2001.0045.

TAKINGS IMPACT ASSESSMENT: The proposal does not impose a burden on private real property and, therefore, does not constitute a taking under Texas Government Code, §2007.043.

GOVERNMENT GROWTH IMPACT: TEA staff prepared a Government Growth Impact Statement assessment for this proposed rulemaking. During the first five years the proposed rulemaking would be in effect, it would limit an existing regulation due to its effect on school accountability for 2024.

The proposed rulemaking would not create or eliminate a government program; would not require the creation of new employee positions or elimination of existing employee positions; would not require an increase or decrease in future legislative appropriations to the agency; would not require an increase or decrease in fees paid to the agency; would not create a new regulation; would not expand or repeal an existing regulation; would not increase or decrease the number of individuals subject to its applicability; and would not positively or adversely affect the state's economy.

PUBLIC BENEFIT AND COST TO PERSONS: Ms. Tian has determined that for each year of the first five years the proposal is in effect, the public benefit anticipated as a result of enforcing the proposal would be to continue to inform the public of the existence of annual manuals specifying rating procedures for public schools by including this rule in the *Texas Administrative Code*. There is no anticipated economic cost to persons who are required to comply with the proposal.

DATA AND REPORTING IMPACT: The proposal would have no data and reporting impact.

PRINCIPAL AND CLASSROOM TEACHER PAPERWORK REQUIREMENTS: TEA has determined that the proposal would not require a written report or other paperwork to be completed by a principal or classroom teacher.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: The public comment period on the proposal begins February 23, 2024, and ends March 25, 2024. A public hearing to solicit testimony and input on the proposed amendment will be held at 1:00 p.m. on March 5, 2024. The public may participate in the hearing virtually by registering for the meeting at <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUvfu2oqjgsE9yZsXlsxJTMISvF3z7JexAl>. Parties interested in testifying must register online by 12:00 p.m. on the day of the hearing and are encouraged to also send written testimony to performance.reporting@tea.texas.gov. The hearing will conclude once all who have registered have been given the opportunity to comment. Questions about the hearing should be directed to the TEA Division of Performance Reporting at (512) 463-9704 or performance.reporting@tea.texas.gov. A form for submitting public comments is available on the TEA website at [https://tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/Laws_and_Rules/Commissioner_Rules_\(TAC\)/Proposed_Commissioner_of_Education_Rules/](https://tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/Laws_and_Rules/Commissioner_Rules_(TAC)/Proposed_Commissioner_of_Education_Rules/).

STATUTORY AUTHORITY. The amendment is proposed under Texas Education Code (TEC), §7.021(b)(1), which authorizes the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to administer and monitor compliance with education programs required by federal or state law, including federal funding and state funding for those programs; TEC, §7.028, which authorizes TEA to monitor as necessary to ensure school district and charter school compliance with federal law and regulations, financial integrity, and data integrity and authorizes the agency to monitor school district and charter schools through its investigative process. TEC, §7.028(a), authorizes TEA to monitor special education programs for compliance with state and federal laws; TEC, §12.056, which requires that a campus or program for which a charter is granted under TEC, Chapter 12, Subchapter C, is subject to any prohibition relating to the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) to the extent necessary to monitor compliance with TEC, Chapter 12, Subchapter C, as determined by the commissioner; high school graduation under TEC, §28.025; special education programs under TEC, Chapter 29, Subchapter A; bilingual education under TEC, Chapter 29, Subchapter B; and public school accountability under TEC, Chapter 39, Subchapters B, C, D, F, and J, and Chapter 39A; TEC, §12.104, which states that a charter granted under TEC, Chapter 12, Subchapter D, is subject to a prohibition, restriction, or requirement, as applicable, imposed by TEC, Title 2, or a rule adopted under TEC, Title 2, relating to PEIMS to the extent necessary to monitor compliance with TEC, Chapter 12, Subchapter D, as determined by the commissioner; high school graduation requirements under TEC, §28.025; special education programs under TEC, Chapter 29, Subchapter A; bilingual education under TEC, Chapter 29, Subchapter B; discipline management practices or behavior management techniques under TEC, §37.0021; public school accountability under TEC, Chapter 39, Subchapters B, C, D, F, G, and J, and Chapter 39A; and intensive programs of instruction under TEC, §28.0213; TEC, §29.001, which authorizes TEA to effectively monitor all local educational agencies (LEAs) to ensure that rules relating to the delivery of services to children with disabilities are applied in a consistent and uniform manner, to ensure that LEAs are complying with those rules, and to ensure that specific reports filed by LEAs are accurate and complete; TEC, §29.0011(b), which authorizes TEA to meet the requirements under (1) 20 U.S.C. Section 1418(d) and its implementing regulations to collect and examine data to determine whether significant disproportionality based on race or ethnicity is occurring in the state and in the school districts and open-enrollment charter schools in the state with respect to the (a) identification of children as children with disabilities, including the identification of children as children with particular impairments; (b) placement of children with disabilities in particular educational settings; and (c) incidence, duration, and type of disciplinary actions taken against children with disabilities including suspensions or expulsions; or (2) 20 U.S.C. Section 1416(a)(3)(C) and its implementing regulations to address in the statewide plan the percentage of schools with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services and in specific disability categories that results from inappropriate identification; TEC, §29.010(a), which authorizes TEA to adopt and implement a comprehensive system for monitoring LEA compliance with federal and state laws relating to special education, including ongoing analysis of LEA special education data; TEC, §29.062, which authorizes TEA to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of LEA programs and apply sanctions concerning emergent bilingual students; TEC, §29.066, which authorizes PEIMS reporting requirements for school districts that are required to offer bilingual education or special language programs to include the following information in the district's PEIMS report: (1) demographic information, as determined by the commissioner, on students enrolled in district bilingual education or special language programs; (2) the number and percentage of students enrolled in each instructional model of a bilingual education or special language program offered by the district; and (3) the number and

