ESEA Flexibility Request
Submitted to the U.S. Department of Education
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Submitted by
Texas Education Agency
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Introduction

This document delineates the Texas Education Agency's specific requests for flexibility in implementing the provisions of ESEA and provides the supporting documentation necessary for review by USDE. ~~It should be noted that~~Initially, TEA ~~is~~ submitt~~ed~~ing th~~e~~is request under Section 9401 waiver authority. ~~To assist the Department in reviewing TEA's request, this document is organized according to the topics and sequence outlined in the "ESEA Flexibility Request" template.~~Going forward, the request is organized according to the requirements outlined below.

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Waivers

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By submitting this updated ESEA flexibility request, the SEA renews its request for flexibility through waivers of the nine ESEA requirements listed below and their associated regulatory, administrative, and reporting requirements, as well as any optional waivers the SEA has chosen to request under ESEA flexibility, by checking each of the boxes below. The provisions below represent the general areas of flexibility requested.

☐ 1. The requirements in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(E)-(H) that prescribe how an SEA must establish annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for determining adequate yearly progress (AYP) to ensure that all students meet or exceed the State's proficient level of academic achievement on the State's assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics no later than the end of the 2013–2014 school year. The SEA requests this waiver to develop new ambitious but achievable AMOs in reading/language arts and mathematics in order to provide meaningful goals that are used to guide support and improvement efforts for the State, LEAs, schools, and student subgroups.

☐ 2. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(b) for an LEA to identify for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, as appropriate, a Title I school that fails, for two consecutive years or more, to make AYP, and for a school so identified and its LEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA and its Title I schools need not comply with these requirements.

☐ 3. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(c) for an SEA to identify for improvement or corrective action, as appropriate, an LEA that, for two consecutive years or more, fails to make AYP, and for an LEA so identified and its SEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that it need not comply with these requirements with respect to its LEAs.

☐ 4. The requirements in ESEA sections 6213(b) and 6224(e) that limit participation in, and use of funds under the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) and Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) programs based on whether an LEA has made AYP and is complying with the requirements in ESEA section 1116. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA that receives SRSA or RLIS funds may use those funds for any authorized purpose regardless of whether the LEA makes AYP.

☐ 5. The requirement in ESEA section 1114(a)(1) that a school have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more in order to operate a school-wide program. The SEA requests this waiver so that

an LEA may implement interventions consistent with the turnaround principles or interventions that are based on the needs of the students in the school and designed to enhance the entire educational program in a school in any of its priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of "priority schools" and "focus schools," respectively, set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, as appropriate, even if those schools do not have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more.

☐ 6. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that section only to LEAs with schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its LEAs in order to serve any of the State's priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of "priority schools" and "focus schools," respectively, set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

☐ 7. The provision in ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) that authorizes an SEA to reserve Title I, Part A funds to reward a Title I school that (1) significantly closed the achievement gap between subgroups in the school; or (2) has exceeded AYP for two or more consecutive years. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may use funds reserved under ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) for any of the State's reward schools that meet the definition of "reward schools" set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

☐ 8. The requirements in ESEA section 2141(a), (b), and (c) for an LEA and SEA to comply with certain requirements for improvement plans regarding highly qualified teachers. The SEA requests this waiver to allow the SEA and its LEAs to focus on developing and implementing more meaningful evaluation and support systems.

☐ 9. The limitations in ESEA section 6123 that limit the amount of funds an SEA or LEA may transfer from certain ESEA programs to other ESEA programs. The SEA requests this waiver so that it and its LEAs may transfer up to 100 percent of the funds it receives under the authorized programs among those programs and into Title I, Part A.

Optional Flexibilities:

If an SEA chooses to request waivers of any of the following requirements, it should check the corresponding box(es) below:

☐ 10. The requirements in ESEA sections 4201(b)(1)(A) and 4204(b)(2)(A) that restrict the activities provided by a community learning center under the Twenty-First Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program to activities provided only during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (*i.e.*, before and after school or during summer recess). The SEA requests this waiver so that 21st CCLC funds may be used to support expanded learning time during the school day in addition to activities during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session.

☐ 11. The requirements in ESEA sections 1116(a)(1)(A)-(B) and 1116(c)(1)(A) that require LEAs and SEAs to make determinations of adequate yearly progress (AYP) for schools and LEAs, respectively. The SEA requests this waiver because continuing to determine whether an LEA and its schools make AYP is inconsistent with the SEA's State-developed differentiated recognition,

accountability, and support system included in its ESEA flexibility request. The SEA and its LEAs must report on their report cards performance against the AMOs for all subgroups identified in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v), and use performance against the AMOs to support continuous improvement in Title I schools.

☐ 12. The requirements in ESEA section 1113(a)(3)-(4) and (c)(1) that require an LEA to serve eligible schools under Title I in rank order of poverty and to allocate Title I, Part A funds based on that rank ordering. The SEA requests this waiver in order to permit its LEAs to serve a Title I-eligible high school with a graduation rate below 60 percent that the SEA has identified as a priority school even if that school does not otherwise rank sufficiently high to be served under ESEA section 1113.

☐ 13. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that section only to LEAs with schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The SEA requests this waiver in addition to waiver #6 so that, when it has remaining section 1003(a) funds after ensuring that all priority and focus schools have sufficient funds to carry out interventions, it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its LEAs to provide interventions and supports for low-achieving students in other Title I schools when one or more subgroups miss either AMOs or graduation rate targets or both over a number of years.

If the SEA is requesting waiver #13, the SEA must demonstrate in its renewal request that it has a process to ensure, on an annual basis, that all of its priority and focus schools will have sufficient funding to implement their required interventions prior to distributing ESEA section 1003(a) funds to other Title I schools.

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☐ 14. The requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(1)(B) and 1111(b)(3)(C)(i) that, respectively, require the SEA to apply the same academic content and academic achievement standards to all public schools and public school children in the State and to administer the same academic assessments to measure the achievement of all students. The SEA requests this waiver so that it is not required to double test a student who is not yet enrolled in high school but who takes advanced, high school level, mathematics coursework. The SEA would assess such a student with the corresponding advanced, high school level assessment in place of the mathematics assessment the SEA would otherwise administer to the student for the grade in which the student is enrolled. For Federal accountability purposes, the SEA will use the results of the advanced, high school level, mathematics assessment in the year in which the assessment is administered and will administer one or more additional advanced, high school level, mathematics assessments to such students in high school, consistent with the State's mathematics content standards, and use the results in high school accountability determinations.

If the SEA is requesting waiver #14, the SEA must demonstrate in its renewal request how it will ensure that every student in the State has the opportunity to be prepared for and take courses at an advanced level prior to high school.

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Assurances

By submitting this request, the SEA assures that:

☐ 1. It requests waivers of the above-referenced requirements based on its agreement to meet Principles 1 through 4 of ESEA flexibility, as described throughout the remainder of this request.

☐ 2. It has adopted English language proficiency (ELP) standards that correspond to the State's college- and career-ready standards, consistent with the requirement in ESEA section 3113(b)(2), and that reflect the academic language skills necessary to access and meet the State's college- and career-ready standards. (Principle 1)

☐ 3. It will administer no later than the 2014–2015 school year alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities that are consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2) and are aligned with the State's college- and career-ready standards. (Principle 1)

☐ 4. It will develop and administer ELP assessments aligned with the State's ELP standards, consistent with the requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(7), 3113(b)(2), and 3122(a)(3)(A)(ii) no later than the 2015–2016 school year. (Principle 1)

☐ 5. It will report annually to the public on college-going and college credit-accumulation rates for all students and subgroups of students in each LEA and each public high school in the State. (Principle 1)

☐ 6. If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and uses achievement on those assessments to identify priority and focus schools, it has technical documentation, which can be made available to the Department upon request, demonstrating that the assessments are administered statewide; include all students, including by providing appropriate accommodations for English Learners and students with disabilities, as well as alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2); and are valid and reliable for use in the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system. (Principle 2)

☐ 7. It will annually make public its lists of reward schools, priority schools, and focus schools prior to the start of the school year as well as publicly recognize its reward schools, and will update its lists of priority and focus schools at least every three years. (Principle 2)

If the SEA is not submitting with its renewal request its updated list of priority and focus schools, based on the most recent available data, for implementation beginning in the 2015–2016 school year, it must also assure that:

☐ 8. It will provide to the Department, no later than January 31, 2016, an updated list of priority and focus schools, identified based on school year 2014–2015 data, for implementation beginning in the 2016–2017 school year.

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☐ 9. It will evaluate and, based on that evaluation, revise its own administrative requirements to reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on LEAs and schools. (Principle 4)

☐ 10. It has consulted with its Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in its ESEA flexibility request.

☐ 11. Prior to submitting this request, it provided all LEAs with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on the request and has attached a copy of that notice (Attachment 1) as well as copies of any comments it received from LEAs. (Attachment 2)

☐ 12. Prior to submitting this request, it provided notice and information regarding the request to the public in the manner in which the SEA customarily provides such notice and information to the public (*e.g.*, by publishing a notice in the newspaper; by posting information on its website) and has attached a copy of, or link to, that notice. (Attachment 3)

☐ 13. It will provide to the Department, in a timely manner, all required reports, data, and evidence regarding its progress in implementing the plans contained throughout its ESEA flexibility request, and will ensure that all such reports, data, and evidence are accurate, reliable, and complete or, if it is aware of issues related to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of its reports, data, or evidence, it will disclose those issues.

☐ 14. It will report annually on its State report card and will ensure that its LEAs annually report on their local report cards, for the "all students" group, each subgroup described in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II), and for any combined subgroup (as applicable): information on student achievement at each proficiency level; data comparing actual achievement levels to the State's annual measurable objectives; the percentage of students not tested; performance on the other academic indicator for elementary and middle schools; and graduation rates for high schools. In addition, it will annually report, and will ensure that its LEAs annually report, all other information and data required by ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C) and 1111(h)(2)(B), respectively. It will ensure that all reporting is consistent with *State and Local Report Cards Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended Non-Regulatory Guidance* (February 8, 2013).

Principle 3 Assurances

Each SEA must select the appropriate option and, in doing so, assures that:

Option A	Option B	Option C
☐ 15.a. The SEA is on track to fully implementing Principle 3, including incorporation of student growth based on State assessments into educator ratings for teachers of tested grades and subjects and principals.	If an SEA that is administering new State assessments during the 2014–2015 school year is requesting one additional year to incorporate student growth based on these assessments, it will: ☐ 15.b.i. Continue to ensure that its LEAs implement teacher and principal evaluation systems using multiple measures, and that the SEA or its LEAs will calculate student growth data based on State assessments administered during the 2014–2015 school year for all teachers of tested grades and subjects and principals; and ☐ 15.b.ii. Ensure that each teacher of a tested grade and subject and all principals will receive their student growth data based on State assessments administered during the 2014–2015 school year.	If the SEA is requesting modifications to its teacher and principal evaluation and support system guidelines or implementation timeline other than those described in Option B, which require additional flexibility from the guidance in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility* as well as the documents related to the additional flexibility offered by the Assistant Secretary in a letter dated August 2, 2013, it will: ☐ 15.c. Provide a narrative response in its redlined ESEA flexibility request as described in Section II of the ESEA flexibility renewal guidance.

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Consultation and Public Input

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Stakeholder engagement has always been a part of Texas' process for developing statewide policies and standards. State standards are developed by a publicly elected 15 member State ~~B~~board of Education with input from educators, subject matter experts~~,~~ and citizens.

TEA has solicited input and provided for meaningful engagement of teachers and other stakeholder groups, not only in preparing this flexibility request, but throughout the process of developing, adopting, and implementing the state's College and Career Ready Standards, ~~and~~ assessment and accountability systems~~,~~ and educator evaluation systems. ~~Information regarding the latter is included in subsequent sections of this document, which describe the development, adoption, and implementation process for major components of the Texas system.~~ Information regarding the state's solicitation and receipt of input regarding this flexibility request is presented below and in ***Attachments 1, 2, and 3***. Information regarding stakeholder input and engagement in the development, adoption~~,~~ and implementation of major components of the Texas system is included in subsequent sections of this document.

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~~In February 2015, TEA worked with the state's 20 Regional Education Service Centers (ESC) to solicit feedback from superintendents across Texas regarding the provisions of this waiver renewal. The input gathered by ESCs was relayed to TEA and shared internally as the renewal application was drafted. The majority of superintendents across the state who provided feedback are in support of this waiver renewal. TEA plans to continue providing an additional avenue for feedback regarding the renewal application through a "To the Administrator Addressed" letter to superintendents. The letter will be distributed to all LEAs via our agency's electronic mail list serve in April.~~

Solicitation of Input from Teachers and Their Representatives

TEA provided local administrators and teachers with notice and the opportunity to comment on this flexibility request. In doing so, we followed the state's usual procedures, i.e., through a letter to all LEAs that was (1) posted on the TEA website and (2) disseminated through TEA's "To the Administrator Addressed" electronic mail list server on September 6, 2012; see *Attachment 1a* for a copy of the letter. TEA personnel also presented and discussed the Intent to Apply for Waivers under Section 9401 with the state's Committee of Practitioners on September 18, 2012; see *Attachment 1b* for a copy of the meeting agenda. Comments on the flexibility request received from LEAs, teachers, and other stakeholders are included in *Attachment 2*.

In February 2015, TEA worked with the state's 20 Regional Education Service Centers (ESC) to solicit feedback from superintendents across Texas regarding the provisions of this waiver renewal. The input gathered by ESCs was relayed to TEA and shared internally as the renewal application was drafted. The majority of superintendents across the state who provided feedback are in support of this waiver renewal. TEA ~~plans to~~is continue~~e~~ing to providi~~e~~ng ~~an additional~~ avenues for feedback regarding the renewal application through a "To the Administrator Addressed" letter to superintendents~~. The letter will be~~ that was distributed to all LEAs via our agency's electronic mail list serve in late April.

[~~In addition,~~It also should be noted that thousands of Texas educators have served on one or more of the educator committees involved in the development of the Texas assessment program. These committees represent the diversity of Texas schools in terms of~~state~~ geograph~~ically~~y, ethnic~~ally~~ity, ~~by~~ gender~~,~~ and ~~by~~ type and size of school district. They routinely include educators with knowledge of the needs of all students, including students with disabilities and English language learners (ELLs). TEA will continue to engage these stakeholders going forward as we implement all aspects of this waiver including the development of evaluation tools.

Solicitation of Input from Other Diverse Stakeholder Groups

Pursuant to P.L. 107-110, Section 9401(3)(A)(iii), TEA provided notice and information regarding the agency's intent to apply for this waiver to the public in the manner in which TEA customarily provides such notice and information to the public, i.e., by posting to the TEA web site and by publishing a notice in the *Texas Register* on September 21, 2012. TEA ~~will~~ also provide~~d~~ notice and information regarding the waiver on April 19, 2013. ~~-~~(See *Attachment 3* for copies of the notice.)

~~In addition,~~ TEA will continue to work with Education Service Centers and the Texas Center for District and School Support to share new federal requirements that are a result of this waiver. In September, trainings will occur across the state on identification and interventions.

Quarterly sessions with stakeholders including ESC staff, district and school personnel will focus on implementation and progress. At these quarterly sessions, ESC staff will collect comments from participants and report those comments back to TEA within 7 business days.

Within 30 days of receiving the comments, TEA will respond to all comments by posting responses on the TEA webpage. Additional ~~comments from~~ stakeholders who are not at any of the trainings will be able to submit questions or comments to eseawaiver@tea.state.tx.us.

~~Stakeholder engagement has always been a part of Texas' process for developing statewide policies and standards. State standards are developed by a publicly elected 15 member board who is publicly elected. They develop standards with input from educators, subject matter experts, and citizens.~~

On September 18, 2012, personnel from TEA provided the Committee of Practitioners (COP) with information regarding the proposed waiver requests. COP members were provided handouts of the agency correspondence dated September 6, 2012, Section 9401 Waivers of Statutory and Regulatory Requirements, and the Timeline for the 9401 waiver submission. TEA personnel then discussed the background, goal, and timeline of the waiver request to COP members, and discussed each individual waiver request with COP members. A motion was made and seconded by COP members that recommended TEA move forward with the waivers as described. The motion was approve unanimously. ~~At the~~ On May 5th ~~meeting~~ TEA staff ~~will~~ provided the COP with an update regarding the waiver renewal and gathered~~seek~~ additional input from this group.

In addition to posting the terms of the waiver online for public comment, Commissioner Williams has met with multiple superintendents and solicited their opinion on the provisions of this waiver. ~~As~~ TEA leadership also brought together the various factions of the Texas association stakeholder groups including ~~implements the terms agreed to in the waiver, the agency will engage superintendents~~, the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), the Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA), ~~,~~ the Texas Classroom and Teachers Association (TCTA), the Texas Federation of Teachers (TFT), the Texas State Teachers Association (TSTA), the Texas Elementary and School Principals Association (TESPA), and the Texas Secondary School Principals Association (TASPA)~~and teacher organizations., the~~ among others.

Evaluation

At this time, TEA does not elect to collaborate with USDE in this voluntary evaluation process. However, the agency has been selected to participate in a review of design, implementation and oversight of waivers by the U.S. Government Accountability Office at the request from the Chair of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions committee and the Chair of the House Education and the Workforce committee. TEA is also considering partnering with other national

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organizations and researchers related to ESEA implementation and college and career ready standards.

Overview of TEA's Request for ESEA Flexibility

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Texas has been a national leader in the college- and career-readiness movement. We were the first state to develop and implement college and career readiness curriculum standards and the first state to assess those standards, and we will be the first to implement an accountability system to hold schools accountable for preparing students for post-secondary success.

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Independent of federal requirements, Texas has developed and begun full implementation of a statewide system that surpasses the requirements of the ESEA statute. Three Five years ago, the state completed full implementation of the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards. In the 2013This year we are transitioneding to a consolidated, differentiated accountability and interventions system, with tiered interventions beginning in school year 2013-2014. Upon approval of this waiver request, Texas will have a single, differentiated accountability system. This differentiated accountability system is based on the state's rigorous new assessment program, the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). Texas also continues to build upon its rigorous teacher certification system that is working to improve teacher and principal accountability to ensure high quality teaching and learning for all students.

Despite Texas' progress on these fronts, the failure of Congress to reauthorize ESEA has forced LEAs to operate within two (at times conflicting) accountability and intervention systems, while taking valuable resources and time away from focusing on improving student achievement. The federal requirements and guidelines of ESEA no longer adequately reflect the performance of the state's schools. For example:

- More graduates in the Class of 2012 scored a 3 or higher on at least one AP Exam than took AP Exams in 2002. Moreover, the number of Texas students taking the ACT reached an all-time high (110,180) in 2012, with Hispanic participation doubling over the past five years. Forty-eight percent of Texas students met the ACT college readiness benchmark on the mathematics test, compared to 46 percent nationally. Even with the rapid rise in participation, the ACT composite score rose from 20.7 in 2008 to 20.8 in 2012. The number of Hispanic students taking the SAT increased by 65 percent between 2007–08 and 2011–12. African American and Asian students also showed double-digit increases (42% and 29%, respectively). The mean SAT mathematics score remained stable or increased for all student groups over this time period.
- Based on USDE's new graduation rate calculation, Texas tied for the third highest high school graduation rate in the country for all students. Texas ranks number one in graduation rates for Asian, African-American, and white students.
- In 2011, every major ethnic group of Texas students significantly outscored their peers nationally on the eighth grade National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) science test, and Texas Hispanic and African-American students earned the second highest score on the eighth-grade mathematics test.
- Annual undergraduate degrees and certificates awarded to Hispanics have increased by 150% since 2000.

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The Texas educational system is rigorous, responsive to the needs of the state's more than 1,200 local education agencies, and aligned with the three principles outlined in USDE's provisional

~~waiver application. Moreover, Texas already has adopted and has either completed or begun implementation of the key components described in those principles. Our request for flexibility is intended to avoid duplication and to further support the implementation of the state's system.~~

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Principle 1:
College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students

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1.A Adoption of College- and Career-Ready Standards

~~As noted earlier,~~ Texas was the first state in the nation to adopt and implement college- and career-ready curriculum standards. The following paragraphs summarize the adoption process, with extensive supporting documentation provided in *Attachment 4.*

The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills Curriculum Standards

Since 1998, K-12 education in Texas has been guided by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum standards. The TEKS, codified in Title 19 of the Texas Administrative Code, Chapters 110-130, became effective in all content areas and grade levels on September 1, 1998. Statute required that the TEKS be used for instruction in the foundation areas of English language arts and reading, mathematics, science~~,~~ and social studies. ~~TEKS i~~In the enrichment subjects (including health education, physical education, fine arts, career and technical education, technology application~~,~~ and languages other than English). TEKS initially served as guidelines~~,~~ rather than requirements. In 2003, the 78th Texas Legislature added enrichment subjects to the list of subject areas required to use the TEKS.

Incorporation of College- and Career-Ready Standards into the TEKS

In 2006, the 79th Texas Legislature required TEA and the state agency for higher education, the Texas Higher Education Coordination Board (THECB), to establish vertical teams composed of public school educators and faculty from institutions of higher education that would develop college- and career- ready standards in the areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science~~,~~ and social studies. The work of the vertical teams was organized in three phases. The first phase entailed a series of team meetings to create the college- and career-ready standards (CCRS) for the four subject areas. Phase two required the vertical teams to make recommendations as to how to align existing public school content standards with the CCRS. Phase three required the vertical teams to develop or establish instructional strategies, professional development materials, and online support materials for students who need additional assistance in preparing to successfully perform college-level work. ~~Upon adoption of the TEKS a~~Tt ~~each phase t~~eams also engaged in a series of gap~~s~~ analyses ~~first~~ to ensure alignment between the adopted TEKS and the Texas CCRS ~~An additional phase of vertical teams also met~~and to ensure appropriate alignment.

