Texas Education Agency
Performance-Based Monitoring

2018 PBMAS Masking Rules

"Masking" refers to the use of special symbols to conceal data for the purpose of protecting student confidentiality. The Performance-Based Monitoring Analysis System (PBMAS) masks data in order to comply with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Data is masked by concealing information that could lead to the identification, either directly or indirectly, of a student. There are two cases in which a student could be identified:

1. When very few students in a group are evaluated, it may be possible to identify a particular student or students within the group.

2. When all the students in a group have the same result, e.g. all passing or all failing, it may be possible to identify all the students within the group. Revealing that all (or no) students in a group achieved the same result violates the students' individual privacy, even if the result achieved is a positive one.

PBMAS masks numerators, denominators, and percentages (rates) according to the procedure below. State standards and performance levels **are not** masked. The asterisk (*) is used as the masking character.

Procedure

The following rules are listed in order of priority. The masking rules are applied to each year of data independently of other years of data that may be available.

Step 1: Masking for all Indicators

1) If the number of students in the denominator is less than 5 (including 0):
   Rate: print an asterisk (*)
   Numerator: print an asterisk (*)
   Denominator: print an asterisk (*)

2) If the rate is 100% or rounds to 100% (except risk ratios printed on district reports):
   Rate: print an asterisk (*)
   Numerator: print an asterisk (*)
   Denominator: print an asterisk (*)

3) If the rate is 0% or rounds to 0% (except risk ratios printed on district reports):
   Rate: print an asterisk (*)
   Numerator: print an asterisk (*)
   Denominator: print an asterisk (*)

4) If the difference between the numerator and the denominator is less than 3:
  Rate: print the rate
  Numerator: print an asterisk (*)
  Denominator: print an asterisk (*)

5) If the numerator is less than 5 (including 0):
  Rate: print the rate
  Numerator: print an asterisk (*)
  Denominator: print an asterisk (*)

Step 2: Additional Masking

The following rules are used for certain special education PBMAS indicators to prevent the ability to calculate numerators, denominators, or rates of related indicators that were masked by previous rules.

6) If the overall **SPED representation** numerator and denominator are masked:
  Print an asterisk (*) for the numerators and denominators of: (a) any reported representation student group indicators, and (b) all instructional placement[1] indicators, including any associated reported student group indicators.

7) If any one of the **SPED instructional placement**[1] indicators is masked:
  Print an asterisk (*) for the numerators and denominators of: (a) the **All Students** group of all four indicators, and (b) any reported placement student group indicators.

8) If any one of the **SPED disciplinary**[2] indicators is masked:
  Print an asterisk (*) for the numerators and denominators of (a) the **All Students** group of all five indicators, and (b) any reported disciplinary student group indicators.

9) If a **significantly disproportionate student group** indicator is reported and is masked:
  Print the risk ratio, but print an asterisk (*) for the rates, numerators, and denominators for **that** student group indicator only.

Additional Masking for Region Reports
If either the current year rate or the rate for two years ago is masked, then mask the rate change.

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[1] SPED instructional placement indicators: Regular Early Childhood Program Rate (Ages 3-5), Regular Class ≥ 80% Rate (Ages 6-21), Regular Class < 40% Rate (Ages 6-21), and Separate Settings Rate (Ages 6-21).
[2] SPED disciplinary indicators: OSS and Expulsion ≤ 10 Days Rate (Ages 3-21), OSS and Expulsion > 10 Days Rate (Ages 3-21), ISS ≤ 10 Days Rate (Ages 3-21), ISS > 10 Days Rate (Ages 3-21), Total Disciplinary Removals Rate (Ages 3-21).