percentage of emergent bilingual students who do not receive specialized instruction; TEC, §29.081(e), (e-1), and (e-2), which define criteria for alternative education programs for students at risk of dropping out of school and subjects those campuses to the performance indicators and accountability standards adopted for alternative education programs; TEC, §29.201 and §29.202, which describe the Public Education Grant program and eligibility requirements; TEC, §39.003 and §39.004, which authorize the commissioner to adopt procedures relating to special investigations. TEC, §39.003(d), allows the commissioner to take appropriate action under Chapter 39A, to lower the district's accreditation status or the district's or campus's accountability rating based on the results of the special investigation; TEC, §39.051 and §39.052, which authorize the commissioner to determine criteria for accreditation statuses and to determine the accreditation status of each school district and open-enrollment charter school; TEC, §39.053, which authorizes the commissioner to adopt a set of indicators of the quality of learning and achievement and requires the commissioner to periodically review the indicators for consideration of appropriate revisions; TEC, §39.054, which requires the commissioner to adopt rules to evaluate school district and campus performance and to assign a performance rating; TEC, §39.0541, which authorizes the commissioner to adopt indicators and standards under TEC, Chapter 39, Subchapter C, at any time during a school year before the evaluation of a school district or campus; TEC, §39.0543, which describes acceptable and unacceptable performance as referenced in law; TEC, §39.0546, which requires the commissioner to assign a school district or campus a rating of "Not Rated" for the 2021-2022 school year, unless, after reviewing the district or campus under the methods and standards adopted under Section 39.054, the commissioner determines the district or campus should be assigned an overall performance rating of C or higher; TEC, §39.0548, which requires the commissioner to designate campuses that meet specific criteria as dropout recovery schools and to use specific indicators to evaluate them; TEC, §39.055, which prohibits the use of assessment results and other performance indicators of students in a residential facility in state accountability; TEC, §39.056, which authorizes the commissioner to adopt procedures relating to monitoring reviews and special investigations; TEC, §39.151, which provides a process for a school district or an open-enrollment charter school to challenge an academic or financial accountability rating; TEC, §39.201, which requires the commissioner to award distinction designations to a campus or district for outstanding performance; TEC, §39.2011, which makes open-enrollment charter schools and campuses that earn an acceptable rating eligible for distinction designations; TEC, §39.202 and §39.203, which authorize the commissioner to establish criteria for distinction designations for campuses and districts; TEC, §39A.001, which authorizes the commissioner to take any of the actions authorized by TEC, Chapter 39, Subchapter A, to the extent the commissioner determines necessary if a school does not satisfy the academic performance standards under TEC, §39.053 or §39.054, or based upon a special investigation; TEC, §39A.002, which authorizes the commissioner to take certain actions if a school district becomes subject to commissioner action under TEC, §39A.001; TEC, §39A.004, which authorizes the commissioner to appoint a board of managers to exercise the powers and duties of a school district's board of trustees if the district is subject to commissioner action under TEC, §39A.001, and has a current accreditation status of accredited-warned or accredited-probation; or fails to satisfy any standard under TEC, §39.054(e); or fails to satisfy any financial accountability standard; TEC, §39A.005, which authorizes the commissioner to revoke school accreditation if the district is subject to TEC, §39A.001, and for two consecutive school years has received an accreditation status of accredited-warned or accredited-probation, failed to satisfy any standard under TEC, §39.054(e), or failed to satisfy a financial performance standard; TEC, §39A.007, which authorizes the commissioner to impose a sanction designed to improve high school completion rates if the district has failed to satisfy any standard under TEC, §39.054(e), due to high school completion rates; and TEC, §39A.051, which authorizes the commissioner to take action based on campus performance that is below any standard under TEC, §39.054(e).