The THECB adopted the standards in January 2008. The Commissioner of Education approved the standards, and the State Board of Education (SBOE) incorporated them into the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum content standards as follows: English language arts and reading TEKS in 2008; mathematics and science TEKS in 2009; and social studies TEKS in 2010. *Attachment 4* provides supporting documentation, including~~s~~ a description of the State's standards adoption process *(Attachment 4a),* English language arts and mathematics gap analyses documents (*Attachment 4b),* evidence of the adoption of the college- and career-ready standards by the THECB *(Attachment 4c),* their approval by the Commissioner of Education and the Commissioner of Higher Education~~,~~ *(Attachment 4d),* and the SBOE actions incorporating them into the TEKS standards *(Attachment 4e).*

A~~The a~~ttachment 4 also includes a copy of the college- and career-ready standards *(Attachment 4f)* and the findings from a comparison of the Texas standards with the national Common Core College Readiness Standards created by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association *(Attachment 4g)*. The comparison, conducted by the Educational Policy Improvement Center and involving teams of higher education and public school educators and content educators, found that the Texas standards are more comprehensive than the Common Core standards, including additional areas of college readiness that are missing from the ~~national standards~~Common Core. Overall, Texas standards in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics matched 92% and 75% of those in the Common Core Standards, respectively. Breadth of coverage, or the extent to which matched standards are representative of content topics within each Common Core strand, was rated as strong for both content areas. Finally, the level of cognitive demand, or depth of knowledge, attributed to Texas standards was at or above that of the Common Core Standards for 90% of mathematics standards, and 71% of ELA standards.

In addition to comparison to the Common Core Standards, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board conducted a 2010 study (see *Attachment 4h*) ~~conducted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board~~ of the extent to which college admission and placement tests assess the Texas standards. The study found that, on average, performance expectations contained within the standards were both more rigorous and more cognitively demanding ~~that~~ than~~the~~ test items from the ACT, SAT, ACCUPLACER, COMPASS, ASSET~~,~~ and the Texas Higher Education Assessment.

Additional ~~Refinements and~~ Revisions to the Standards

Mathematics. During 2011-2012, the cycle of review and revision of the TEKS standards continued with the comprehensive revision of the K-12 mathematics TEKS, which once again raised the bar to ensure the necessary rigor for college and career readiness. The SBOE adopted these new math TEKS in April 2012 (see *Attachment 4i)*. The revised mathematics standards for kindergarten through grade 8 were implemented in the 2014-2015 school year and the revised high school standards will be implemented in the 2015-2016 school year.

Language Arts and Reading. The SBOE will begin review and revision of the English language arts and reading and Spanish language arts and reading in 2015. The primary goals of this revision include ensuring the standards continue to reflect current research to support the rigor necessary for college and career reading and streamlining the standards to ensure that students can develop mastery within the school year.

Career and Technical ~~Education.~~ The Education. The SBOE will adopt revised career and technical education (CTE) standards in summer 2015 to ensure that course offerings remain current and relevant to support workforce needs. The CTE standards also incorporate the Texas CCRS. The state has completed validated crosswalks that connect the CTE TEKS with the Texas CCRS. The crosswalks were completed by content experts including classroom teachers (CTE and core academic), postsecondary faculty~~,~~ and business and industry partners. Crosswalks are available at http://www.achievetexas.org/Career%20Cluster%20Crosswalks.htm.

~~**Language Arts and Reading.** The SBOE will begin review and revision of the English language arts and reading and Spanish language arts and reading in 2015. The primary goals of this revision~~

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~~include ensuring the standards continue to reflect current research to support the rigor necessary for college and career reading and streamlining the standards to ensure that students can develop mastery within the school year.~~

English Language Proficiency. The English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) were created in response to a USDE Monitoring Visit in 2008. ~~Prior to the development of the ELPS,~~ Texas had previously implemented English as a Second Language (ESL) TEKS that were ~~imbedded~~ embedded in the English language arts/Reading TEKS~~, and~~; in its monitoring report, the USDE indicated that it was not clear that the English language acquisition standards were to be addressed in conjunction with all foundation subject areas. ~~-~~Since the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment Standards (TELPAS) were already being implemented, the agency formed a committee comprised of educators and administrators from throughout the state to develop ELPS that were aligned to TELPAS. ~~-~~The TELPAS includes standards for the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading~~,~~ and writing with the proficiency levels of beginning, intermediate, advanced~~,~~ and ~~advanced~~ advanced-high. Once the ELPS were written, the committee completed an alignment of the ELPS with the Grade 4 content standards. The proposed ELPS were then submitted to the State Board of Education for approval and were adopted in 2008.

As part of the periodic review and revision of the TEKS and related standards, the agency plans to initiate review and revision of the ELPS in ~~the coming year~~ 2015. This review will follow the same process that the SBOE uses for review and revision of the TEKS that includes appointment of review committees comprised of educators, parents, business and industry leaders~~,~~ and employers to recommend revisions to the standards. The committees will be asked to ensure proper alignment with the CCRS as well as the state's prekindergarten guidelines. Prior to adoption of any revisions to the ELPS the SBOE will conduct public hearings and solicit input from educators throughout the state.

All state level Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills professional development is required to incorporate connections with the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) and the ~~College and Career Readiness Standards (~~CCRS~~)~~. ~~-~~Within the Linguistic Instructional Alignment Guide (*Attachment 4j)*, explicit connections between the ELPS and the CCRS for each of the four linguistic domains have been incorporated in an effort to support teachers' understandings of the connections between the two. With this understanding, teachers incorporate activities that strengthen both language development and college and career readiness.

1.B Transition to College- and Career-Ready Standards

Texas has already made the transition to statewide use of the college- and career-ready standards. This transition has included (1) incorporation of the standards into the TEKS, as described above; (2) provision of instructional strategies, professional development materials and activities~~,~~ and online support materials for local educators; (3) provision of resources for students who may need additional assistance, including English Language Learners, students with disabilities~~,~~ and other high-need populations; and (4) alignment of statewide assessments to the standards as incorporated into the TEKS. Additional information about these activities is provided in the following

paragraphs~~,~~ as well as in Section 1.~~C~~ C, which address~~es~~~~ing~~ the state's student assessment program, and in *Attachment 5*.

Resources for Students Who Are English Language Learners

Texas currently has 949,074 English language learners (ELLs) who speak over 120 languages Resources that support both language development and content understanding for these students ~~the 949,074838,494 English language learners (ELLs) in Texas who speak over 120 languages~~ are housed on ~~the~~ The Texas English Language Learner Web Portal (www.elltx.org) and are available to educators and parents throughout the state. This website includes resources, tools and training materials that are designed to support educators in effectively serving ELLs ~~and also in improving content knowledge and English proficiency~~. Examples of the resources available on this ~~state~~ site include ~~the following~~:

1. **The Texas English Language Learner Instructional Tool (TELLIT) Courses**
   These courses help teachers learn how to address the linguistic, cognitive, and affective needs of English language learners. Course participants are able to view video segments of teachers using effective strategies that enhance mathematics, science~~,~~ and social studies instruction and promote academic achievement of ELL students. Courses are organized both by subject and by their focus on linguistic environment, cognitive learning environment~~,~~ and affective learning environment.

   ~~TELLIT Math Linguistic Environment Course~~
   ~~TELLIT Math Cognitive Learning Environment Course~~
   ~~TELLT Math Affective Learning Environment Course~~

   ~~TELLIT Science Linguistic Learning Environment Course~~
   ~~TELLIT Science Cognitive Learning Environment Course~~
   ~~TELLIT Science Affective Learning Environment Course~~

   ~~TELLIT Science Linguistic Learning Environment Course~~
   ~~TELLIT Science Cognitive Learning Environment Course~~
   ~~TELLIT Affective Learning Environment Course~~

2. **Professional Service Provider (PSP) Training – Math**
   This course provides Professional Service Providers with a tool that can be used in providing feedback and exploring perceptions with campus administrators about what is occurring in mathematics instruction for ELLs. During this course, participants learn about the role of the PSP in the classroom-observation process, including pre-observation and post-observation tasks.

3. **Accelerating Language Acquisition for Secondary English Language ~~Learner~~ Learners Online Course**
   This online course provides self-paced ~~processional~~ professional development ~~training~~ for content area teachers in secondary classrooms. The course presents skills and strategies for teaching academic language to facilitate the content learning of ~~English language learners (~~ELLs~~)~~.

4. **ELPS Face-to-Face Academies in ~~all content areas (~~Science, Social Studies, ELAR, and Mathematics~~)~~**

~~4.~~ These ~~face~~ face-~~to~~ to-face professional development sessions provide participants with an exploration of ways to increase achievement for ELLs using the ELPS. ~~In this face-to-face session, p~~Participants examine the ELPS and practice writing language objectives using the four linguistic domains of~~:~~ listening, speaking, reading and writing. The resources contain specific strategies that ~~will~~ enable teachers to incorporate the ELPS in their classrooms.

5. **ELPS Online Academy Overview**

~~5.~~ ~~—~~This online course assists teachers in ~~the~~ understanding ~~of~~ how the ELPS provide cross-curricular second language acquisition and essential knowledge and skills for listening, speaking, reading~~,~~ and writing to provide a common framework for instruction in content area classrooms.

6. **Implementing the ELPS Online Modules ~~in all content areas (~~Science, Social Studies, ELAR, and Mathematics**

~~6.~~ ~~)~~ ~~—~~These~~is~~ online courses assist~~s~~ teachers in understanding how to apply the ELPS cross-curricular student expectations and linguistic accommodations in a specific content-focused instructional lesson (e.g., ~~a~~ English language arts~~) lesson~~. A focus on the integration of the ELPS into lesson planning and instructional practices in support of ELL success is addressed. In addition, a variety of instructional strategies that assist ELLs in both language development and content acquisition are explored in order to promote academic success.

7. **ELPS Resource Supplement**

~~7.~~ ~~—~~This resource~~, is~~ accessible as part of the ELPS Academy online course and ~~is~~ available for download and printing~~. The resource~~ contains the ELPS, College and Career Readiness Standards, Response to Intervention information~~,~~ and processing activities aligned to the ELPS Academy face-to-face and online modules.

8. **ELPS Linguistic Instructional Alignment Guide (Resource)**

~~8.~~ ~~—~~The ~~purpose of the ELPS Instructional Alignment~~ Guide ~~is to~~ supports content area teachers in the identification of the essential components for providing instruction commensurate with English language learners' linguistic needs. This tool allows teachers to see connections among English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS), ELPS-TELPAS Proficiency Level Descriptors ~~(PLDs)~~, College Career Readiness Standards ~~(CCRS)~~ and Linguistic Accommodations. The consistent integration of these components is critical in lesson planning in order to meet the linguistic and academic needs of English language learners.

9. **ELPS Linguistic Instructional Alignment Guide (ELPS LIAG) Trainer of Trainer ~~online~~ Online ~~course~~Course**

The~~ purpose of this online trainer of trainer~~ is online course ~~is to~~ builds capacity ~~on how to~~in delivering professional development sessions on the use of the ELPS LIAG. ~~The goal~~

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~~is for trainers to increase knowledge and understanding on the use of the ELPS LIAG and its components.~~

10. **A+Rise Online Tutorial**

~~10.~~ ~~–~~This online tutorial course assists 9th-12th secondary educators in the use of the A+Rise program in order to access instructional strategies for ELPS implementation effectively.

Support for Teachers Serving Students with Disabilities ~~– College and Career Ready Standards~~

~~The State of~~ Texas has a long history of providing high quality professional development and training opportunities to all educators providing general and special education instruction and related services to the ~~State's~~ state's 439,675 ~~(2011-12 Child Count – Ages 3-21)~~ students with disabilities. ~~–~~Professional development and training are provided through local school districts/charter schools and the 20 Regional Educational Service Centers.~~–~~ In ~~more~~ recent years~~,~~ the TEA ~~Project Share~~ has made available online professional development and training offerings for educators across a variety of topics, including the ~~Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (~~TEKS, via Project Share, an interactive learning environment for Texas educators~~),~~ ~~which is the State's curriculum framework~~ (~~See~~ see *Attachment 5:* Excerpt from Project Share Web ~~Page~~site).

~~-~~As ~~stated above~~noted earlier, the TEKS ~~contain~~ incorporate ~~our State's College and Career Ready Standards~~the Texas CCRS.~~–~~ Professional development and training focused on the TEKS ~~is~~ are available to all educators. ~~–~~Additionally, all ~~the~~ TEKS professional development and training offerings ~~also contain~~address ~~response~~ Response to ~~intervention~~ Intervention strategies for teachers to support students who struggle with curriculum content.

~~Current professional development and training offerings made available to all educators related to the TEKS ensures students with disabilities have teachers who have participated in high quality TEKS/subject matter professional development/training.~~ Since more than 65 percent ~~(AFDR)~~ of students with disabilities ~~(ages 6-21)~~ are served in the general education classroom ~~80 percent, by a general education teacher~~, it is critically important to provide in-depth professional development ~~maintain our current efforts to~~ support~~s~~ for general education teachers; TEA does so through ~~our~~ the above-described ~~existing~~ professional development and training offerings, in conjunction with the following long~~–~~standing state initiatives:

1. ~~The~~ Rider 19 to the Texas State Budget Appropriations Act ~~contains a Rider that~~ requires ~~the Texas Education Agency~~TEA to reser~~ve~~, over two years, 10.5% ~~(over 2 yrs)~~ of IDEA ~~federal~~ state set-aside funds ~~(state set-aside)~~ to provide professional development regarding access to the general curriculum. ~~–~~These funds are distributed to all 20 Regional Education Service Centers, whose staff members provide ~~for the provision of~~ the professional development. Over the next two years ~~,~~TEA will reserve ~$10,850,428 ~~over the next two years~~ for this purpose.

   ~~**Rider 19. Professional Development for the Provision of Access to the General Curriculum for Students with Disabilities in the Least Restrictive Environment.** Out of the federal discretionary funds awarded to the Texas~~

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~~Education Agency through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B and appropriated above, the Commissioner shall set aside 10.5 percent during the biennium to fund capacity building projects, including follow-up professional development and support, for school districts to provide access to the general curriculum in the least restrictive environment for students with disabilities and Response to Intervention (RtI) processes for struggling learners in general education settings.~~

2. ~~In addition to Rider 19 (above), the Texas Education Agency~~TEA has established a Statewide Leadership project ~~at~~ housed in the Region 20 Education Service Center (ESC)~~. Region 20 ESC (located~~ in San Antonio. The project~~)~~ provides statewide leadership in the area of Access to the General Curriculum (AGC). ~~The~~ An AGC Network, comprised of representatives from a~~(A~~ll 20 ESCs and coordinated by the Region 20 ESC,~~)~~ develops and maintains a framework for statewide collaboration through an ongoing, comprehensive planning process. Priorities ~~in~~ for professional development and technical assistance ~~focus on~~emphasize strategies for ensuring that all students with disabilities will gain access to and show progress in the general curriculum through curricular/instructional adaptations in the least restrictive environment. ~~Region 20 ESC is responsible for establishing and coordinating a 20 ESC network for accessing the general curriculum. The purpose of the 20 region network is to ensure ongoing communication among ESCs about state-level needs assessment processes, planning, implementing, and evaluating statewide activities.~~ See *Attachment 6:s titled* "Access to the General Curriculum" and "AGC Statewide Leadership" for more information. ~~regarding the Access to the General Curriculum Statewide Leadership function and Access to the General Curriculum Project resources. The purpose of both Rider 19 and the AGC ESC network is to create professional development opportunities, and tools and resources for all educators so students with disabilities have access to, and make progress in, the general curriculum (the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), which includes the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards).~~

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~~All current professional development and training offerings through local school districts, the 20 ESCs, and Project Share matched with training related to accessing the general education curriculum through accommodation/modification provides all student with disabilities with high quality instruction in the TEKS, and is individualized based on the student's needs. T~~In addition to professional development and training for general education teachers, the 20 ESCs offer additional high quality professional development and training opportunities specific to special education teachers who support~~ing~~ the general education teachers and/or provid~~eing~~ direct instruction to students with disabilities to ensure all educators have access to the knowledge necessary to deliver high quality instruction in the TEKS content standards.

~~In~~ Texas has in place ~~additional to~~ local~~,~~ and regional evaluation systems that are used to determine the effectiveness of professional development and training opportunities. In addition,~~,~~ ~~the Texas Education Agency~~TEA will continue to analyze the following data sets:

- ~~2013-14 d~~District and Statewide Accountability Ratings ~~(~~specific to the performance of students with disabilities~~)~~;
- ~~2013-14~~ STAAR performance information ~~(~~across all three state assessments – STAAR, STAAR- Accommodated (A)~~Modified~~ and STAAR-Alt 2~~)~~;
- ~~2013-14~~ Performance Based Monitoring Analysis System (PBMAS) Special Education Performance Levels; and
- ~~2013-14~~ Program Monitoring and Interventions Staging ~~(~~specific to special education indicators related to student STAAR, STAAR-A~~,~~ and STAAR-Alt2 performance and participation, graduation~~,~~ and dropout rates~~1-5, and 9-11~~; s~~—~~ See *Attachment 7*:~ ~~2012~~ Performance-Based Monitoring Analysis System State Longitudinal Report)

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These~~is analysis~~ analyses are and will be used to ~~determine~~ assess the effectiveness of ~~the~~ professional development and ~~/~~training, and to determine whether additional ~~/specific efforts~~opportunities need to be ~~developed/~~made available ~~to educators, for the 2014-15 school year,~~ regarding TEKS content instruction for students with disabilities. ~~-~~Such opportunities may~~These additional/specific efforts could~~ include the following~~, but will not be limited to~~:

1. Continue ~~A~~assignment of local school district interventions/improvement planning that includes ~~specific mentoring and/or~~ professional development ~~and training~~ related to TEKS content instruction for educators serving students with disabilities;
2. Continue ~~D~~development collection and posting of ~~supplemental online TEKS content/subject guides support for the educators to provide access to of instructional~~examples of best practices~~, that work offered~~ from ~~by fellow~~ teachers ~~from~~ across the state~~,~~ that have been successful with students who continue to struggle ~~in~~ with mastery of the TEKS;
3. Continue ~~R~~revision of current ~~P~~professional development and training offerings to integrate into current offerings additional accommodations and/or limited modifications to ensure alignment of standards, instruction~~,~~ and the needs of students with disabilities; and/or

4. Continue ~~Development~~implementation of specific professional development and training (both online and face-to-face) ~~related to the provision of TEKS instruction for all educators of students with disabilities~~ to assist school personnel in transitioning from the STAAR-Modified assessment to the regular STAAR and STAAR-A.

Since the 2014-15 school year is the first year for the administration of the STAAR-A and STAAR-Alt2 assessments, and incoming freshmen are required to meet a new set of graduation requirements, it will be necessary to review the above improvement strategies over the next two years~~,~~ and adjust as appropriate, to ensure continuous improvement across student performance indicators.

Professional Development and Other Supports for Local Educators

Recognizing the level of rigor of the ~~new~~ curriculum requirements and the need to support the state's more rigorous student graduation requirements ~~(which require four years of math, science, social studies and English language arts as the default graduation plan)~~, the Texas Legislature has committed significant funding toward professional development to support implementation of the ~~new~~ TEKS as they are revised and updated. The state's system of 20 Regional ~~Educational Service Centers (~~ESCs~~)~~ serves as a primary vehicle for ensuring that all local educators have access to the professional development they need. Providing leadership to the ESCs, TEA has developed and deployed professional development addressing the incorporation of the CCRS into the TEKS and the instructional implications of ~~the new~~revised standards; supporting the use of diagnostics, data~~,~~ and technology in implementing the TEKS; and facilitating the use of student-centered strategies including Response to Intervention, Gifted and Talented approaches~~,~~ and strategies to strengthen academic language among English Language Learners.

Online support materials are provided through TEA's online portal for Texas teachers, known as Project Share (see *Attachment ~~85~~a* for a description), and are available to all Texas LEAs. These materials include lessons, aligned to the TEKS and CCRS, which~~, that~~ supplement classroom instruction and provide additional practice for students during and beyond traditional school hours.

As the state has worked toward college and career readiness, literacy has remained a top priority. The Texas Legislature continues to commit significant resources toward the Texas Adolescent Literacy Academies (TALA), which support teachers in grades 6-8 in the use of diagnostic instruments and intensive instructional strategies that build proficiency in reading and comprehension for all middle school students. Through these academies, English language arts teachers also have received training in how to administer and interpret the results of the Texas Middle School Fluency Assessment (TMSFA), an instrument designed to measure key reading skills in middle school students. TMSFA materials and training are available at no cost to LEAs and open-enrollment charter schools that serve middle school students. In addition to face-to-face trainings, TALA and TMSFA professional development courses are also available through Project Share.

TEA also has taken the initiative to develop the *Middle-School Students in Texas: Algebra Ready (MSTAR)*, *Elementary School Students in Texas: Algebra Ready (ESTAR)* and *Texas Response to*

Curriculum Focal Points (Grades K-8), which are used in mathematics professional development academies that are available in both face-to-face and online environments. These materials address key "focal points" contained within the mathematics TEKS that target algebra readiness for grades K-8. In continued support of excellence in mathematics the ESTAR and MSTAR Universal Screener (US), an online formative assessment system administered to students in grades 2–4 (ESTAR) and grades 5–8 (MSTAR), was developed. The MSTAR US was made available statewide in fall 2010. The ESTAR US was added to the system in fall 2013.

Provision of Resources for Students

As noted ~~above~~earlier~~,~~ TEA's online portal, Project Share, includes significant resources and professional development opportunities for teachers. In addition, it provides engaging online resources and support materials for students (see *Attachment ~~8~~5b* for examples). Many of the Project Share student resources are provided in both English and Spanish versions to further support English Language Learners and the teachers who work with them. English/Spanish resources include a series of videos that explain secondary math and science concepts, algebra-readiness universal screeners and diagnostic assessments, and a math and science item bank that teachers can draw from when creating formative and summative assessments. Project Share also provides OnTRACK Lessons for core secondary English, math, science~~,~~ and social studies subjects. The OnTRACK Lessons, which are developed at the state level and electronically distributed to all Texas districts for use at the local level, include lessons designed to supplement classroom instruction and to provide accelerated instruction for struggling students, particularly those who are at risk for not meeting curricular expectations and/or not passing state assessments.

Alignment of Assessments to the College- and Career-Ready Standards

Please see section 1.C, below, for more information on this topic.

1.C Development and Administration of Annual, Statewide, Aligned, High-Quality Assessments That Measure Student Growth

Texas already has developed and begun annually administering ~~statewide~~ aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs statewide. The state launched its first statewide student assessment program in 1979 to bring common standards to the measurement of students' academic achievement. From this early Texas Assessment of Basic Skills to the new State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR), Texas has steadily increased the rigor, expanded the scope, and raised the performance standards measured on its assessments. The STAAR program began operational testing in the 2011-2012 school year. A description of the development and critical features of the STAAR system ~~are~~ is provided ~~in the following paragraphs~~below.

Overview of the STAAR Assessment Program

With the creation of the STAAR assessment program, the Texas Legislature continued its ongoing efforts to improve the state's education system using statewide assessments. STAAR represents a ~~more~~ unified, comprehensive assessment program that incorporates the state's rigorous college and career readiness standards. TEA set broad goals for the STAAR assessment program that include the following:

- The performance expectations on STAAR ~~were established such that they~~ raise the bar on student performance to a level where graduating students are postsecondary ready.
- The focus of student performance at the high school level was shifted to end-of-course (EOC) assessments in ~~twelve~~ five courses~~, and~~; those assessments, where appropriate, ~~will be~~are linked to college and career readiness.
- ~~In reading and mathematics, the grades 3–8 tests are linked from grade to grade to the college- and career-readiness performance standards for the Algebra II and English III assessments.~~
- Individual student reports provide comprehensive, concise results that are easily understood by students and parents. Assessment results ~~will be~~are available to a wide variety of individuals (as appropriate) through the state's education data portal.

~~The most~~Other significant changes in the rigor of assessments, attention to postsecondary readiness, and measures of progress that TEA has implemented under the STAAR program are summarized below.

~~*General changes:*~~

- ~~High school, grade-based testing represented by the previous state assessment, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), was replaced with course-based EOC assessments.~~
- ~~A data portal was implemented to give students, parents, and educators access to authorized information on student achievement.~~

Rigor:

- Content standards for the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) — the source for the state's K–12 instructional curricula as well as the basis for the state assessment program — have been strengthened to include college-and career-readiness content standards, as described earlier.
- New test blueprints (the number of items on the test for each reporting category) emphasize ~~the~~ assessment of the content standards that best prepare students for the next grade or course.
- Assessments have increased in length ~~at~~ for most grades and subjects, and overall test difficulty has increased by including more rigorous items.
- The rigor of items has increased by assessing skills at a greater depth and level of cognitive complexity. In this way, the tests are better able to measure the growth of higher-achieving students.
- In science and mathematics, the number of open-ended ~~(griddable)~~ items on most tests has increased to allow students more opportunity to derive an answer independently without being influenced by answer choices provided with the questions.
- Performance standards are set so that they require a higher level of student performance than was required on the TAKS assessments.
- To validate the level of rigor, student performance on STAAR assessments has been compared with results on standardized national and international assessments.

Postsecondary readiness:

- College- and career-readiness content standards have been fully incorporated into the TEKS, and these TEKS are assessed on the STAAR EOC assessments. This provision helps ensure

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that students are prepared for their freshman year of college without the need for remediation, prepared to enter the workforce, or prepared to serve in our nation's military.

- Performance standards on assessments ~~were~~ have been vertically aligned to ensure college readiness, using empirical data gathered from studies that linked performance in grades ~~three~~ 3 through 12 from year to year. Performance standards will be reviewed at least once every three years and ~~, if necessary,~~ adjusted as necessary so that the assessments maintain a high level of rigor.
- Texas law defines college readiness as "the level of preparation a student must attain in English language arts and mathematics courses to enroll and succeed, without remediation, in an entry-level general education course for credit in that same content area for a baccalaureate degree or associate degree program."

Measures of progress:

- Measures of student progress, based on the more rigorous standards for STAAR assessments, are being developed and implemented. Progress measures were implemented in fall 2013, and the measures are being phased in over several years as additional data for ~~the new program~~STAAR become available~~, with initial implementation scheduled no later than Fall 2013.~~ (See additional information and timeline under Principle 2, section 2.A.) [EDITOR's NOTE: Update the highlighted information.]
- Progress measures are designed to provide an early-warning indicator for students who are not on track to meet the passing standard, or who may not be successful in the next grade or course, ~~may not be~~ ready for advanced courses in mathematics and English in high school, or ~~may not be~~ postsecondary ~~-~~ ready in mathematics and English.

Process for Setting STAAR Performance Standards

TEA has engaged and will continue to involve a wide range of stakeholders in the development and implementation of the STAAR program (see Educator Review of STAAR Assessments, *Attachment ~~9~~6a)*. Following the development of the new STAAR test design, standard-setting advisory panels composed of diverse groups of stakeholders (i.e., business leaders, superintendents~~,~~ and regional service center representatives) made recommendations regarding where the performance standards should be set within each subject area. These panels provided TEA, the commissioner of education, and the commissioner of higher education with recommendations ~~(for English III and Algebra II)~~ for establishing cut scores and for matching the cut scores with the policy definitions that relate to performance on each assessment. The performance standards were developed to comply with legislative requirements for setting several performance standards for each STAAR EOC assessment. In addition, the validity of the STAAR assessments is integral to meeting the long-range educational goals of the state as well as for the overall defensibility of the assessment program. To provide evidence of the validity of the STAAR assessments, empirical studies were conducted in various stages of the standard-setting process.

TEA has conducted extensive research to support the standard-setting process. Studies focused on creating links between STAAR assessments and other measures of students' knowledge and skills. Some studies linked students' scores on STAAR assessments to corresponding course grades. Another set of studies linked STAAR assessments to established national and international assessments, such as SAT, ACT, NAEP~~,~~ and PISA. Additional studies linked STAAR assessments to other assessments (THEA and ACCUPLACER) used by Texas colleges and

universities to place students in credit-bearing courses. Finally, research was conducted to link STAAR scores to corresponding grades in entry-level, credit-bearing college courses. To support reliable and meaningful score interpretations, links between two assessments were based on the same students taking STAAR and one of the comparison assessments listed above. The thoroughness of the studies and research, as well as the checks and balances incorporated into the process, ~~will provide~~help ensure a reliable and objective measure of college and career readiness.

TEA and THECB have agreed on the performance standards for college-and career-readiness on the Algebra II and English III EOC assessments. Although these assessments are no longer required for graduation purposes and are currently not being administered, they will become optional assessments beginning in spring 2016. Moving forward, TEA and THECB will continue to collaborate to improve the assessment of the college and career readiness of graduating high school students, periodically reviewing the performance standards and ~~will~~ making adjustments if data indicate this is appropriate. ~~The thoroughness of the studies and research, as well as the checks and balances incorporated into the process, will provide a reliable and objective measure of college and career readiness. TEA and THECB will continue to collaborate to improve the assessment of the college and career readiness of graduating high school students~~.

Addressing the State's Diverse Student Populations

In response to changes in federal and state legislation, the Texas assessment program has broadened in recent years to better assess the state's diverse student populations. Since the inception of TAKS in 2003, the assessment program has evolved to include linguistically accommodated testing for eligible English ~~language~~ Language ~~learners~~Learners, English language proficiency measures through the K–12 Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS)~~,~~ and two separate assessments for ~~some~~ students receiving special education services.

The Texas student assessment program includes as many students as possible in the STAAR, while also providing an option~~s~~ for an alternate assessment~~s~~ for eligible students receiving special education services whose academic achievement and progress cannot be measured appropriately with the general assessments. The alternate assessment~~s~~ for eligible students with severe cognitive disabilities who receive special education services ~~include STAAR Modified and~~is known as STAAR Alternate 2 and reflects the general STAAR program. This assessment is a standardized, item-based assessment that is administered individually to eligible students. STAAR Alternate 2 measures individual student performance on test items that are linked to the grade-level TEKS. STAAR Alternate 2 is available in the same grades and subjects as the general STAAR. In accordance with changes in federal regulations, TEA discontinued ~~the~~a previous assessment based on modified academic achievement standards, known as STAAR Modified, in 2014. Students formerly assessed using that program are to be assessed with the general STAAR beginning in 2015.

Additionally, TEA has ~~also~~ developed Spanish versions of STAAR in grades 3–5 in accordance with state statute. ~~In addition, TEA has also developed~~ as well as online versions of STAAR with built-in, standardized accommodations designed to specifically address the needs of eligible ELLs and students with disabilities ~~linguistic accommodations for eligible ELLs~~ in grades 3–8 and high school. TELPAS will continue to measure the progress ELLs make in learning English language.

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TEA continues to provide guidance to LEAs regarding appropriate testing accommodations that are allowable within the STAAR program to assist in providing access to the assessments for students with diverse needs. These accommodation policies are reviewed and updated annually based on industry best practice and input from the public.

~~**STAAR Modified and STAAR Alternate** **2.** STAAR Modified assessments have been developed for all content areas for grades 3–8 that are part of the general STAAR program and for nine of the STAAR EOC assessments (English I, II, and III, Algebra I, geometry, biology, world geography, world history, and U.S. history). Modified assessments are not being developed for Algebra II, chemistry, or physics as these courses are not required in order for students to graduate on the Minimum High School Program (MHSP), and all students taking STAAR Modified assessments are automatically on the MHSP because they are receiving modified instruction. The MHSP is general high school diploma that students may opt into by meeting one of three criteria and upon agreement in writing by the student, the student's parent/guardian, and a school administrator. Primary differences in course requirements between the Recommended High School Program (RHSP), the default program and the MHSP include the following: the MSHP does not require credits in foreign language, requires one fewer mathematics credit, two fewer science credits, one fewer social studies credit, and requires at least one academic elective that is not required in the RHSP (see *Attachment 6b* for current graduation credit requirements).~~

~~The STAAR Modified assessments cover the same content as the general STAAR assessments but have been modified in format and test design. The modified assessments are designed for eligible students receiving special education services who can make academic progress even though they may not reach grade-level achievement standards in the same time frame as their non-disabled peers. Performance standards were set so that they require a higher level of student performance than was required on TAKS Modified assessments. Each STAAR Modified assessment consists primarily of multiple-choice questions addressing the content of the assessed curriculum for the grade-level subject. Item modification guidelines specify how to modify test questions from the general assessment in a way that preserves the integrity of the knowledge or skill being assessed.~~

~~By the 2014–2015 school year, Texas will require students currently participating in STAAR Modified to take the general assessments and will discontinue the modified assessment program. Texas has long been a leader in the development and administration of accessible tests for students served by special education. Elements of universal design have been incorporated into the item development process for all state assessments to help ensure accessibility for diverse student populations. In addition, Texas has continued to expand its list of allowable accommodations on statewide assessments to both reflect instructional practices and to provide more meaningful assessments of all students. As the state transitions students from alternate assessments based on modified achievement standards to the general assessments by 2014–2015, Texas will make use of the practices it has followed for a number of years to ensure the reliability and validity of the results of the statewide assessment program.~~

~~Committees of Texas educators will play a significant role in planning for the transition from STAAR Modified to STAAR. Advisory committees will be convened beginning in fall 2013 to develop guidelines for ensuring accessibility of the assessments and to outline a plan for supporting~~

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students, parents, and educators during the transition period. In addition, assessment and special education staff at the TEA will collaborate and participate in meetings with professional organizations in the field to obtain guidance and recommendations for making the transition as seamless as possible.

One major way to help ensure student success on the more rigorous standards of the general assessment is to ensure they have access to grade level content. Because one of the eligibility criteria for participating in STAAR Modified is for students to receive modified instruction in the relevant subject or course, it will be critical that students are provided the instructional support to be successful on the general assessment. This will require coordinated efforts across multiple divisions at the TEA to ensure that professional development is made available for educators, and that parents and stakeholders are informed about the changes to assessment policies. At a minimum a question and answer document will be provided to school districts and posted on the TEA's website that will contain information about the elimination of the modified assessments and the transition to the general assessment.

Enhanced accommodation procedures during testing will be put into place for qualifying students. These accommodations may be integrated into an online interface or may be delivered by test administrators in a paper based test. In addition, the accommodations manual that has been developed for the STAAR program will be revised to reflect changes in accommodations policies.

Training will be provided to district testing coordinators and special education coordinators to provide technical assistance regarding the integration of the enhanced accommodations into IEPs, as well as classroom instruction and classroom assessments so that students are adequately prepared to make use of these accommodations during statewide testing.

Changes in state statute in 2014 required TEA to redesign the state's assessment based on alternate academic standards. The newly redesigned assessment is known as STAAR Alternate Alternate 2. Similar to the previous alternate assessment, STAAR Alternate 2 is based on alternate academic achievement standards and is designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements for the program. This assessment is a standardized, item-based assessment that is administered individually to eligible students. STAAR Alternate 2 measures individual student performance on test items whichthat are linked to the grade-level TEKS. STAAR Alternate 2 is available in the same grades and subjects as the general STAAR. not a traditional paper or multiple-choice test. Instead, it requires teachers to observe students as they complete state-developed assessment tasks linked to the grade-level TEKS. Teachers then evaluate student performance based on the dimensions of the STAAR Alternate rubric and submit results through an online instrument. The STAAR Alternate assessments reflect the same increased rigor and focus of the general and modified assessments.

English Language Learners and the STAAR Program. The number of English Learners in Texas public schools has risen steadily during the past decade from about 570,000 in 2000–2001 to aboutmore than 900,000838,000 (nearlyor about 1 in 56 students) by in the 20131–20142 school year. ELLs are a diverse group of students who know English to varying degrees when they enter U.S. schools and have widely differing educational and sociocultural backgrounds. Both state and federal regulations require ELLs to be taught and tested over the same grade-level academic skills

as other students. TEA has developed Spanish versions of STAAR in grades 3–5 in accordance with state statute. In addition, TEA has developed online versions of STAAR with built-in, standardized linguistic accommodations for eligible ELLs in grades 3–8 and high school. TELPAS will continue to measure the progress ELLs make in learning English language.

Plan for Measurements of Student Progress

In 2006, Texas expanded its reporting of student performance to include a measure of student progress when legislation from HB 1 (79th Texas Legislature, Third Called Session, 2006) required the commissioner of education to determine a method for measuring annual improvement in student achievement. Additionally, HB 3 (81st Texas Legislature, 2009) required that performance standards be tied to a measure of college readiness.

With the implementation of the STAAR program, Texas has developed the STAAR progress measureis considering growth measures to determine if students (1) are on-track to meet performance standards in a subsequent year, (2) are prepared for advanced courses, and (3) are projected to meet college-and career-readiness performance standards.

The following table outlines the general steps and timeline for implementing and reporting measures of student progress for the STAAR program. A number of different types of growth measures will be considered to meet state and federal requirements for STAAR reporting and for using a growth measure for state and federal accountability. Also under consideration is a measure of expected academic performance for ELLs that sets challenging but achievable goals to meet grade-level academic content standards for ELL students in accordance with a timeline based on their years in U.S. schools.

Steps in the Process for Implementing and Reporting Measures of Student Progress for STAAR Assessments	Timeline
Identify the most appropriate student progress measures for the STAAR program	November 2010 – May 2011
Empirically evaluate the identified measures	June 2011 – October 2011
Obtain advisory group and expert advice	November 2011 – August 2012
Reevaluate plans for measures of student progress after spring 2012 and spring 2013 STAAR administrations (review of proposed measures and empirical data; additional advisory group and expert advice also may be gathered)	Summer 2012 and Summer 2013
Obtain approval of the new measures of student progress	Summer 2013
Implement and report new measures of student progress for the STAAR program	No later than Fall 2013

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In addition, TEA has developed a measure of expected academic performance for ELLs known as the Texas ELL Progress Measure. This measure sets challenging but achievable goals for ELLs to meet grade-level academic content standards in accordance with a timeline based on their years in U.S. school also taking into accountand their level of English proficiency in English upon arrival in the U.S. The Texas ELL Progress Measure was applied to STAAR results beginning in 2014.

Provisions for Peer Review bythrough the U.S. Department of Education

TEA submitted STAAR Modified for peer review by USDE in May 2012. The state had developed

~~a plan to submit STAAR 3-8, STAAR 3-8 Alternate, STAAR EOC, and STAAR EOC Alternate for peer review in three phases, according to the following schedule:~~

~~*Phase I: January 2013*~~

- ~~Content Standards (1): Critical elements 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4~~
- ~~Statewide Assessment System (3): Critical elements 3.1, 3.4, 3.7~~

~~*Phase II: May 2013*~~

- ~~Achievement Standards (2): Critical elements 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6~~
- ~~Statewide Assessment System (3): Critical elements 3.5, 3.6~~
- ~~Technical Quality (4): Critical elements 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6~~
- ~~Inclusion (6): Critical elements 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4~~
- ~~Reports (7): Critical elements 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4~~

~~*Phase III: December 2013*~~

- ~~Achievement Standards (2): Critical elements 2.5~~
- ~~Alignment (5): Critical elements 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6~~

TEA has been successful at obtaining USDE peer review approval for its state assessment system in the past, and is prepared to submit documentation on STAAR that demonstrates the state assessment program meets all aspects of a high quality assessment system. ~~Peer review notes from the initial submission for STAAR Modified that provide evidence that the assessment program meets these criteria are included in *Attachment 96c*.~~ On December 21, 2012, USDE suspended the peer review process pending further notice. TEA is continuing to work on all of the required elements detailed above as a part of the STAAR Technical Digest. When USDE sets a new timeline for peer review submissions, TEA will resume submissions and adjust the schedule accordingly. ~~Also attached is the outline for the 2011–2012 Technical Digest (*Attachment 96d*), which will form the basis for the STAAR peer review submission.~~

The United States Department of Education (USDE) also noted in August 28 correspondence to TEA that the USDE had denied TEA's request to allow students taking Algebra I in middle school to take the STAAR Algebra I EOC assessment in lieu of a STAAR middle school mathematics test.

TEA does not have the statutory authority to address the lack of a second high school mathematics assessment for those students who take Algebra I in middle school. Only one mathematics assessment, the STAAR Algebra I assessment, has been authorized and funded by the Texas Legislature. –House Bill 5, passed by the 83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2013, eliminated high school assessments in geometry and Algebra II, thereby allowing a portion of Texas students to complete their mathematics testing requirements for high school graduation prior to entering high school.

Double testing middle school students enrolled in Algebra I on the Algebra I assessment and a grade level mathematics assessment is not a common sense option for Texas to address the federal

requirement for a higher-level mathematics assessment in high school for these students. Double testing middle school students is instructionally inappropriate and an invalid evaluation of mathematics for Texas middle schools and high schools. Texas cannot support testing students on content that does not reflect the instruction the student received that school year and cannot justify arbitrarily assigning a set of prior year test scores to a campus to meet federal accountability requirements, given that the test scores are not tied to current-year instruction on that campus.

Therefore, rather than endorsing the inappropriate double testing of middle school students, TEA is moving forward to address the USDE denial of the double testing waiver through the following actions~~.~~: Commissioner of Education Michael Williams has sent a letter to legislative leadership ~~(see attached)~~ informing them of the requirement by USDE to ensure middle-school students who take Algebra I be provided the opportunity to take a higher-level mathematics assessment in high school. The 84th Texas Legislature meets in Regular Session beginning January 13, 2015, and therefore has the ability to enact legislation authorizing an additional higher-level mathematics assessment in high school to address USDE requirements.

In addition, TEA is exploring other options to address this requirement if there are no changes to current statute following the legislative session. One of the options under consideration is to track from each graduating cohort the students who take Algebra I in middle school across their high school career prior to graduation, beginning with ninth grade students in the 2014-15 school year. If these students take the optional STAAR Algebra II test that is currently scheduled to be available beginning in the 2015-16 school year, or if these students take one of the approved substitute assessments for the STAAR Algebra I assessment (PSAT Mathematics, SAT Mathematics, or ACT Mathematics) available in 2014-15, TEA would use those results to meet federal participation and performance requirements for a mathematics assessment at the high school level. School districts would be held accountable for the performance of middle school students who t~~ook~~ake Algebra I prior to high school on either the STAAR Algebra II EOC assessment or one of the approved substitute assessments for STAAR Algebra I prior to these students graduating from high school.

Principle 2:
State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

2.A Development and Implementation of a State-Based System of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, And Support

This section provides a detailed description of the state's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, its alignment with the principles of the federal system, and provisions for integrating the two systems. Supporting documentation may be found in *Attachment 10*.

Background on the State's Accountability System

For some time, Texas schools and LEAs have been held accountable under two systems: the state accountability system, mandated by the Texas Legislature, and the federal system, created by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. Texas led the nation in the introduction of a statewide accountability system as a foundation for public education reform when, in 1993, the Texas Legislature enacted statutes mandating the creation of the Texas public school accountability system to rate LEAs and evaluate schools. A viable and effective accountability system could be developed in Texas because the state already had the necessary supporting infrastructure in place comprised of a student-level data collection system; a state-mandated curriculum; and a statewide assessment tied to the curriculum, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS).

A new accountability system was designed in 2004 following introduction of a new state assessment program replacing the TAAS, the TAKS. This change coincided with the 2002 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act via NCLB, which extended federal accountability requirements that previously applied only to Title I schools and LEAs to all schools and LEAs. Designing an accountability system that met the demands of implementing the new TAKS system; reporting TAKS results and a longitudinal completion rate; meeting other state requirements; and adhering to the new federal regulations presented the state with new challenges. One challenge was keeping the performance improvement of low-performing students a priority, while improving the performance of top-performing students who must compete with other top-performing students across the nation. Additionally, new state accountability requirements expanded the system in one direction with more subjects and grades, while federal accountability requirements expanded the system in another direction with more student groups.

The accountability system initiated with the 1993 legislative session remained in place through the 2001-02 school year. The ratings issued in 2002 were the last under that system. The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) were first administered beginning in the 2002-03 school year. This assessment included more subjects and grades and was more difficult than the previous statewide assessment. A rating system based on the TAKS was developed during 2003, with ratings established under the redesigned system first issued in fall 2004. The last year for accountability ratings based on the TAKS was 2011.

In 2009, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 3, mandating the creation of entirely new assessment and accountability systems focused on the achievement of postsecondary readiness for all Texas public school students. TEA worked closely with advisory committees to develop an integrated accountability system based on the adopted goals and guiding principles. The 2012-13

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school year marked the first year of ratings and distinction designations based on STAAR results. In 2013, the Texas Legislature passed HB 5, which requiredss evaluation of additional indicators for postsecondary readiness and distinction designations.