CROSS REFERENCE TO STATUTE. The amendment implements Texas Education Code, §§7.021(b)(1); 7.028; 12.056; 12.104; 29.001; 29.0011(b); 29.010(a); 29.062; 29.066; 29.081(e), (e-1), and (e-2); 29.201; 29.202; 39.003; 39.004; 39.051; 39.052; 39.053; 39.054; 39.0541; 39.0543; 39.0546; 39.0548; 39.055; 39.056; 39.151; 39.201; 39.2011; 39.202; 39.203; 39A.001; 39A.002; 39A.004; 39A.005; 39A.007; 39A.051; and 39A.063.

<rule>

§97.1001. Accountability Rating System.

- (a) The rating standards established by the commissioner of education under Texas Education Code (TEC), §§39.052(a) and (b)(1)(A); 39.053, 39.054, 39.0541, 39.0548, 39.055, 39.151, 39.201, 39.2011, 39.202, 39.203, 29.081(e), (e-1), and (e-2), and 12.104(b)(2)(L), shall be used to evaluate the performance of districts, campuses, and charter schools. The indicators, standards, and procedures used to determine ratings will be annually published in official Texas Education Agency publications. These publications will be widely disseminated and cover the following:
- (1) indicators, standards, and procedures used to determine district ratings;
 - (2) indicators, standards, and procedures used to determine campus ratings;
 - (3) indicators, standards, and procedures used to determine distinction designations; and
 - (4) procedures for submitting a rating appeal.
- (b) The procedures by which districts, campuses, and charter schools are rated and acknowledged for 2024 [~~2023~~] are based upon specific criteria and calculations, which are described in excerpted sections of the 2024 [~~2023~~] *Accountability Manual* provided in this subsection.
- Figure: 19 TAC §97.1001(b) [~~Figure: 19 TAC §97.1001(b)~~]
- (c) Ratings may be revised as a result of investigative activities by the commissioner as authorized under TEC, §39.057.
- (d) The specific criteria and calculations used in the accountability manual are established annually by the commissioner and communicated to all school districts and charter schools.
- (e) The specific criteria and calculations used in the annual accountability manual adopted for prior school years remain in effect for all purposes, including accountability, data standards, and audits, with respect to those school years.
- (f) In accordance with TEC, §7.028(a), the purpose of the Results Driven Accountability (RDA) framework is to evaluate and report annually on the performance of school districts and charter schools for certain populations of students included in selected program areas. The performance of a school district or charter school is included in the RDA report through indicators of student performance and program effectiveness and corresponding performance levels established by the commissioner.
- (g) The assignment of performance levels for school districts and charter schools in the 2024 [~~2023~~] RDA report is based on specific criteria and calculations, which are described in the 2024 [~~2023~~] *Accountability Manual* provided in subsection (b) of this section.
- (h) The specific criteria and calculations used in the RDA framework are established annually by the commissioner and communicated to all school districts and charter schools.
- (i) The specific criteria and calculations used in the annual RDA manual adopted for prior school years remain in effect for all purposes, including accountability and performance monitoring, data standards, and audits, with respect to those school years.