AIn implementing HB 5, TEA formed accountability advisory committees consisting of eEducators, school board members, business and community representatives, professional organizations, and legislative representatives from across the state who provided assistance and advice to TEA during the development and implementation of the current accountability system. Following theUpon implementation of the accountability system, the advisory committees are convened annually to provide continual guidance to TEA on critical policy and technical issues that need to be addressed in the accountability system. There are two types of advisory committees, as described below.

The **Accountability Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC)** includes representatives from school districts and regional education service centers (ESCs). Members make makde recommendations to address major policy and technical issues related to the for 2014 accountability ratings, distinction designations, and system safeguards."

The **Accountability Policy Advisory Committee (APAC)** includes representatives from legislative offices, school districts, and the business community. Members participated in identifying issues critical to the accountability system and reviewed the ATAC recommendations. The APAC either endorsesd the ATAC's proposals or recommended alternatives, which aswere are forwarded to the commissioner for final decision.

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Under the provisions of Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 39, and the ESEA Title I School Improvement Program (SIP), the state is required to provide interventions to improve low-performing schools. TEC, Chapter 39, establishes a related system of interventions and sanctions for LEAs and schools, including charter schools. Interventions may include the appointment of campus intervention teams, monitors, conservators, management teams, and boards of managers, and also may include required hearings, public notifications, and the development of improvement or corrective action plans. School-level interventions required in state statute include the appointment of an intervention team to any school that fails to meet established performance standards, with escalated interventions imposed as a result of continuing low performance. Those graduated interventions include school reconstitution, the possible appointment of a monitor or conservator to provide LEA-level oversight, and a potential order of campus repurposing, alternative management, or closure (see Campus Intervention Matrix, *Attachment 107a*). The statute also establishes certain sanctions for LEA-level underperformance, including, but not limited to, LEA closure.

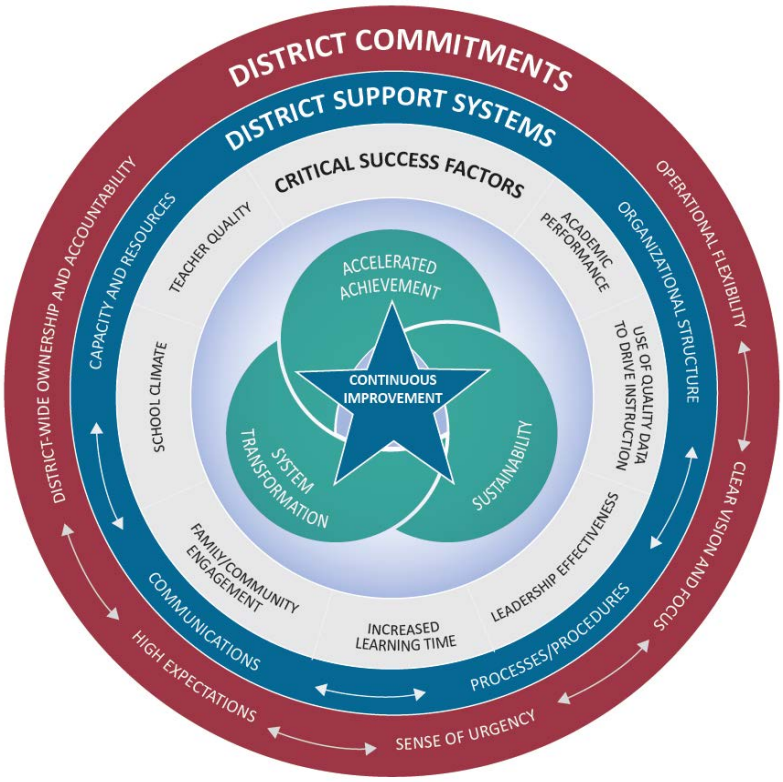
Similarly, the framework of support implemented by Texas under the federal accountability system includes the appointment of external technical assistance providers to support low-performing schools, with escalated interventions imposed as a result of continuing low performance. Those interventions may include student-level supports, corrective actions, school restructuring, and alternative governance.

The State's Framework for Continuous District and School Improvement

As part of the state's evolving efforts to align the state and federal accountability systems, TEA

established the Texas Center for District and School Support (TCDSS), a state-level entity that functions to coordinate, in conjunction with TEA, system-level leadership for school improvement efforts under both the federal and state systems. In collaboration with the TCDSS, TEA developed a research-based framework for continuous district and school improvement. The framework outlines a cohesive system of intervention and the implementation of policies and practices that establish the environment and support needed to effectively impact low-performing schools. Designed to aid in the development of both district and campus improvement planning, the framework provides a common language and process for addressing the school improvement challenge. It is designed to show the aligned leadership and systems of support at the state, regional, district, and campus levels that will build the capacity necessary to turn around low-performing schools in Texas. Service providers, working collaboratively with district and school leadership, help facilitate district and campus supports that are aligned to the framework. The graphic on the following page illustrates the framework's key components, processes and outcomes; more detailed information about each component is provided in the narrative and tables following the illustration.

Texas Framework for Continuous District and School Improvement



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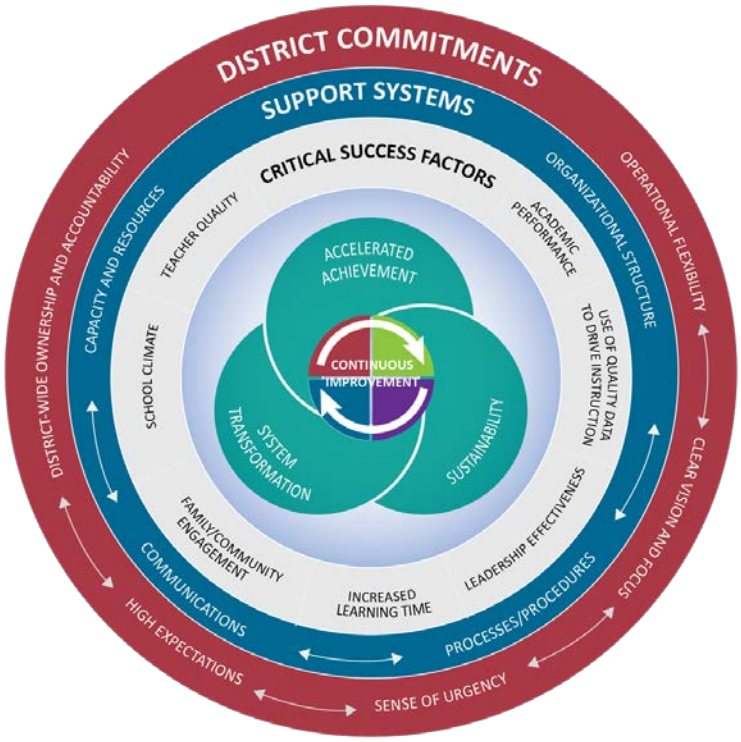

Outcomes. The overarching goal of the framework is a state of continuous improvement for campuses, districts and the state. The end goal of the system of support, reflected in the center of the illustration, is accelerated achievement, sustainability, system transformation~~,~~ and continuous improvement. The table below describes these four outcomes in more detail.

Outcome	Description
Accelerated Achievement	~~Accelerated achievement is r~~Rapidly attained improvement resulting from an intense and urgent focus on identified areas of need. As barriers to achievement are uncovered and addressed, significant gains are accomplished and performance gaps are reduced.
Sustainability	~~Sustainability is t~~The institutionalization of effective systems and processes that maintain progress over time, regardless of changing conditions. Districts ensure capacity for continuity, safeguard successful practices, and maintain commitment to continuous improvement.
System Transformation	~~System Transformation is t~~The comprehensive change of expectations and behaviors, resulting in sustained innovation and success. Transformation is reflected in all

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Outcome	Description
	aspects of the organization through fully functioning and effective processes.
Continuous Improvement	~~Continuous Improvement is t~~The result of the dynamic interaction of organizational commitments and support systems ensuring the effective implementation of all Critical Success Factors. When these elements are integrated and fully operational, the outcomes of accelerated achievement, sustainability~~,~~ and system transformation are produced.

Critical Success Factors. The framework's ~~critical~~ Critical ~~success~~ Success ~~factors~~ Factors capture seven areas to ~~be addressed~~be addressed in improvement efforts. Whether campus interventions are being provided through the district, local ~~Education Service Center~~ESC~~,~~ or ~~the Texas Center for District and School Support~~TCDSS, sharing a common language around resources is essential. The seven Critical ~~critical~~ Success ~~success~~ Factors ~~factors~~ (CSFs) provide a common language to anchor the work of school improvement across Texas and create opportunity to match resources to needs. These factors reference the USDE turnaround principles and will be part of the statewide intervention system. Schools connecting individual needs to the CSFs can easily choose from customized resources provided across the state. The table below describes each CSF in more detail.

Critical Success Factor	Description
Academic Performance	The foundational CSF. By focusing on data driven instruction that targets the use of ongoing monitoring of instruction, schools can increase performance for all students. Curricular alignment, both horizontally and vertically, is also an essential component of this CSF.
Use of Quality Data to Drive Instruction	Emphasizes data disaggregation training and ongoing communication of data to improve student learning outcomes. A focus of this CSF is utilizing data to drive decisions.
Leadership Effectiveness	Targets the need for leadership on the campus to exercise operational flexibility and the effective use of data and resources. Providing job-embedded professional development to build capacity of campus leaders is a vital part of this CSF.
Increased Learning Time	Necessitates flexible scheduling that allows time for additional instructional minutes, enrichment activities and staff collaborative planning time. This CSF also ~~confirms as a requisite,~~requires an instructionally-focused calendar.
Family/Community Engagement	Calls for increased opportunities for input from parents and the community, as well as the necessity for effective communication and access to community services.
School Climate	Recognizes increased attendance and reduced discipline referrals as indicators of a positive and welcoming environment. Increased attendance in extracurricular activities is another sign that students feel supported by an affirming school climate.
Teacher Quality	Focuses on the need to recruit and retain effective teachers

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Critical Success Factor	Description
	while also supporting current staff with job-embedded professional development. A locally developed appraisal and evaluation system informs personnel decisions in order to ensure quality teaching and learning.

~~District~~ Support Systems. ~~District support~~Support systems are vital, as they have a significant impact on campus success. ~~The most effective road to improvement is through the district. District support~~Support systems that should be in place at the district and campus level and characteristics related to the effectiveness of these systems are presented in the following table.

~~District~~ Support System	Description
Organizational Structure	The ~~district~~ organizational structure has clearly delineated roles and responsibilities for personnel that focus on teaching and learning, ~~with~~ accountability and impact on student achievement. D~~The d~~istrict and campus leaders eliminate~~s~~ barriers to improvement, redefine~~s~~ staff roles and responsibilities as necessary, and empower~~s~~ staff to be responsive in support of improvement~~school leadership~~.
Processes/Procedures	Priority is placed upon teaching and learning when establishing and implementing systemic operational protocols that guarantee accountability, availability of resources~~,~~ and their effective use.
Communications	~~A~~ Communications function via a clearly defined process that ensures a consistent message is being sent, received, and acted upon using multiple, effective delivery systems. Proactive efforts are engaged by district level staff to establish effective internal communication systems and transparent external communication practices. Communication is focused on a shared and clear vision for continuous improvement, which streamlines collaborative efforts toward student success.
Capacity and Resources	The ~~district~~ organization strategically utilizes internal and external human capital and necessary resources to meet all needs for a successful learning environment. Expertise is purposefully cultivated and sustained through targeted recruitment, retention and succession planning.

District Commitments. An additional focus on the role of districts in continuous improvement is on district commitments that are essential to sustainable transformation. Critical district commitments are described in more detail in the table below.

District Commitment	Description
Operational Flexibility	The district permits the agility to shift resources, processes~~,~~ and practices in response to critical identified needs ~~identified~~. The district's ability to address the needs of all students is contingent upon allowing customized approaches, expedition of resources~~,~~ and departures from standard practice when the need is substantiated.
Clear Vision and Focus	The district strongly articulates a focus on student achievement as its primary work. Clear plans ~~across the district~~ are developed districtwide to address increasing performance for all students on all campuses. This vision is embraced and embedded in daily practice by all staff members.
Sense of Urgency	District staff, compelled by an intolerance of failure and dissatisfaction with deficits of the current state, set a priority and press for rapid action to

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	change ineffective practices and processes that impede student success.
High Expectations	Explicit, rigorous standards are in place for student learning with adult and student confidence that success is attainable. These expectations are pervasively evident and understood by all with a commitment to providing a timely response and/or adjustment when goals are not met.
District-Wide Ownership and Accountability	Throughout the district, leadership recognizes and accepts responsibility for all current levels of performance and transparently interacts with stakeholders to plan and implement improvement initiatives. The district is engaged in continuous review of systemic, district-wide practices to ensure effective impact on critical need areas, such as low-performing campuses.

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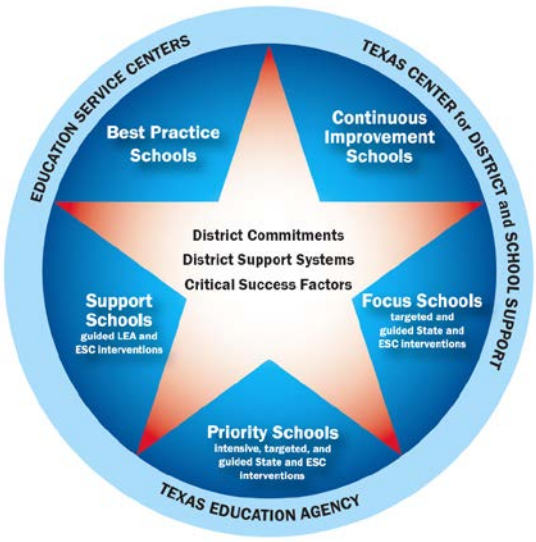
In summary, the Texas Framework for Continuous District and School Improvement supports district ownership and investment so that meaningful change can take place at the school level. The framework reflects a retooling of how the state supports low-performing schools, shifting more focus to developing central office teams to lead the work, and providing a structure to organize, deliver~~,~~ and monitor the supports provided. Implementation of the framework is supported through the components of the Texas School Support System, described ~~below~~in subsequent sections of this document.

~~**The Texas School Support System.**~~



~~With the increase in identified low-performing districts and schools, there is a need to mobilize the statewide support that is available to provide assistance to districts as they work with their campuses on improvement. TEA, the TCDSS, and the network of regional Education Service Centers are committed to working with districts to provide support to campuses. The Texas School Support System, depicted graphically to the right, categorizes schools according to identified needs across levels of increased assistance and intervention. *Best practice schools* have effective approaches to school success that can serve as resources to others across the state. *Continuous improvement schools* have systems and commitments that focus on their improvement efforts and they are continuously progressing toward better performance. *Support schools* have identified areas of needed improvement and are working with their district and regional education service center to positively impact the identified areas. *Focus schools* have also identified areas of needed improvement and are working with their district, regional education service center, and have some statewide interventions targeting areas of need. *Priority schools* have multiple identified areas of needed improvement. They receive intensive, targeted, and~~

~~guided district, education service center, and state interventions.~~

~~The structure of the Texas School Support System aligns state and federal accountability systems into a single system of support, and recognizes that sustainable transformation is the result of district commitments, district systems, and campus institutionalization of critical success factors. Schools are required to engage in the Texas Accountability Intervention System due to identified low performance in the state and/or federal accountability systems.~~

A System Characterized by Increasing Rigor

~~.~~ Primary features of the state-defined rating system since 1993 have been increasing rigor by raising the standards progressively over time; including new assessments as they become available; and incorporating more students in the LEA and school evaluations. As noted earlier, ~~In 2009, the Texas legislature enacted House Bill 3 (~~House Bill 3~~)~~ made~~, making~~ significant changes to parts of the Texas Education Code ~~(TEC)~~ relating to public school accountability that continue the trend toward greater rigor. These changes shifted the focus of the state accountability system from meeting satisfactory standards on the state assessments to meeting both satisfactory and college-ready standards as measured by the~~new~~ STAAR assessments that are linked to postsecondary readiness.

~~The focus of~~ HB 3 ~~is~~ focuses on the state-defined academic accountability ratings and distinction designations. However, state-defined accountability is part of the state's proposed integrated accountability system for Texas public schools and LEAs, the Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS). Changes to the state assessment program and accountability ratings are~~will be~~ reflected throughout the larger system of public school accountability. Three major components of the integrated accountability system ~~will~~ use STAAR assessment results to evaluate campuses and/or LEAs. State accountability ratings and federal accountability status ~~will~~ feed into multiple other processes that identify campuses and/or LEAs for interventions, sanctions~~,~~ or rewards. Consequently, decisions made during the state accountability development process ~~will~~ extend beyond the state accountability ratings. The following goals ~~have~~ guided development of the ~~new, state-defined~~ current accountability system:

1. ~~Focus~~ Change the focus ~~on~~ of LEA/school performance ~~changes~~ from minimum standards to standards based on postsecondary readiness.
2. Increase rigor of college readiness standards incrementally to ensure that Texas performs among the top ten states in postsecondary readiness by 2020.
3. Assign ~~recognized and exemplary distinction~~ ratings based on higher levels of student performance on college readiness standards rather than higher percentages of students performing at the satisfactory level.
4. Award schools distinctions for achieving the top quartile in terms of overall individual student progress and closing performance gaps among student groups.
5. Assign schools distinctions on broader indicators of excellence beyond results on state assessments.
6. Aggregate reports providing detailed academic and financial information that is relevant, meaningful~~,~~ and easily accessible to the public.
7. Align state and federal accountability requirements to the greatest extent possible.

The Need for a Single Integrated System

Despite the best efforts of all parties, the implementation of two systems often results in a confusing mix of requirements that detract attention from the overall goal – improved performance for all students. To support this goal, and to create optimal learning environments and sustainable increases in student achievement, a coordinated, effective statewide system of support for struggling schools and LEAs is essential. With this flexibility request, TEA is proposing to implement a single accountability system with tiered interventions beginning in school year 2013–2014. With USDE approval, a waiver will allow Texas to implement one integrated system built on the following three components that are designed to meet state and federal accountability requirements for all campuses and LEAs.

- The Performance Index Framework is designed to meet state statutory requirements using four performance indexes that determine the state accountability rating labels that are assigned to each LEA and campus.
- The System Safeguards are designed to meet federal requirements by requiring all campuses and districts to meet ambitious, but achievable, annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for each student group evaluated.
- The Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS) identifies campuses and LEAs for interventions, sanctions, and rewards based on the accountability rating labels assigned based on state requirements and the outcomes of the system safeguards.

Texas Accountability System for All Campuses and LEAs		
Performance Index Framework and Accountability Rating Labels (meets state legislative requirements)	**System Safeguard Targets*** (meets federal requirements)	**Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS)**
Met Standard or Met Alternative Standard	Met All System Safeguard Targets	No Interventions required
Met Standard or Met Alternative Standard	Missed One or More System Safeguard Targets	Interventions required
Improvement Required		

*** System Safeguard Targets are based on Performance, Participation, Federal Graduation Rates, and Excessive Use of Alternate Assessments (use of alternate assessments applies to districts only)**

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A single system will foster the coordination of technical assistance and interventions to facilitate systemic change. One robust intervention system will allow for a focus on LEA involvement and sustainability for struggling schools through graduated levels of intervention. Furthermore, tiered interventions based on individual school needs that consider multiple variables will target and streamline interventions. Full implementation of the TAIS will allow LEAs to focus on creating accelerated, sustainable and systemic transformation in Texas schools to significantly increase student achievement. This conceptual approach moves beyond the classification of schools and requires LEAs to clearly articulate commitments and provide for necessary support to implement improvement strategies for low-performing schools. This provides LEAs with the opportunity to target the critical success factors of the Texas Framework for Continuous District and School Improvement described earlier.

Each district or school required to engage in the TAIS must collect and analyze data; conduct a needs assessment to determine factors contributing to low performance; develop an improvement plan addressing all areas not meeting the required performance standard; and monitor the implementation of the improvement plan. Schools must also establish a campus intervention team consisting of:

1. A Professional Service Provider (PSP), a TEA approved member responsible for assuring implementation of all intervention requirements and reporting progress to the agency;
2. A District Coordinator of School Improvement (DCSI), an individual assigned by the district and approved by TEA, and who is a district level employee in a leadership position in school improvement, curriculum and instruction, or another position with responsibility for student performance; the DCSI is responsible for ensuring district support for the academic achievement of each campus; and
3. The Campus Leadership Team (CLT), made up of key school leaders and membership determined by the principal and/or the district; the CLT is responsible for developing, implementing, and monitoring the improvement plan; monitoring student performance; and determining student interventions and support services.

Relying on decades of school improvement research to identify critical success factors that elevate expectations and lead schools on a path of continuous improvement, the TAIS is designed to specify the foundational systems, actions, and processes to transform Texas' schools. TAIS distinguishes levels of assistance for schools by incorporating the state and federal accountability labels into an aligned system of support (see *Attachment 10*7b for an overview of the TAIS). Success will require purposeful actions and thoughtful planning by analyzing data, determining needs, developing focused plans for improvement, and monitoring the impact of those plans. The Texas School Support System will assist schools with these actions, placing them on a path toward attaining the outcomes central to the Framework for Continuous District and School Improvement. The following sections provide detailed descriptions of the state's efforts in aligning state and federal requirements and the proposed system for 2013 and beyond.

Texas Accountability System Safeguards

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The Texas Accountability System Safeguards are designed to meet federal accountability requirements by requiring all campuses and districts to meet ambitious, but achievable, annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for each student group evaluated.

The table provided in Section 2.B, below, shows the disaggregated safeguard measures and federal targets or ~~annual measurable objectives (~~AMOs~~)~~. ~~—~~Performance rates, participation rates, graduation rates~~,~~ and limits on use of STAAR Alternate 2 ~~and STAAR Modified~~ are calculated to meet federal requirements, and federal targets have been set for these indicators.

Results for federal accountability purposes will be reported for any cell that meets accountability minimum size criteria (i.e., All Students—no minimum size criteria; if denominator is less than 10, data are aggregated across two or three years; Student Groups—denominator greater than or equal to 25, if the student group comprises at least 10 percent of all students up to 200 students). Student groups of 200 or more students are evaluated even if that group represents less than 10% of all students.

For the All Students group, the minimum size ~~criteria~~ criterion of 25 or more tests ~~are~~ is not applied in order to ensure that campuses and districts with very small number of students tested are still evaluated for federal accountability purposes.~~-~~ Specifically, small numbers analyses are conducted when there are fewer than ~~ten~~ 10 test results in the current year. ~~-~~For the system safeguards evaluated for 2013 federal accountability, a two-year uniform average ~~is~~ was computed based on the current year (2013) and prior year (2012) results. ~~-~~If there ~~are~~ were ten or more test results available when both years ~~are~~ were combined, then the two-year uniform average ~~is~~ was used to evaluate the All Students group in 2013.~~-~~ ~~In future years, a~~A three-year uniform average ~~will~~ is being used in subsequent years, since STAAR test results ~~will be~~are available across three years ~~beginning in~~as of 2014.~~-~~ ~~[~~(Note that a similar approach was used by Texas in the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) performance measure calculations for the All Students group for the 2002-03 through the 2011-12 school years, as described in Critical Element 5.5 of the Texas Consolidated State Application Accountability *(Attachment 10c)* Workbook that was approved by the USDE for each of those years~~.~~]).

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The Texas Accountability System Safeguards apply the same AMO targets to all districts and campuses, including charter districts and alternative education campuses. ~~-~~Alternative education campuses that primarily serve at-risk students have modified performance index targets for state accountability rating labels only, yet these campuses must meet the same performance, participation~~,~~ and federal graduation rate targets that are required for all Texas school districts and campuses.

Federal Performance Rate Targets

Uniform federal performance rate targets are applied to seven student groups in the reading/English language arts and mathematics subject areas. ~~-~~The seven student groups evaluated are all students, African American, Hispanic, White, economically disadvantaged, students receiving special education services~~,~~ and English language learners.

Federal Participation Rate Targets

Participation rates targets of 95% that are applied to the STAAR assessments are unchanged from the targets applied to the TAKS assessments in the federal accountability evaluations in prior years. Participation rate targets are applied to the seven student groups evaluated for performance in the reading/English language arts and mathematics subject areas.

Federal Graduation Rate Goals and Targets

Texas is required by state statute to use the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) dropout definition and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) graduation rate calculation. The four-year graduation rates follow a cohort of first-time ninth graders through their expected graduation three years later. The five-year rates follow the same cohort of students for one additional year. Specific goals and targets are as follows:

Goal: The long term statewide goal for the four-year graduation rate is 90.0 percent. High schools and school districts that do not meet the 90.0 percent graduation rate goal must meet either an annual target or a growth target for the four-year graduation rate, or an annual target for the five-year graduation rate.

Four-Year Graduation Rate Annual Target: For 2016~~3~~ accountability determinations, 88.0~~78.0~~ percent of students graduate with a regular high school diploma in four years.

Four-Year Graduation Rate Growth Target: The growth target is a 10.0 percent decrease in difference between prior year graduation rate and the 90.0 percent goal.

Five-Year Graduation Rate Target: For 2016~~3~~ accountability determinations, ~~83.0~~90.0 percent of students graduate with a regular high school diploma in five years.

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All districts and campuses that fail to meet graduation rate targets are subject to interventions. The interventions require districts and campuses to develop focused plans for improvement. If graduation rates do not improve and the district or campus fails to meet federal accountability targets in the next accountability cycle, the level of assistance and intervention increases.

Assistance and Intervention

TAIS was implemented following release of the 2012 state accountability ratings and 2012 federal adequate yearly progress designations. TAIS distinguishes levels of assistance for Title I and non-Title I campuses and districts by incorporating the state and federal accountability labels into an aligned system of support. Focus Schools receive targeted and guided state and ESC interventions. Priority Schools receive intensive, targeted, and guided state and ESC interventions.

Districts and campuses are also subject to supports and interventions for failure to meet disaggregated system safeguard targets. As described earlier, the TAIS determines the level of

intervention and support the campus or district receives, and is based on performance history as well as the current year state accountability rating and performance on the safeguard measures.

2.B Establishment of Ambitious but Achievable Annual Measurable Objectives

Texas proposes the following ambitious, yet achievable, AMOs for the state, LEAs, and each campus for the 2016~~2013~~ through the 2020 school years.

Accountability System Measures and Safeguard (AMO) Targets
Proposed AMOs for 2013 - 2020 (Option B)
Based on 2012 State Proficiency Rates at Phase in 1 Level II Standards

	Year	All Students	African American	Hispanic	White	Econ. Disadv.	ELL	Special Educ.
Performance Rates								
Reading/ELA	2012 State Rates (Phase in)	79%	71%	73%	88%	71%	50%	58%
	2012-2013	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%
	2013-2014	79%	79%	79%	79%	79%	79%	79%
	2014-2015	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%
	2015-2016	87%	87%	87%	87%	87%	87%	87%
	2016-2017	91%	91%	91%	91%	91%	91%	91%
	2017-2018	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
	2018-2019	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
	2019-2020	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Mathematics	2012 State Rates (Phase in)	77%	65%	73%	86%	69%	58%	55%
	2012-2013	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%
	2013-2014	79%	79%	79%	79%	79%	79%	79%
	2014-2015	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%
	2015-2016	87%	87%	87%	87%	87%	87%	87%
	2016-2017	91%	91%	91%	91%	91%	91%	91%
	2017-2018	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
	2018-2019	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
	2019-2020	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Participation Rates								
Reading	2013 through 2020	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Mathematics	2013 through 2020	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Federal Grad. Rates								
4-year longitudinal rate	2012-2013	78.0%	78.0%	78.0%	78.0%	78.0%	78.0%	78.0%
	2013-2014	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%
	2014-2015	83.0%	83.0%	83.0%	83.0%	83.0%	83.0%	83.0%
5 year longitudinal rate	2012-2013	83.0%	83.0%	83.0%	83.0%	83.0%	83.0%	83.0%

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	2013-2014	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%	85.0%
	2014-2015	88.0%	88.0%	88.0%	88.0%	88.0%	88.0%	88.0%
Federal Limits on Proficient Results on Alternative Assessments								
Modified	2012-2013 and 2013-2014	2% for the All Students Group						
Alternate	2013 through 2020	1% for the All Students Group						

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Accountability System Measures and Safeguard (AMO) Targets
Proposed AMOs for 2016 - 2020 (Option B)
Based on 2014 State Proficiency Rates at Phase in 2 Level II Standards

	Year	All Students	African American	Hispanic	White	Econ. Disadv.	Current and Monitored ELL	Special Educ.
Performance Rates								
Reading/ELA	Baseline: 2014 State Rates (Phase-in 2 Level II)	66%	54%	58%	80%	55%	46%	31%
	2015-16	73%	73%	73%	73%	73%	73%	73%
	2016-17	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%
	2017-18	86%	86%	86%	86%	86%	86%	86%
	2018-19	93%	93%	93%	93%	93%	93%	93%
	2019-20	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Mathematics	Baseline: 2014 State Rates (Phase-in 2 Level II)	64%	49%	59%	77%	55%	53%	34%
	2015-16	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%
	2016-17	79%	79%	79%	79%	79%	79%	79%
	2017-18	86%	86%	86%	86%	86%	86%	86%
	2018-19	93%	93%	93%	93%	93%	93%	93%
	2019-20	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Participation Rates								
Reading	2016 through 2020	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Mathematics	2016 through 2020	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Federal Grad. Rates								
4-year longitudinal rate	Baseline: Class of 2013	88.0%	84.1%	85.1%	93.0%	85.2%	71.3%	77.8%
	2015-16	88.0%	88.0%	88.0%	88.0%	88.0%	88.0%	88.0%
	2016-17	88.5%	88.5%	88.5%	88.5%	88.5%	88.5%	88.5%
	2017-18	89.0%	89.0%	89.0%	89.0%	89.0%	89.0%	89.0%
	2018-19	89.5%	89.5%	89.5%	89.5%	89.5%	89.5%	89.5%
	2019-20	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%
5-year longitudinal rate	Baseline: Class of 2012	90.4%	86.5%	88.0%	94.5%	88.7%	76.5%	81.6%
	2015-16	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%
	2016-17	91.0%	91.0%	91.0%	91.0%	91.0%	91.0%	91.0%
	2017-18	92.0%	92.0%	92.0%	92.0%	92.0%	92.0%	92.0%
	2018-19	93.0%	93.0%	93.0%	93.0%	93.0%	93.0%	93.0%
	2019-20	94.0%	94.0%	94.0%	94.0%	94.0%	94.0%	94.0%
Federal Limits on Proficient Results on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards								
STAAR Alt 2	2016 through 2020	1% for the All Students Group						

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Texas selects the Option B method to set rigorous AMOs in each content area for the state, LEAs, and schools for each student group. (See ESEA Flexibility Request for Window 3, page 13 at http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/esea-flexibility/index.html).

The following comparisons to the AYP requirements for Texas schools in prior years demonstrate the rigor of the proposed AMOs for 2016 and beyond.

- As described in Section 1.C, the emphasis on postsecondary readiness in the new STAAR assessment program, in comparison with the previous TAKS assessments, directly impacts the rigor of the performance indicator AMOs evaluated in the system safeguards.
- The starting point of the AMOs of 75% for every student group is aligned with 2013-14 statewide proficiency rates on average across all student groups in reading/ELA and mathematics at the projected phase-in 2 Level II proficiency standard that will be implemented for the first time in 2015-16. The AMOs then increase annually to the goal of 100% proficiency for all student groups by the 2019-20 school year. In 2002-03, the AMO starting point in the first year of the prior AYP system was 33% for mathematics and 47% for reading/English language arts. An AMO of 75% or higher was not required in the prior AYP system until the ninth year (2010-11) for reading/English language arts (80%) and mathematics (75%).
- New curriculum standards in mathematics for grades K–8 were adopted by the State Board of Education in April 2012 for implementation in the 2014–15 school year. As a result, new student performance standards for the corresponding STAAR assessments must be established. In August 2015, new student performance standards will be established using the results of the spring 2015 assessments to determine each student's passing status. Therefore, the proposed AMOs for mathematics may need to be revised in late fall 2015 based on the new achievement standards for grades 3-8.
- The class of 2015 graduates that will be evaluated in 2015-16 with the four-year graduation rate will be the first graduating class required to pass all five of the STAAR end-of-course assessments to be eligible to graduate. Therefore, the proposed graduation rate AMOs beginning with the class of 2015 may need to be revised at a later time based on the actual graduation rates for the class of 2015.
- The minimum size criteria criterion of 25 (if the student group comprises at least 10 percent of all students up to 200 students) are is will be applied to all racial/ethnic, students with disabilities, and English language Language learners Learner (current year and two-year monitored ELLs) student groups in the system safeguard system. Student groups of 200 or more students are evaluated even if that group represents less than 10% of all students. These criteria are significantly more rigorous than the minimum size criteria in the prior AYP system of 50, in which the student group was required to comprise at least 10 percent of all students up to 200 students; groups of 200 student or more met the criteria even if that group represents less than 10% of all students.

As shown in the table above, a uniform set of AMOs for each student group requires that the ~~special education~~students with disabilities and ~~the~~ ELL student groups achieve significantly higher rates of progress in order to eliminate the achievement gap between these student groups and all other student groups by 2020.

In May 2010, the USDE approved the graduation rate goal and targets for Texas following the graduation rate peer review, as required by the October 2008 Title I regulations. ~~–~~The graduation rate targets approved for Texas are increased over time to ensure that the Texas reaches the goal of 90%. The approved growth target approved by the USDE in May 2010 for the four-year graduation rate is a 10.0 percent decrease in the difference between the prior year rate and the 90% goal. ~~-~~All districts and campuses must meet the federal graduation rate AMO targets for either the four-year or five-year adjusted cohort graduation rates as part of the underlying System Safeguards. Failure to meet one or more of the AMO graduation rate targets triggers the Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS), which requires intervention activities.

2.C Reward Schools

This section ~~presents~~ describes the method the state will use to identify its highest-performing and high-progress schools as reward schools. ~~-~~The broadening of distinction designations compared to the state's previous accountability system is also noted. ~~–~~Reward schools must also meet the campus AMO targets on each of the system safeguards evaluated for all students and all subgroups.

~~To meet statutory requirements, the basic accountability ratings must identify satisfactory and unsatisfactory schools and LEAs and describe conditions that trigger state monitoring and interventions. In addition to the basic accountability ratings, LEAs and schools are eligible for distinction designation ratings for recognized or exemplary performance.~~

Texas has a long history of recognizing high performance by students in academics beyond those required to receive an acceptable accountability rating, and this practice will continue with campus distinction designations for schools in the top 25% in annual improvement, schools in the top 25% of those demonstrating ability to close performance gaps, and schools that meet criteria for academic performance in English language arts, mathematics, science~~,~~ or social studies. Academic achievement distinction designations in reading/English language arts, ~~and~~ mathematics, science~~,~~ and social studies are ~~will be assigned~~ awarded to campuses ~~in August 2013~~ concurrent with the release of the accountability ratings. These distinctions ~~will~~ include indicators based on performance at the Advanced standard on STAAR, attendance rates, completion of advanced/dual enrollment courses~~,~~ and SAT and ACT performance and participation. In 2014, both districts and campuses are also eligible to receive additional distinction designation for postsecondary readiness.

~~Under HB 3, schools will also be awarded distinctions in four new areas: fine arts, physical education, 21st Century Workforce Development programs, and second language acquisition programs. The criteria and standards for distinctions will depend on advice and guidance from committees comprised of individuals who practice as professionals in the content area relevant to the distinction designation; educators and other individuals with subject matter expertise in the content area; and community leaders, including leaders from the business community.~~

High-Performing Schools Identification

A high-performing school is a Title I school that receives distinction designations based on math and reading performance, and at the high school level, is also among the Title I schools with the highest graduation rates; or (2) has exceeded AYP for two or more consecutive years.

- A minimum size requirement of 10 students is used for the 4 and 5 year completion rate denominators. If either value is less than 10 then the graduation rate cannot be evaluated for that campus

The following steps explain the data run used to determine the list of high-performing schools.

1. Determine the number of Title I served schools in Texas and subtract all non-rated paired Title 1 campuses.
2. Remove all campuses included on the 2015-2016 PEG list.
3. Remove all campuses that did not meet the AMO targets on each of the system safeguards evaluated for all students and all subgroups. This will include to the seven federally required student groups in math and reading subject areas
4. Remove all campuses that did not receive distinctions based on math and reading performance.
5. Add all campuses with a high grade of 11 or lower to the High-Performing Schools list
6. Evaluate all campuses with a high grade of 12 by graduation rate criteria. Apply graduation minimum size requirements to all campuses serving twelfth grade remaining on the list.
7. Add all campuses serving twelfth grade that met the graduation minimum size requirements and had a graduation rate of at least 90% to the High-Performing Schools list.
8. From the final list of all campuses meeting the above criteria, remove any campuses or districts, currently under investigation with the Agency deemed ineligible for a Reward School designation.

High-Progress Schools Identification

A high-progress school will be identified as Title I school in the top 25% in annual improvement and/or schools in the top 25% of those demonstrating ability to close performance gaps based on system safeguards. Any school that has significant achievement gaps across subgroups that are not closing will not be considered a reward school. Schools are identified for the top 25% in annual improvement by achieving the top quartile (top 25%) of performance on the STAAR progress measure in relation to a comparison group of similar schools.

Each school is compared to a unique group of 40 other public schools (throughout the state) that closely matches that school on the following characteristics: campus type, campus size, percent economically disadvantaged students, mobility rates (based on cumulative attendance), and percent of English language learners. Schools that achieve the top 25% in annual improvement have outperformed their peers in terms of growth in student achievement from the prior school year.

The following steps explain the data run used to determine the list of high-progress schools.

1. Determine the number of Title I served schools in Texas and subtract all non-rated

paired Title 1 campuses.
2. Remove all campuses included on the 2015-2016 PEG list.
3. Remove all campuses that did not meet the AMO targets on each of the system safeguards evaluated for all students and all subgroups. This will include to the seven federally required student groups in math and reading subject areas
4. Remove campuses that did not receive a distinction for "Progress Measure"
5. Remove any campuses or districts, currently under investigation with the Agency deemed ineligible for a Reward School designation.
6. The resulting value is the number of Title I schools in the state that are to be identified as High-Progress schools.~~A Texas high-performing reward school will be a Title I school that receives distinction designations based on math and reading performance, and at the high school level, is also among the Title I schools with the highest graduation rates; or (2) has exceeded AYP for two or more consecutive years.~~

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~~Reward high-progress schools will be identified as Title I school in the top 25% in annual improvement and/or schools in the top 25% of those demonstrating ability to close performance gaps based on system safeguards. Any school that has significant achievement gaps across subgroups that are not closing will not be considered a reward school. Schools are identified for the top 25% in annual improvement by achieving the top quartile (top 25%) of performance on the STAAR progress measure in relation to a comparison group of similar schools. Each school is compared to a unique group of 40 other public schools (from anywhere in the state) that closely matches that school on the following characteristics: campus type, campus size, percent economically disadvantaged students, mobility rates (based on cumulative attendance), and percent of English language Language lLearners. Schools that achieve the top 25% in annual improvement have outperformed their peers in terms of growth in student achievement from the prior school year.~~

~~The STAAR progress measure provides information about the amount of improvement or growth that a student has made from year to year. For STAAR, progress is measured as a student's gain score, i.e., the difference between the score a student achieved in the prior year and the the student's score a student achieved in the current year. Individual student progress is then categorized as Did Not Meet, Met, or Exceeded. The progress measure results are then aggregated in a manner that gives districts and campuses one point credit for tests that Met the progress target and two point credit for tests that Exceeded the progress target.~~

~~Additional Information information about the steps involved ion calculating the progress measure: is provided below.~~

~~*Step 1. Determine if the student should receive a STAAR progress measure.*~~
~~In order to receive a progress measure, a student must meet ALL all of the following criteria within the same content area (reading, mathematics, or writing):~~

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- ~~Have a valid score from the prior year and the current year.~~
- ~~Have tested in successive grade levels or end-of-course (EOC) tests in the prior year and the current year. Students who took the same grade level or EOC test in the prior year and the current year will not receive a progress measure. Students who skipped a~~

grade level between the prior year and the current year, with the exception of grade 7 mathematics to Algebra I, will not receive a progress measure.

- Have taken the same version or type of test in the prior year and the current year (i.e., STAAR, STAAR Modified, or STAAR Alternate).
- Have taken tests in the same language in the prior year and the current year (i.e., English or Spanish).

Note that students identified as limited English proficient (LEP) and tested in Spanish language test versions must also meet the criteria above. LEP students tested in English language test versions will not receive a STAAR progress measure.

If a student does not meet one or more of these criteria, the student will not receive a progress measure. Some students may meet the criteria and receive a progress measure for one content area but not another.

Step 2. Compile the needed information to compute a STAAR progress measure.

In order to calculate the progress measure, the following student information is needed:

- Test information from the current year, including
  - Grade level
  - Content area
  - Test language (English or Spanish)
  - Scale score
  - Raw score
  - Performance level (Level I, Level II, or Level III) based on the performance standards in place in the current year (phase-in 1, phase-in 2, or final recommended)
- Test information from the prior year, including
  - Grade level
  - Content area
  - Test language (English or Spanish)
  - Scale Score
  - Performance level (Level I, Level II, or Level III) based on the performance standards in place in the prior year (phase-in 1, phase-in 2, or final recommended)
- Gain score = Current year scale score – Prior year scale score

Step 3. Compute STAAR progress measure.

These Reward schools are will be encouraged to continue to participate in the improvement process and are given greater autonomy on how to implement the improvement interventions based on their findings.

Schools are recognized for their accomplishments and are invited to participate at in the annual Advancing Improvements in Education (AIE) conference. AIE provides over 100 breakout sessions to over 2000 participants and includes national speakers on improvement and turnaround.

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2.D Priority Schools

This section provides a description of the state's methodology for identifying the lowest 5% of Title I schools as priority schools. Interventions and supports for identified schools are also described, as is a plan to identify effective district-based turnaround strategies, develop leadership capacity for these schools~~,~~ and institutionalize such systems and supports.

Identification

A Texas priority school will be a school that, based on the most recent data available, has been identified as being among the lowest ~~-~~performing in the state. The agency will generate a list that rank orders Title I schools in the state based on proficiency on the statewide reading and mathematics assessments~~,~~ and graduation rates.

Texas priority schools will include ~~Tier I or Tier II~~current SIG schools, schools with graduation rates less than 60%~~,~~ and the lowest achieving schools, ranked by the difference between school performance and proficiency targets. The total number of schools will equal 5% of Title I campuses in Texas. Following is the procedure for determining the annual list of Priority schools:

~~Explanation of Data Run to Determine List of Priority Schools~~

1. Count the number of Title I schools in Texas.
2. ~~Multiply the number of Title I schools in Texas by 5% to determine the specific~~
3. ~~The resulting value is the~~ number of Title I schools in the state that are to be identified as Priority schools.
4. Place the SIG schools on the Priority list.
5. ~~Subtract the number of SIG schools from the~~ target number of ~~identified~~ Priority schools to determine
6. ~~The resulting value represents~~ the number of additional schools that should be identified as Priority schools based on the definition as it relates to graduation rate and achievement.
5. For high schools, identify schools where the graduation rate is less than 60%.
7. Subtract this ~~count~~ number from the number of additional schools to be identified based on graduation and achievement as described in the following step
8. Rank the Title I schools based on their achievement results on reading and math system safeguards at the All Student level from lowest achievement to highest achievement. Priority schools will be the lowest achieving 5% of Title I schools
9. Identify the schools that will make up the remainder of the number of Priority schools

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As the information needed to define this category will not be available until ~~Summer 2013, a list of Priority Schools will be provided.~~fall 2015, a preliminary list of priority schools will be released in January 2016. A finalized list of priority campuses will be published by August 2016 based on 2015-2016 data in preparation for implementation during the 2016-2017 school year.

System Safeguards

Accountability System Safeguards include participation rates, graduation rates~~,~~ and limits on the use of alternate assessments. These have been calculated to meet federal requirements and federal

targets. Results will be reported for any subgroup that meets accountability minimum size criteria as described previously. Failure to meet the safeguard target for any reported cell must be addressed in the campus or district improvement plan. Campuses will be encouraged to work with the ~~regional Education Service Center~~ESC Turnaround Teams if they have areas of underperformance within the system safeguards. Based on the modeling assumptions described above, the estimated percentage of campuses that will not meet one or more of the federal accountability targets for performance rates, participation rates, or federal graduation rates more than 50% in 201~~6~~6~~3~~.

Interventions and Supports

Priority schools will engage in the continuous improvement process~~, and~~ to address and correct areas of ~~campus~~ low performance, and may be assigned a Professional Service Provider (PSP). Districts also must designate a leadership team that may include a district coordinator of school improvement (DCSI). The PSP will be selected, trained, monitored and evaluated each year. ~~Both t~~The PSP and the DCSI will work together to support the campus through the improvement process and identified interventions. This improvement process includes addressing each of the Critical Success Factors described ~~earlier~~ in section 2.A, above.

In addition, state statute defines the duties of the PSP, including facilitating data analysis and development of a needs assessment; working on curriculum and instruction; addressing teacher quality; reviewing principal performance; and recommending which educators to retain (see full statutes TAC 97.1063 and 97.1064 in *Attachment 10~~7~~d*). The PSP's role is to monitor progress and to ensure (1) an increase in quality instruction; (2) effective leadership and teaching; and (3) that student achievement and graduation rates for all students, including English learners, students with disabilities~~,~~ and the lowest achieving students, improve~~s~~.

Campuses that did not achieve results that allow them to exit ~~p~~Priority status will be required to utilize additional services to assist in the data analysis and needs assessment process of their improvement planning. In addition to quarterly reporting on their improvement plans, campuses will be required to participate in regular conference calls with their TEA support specialist to discuss progress over time.

Additional Information on Professional Service Providers

PSPs are experienced, successful educators with experience in campus or district turnaround who have qualified by (1) submitting a resume and applying for membership in the PSP Network, overseen by the TEA and the Texas Center for District and School Support (TCDSS~~),~~); (2) undergoing a thorough screening, including reference checks and interviews~~,~~ ; (3) being trained in the Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS~~),~~); (4) receiving annual training at the PSP Network Conference ~~around~~ in effective strategies to facilitate school change and improvement, including turnaround principles, development of leadership, school organization and design, rigorous instructional programming that serves all learners, data-driven decision-making, ensuring positive culture and climate, facilitating parent and community involvement~~,~~ and student supports and intervention strategies~~,~~ ; (5) providing monthly progress reports (based on their role in each campus improvement process) that are reviewed and discussed by TEA and TCDSS~~,~~ ; (6) participating in ongoing professional development based on state, district~~,~~ and campus need~~,~~ ; and

(7) receiving an annual evaluation based on campus performance, principal and district feedback~~,~~ and review of monthly progress reports.

With respect to increasing the quality of instruction and improving outcomes for all students, the PSP monitors the progress of the campus and provides monthly reports. Additionally, the DCSI provides quarterly updates on the progress of identified campuses and works with the PSP and TEA staff to develop sustainability plans once the campus meets safeguard targets. As prescribed in current state statute (TAC 97.1063i), the PSP will continue to work with the campus until the campus satisfies all performance standards for a two-year period. Therefore, interventions will continue for at least three years. Additional information on specific interventions is included in other sections addressing Priority and Focus schools.

PSPs that do not perform as expected on their annual evaluation or who do not adhere to the PSP Code of Ethics are replaced. PSPs are replaced if they have not made an impact after three years on a campus. Criteria for replacement also include failure to achieve "Met Standard" in the accountability index system and/or failure to achieve significant, sustained progress on safeguard system targets.

Additional external providers are reviewed and approved via ~~the agency~~TEA's Request for Qualification, Request for Proposal, and Request for Application process. Related reviews are currently in process for the Texas Educator Pipeline project and the District Turnaround Leadership Institute.

~~With respect to increasing the quality of instruction and improving outcomes for all students, the PSP monitors the progress of the campus and provides monthly reports. Additionally, the DCSI provides quarterly updates on the progress of identified campuses and works with the PSP and TEA staff to develop sustainability plans once the campus~~ meets safeguard targets. ~~As prescribed in current state statute (TAC 97.1063i), the PSP will continue to work with the campus until the campus satisfies all performance standards for a two-year period. Therefore, interventions will continue for at least three years. Additional information on specific interventions are~~ is ~~included in the other sections on~~ addressing ~~Priority and Focus schools below.~~

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Applying Principles of School Turnaround

In addition to the interventions and supports noted ~~above~~elsewhere, TEA ~~TEA is also in the process of posting a Request for Proposals to~~has established proof points for effective district-based turnaround strategies that can be replicated statewide. The purpose of the District Turnaround Leadership Initiative (DTLI) is to enable districts to own the processes and develop the leadership necessary to swiftly and systematically diagnose, intervene~~,~~ and provide ongoing support to low-performing campuses, thus rapidly and permanently improving the performance of the students. ~~The successful bidder,~~Working with the University of Virginia-Partnership for Leaders in Education (UVA), in cooperation with the USDE-funded Texas Comprehensive Center and institutions of higher education and/or educator preparation programs, TEA will institutionalize systems, processes and procedures that enable districts to reform struggling campuses. San Antonio ISD and Uvalde ISD currently are participating in ~~this~~a pilot initiative with TEA and UVA.

As referenced earlier in the ~~section on~~ description of the Texas Framework for Continuous ~~and~~ District and School Improvement, the state's Critical Success Factors build on the USDE turnaround principles. Priority schools will work with districts and state personnel to align their intervention efforts with these principles, as follows:

- providing strong leadership by: ~~(~~(1) reviewing the performance of the current principal; (2) either replacing the principal if such a change is necessary to ensure strong and effective leadership, or demonstrating to ~~the SEA~~TEA that the current principal has a track record in improving achievement and has the ability to lead the turnaround effort; and (3) providing the principal with operational flexibility in the areas of scheduling, staff, curriculum~~,~~ and budget;
- ensuring that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction by:~~-~~ (1) reviewing the quality of all staff and retaining only those who are determined to be effective and have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort; (2) preventing ineffective teachers from transferring to these schools; and (3) providing job-embedded, ongoing professional development informed by the teacher evaluation and support systems and tied to teacher and student needs;
- redesigning the school day, week~~,~~ or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration;
- strengthening the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous~~,~~ and aligned with State academic content standards;
- using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data;
- establishing a school environment that improves school safety and discipline and addressing other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional~~,~~ and health needs; and
- providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.

Additional~~/Expanded~~ Information on Interventions for Priority Schools

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Priority and Focus schools are required to align their improvement process (data analysis, needs assessment, improvement plan~~,~~ and monitoring) around the ESEA turnaround principles and the ~~critical~~ Critical ~~success~~ Success ~~factors~~ Factors. ~~(designed based on the School Improvement Grant (SIG) requirements and closely aligned to the turnaround principles).~~

~~Interventions for priority schools will align with all of the ESEA flexibility turnaround principles and CSFs.~~ Each of the ESEA principles is listed below with their corresponding Critical Success Factor~~.~~ ~~Examples~~ examples of interventions ~~are provided in italics~~and an implementation timeline.

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~~Tier I and Tier II SIG schools will be implementing federal priority requirements in 2013-14 as they have already begun the turnaround process.~~ For ~~the remaining~~new priority schools, the timeline of implementation is as follows:

- ~~providing~~ Providing ~~strong~~ Sstrong ~~leadership~~ Lleadership *(Critical Success Factor: Leadership Effectiveness)*
  - 201~~3~~6-1~~4~~7: SIG Priority schools will have a campus intervention team (CIT) assigned that may include a professional service provider (PSP) and the district coordinator of school improvement (DCSI); all members of the CIT are approved by ~~the Texas Education Agency (~~TEA. As described earlier, ~~, or the agency).~~ PSPs are experienced, successful educators, with experience in school and district improvement and turnaround~~, who have been trained in the Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS) and received annual training at the PSP Network Conference around effective strategies to facilitate school change and improvement, including turnaround principles, development of leadership, school organization and design, rigorous instructional program that serves all learners, data-driven decision-making, culture and climate, facilitating parent and community involvement, and student supports and intervention strategies. As part of the application and interview process, PSPs are questioned around specific skill sets (including core content knowledge, leadership, working with students with disabilities, and providing bilingual and/or ELL instruction and support).~~ Priority schools are provided a list of approved PSPs with skills that match the identified need of the campus. Priority schools may select from that list of PSPs.
  - 201~~3~~6-1~~4~~7: Non-SIG Priority schools will work with the TCDSS and regional ESCs and participate in the improvement cycle as part of the TAIS. Data ~~Analysis~~analysis, needs assessments~~,~~ and improvement plans will be centered on identifying the model for turnaround that will have the biggest impact on student performance, planning for implementation of the model in the 2014-15 school year, and determining the ability of the current principal to serve as a turnaround leader. ESCs and TCDSS will provide guidance on how to identify traits of a turnaround leader, and resources to build turnaround educator pipelines so that campuses can replace leaders with turnaround principals as needed.
  - Schools in ~~priority~~ Priority ~~School~~ school status are required to engage in reconstitution planning if they continue to underperform following the first year interventions. Principals who have been employed by the campus in that capacity may not be retained by the campus, unless the CIT determines the retention of the principal will be more beneficial to student achievement and campus stability. Principals that are retained at the campus will be provided training and support by the CIT, and will be further supported by the ~~regional education service center (~~ESC~~)~~. A list of ~~Campus Intervention Team~~CIT duties includes stipulations that the CIT will determine interventions and staff development for campus administrators. The CIT will document the determination regarding retention of the principal. If the determination is made to retain the principal, the state will review submitted documentation.
  - Principals of ~~priority~~ Priority schools will participate in targeted training, including the Advancing Improvement in Education (AIE) conference.

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- ~~*ensuring*~~ *Ensuring that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction (Critical Success Factor: Teacher Quality)*
  - 2016~~3~~-2014~~7: CITs in~~ SIG ~~Schools~~ schools: CITs ~~CITs~~ are required to conduct a needs assessment that includes assessment of staff quality and preparation for the assignment, determination of compliance with class size limitations, and the assessment of the quality, quantity~~,~~ and appropriateness of instructional materials, including the availability of technology-based instructional materials. The CIT must make recommendations for professional development for instructional staff, and, as appropriate, determine interventions for specific teachers. The CIT also must examine teacher recruitment and retention strategies and incentives for highly qualified teachers. TEA, ESCs~~,~~ and TCDSS staff will provide guidance and resources for non-SIG ~~priority~~ Priority schools to complete the assessment of staff quality.
  - 2013~~6~~-14~~: CIT members in~~ SIG schools: CITs ~~CIT members~~ work with principals on implementation of effective teacher observation and feedback strategies. Such observations are targeted at teacher actions, student engagement, effective use of questioning, alignment with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)~~,~~ and instructional rigor. The observation protocol results in immediate feedback to the teacher and, as appropriate, determination of ongoing and job embedded professional development. TEA, ESCs~~,~~ and TCDSS staff will provide guidance and resources for non-SIG ~~priority~~ Priority schools to complete the assessment of staff quality in 2013-14.
  - Interventions for teachers that address the needs of all students will include, as appropriate, training in: Response to Intervention (RtI) and/or tiered interventions, sheltered instruction, accommodated/modified instruction for students with learning differences, positive behavior interventions, data informed instruction, effective use of allocated learning time, extended learning opportunities~~,~~ and instructional collaboration between/among general education and special program teachers.
  - Online professional development and collaboration are provided via Project Share~~,~~ and through the Texas English Language Learner Instructional Tool (TELLIT) coursework, sheltered instruction online training~~,~~ and the ELL web portal.
  - Multiple online courses are provided that emphasize RtI strategies. One example is the MSTAR Academy II training ~~that emphasizes~~, which addresses research-based Tier II strategies from the IES Practice Guide for Assisting Struggling Students with Mathematics: Response to Intervention (RtI) for Elementary and Middle Schools and also engages participants in how to identify students needing Tier II support in mathematics ~~and meet their instructional needs~~. Participants learn how to interpret results of the MSTAR Universal Screener; use the screener results and other forms of data to make instructional decisions; and provide practical strategies

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for implementing evidence-based interventions for students receiving Tier II mathematics support.

- ~~(Additional examples available, if required).~~

- ~~*redesigning*~~ *Redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration (Critical Success Factor: Increased Learning Time)*

  - 201~~3~~6-201~~4~~7 SIG schools: ~~the~~ The CIT needs assessment and recommendations process requires the CIT to identify any needed changes in school procedures or operations, whether resources should be reallocated, and whether the campus should request waivers from state requirements and/or to fund extended year services for students who are unsuccessful on state assessments. ~~ESCS~~ ESCs and TCDSS will provide resources and guidance on how non-SIG ~~priority~~ Priority schools can begin to address increased learning time in 2013-2014 and fully implement in 2014-15.
  - Additionally, for Priority ~~Schools~~ schools required to reconstitute, the campus must implement campus redesign, approved by the commissioner of education, that: provides a rigorous and relevant academic program; provides personal attention and guidance; promotes high expectations for all students; and addresses comprehensive school-wide improvements that cover all aspects of a school's operations, including, but not limited to, curriculum and instruction changes, structural and managerial innovations, sustained professional development, financial commitment, and enhanced involvement of parents and the community.
  - Resources and lessons learned from ~~our~~ participation in the SIG work will be utilized for future ~~priority~~ Priority schools.

- ~~*strengthening*~~ *Strengthening the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with State academic content standards (Critical Success Factor: Use of Quality Data to Drive Instruction/Academic ~~performance~~Performance)*

  - Campus improvement planning processes are organized around the turnaround principles and CSFs ~~(including Academic Performance, Quality Data, Leadership Effectiveness, Learning Time, Family and Community Support, School Climate, Teacher Quality), and around~~as well as a research-based systemic approach that focuses on the components of Curriculum and Assessment, Instruction, Culture and Climate, Parent and Community Engagement, Adult Advocates, Academic Supports and Interventions, Behavior and Social Skills Development~~,~~ and Personalized Environment. By organizing improvement planning around the CSFs and by focusing on improvement of major systems that impact teaching and learning, dropout rates~~,~~ and graduation rates, the TAIS provides a framework for development of a strong instructional program that addresses student needs.
  - Curriculum and Instruction program improvement processes require the campus to assess rigor, relevance~~,~~ and alignment to the TEKS ~~(state academic content~~

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~~standards)~~, and to address in the improvement plan the means by which these programs will be strengthened.

- Campuses and LEAs in interventions will submit periodic reports on their progress toward full implementation of the targeted improvement plan. These progress reports will include data showing the impact of the plan initiatives and strategies, and the January progress report includes benchmark and/or CBA data for the first semester. (2013-2014 SIG ~~priority~~ Priority schools; 2014-2015 non-SIG ~~priority~~ Priority schools).

- ~~using~~ *Using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data (Critical Success Factor: Use of Quality Data to Drive Instruction/Academic ~~performance~~Performance)*
  - Each ~~priority~~ Priority school will work with the through the improvement cycle that includes extensive data analysis. A data analysis guidance document and related training ~~has~~ have been created and will be provided to each school and their DCSI and PSP.
  - Two examples of ~~ESC~~ ESC-designed resources specifically focused on data analysis include the Formative Assessment Success Tracker (FAST) and the Transformational Teacher Cadre.

- ~~establishing~~ *Establishing a school environment that improves school safety and discipline and addressing other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs (Critical Success Factor: School Climate)*
  - Each ~~priority~~ Priority school will work ~~with the~~ through the improvement cycle ~~that~~, which includes extensive focus on factors that influence school environment.
  - Two examples of ESC-designed resources specifically focused on school environment ~~–~~include the Warming up the Classroom Climate and Culture & Climate Improvement Targets (C2IT).

- ~~providing~~ *Providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement (Critical Success Factor: Family/Community Engagement)*~~.~~
  - Each ~~priority~~ Priority school will work ~~with the~~ through the improvement cycle ~~that~~, which includes extensive focus on factors that influence family and community engagement.
  - Two examples of ESC-designed resources specifically focused on family and community engagement include The Parent Connection-Go Social and Grown Locally: Parent Power Community Capacity.

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~~As mentioned above, each priority campus has a campus intervention team.~~ In addition to the PSP and CIT, ~~priority~~ Priority schools have a state support specialist who works with the district and campus staff. These support specialists facilitate conference calls that provide an opportunity for the CIT (including the DCSI and the PSP), the TCDSS, and the regional ESC to participate in ~~a~~ conversations ~~around~~ addressing progress and next steps.

Timeline for Implementation of Intervention Process for Priority Schools

All identified Priority schools will participate in the TAIS intervention system and continuous improvement cycle. Implementation of all the turnaround principles will begin in the 2016-2017 year for all Priority schools. The table below presents the implementation timeline for 201~~2~~6–201~~3~~7 identified ~~priority~~ Priority schools.

Activity	Timeline
Preliminary federal accountability ratings released	January 2016
~~Accountability ratings released~~Federal ~~A~~accountability ratings finalized	~~August 8, 2013~~August 2016
Parent notification/public notice/hearing provided (as required)	August ~~15,~~ 201~~3~~6
~~District submits n~~Names of PSP and DCSI, submitted by districts, as applicable	September ~~9,~~ 201~~3~~6
Data analysis, needs assessment, improvement plan completed; improvement plan submitted for approval	September ~~October 31,~~ 201~~3~~6
PSP progress reports completed	~~Monthly~~Quarterly
~~Quarterly review~~Review of progress in the improvement process ~~progress~~completed	~~November 2013, February 2014, June 2014~~January 2016, March 2016, June 2016
Reconstitution Plan drafts submitted (as required)	October 2013 – January 2014
Final Reconstitution Plan approved (as required)	June 2014

~~In addition, t~~The PSP and DCSI will determine the implementation timeline for specific activities for each individual campus. Their determination will be based on the data analysis, needs assessment and improvement plan for each school.

~~All identified priority~~ Priority ~~schools will participate in the TAIS intervention system and continuous improvement cycle. Implementation of all the turnaround principles will begin in the 2016-2017 year for all pPriority schools. will be targeted at a SIG schools during the 2013-2014 year, with all priority schools fully implementing in 2014-2015.~~

Exiting Priority Status

To exit ~~priority~~ Priority status, a campus must ~~make significant progress toward meeting AMOs and graduation targets for two consecutive years~~be rated "met standard" on Texas' state accountability system for two consecutive years following interventions and no longer fit the

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criteria to be identified as a ~~priority~~ Priority campus. ~~Significant progress is defined as reducing the gap between campus performance and AMO and graduation targets by at least fifty percent.~~ If a ~~priority~~ Priority school makes significant progress toward meeting the AMOs and graduation targets for two consecutive years following intervention, the campus will implement improvement interventions based on the TAIS during the third year with reduced support from the TEA and/or the ~~Texas Center for District & School Support (~~TCDSS~~)~~, and increased support from the regional ESC.

Texas monitors the progress of ~~priority~~ Priority and ~~focus~~ Focus schools via ~~monthly~~ quarterly PSP, campus and district reports. Site visits to campuses provide additional information. Ongoing conversations are focused on impact of interventions and progress toward academic achievement. Formative reviews allow for mid-course adjustments as necessary.

Schools in ~~priority~~ Priority status are required to engage in reconstitution planning if they continue to miss the safeguards created for the federal system following a year of interventions. The reconstitution plan will include the required turnaround principles. ~~Requirements of~~The Texas Education Code (TEC) §39.107, Reconstitution, Repurposing, Alternative Management, and Closure stipulates the following: *Reconstitution requires the removal or reassignment of some or all campus administrative and/or instructional personnel, taking into consideration proactive measures the district or campus has taken regarding campus personnel; and the implementation of a campus redesign, approved by the commissioner of education.*

Principals who have been employed by the campus in that capacity may not be retained by the campus, unless the CIT determines the retention of the principal will be more beneficial to student achievement and campus stability. Principals that are retained at the campus will be provided training and support by the CIT, and will be further supported by the regional education service center (ESC). TEC §39.106, Campus Intervention Team Duties, includes stipulations that the CIT will determine interventions and staff development for campus administrators.

For Priority ~~Schools~~ schools that continue to fail to improve, if the commissioner determines that the campus is not fully implementing the updated targeted improvement plan or if the students enrolled at the campus fail to demonstrate substantial improvement in the areas targeted by the updated plan, the commissioner may order repurposing, alternative management~~,~~ or closure of the campus.

Additionally, after implementation of the improvement plan in year three of ~~priority~~ Priority status, the commissioner may order a hearing to be held before the commissioner or the commissioner's designee at which the president of the board of trustees, the superintendent~~,~~ and campus principal must appear and explain the campus's low performance, lack of improvement~~,~~ and plan~~'~~s for improvement. Following the hearing the commissioner will issue directives to the campus regarding the actions the campus will be required to take, including continuation of interventions, planning for repurposing, alternative management~~,~~ or closure, or integration of a school community partnership team in the intervention process. The commissioner may establish a school community partnership team composed of members of the campus-level planning and decision-making committee and additional community representatives, as determined appropriate by the commissioner.

~~All priority schools will participate in three years of interventions.~~

In addition to other interventions and sanctions, the commissioner may order a school district or campus to acquire professional services at the expense of the district or campus to address the applicable financial, assessment, data quality, program, performance~~,~~ or governance deficiency.

Attachments (previously submitted): Site Visit Report Template
Campus Improvement Planning Workbook

2.E Focus Schools

This section describes the state's methodology for identifying and providing intervention supports for ~~focus~~ Focus schools.

Identification

Texas ~~focus~~ Focus schools will be Title I schools that have the widest gaps in student performance between student groups. Schools will be ranked based on the largest gaps of performance between student groups and the AMO target ~~of 75%~~ for the given school year. Ten percent of Title I schools, not otherwise identified as ~~priority~~ Priority schools, will be identified as ~~focus~~ Focus schools using ~~this~~ the methodology for determining the annual list~~.~~:

~~Explanation of Data Run to Determine List of Focus Schools~~

1. Count the number of Title I schools in Texas.
2. Multiply the number of Title I schools in Texas by 10% to determine the target number of identified Focus schools.
~~2.~~
~~3. The resulting value is the number of Title I schools in the state that are to be identified as Focus schools~~
3. Using achievement results across the federally required subject areas and student groups, calculate the gap between the performance of student groups and the AMO target ~~of 75%~~for the given school year. (~~please n~~Note that~~:~~ all Title I high schools with a graduation rate of less than 60% will be identified as ~~p~~Priority schools)
~~4.~~
4. Sum the differences and rank order the campuses.
~~5.~~
5. Remove any identified Priority schools.
~~6.~~
~~7.~~6. Identify the ~~10%~~appropriate number of Focus schools based on steps 1 and 2. ~~(please note: all Title I high schools with a graduation rate of less than 60% will be identified as priority schools)~~

Based on 2014-2015 data, TEA will release a preliminary list of focus campuses in January 2016. A finalized list of ~~p~~Priority and Focus campuses will be published by August 2016 based on 2015-2016 data in preparation for implementation during the 2016-2017 school year.

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Additional Information on Interventions for Focus schools

Focus schools will participate in the TAIS and improvement process, and implementing interventions based on the Critical Success Factors (CSFs) and turnaround principles when applicable (based on data analysis and needs assessment).

Examples of possible interventions (based on the results of the improvement process cycle and the CSFs/turnaround principles) include:

- The Transformational Teach Institute, to Improve improveaddressing the CSF on Academic Performance
  - Transformational Teach Institute (TTI)
- Curriculum Audits audits, including the Leaders' Portfolio, addressingIncrease Leadership Effectiveness
  - The Leaders' Portfolio
- Enlist, Educate, Empower, Evaluate (4E) process Increase addressing Teacher Quality, including:
  - Peer Observation Data-Driven Dialogue (PODZ)
  - Teacher Quality Portfolio
- Products, on-line courses, websites, and assessments developed to identify, assess, and provide instruction to English Language Learners, and underperforming students in core content areas,. These include strategies to close the achievement gap, and to assist struggling students identified as underperforming through the Response to Intervention (RTIRtI) process. For As an example, participation participants in the Elementary Students in Texas: Algebra Ready (ESTAR) Academy I examines the big ideas in the grades K-2 mathematics TEKS that prepare students for success in algebra. Participants engage in hands-on, student-centered activities and lessons designed to provide connections to and strengthen participants' knowledge of the elementary mathematics that is critical for success in algebra; and explore how to embed the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) into instruction as well as how to differentiate instruction to align with the expectations of Response to Intervention (RtI).
-

As the information needed to define this category will not be available until Summer 2013, a list of Focus Schools will be included soon.The full list of current fFocus schools can be found here: http://tea.texas.gov/Student_Testing_and_Accountability/Monitoring_and_Interventions/School_Improvement_and_Support/2013-2014_Focus_Schools/

System Safeguards

Accountability System Safeguards include participation rates, graduation rates, and limits on the use of alternate assessments. These have been calculated to meet federal requirements and federal targets. Results will be reported for any subgroup that meets accountability minimum size criteria. Failure to meet the safeguard target for any reported subgroup must be addressed in the campus or district improvement plan. Campuses will be encouraged to work with the regional Education

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Service Center Turnaround Teams if they miss a system safeguard. ~~Based on the modeling assumptions described above, the estimated percentage of campuses that will not meet one or more of the federal accountability targets for performance rates, participation rates, or federal graduation rates is more than 50% in 2013.~~

Timeline for Implementation of Intervention Process for Focus Schools

The table below presents the implementation timeline for 201~~2~~6–201~~3~~7 identified ~~focus~~ Focus schools.

Activity	Timeline
Preliminary federal ~~A~~accountability ratings released	~~August 8, 2013~~January 2016
Final federal accountability ratings released	August 2016
Parent notification/public notice/hearing completed	August ~~15,~~ 201~~3~~6
~~District submits n~~Names of PSP and DCSI submitted by districts, as applicable	~~September 9, 2013~~September 2016
Data analysis, needs assessment, improvement plan completed; improvement plan submitted for approval	~~October 31, 2013~~October 2016
PSP progress reports completed	~~Monthly~~Quarterly

All identified ~~focus~~ Focus schools will begin interventions aligned with the reason for identification in 201~~3~~6-201~~4~~7. At least one intervention impacting instruction must begin by the end of the first semester.

Exiting Focus Status

~~To exit focus status, schools will need to close achievement gaps between student groups by 50%.~~

To exit ~~focus~~ Focus status, a campus must make significant progress toward closing achievement gaps of student groups, and no longer fit the criteria to be identified as a ~~focus~~ Focus campus. Significant progress is defined as ~~reducing the gap between student group performance and AMO by at least fifty 50 percent~~ being rated as "met standard" in Texas' state accountability system for two consecutive years and no longer meeting the eligibility for Focus status.

If a ~~focus~~ Focus school ~~does~~ makes significant progress toward meeting the AMOs for two consecutive years following intervention, the campus will implement improvement interventions based on the TAIS during the third year with reduced support from ~~the~~ TEA and/or the ~~Texas Center for District & School Support (~~TCDSS~~),~~ and increased support from the regional ESC.

As noted earlier, Texas monitors the progress of ~~priority~~ Priority and ~~focus~~ Focus schools via regular campus and district reports. Site visits to campuses provide additional information. Ongoing conversations are focused on impact of interventions and progress toward academic achievement. Formative reviews allow for mid-course adjustments as necessary.

~~All focus schools will participate in three years of interventions.~~

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In addition to other interventions and sanctions, the commissioner may order a school district or campus to acquire professional services at the expense of the district or campus to address the applicable financial, assessment, data quality, program, performance, or governance deficiency.

2.F Provision of Incentives and Support for Other Title I Schools

The structure of the Texas School Support System aligns state and federal accountability systems into a single system of support, and recognizes that sustainable transformation is the result of district commitments, district systems, and campus institutionalization of critical Critical success Success factors Factors. Schools are required to engage in the Texas Accountability Intervention System due to identified low performance in the state and/or federal accountability systems.

Each district or school required to engage in the TAIS must collect and analyze data; conduct a needs assessment to determine factors contributing to low performance; develop an improvement plan addressing all areas not meeting the required performance standard and/or system safeguards; and monitor the implementation of the improvement plan. Schools must also establish a campus intervention team consisting of:

1. A Professional Service Provider (PSP), a TEA-approved member responsible for assuring implementation of all intervention requirements and reporting progress to the agency;
2. A District Coordinator of School Improvement (DCSI), an individual assigned by the district and approved by TEA, and who is a district-level employee in a leadership position in school improvement, curriculum and instruction, or another position with responsibility for student performance; the DCSI is responsible for ensuring district support for the academic achievement of each campus; and
3. The Campus Leadership Team (CLT), made up of key school leaders and membership determined by the principal and/or the district; the CLT is responsible for developing, implementing, and monitoring the improvement plan; monitoring student performance; and determining student interventions and support services.

Relying on decades of school improvement research to identify critical Critical success Success factors Factors that elevate expectations and lead schools on a path of continuous improvement, the TAIS is designed to specify the foundational systems, actions, and processes to transform Texas' schools. TAIS distinguishes levels of assistance for schools by incorporating the state and federal accountability labels into an aligned system of support (see *Attachment 107b* for an overview of the TAIS). Success will require purposeful actions and thoughtful planning by analyzing data, determining needs, developing focused plans for improvement, and monitoring the impact of those plans. The Texas School Support System will assist schools with these actions, placing them on a path toward attaining the outcomes central to the Framework for Continuous District and School Improvement.

The campuses and districts included in Texas' differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system include all campuses and districts administered by the Texas Education Agency regardless of program or type of public school. Campuses will be encouraged to work with the regional Education Service Center Turnaround Teams.

~~As part of the state's evolving efforts to align the state and federal accountability systems, TEA established the Texas Center for District and School Support (TCDSS), a state level entity that functions to coordinate, in conjunction with TEA, system level leadership for school improvement efforts under both the federal and state systems. In collaboration with the TCDSS, TEA developed a research based framework for continuous district and school improvement. The framework outlines a cohesive system of intervention and the implementation of policies and practices that establish the environment and support needed to effectively impact low performing schools. Designed to aid in the development of both district and campus improvement planning, the framework provides a common language and process for addressing the school improvement challenge. It is designed to show the aligned leadership and systems of support at the state, regional, district, and campus levels that will build the capacity necessary to turn around low performing schools in Texas. Service providers, working collaboratively with district and school leadership, help facilitate district and campus supports that are aligned to the framework. The overarching goal of the framework is a state of continuous improvement for campuses, districts and the state. The end goal of the system of support, reflected in the center of the illustration, is accelerated achievement, sustainability, system transformation, and continuous improvement. The framework's critical success factors capture seven areas to address in improvement efforts. Whether campus interventions are being provided through the district, local Education Service Center, or the Texas Center for District and School Support, sharing a common language around resources is essential. The seven Critical Success Factors (CSFs) provide a common language to anchor the work of school improvement across Texas and create opportunity to match resources to needs. These factors reference the USDE turnaround principles and will be part of the statewide intervention system. Schools connecting individual needs to the CSFs can easily choose from customized resources provided across the state.~~

With the increase in identified low-performing districts and schools, there is a need to mobilize the statewide support that is available to provide assistance to districts as they work with their campuses on improvement. TEA, the TCDSS, and the network of regional Education Service Centers are committed to working with districts to provide support to campuses. The Texas School Support System categorizes schools according to identified needs across levels of increased assistance and intervention.

All districts and campuses that fail to meet graduation rate targets are subject to interventions. The interventions require districts and campuses to develop focused plans for improvement. If graduation rates do not improve and the district or campus fails to meet federal accountability targets in the next accountability cycle, the level of assistance and intervention increases.

2.G Provisions for Building SEA, LEA~~,~~ and School Capacity to Improve Student Learning

As noted earlier, the Texas Center for District and School Support (TCDSS) has evolved to support LEAs and schools around school improvement and interventions. Initial ~~coordination~~ efforts to align state and federal accountability systems focused primarily on similar intervention requirements for schools that were identified as academically unacceptable in the state accountability system and were subject to the ~~s~~School ~~improvement~~ Improvement ~~program~~ Program under federal accountability requirements. Evolving from early work on the

accountability system was the creation of the TAIS, which is built upon the best aspects of both the state and federal systems. TEA determined that the fundamental issues for underperforming campuses are the same in both systems, and students with academic needs are often the same regardless of the identification process. Therefore, the TAIS was designed to assist LEAs and schools to focus on engaging in the improvement process as opposed to completing and checking off state and federal requirements. The comprehensive Texas system continues to develop along with ongoing investments in improving the initial system. Along these lines, partnerships have been built ~~between~~ among TEA, ESCs, ~~Texas~~ LEAs and schools that have strengthened the accountability and improvement processes.

~~The~~ As described earlier, the TAIS provides a variety of connected supports, opportunities~~,~~ and incentives to monitor and adapt interventions to engage districts and campuses in the improvement process. ~~The c~~Campus ~~intervention~~ Intervention ~~team~~ Teams~~will~~ ensure timely and comprehensive monitoring and technical assistance for the implementation of interventions. Staff at TEA, the TCDSS, and the network of regional Education Service Centers ~~will~~ provide assistance to the ~~campus interventions teams~~ CITs,~~and~~ assess progress on leading indicators and student outcomes at identified schools, and adapt services and support to better meet specific campus- and district-level needs.

Under NCLB, many LEAs were required to reserve 20 percent of the districts' Title I allotments to implement choice and/or Supplemental Educational Services (SES). With approved waivers, funds that the LEA previously reserved to meet requirements of ESEA section 1116(b)(10) will be used to support the implementation of interventions in an LEA's Focus ~~Schools~~ schools or Priority ~~Schools~~ schools in accordance with allowable use of Title I funds. Once the LEA demonstrates that sufficient resources are available to support interventions in its Priority and Focus schools, funds may be used to support instructional programs at the district ~~-~~level or by providing Title I funds in school allocations under ESEA section 1113(c). An LEA may also reserve funds to support the implementation of interventions in an LEA's Focus ~~Schools~~ schools or Priority ~~Schools~~ schools in accordance with allowable use of Title I funds. Although~~,~~ T~~the S~~EA will not require LEAs to use the funds in a specific way, all decisions must be made based on an LEA's careful analysis of local capacity and based on a comprehensive needs assessment. The LEA must demonstrate in its Title I Application that resources have been allocated to its Priority and Focus schools sufficient to support the interventions described.

Additional Information on Building SEA, LEA, and School Capacity to Improve Student Learning~~:~~

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Interventions for Local Education Agencies.

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LEAs identified for interventions due to missing the systems safeguard targets identified above must, with the assistance of the ESC turnaround team, engage in the district-level TAIS process~~, which also relies on data analysis, needs assessment, improvement planning, and monitoring of progress under the plan~~. The District Intervention Team is responsible for engagement in the TAIS; the Intervention Team must include representative professional staff, including, if practicable, at least one representative with the primary responsibility for educating students with disabilities, parents of students enrolled in the district, business representatives~~,~~ and community members. The local board of trustees, or the board's designee, will periodically meet with the district-level

committee to review the district-level committee's deliberations. The missed system safeguards must be addressed in the improvement plan. ~~The~~ TEA and/or TCDSS will review all submissions, including the improvement plan and monitoring documentation.

LEAs that continue to be identified as missing system safeguards after engagement in interventions for one year are subject to requirements of TEC §39.102, which offers the commissioner the option of invoking one or more of the following sanctions:

(1) issue public notice of the deficiency to the board of trustees;
(2) order a hearing conducted by the board of trustees of the district for the purpose of notifying the public of the insufficient performance, the improvements in performance expected by the agency, and the interventions and sanctions that may be imposed under this section if the performance does not improve;
(3) order the preparation of a student achievement improvement plan that addresses each student achievement indicator under Section 39.053(c) for which the district's performance is insufficient, the submission of the plan to the commissioner for approval, and implementation of the plan;
(4) order a hearing to be held before the commissioner or the commissioner's designee at which the president of the board of trustees of the district and the superintendent shall appear and explain the district's low performance, lack of improvement, and plans for improvement;
(5) arrange an on-site investigation of the district;
(6) appoint an agency monitor to participate in and report to the agency on the activities of the board of trustees or the superintendent;
(7) appoint a conservator to oversee the operations of the district;
(8) appoint a management team to direct the operations of the district in areas of insufficient performance or require the district to obtain certain services under a contract with another person.

Attachment (provided in initial submission): District TAIS Workbook

~~The campuses and districts included in Texas' differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system include all campuses and districts administered by the Texas Education Agency regardless of program or type of public school.~~

Building Capacity. ~~(General)~~
TEA and the TCDSS collaborate regularly, including monthly group meetings and weekly project-based meetings. The TCDSS also facilitates meetings for the ESC Turnaround Teams on a regular basis. TEA, TCDSS~~,~~ and ESCs collaborate on the selection of PSPs, the PSP Summer Training, trainings for LEAs and campuses on the TAIS process, presentations at the Advancing Improvement in Education conference and on the site-visits conducted on campuses. In addition, regular monitoring conversations with LEAs and campuses include TEA, TCDSS, the ESC regional representative, the PSP~~,~~ and the DCSI. The Intervention Stage and Activity Manager (ISAM) online system is accessible by TEA, TCDSS, ESCs, LEAs, campuses, DCSIs and PSPs and provides a portal for monthly reports, improvement plans, and correspondence. It is searchable by LEA and campus.

Texas works closely with the Texas Comprehensive Center, the Edvance Center ~~of~~ on State Productivity~~,~~ and other entities to stay current on turnaround research and practices. Previous

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collaborators and/or trainers have included: Public Impact, Sam Redding/CII, Lauren Rhim, University of Virginia School Turnaround Program, Edvance, and Mass Insight. In addition, USDE conferences and trainings are used to develop capacity at the state-level and to network and learn from other states.

Attachments (provided in earlier submissions): TAIS
Campus Intervention Planning (draft)
Sample DSS Agenda

LEA Accountability

LEAs and schools are held accountable for improving school and student performance and their achievements are reviewed via monthly campus, district, and PSP reports (based on the turnaround principles and CSFs).

The TAIS was designed with an LEA focus and district capacity is addressed via specific trainings for DCSIs and LEA staff. LEA-focused meetings have included the District Sustainability Summit, and the District Institute-Rethinking Central Office.

Districts will be held accountable for student achievement and interventions will be based on specific district areas of need. TEA, TCDSS, and ESCs will work regionally to provide professional learning and content area support. District Improvement Plans will be required to include identified areas of need and will be part of the ongoing monitoring of interventions at the district and campus level. If goals are not met within a two year period, the district policies and procedures will be reviewed and specific districts will be identified to receive a district level on-site review based on achievement data.

Additionally, as previously described, to build LEA capacity the commissioner may: order a hearing to be held before the commissioner or the commissioner's designee at which the president of the board of trustees of the district and the superintendent shall appear and explain the district's low performance, lack of improvement, and plans for improvement; arrange an on-site investigation of the district; appoint an agency monitor to participate in and report to the agency on the activities of the board of trustees or the superintendent; appoint a conservator to oversee the operations of the district; appoint a management team to direct the operations of the district in areas of insufficient performance; or require the district to acquire professional services under a contract with qualified another person or entity.

The DCSI will work in collaboration with TEA, TCDSS, and ESC staff to implement the TAIS.

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Principle 3:
Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership

3.A Develop and Adopt Guidelines for Local Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems

This section provides a description of the state's guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems. Beginning with information regarding the current system, the section describes progress the state has made toward developing and piloting new appraisal systems focused on ~~improving practice~~increasing quality instruction and raising student achievement.

3.A.i. Teacher Evaluation and Support Systems

~~The Texas Education Agency's (~~TEA~~'s)~~ approved instrument for evaluating teachers, the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS), is currently used by 86 percent of LEAs in the state and has been in place since 1997. PDAS includes 51 criteria with eight domains reflecting the Proficiencies for Learner-Centered Instruction. The domains are: Active Successful Student Participation in the Learning Process; Learner-centered Instruction; Evaluation and Feedback on Student Progress; Management of Student Discipline, Instructional Strategies, Time/Materials; Professional Communication; Professional Development; Compliance with Policies, Operating Procedures and Requirements; and Involvement of All Students' Academic Performance. The appraisal system also includes Instructional Leadership Development and Administrator Appraisal.

As research has routinely emphasized, the number one in-school factor for increasing student achievement is the effectiveness of the teacher. A~~, and in a~~cknowledging the vital roles teachers play in student achievement and based on feedback from the field, TEA has continuously revisited the state's approved instrument for evaluating teachers.~~since~~ In addition,~~Since 2009,~~ Texas has made significant strides to improve both the quality of its educator preparation programs and the quality of individual teacher evaluations so that teachers and administrators have more meaningful feedback on student learning and growth. ~~I~~~~in acknowledging the vital roles teachers play in student achievement and based on feedback from the field, TEA has revisited the state's approved instrument for evaluating teachers.~~

Stakeholder Involvement

During the fall of 2011,~~ the~~ TEA created the Teacher Effectiveness Workgroup, comprised of members from ~~the agency~~TEA's Educator Initiatives department, the USDE-funded Texas Comprehensive Center, Educate Texas (a public-private education initiative of the Communities Foundation of Texas), and the Region XIII Education Service Center. This workgroup examined literature on promising and state practices on evaluating educator effectiveness, including different appraisal models from across the nation, to help inform the development of a new Texas system. As a key resource, the workgroup reviewed and used the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality's publication, *A Practical Guide to Designing Comprehensive Teacher*

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Evaluation Systems: A Tool to Assist in the Development of Teacher Evaluation Systems.

Additionally, from December 2011 to December 2012, TEA participated in the Texas Teaching Commission. This group was convened by a statewide nonprofit organization, Educate Texas, and was comprised of 17 stakeholders representing teachers, administrators, business and community members. Over the course of 13 face-to-face meetings and multiple conference calls, this group reviewed research, heard expert testimony, and developed consensus on a broad number of issues related to preparation, induction, evaluation, professional development, and compensation for teachers. ~~The culmination of t~~This work resulted in the development of 63 policy recommendations related to the continuum of teacher quality in Texas. Of those recommendations, 18 were specifically directed at TEA and the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). Since the release of the report in December 2012, TEA and SBEC have undertaken the steps to adopt many of the recommendations, including reexamining current efforts underway related to development of value-add modeling and new observation rubrics.

Standards Setting and Evaluation Redesign

During the fall of 2013, TEA worked with a teacher steering committee comprised of classroom teachers from a variety of subjects and grade levels, campus principals, members from the higher education community, evaluation trainers from state regional service centers, and teacher association members to revise teaching standards and develop a new, state-recommended appraisal system in accordance with §21.351 of the Texas Education Code. This committee began the work by revising and updating the state teaching standards to reflect best practices for today's classrooms that have a research base in improving student achievement. These aspirational standards (see *Attachment 11~~8a~~*) provide goals for which all teachers can strive regardless of where they are in their career; both master teachers and beginning teachers will find practices captured in the standards toward which they can work. These standards have been adopted into commissioner's rule in Chapter 149 of the Texas Administrative Code.

During the spring of 2014, the teacher steering committee developed an evaluation system tied to the teaching standards. In the redesign of the state evaluation system, the committee focused on creating a system that ~~would~~ will be used for continuous professional growth, that can apply to all classroom teachers, including those who teach English ~~l~~Language ~~l~~Learners and students with disabilities (~~please~~ see Texas Administrative Code Chapters 233 and 150 for the inclusion of special education, bilingual and English as a second language teachers in the appraisal process), and ~~and~~ that will de-stigmatize the observation process, moving the mindset around observation and evaluation away from one of compliance to one of feedback and support. The system they created will provide for actionable, timely feedback that will allow teachers to make efficient and contextual professional development choices that, in turn, will lead to an improvement in their teaching. The characteristics of this system ~~that will promote these goals~~ include:

- **Multiple ~~m~~Measures of ~~p~~Performance:**~~,~~ These measures include~~ing~~ rubric-based observations~~,~~; a teacher-directed goal-setting process that will allow ~~for~~ all teachers, in consultation with their campus leadership team or principal, to identify key areas for improvement and track ~~his/her~~ growth toward~~s~~ those goals (referred to as the Goal-Setting

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and Professional Development Plan~~teacher self-assessment component~~);; and a measure of student growth at the level of the individual teacher.

- **Clear, Timely, and Useful Feedback:** A rubric (see *Attachment 11~~8b~~II*) with five performance levels that clearly differentiate practices. The rubric allows for immediate feedback that is built into the document itself – any teacher can self-assess, and any teacher can look to the practices articulated in the levels above his or her observation score and understand which practices will elevate their performance.

- ~~A~~ **Goal-Setting and Professional Development Plan**;~~teacher self-assessment~~ that allows all teachers to determine their professional growth goals, build a professional development plan to attain those goals, and track the progress of their development over the course of the year based on both their assessment of their practice within their unique teaching context and the feedback received during the ongoing formative and end-of-year summative conversations with their appraiser.

- ~~**A s**~~**Student ~~g~~Growth ~~m~~Measure:** A student growth measure at the individual teacher level that will include a value-add score based on student growth as measured by state assessments for teachers for whom a value-add score can be determined, or student growth based on student learning objectives, portfolios, or district pre- and post-tests.

These multiple measures, taken together, will provide a more complete narrative of teacher performance than any single measure taken by itself and will comprise a summative evaluation score based on the following weights: classroom observations and the Goal-Setting and Professional Development Plan~~teacher self-assessment~~ will comprise 80% of the evaluation score, and student growth will comprise 20% of the evaluation score.

The relative weight of the rubric-based observation (80% overall, which includes 10% of the overall evaluation score attributed to the progress on the Goal-Setting and Professional Development Plan~~teacher self-assessment~~) aligns with the idea that a teacher's primary focus should include the daily interaction between ~~a~~ teacher and ~~his/her~~ students – around building positive relationships with students in the midst of productive learning environments that seek to address students' academic, cognitive and developmental needs. ~~-~~Although this focus will lead to academic gains, the positive benefits of this learning environment are not limited to academic gains as measured by tests, whether local, state or national. ~~-~~With the rubric comprising the bulk of a teacher's evaluation score, teachers are ~~encouraged and~~ incentivized to build skills in students that may not manifest themselves on tests or by the end of a single academic year, but will be captured within the performance levels of the observation rubric.

The ~~state~~ state-recommended teacher evaluation system will encourage annual evaluations with at least a single formal observation and multiple informal observations and walk-throughs~~,~~. The system is in alignment with Texas Education Code §21.352(c-1)~~House Bill 2012, passed in 2013 during the 83rd legislative session~~, which requires that components of the appraisal process, including classroom observations and walk-throughs, be conducted more frequently for new teachers and teachers who show deficiencies in evaluation results~~broadened the scope of the evaluation process to include additional observations and walk-throughs as necessary to ensure~~

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~~adequate guidance for teachers~~.

~~During the~~A ~~two~~three-day face-to-face appraiser training on the state teacher evaluation system has been developed and implemented.~~,~~ ~~p~~Participants ~~will~~ discuss best ~~-~~practices for fostering open, collaborative campus cultures where feedback and opportunities for instructional growth are embedded into the school calendar so that teachers can consistently work with their campus peers throughout the school year on pedagogy and content delivery in response to both the annual process for self-reflection, goal setting and goal attainment, and feedback from appraisers and instructional leaders on areas for improvement. ~~–~~Appraiser training ~~will~~ also stresses the importance of open dialogue between teachers and campus leaders that allow ~~for~~s both groups to further develop insight into good instructional practices~~,~~ and the role that teacher leaders should play in informal observations and collaborative professional development. ~~-~~TEA will work with the 20 regional ~~service centers~~ESCs to offer assistance and support to districts that lack the personnel capacity to implement their preferred evaluation process.

Rubric, Appraisal Process, and Performance Levels

The appraisal, which is cyclical, follows the following pattern (see *Attachment 11*~~8c III~~):

Goal-Setting and PD Plan → Pre-Conference → Observation → Post-Conference → End-of-Year Conference
Goal-Setting and PD Plan →
Pre-Conference → Observation →Post-Conference → End-of-Year Conference
Goal-Setting and PD Plan…

The teacher evaluation system rubric includes four domains: Planning, Instruction, Learning Environment~~,~~ and Professional Practices and Responsibilities ~~(see Attachment II)~~. The rubric contains five performance levels (Distinguished, Accomplished, Proficient, Developing~~,~~ and Improvement Needed) that clearly differentiate practices~~; as~~ each descriptor within each of the sixteen dimensions articulates an evolution of performance from Improvement Needed to Distinguished. Teachers can self-assess and review practices articulated in the levels about the observation score to understand which specific descriptors will elevate their performance.

Appraisers are trained, during ~~a~~the mandatory three-day face-to-face training described above, to collect evidence before the lesson during a pre-conference and during the lesson by scripting what ~~the~~ teachers and students ~~says and does and what the students~~ say and do, along with collecting other visuals and artifacts. This evidence is used along with the rubric to score the lesson. A post-conference is required of all observations. During this time, the appraiser and teacher meet to discuss the overall lesson and identify an area of reinforcement (strength) and refinement (growth), along with the ratings for the lesson.

End-of-Year (EOY) Conferences occur from mid-April through May. ~~–~~The EOY Conference provides an opportunity for the appraiser and the teacher to summarize the year, to collect information that will provide evidence to score Domain 4 of the rubric, and to discuss next year's goal(s) and professional development plan. The EOY Conference is also a time that teachers and appraisers review the academic progress students have made over the course of the school year, as measured by student learning objectives, portfolios, or district pre- and post-tests.

Unlike Domains 1-3, Domain 4: ~~–~~Professional Practices and Responsibilities is not scored in

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summative form by the evaluator until after the teacher has been afforded the opportunity to present evidence related to the four dimensions during the EOY Conference.

Prior to the meeting, ~~T~~teachers prepare their Domain 4 evidence/data ~~prior to the meeting~~, which include~~s~~ their Goal Setting and Professional Development Plan documents and evidence showing progress toward goal attainment and in following their professional development activity plan. Teachers also prepare to discuss activities they ha~~'~~ve undertaken that conform to the various practices articulated in Domain 4.

~~The EOY Conference is also time that teachers and appraisers review the academic progress students have made over the course of the school year, as measured by student learning objectives, portfolios, or district pre- and post-tests.~~

Student Growth

TEA is committed to implementing an evaluation system that provides teachers and principals with the most valuable data and information that ~~will~~ can be used in making professional development and growth decisions. All measures of student growth will be piloted, reviewed and assessed against this ~~criteria~~criterion.

Districts will be given flexibility in choosing from student learning objectives, portfolios and district pre- and post-tests as means by which to measure student growth for teachers for whom value-add scores cannot be calculated. In making these choices, districts will have the option of using any of the three methods, provided that the choice for a particular grade and subject is uniform throughout the district, i.e. if a district chooses to use portfolios for a teacher's student growth score for Art I, then all district Art I teachers would need to use portfolios for their measure of student growth.

TEA is working with SAS Institute, Inc. to ~~develop~~ pilot a value-add model to capture student growth for teachers whose students take state assessments. This model, a univariate response model, will be piloted during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school year~~s~~, and ~~it~~ will cover teachers of state-tested subjects from fifth grade through end-of-course exams at the high school level. TEA will weigh feedback from pilot districts, including the usefulness of value-add data as calculated by the pilot model, to inform how value-add measures will be used during the 2015-2016 refinement year and beyond. For more information on the model used, ~~(a univariate response model),~~ please see *Attachment 11~~8d~~IVII~~s~~*.

TEA will provide guidelines for districts through the 20 ~~regional service centers~~ESCs ~~in~~ addressing how to implement student learning objectives, portfolios and district pre- and post-tests as measures of student growth. TEA is working with the Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) to develop student learning objective guidelines, resources and models, and TEA will facilitate a~~n expanded~~ pilot of student learning objectives during the 2015-2016 refinement year. ~~Please s~~See *Attachment ~~I~~11~~8e~~V~~s~~* for TEA's guidelines on student learning objectives for the 2015-2016 pilot year.

In addition, TEA will assist in developing the capacity of the state's 20 ~~regional service~~

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~~centers~~ESCs to support districts in building processes for each optional method, including housing models for portfolios and student learning objectives. ~~-~~These guidelines and processes at both the state and regional levels will continuously be updated and revised as best practices emerge during pilot years and statewide implementation.

TEA will also provide guidance on uses of student growth data. ~~-~~This guidance will reinforce the idea that student growth data, like observation data, should be used to inform professional growth and development decisions for teachers.~~-~~ In addition, guidance will reinforce the idea that single-year student growth data should not be the sole factor in employment decisions and that multiple years of student growth data provide more robust feedback on a teacher's influence on student performance.

Student growth measures will be captured on a five-point scale as a part of the summative evaluation score. ~~-~~The ordinal labels for the five levels will be:

- well ~~-~~above expectations;
- above expectations;
- at expectations;
- below expectations; and
- well ~~-~~below expectations.

For teachers with a value-add score, those categories will indicate scores that are:

- two or more standard errors above expected growth;
- more than one but less than two standard errors above expected growth;
- between one standard error above and one standard error below expected growth;
- more than one but less than two standard errors below expected growth; or
- two or more standard errors below expected growth.

Guidelines provided by TEA will include processes that districts can follow to determine an ordinal score for student learning objectives, portfolios~~,~~ and district pre- and post-tests, and will be refined as best practices emerge during the pilot years and statewide implementation.

Summative Evaluation Scores

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Based on teacher steering committee feedback and as a means to promote the professional growth priorities of the evaluation system, scoring will be displayed as an ordinal system instead of a point system, ~~which~~ since the latter could lead to the faulty conclusion that a difference in tenths or hundredths of points indicates that one teacher is "better" than another teacher. ~~-~~Teachers will receive ordinal scores for each level of the rubric and summative evaluation – for each indicator, each domain~~,~~ and ~~for~~ each component of the summative score. ~~-~~The summative score will be determined through a matrix approach and will also yield an overall ordinal score. ~~-~~As indicated in the table below, six total results (those marked by asterisks) would require additional investigation and consideration by both the evaluator and the teacher, as the divergence of the student growth score and the observation and goal-setting and professional development plan~~self-assessment~~ results would indicate an incongruity that required further explanation.

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	Observation and Goal-Setting and PD Plan~~Self-Assessment~~ Results (80%)					
		Improvement Necessary	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	Distinguished
Student Growth Results (20%)	Well Below Expectations	Improvement Necessary	Developing	Proficient	Proficient*	Accomplished*
	Below Expectations	Improvement Necessary	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	Accomplished*
	At Expectations	Improvement Necessary	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	Distinguished
	Above Expectations	Developing*	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	Distinguished
	Well Above Expectations	Developing*	Proficient*	Proficient	Accomplished	Distinguished

3.A.ii. Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System

Stakeholder Involvement

During the fall of 2012, the TEA convened a principal advisory committee to review state policy and law governing principals, best practices in principal preparation, and the state policies regulating them. ~~-~~The Alliance to Reform Education Leadership (AREL) provided support to the committee and brought in experts ~~in the field and~~ from other states to ~~present on~~provide information about policies and processes adopted by other states and the effect they have had on principal effectiveness. ~~-~~The ~~e~~ is ~~results of this~~ work ~~led to~~resulted in a draft set of competencies that principals should acquire to be effective leaders and improve student achievement. ~~-~~In the summer of 2012, TEA met with educator preparation programs and held focus groups at state principal conferences to review the work done to date by the principal advisory committee and to provide feedback and responses to that work.

Standards Setting and Evaluation Design

Starting in the spring of 2012, TEA worked with the principal advisory committee to build principal standards. ~~-~~This committee began by determining best practices for principals to be effective leaders and improve student performance, primarily by reframing the central role of the principal as the instructional leader of a campus. ~~-~~This work concluded in the fall of 2013 with a comprehensive set of principal standards that, like the teacher standards, capture the aspirational practices all principals can strive toward regardless of their level of experience or the context of their position (see *Attachment ~~III~~18~~f~~VI*).

During the spring of 2014, a principal steering committee~~,~~ comprised of campus principals, central office administrators, members of the higher education community and principal association members, was convened to build a state principal evaluation system in accordance with §21.3541 of the Texas Education Code. ~~-~~The committee developed an evaluation system tied to the principal standards~~,~~ and, like the teacher evaluation system, focused on creating a process that would be

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used for continuous professional growth. The system they created will provides for actionable, timely feedback that will allow principals to reflect consistently on their practice and strive to implement those practices that would improve their performance. The characteristics of this the system that will promote these goals include:

- Multiple measures of performance, including rubric-based practice assessments of practicesobservations, a principal-directed goal-setting process that will allow for all principals, in consultation with their district leadership team or appraiser, to identify key initiatives and areas for improvement and track his/her growth towards those goals (referred to as the principal goal-setting component), and campus-level measures of student growth or progress.
- A rubric (see *Attachment IV11gqV1*) with five performance levels that clearly differentiate practices. The rubric allows for immediate feedback that is built into the document itself – any principal can self-assess, and any principal can look to the practices articulated in the levels above their observation score and understand which practices will elevate their performance.
- A principal goal-setting process that allows all principals to determine what their professional growth and implementation goals include, build a plan to attain those goals, and track the progress of their development over the course of the year based on their assessment of their practice within their unique context, the feedback received during the ongoing formative and end-of-year summative conversations with their appraiser, and particular district and campus initiatives.
- A student growth measure that will include a campus-level value-add score based on student growth as measured by state assessments for campuses for which a value-add score can be determined. In addition to a campus value-add score, districts will have flexibility in choosing from other student growth and progress measures that fit the particular context of a campus. These other measures of student growth and progress will be in addition to campus value-add scores where they are available.
- These multiple measures, taken together, will provide a more complete narrative of principal performance than any single measure taken by itself and will comprise a summative evaluation score based on the following weights and the length of time one has been a principal on a particular campus:

Experience as principal on particular campus	Rubric	Goal-Setting	Student Growth
0 years	70%	30%	0%
1 year	70%	20%	10%
2 or more years	60%	20%	20%

The relative weight of the rubric-based evaluation (between 60% and 70% depending on tenure as principal on a campus) aligns with the idea that a principal's primary focus should include the daily practices captured in the rubric, which have a research base in improving student performance. Although the successful implementation of these practices will lead to improved results in student performance, tThe rubric itself aligns to the unique context of each principal, whether he or she is new to the profession, new to the campus or has years of experience. For

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principals new to a particular campus, student growth would not begin to be a factor in their evaluation scores until their second year as principal on that campus and would be phased ~~-~~in between years two and three of their tenure. ~~-~~This phase-in process acknowledges ~~with~~ the limitations of a principal's influence on student growth or progress during his or her first year on a campus, where the principal inherits the conditions that affect student learning~~, and, although a principal can begin to make appropriate modifications during that first year, where a student growth score would not be a reliable indicator of principal effectiveness for that year~~. ~~-~~By the third year of a principal's tenure on a campus, the principal should have full ownership of student growth ~~and~~ or progress results, and from that year forward, student growth would count for 20% of the principal's evaluation score.

The ~~state~~ state-recommended principal evaluation system will require annual evaluations. During the two-day face-to-face appraiser training on the state principal evaluation system, participants ~~will~~ discuss best-practices for fostering district cultures where feedback and professional growth are valued and stressed, and where dialogue between principals and district leaders allows ~~for~~ both groups to further develop insight into good professional practices for principals. ~~-~~TEA ~~will~~ is working with the 20 regional ~~service centers~~ESCs to offer assistance and support to districts that lack the personnel capacity to implement the necessary evaluation process.

Rubric, Appraisal Process, and Performance Levels

The principal appraisal process, which is cyclical, follows the following pattern:

Year 1: Self-Assessment & Goal-Setting → Pre-Evaluation Conference → Mid-Year Evaluation Meeting → End-of-Year Conference → Year 2: Self-Assessment & Goal-Setting → Pre-Evaluation Conference → Mid-Year Evaluation Meeting →End-of-Year Conference…

The principal evaluation rubric includes five standards: Instructional Leadership, Human Capital, Executive Leadership, School Culture~~,~~ and Strategic Operations (see *Attachment 11*~~8~~ VII). The rubric also contains five performance levels (Distinguished, Accomplished, Proficient, Developing~~,~~ and Improvement Needed/Not Demonstrated) that clearly differentiate practices~~.~~; ~~as~~ each descriptor within each of the twenty-one indicators articulates an evolution of performance from Improvement Needed to Distinguished.~~-~~ Principals can self-assess and review practices articulated in the levels about the observation score to understand which specific descriptors will elevate their performance.

~~Appraisers are trained, d~~During the mandatory two-day face-to-face appraiser training emphasizes ~~-~~ that the principal evaluation system ~~is comprised of a process that~~ incorporates a series of actions and activities that should be applied as ongoing and systematic rather than inconsistent and compulsory ~~to simply comply with a policy requirement~~. While the evaluation process results in an annual summary assessment of the principal, it is intended and best used as an iterative design based on an annual process of actions and activities that self-assess, establish performance goals, collect and analyze information, and provide constructive feedback resulting in the improvement and refinement of practice. ~~This process is intended to ultimately improve the quality and effectiveness of the principal.~~

End-of-Year (EOY) Conferences occur from May through the end of June. ~~-~~The principal and appraiser will meet at the principal's campus to discuss completing the evaluation process. They

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will discuss the Consolidated Performance Assessment (see *Attachment 11~~8~~h~~VIII~~*) information and the principal's attainment of their performance goals and any additional information that would assist in more accurate and fair summary ratings. ~~-~~Should additional information be needed for the discussion, the principal will have ample opportunity to make the information available. If time permits and the appraiser and principal agree on the final performance ratings and goals are attained, the final evaluation ratings are completed at this time.

Student Growth

As noted in the preceding section on the teacher evaluation system, TEA is working with SAS Institute, Inc. to ~~develop~~ pilot a value-add model to capture student growth for campuses with students who take state assessments. ~~This model will be piloted during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years~~~~Although this model is still in development,~~ and ~~it will likely covers state-tested subjects from grades five through eight and end-of-course exams at the high school level.~~ All districts will be given flexibility in choosing from additional means by which to measure student growth or progress, as appropriate for a campus's configuration (see sample table below). For campuses that ~~have~~use a value-add score, the score must comprise a minimum of half of the overall weight dedicated to student growth, with the additional half coming from the additional measures available to them and appropriate for their campus context. For campuses that do not ~~have~~use a value-add score, the entirety of the student growth measure would come from the list of additional methods of capturing student growth and progress. ~~-~~TEA has conducted focus groups with principals and appraisers of principals to determine which measures of student growth or progress are both available and valuable as diagnostic data that will help inform areas in need of improvement~~will continue to work with districts during the pilot year and during and after statewide rollout to improve upon and revise the list of additional measures of student growth and progress~~. ~~For campuses that have a value-add score, the score must comprise a minimum of half of the overall weight dedicated to student growth, with the additional half coming from the additional measures available to them and appropriate for their campus context. For campuses that do not have a value-add score, the entirety of the student growth measure would come from the list of additional methods of capturing student growth and progress.~~

Campus Configuration		
Elementary School	**Middle School**	**High School**
Potential Measures*	**Potential Measures***	**Potential Measures***
Indices of ~~State~~ state ~~Accountability~~ accountability ~~System~~system	Indices of ~~State~~ state ~~Accountability~~ accountability ~~System~~system	Indices of ~~State~~ sate ~~Accountability~~ accountability ~~System~~system
ITBS and other standardized assessments~~Attendance~~	Attendance	Attendance
Student ~~Surveys~~surveys	Student ~~Surveys~~surveys	Student ~~Surveys~~surveys
Literacy ~~Measures~~ measures (TPRI/DRA/Dibels)	% of ~~Students~~ students in Algebra 1 or other advanced curriculum	Advanced ~~Placement~~ placement ~~Participation~~ participation and ~~Scores~~scores
District-wide ~~A~~assessments	District-wide ~~A~~assessments	PLAN, ACT, ~~and~~ SAT, ASPIRE ~~Participation~~ participation and ~~Scores~~scores

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Reading A-Z leveled books	Literacy ~~M~~measures (TPRI/DRA/Dibels)	IB ~~Participation~~ participation and ~~Scores~~scores
Participation rates in academic clubs and activities (Science Fair, Robotics programs, etc)	Participation rates in academic clubs and activities (Science Fair, Robotics programs, etc)	Graduation ~~Rates~~rates/~~Dropout~~ dropout ~~Rates~~rates
	Leaver ~~R~~rates	% ~~College~~ college and ~~Career~~ career ~~Ready~~ready
		CTE ~~C~~certifications
		Dual ~~C~~credit completion

*Student growth scores would be calculated based on year-over-year progress

Beginning in refinement year 2015-2016, TEA will provide guidelines ~~on its website~~ for districts in how to use measures of student growth and progress beyond campus value-add scores. ~~-~~ In addition, as noted earlier, TEA will assist in developing the capacity of the state's 20 regional ~~service centers~~ESCs to support districts in building processes for each optional method. ~~These guidelines and processes at both the state and regional levels will continuously be updated and revised as best practices emerge during pilot year and statewide implementation.~~

Student growth measures will be captured on a five-point scale as a part of the summative evaluation score. The ordinal labels for the five levels will be:

- well above expectations (5)
- above expectations (4)
- at expectations (3)
- below expectations (2)
- well below expectations (1)

For campuses with ~~a~~ value-add scores, those categories ~~will~~ indicate the average of the available campus-level value-add scores for each tested grade and subject. For example, if campus X has a campus-level value add score of 5 for Algebra I, 4 for English I, 3 for English II, 3 for Biology, and 5 for U.S. History, then that campus would receive a campus-level value add score of ~~a~~ 4, or above expectations~~scores that are two or more standard errors above expected growth, more than one but less than two standard errors above expected growth, between one standard error above and one standard error below expected growth, more than one but less than two standard errors below expected growth, and two or more standard errors below expected growth~~. Guidelines provided by TEA will include processes that districts can follow to determine an ordinal score for other measures of student growth and progress and will be refined as best practices emerge during pilot year and statewide implementation.

Summative Evaluation Scores

~~Based on teacher steering committee feedback and as a means to promote the professional growth focus of the~~As with the teacher evaluation system described earlier, scoring will be displayed as an ordinal system instead of a point system, ~~which~~ since the latter could lead to the faulty conclusion that a minor difference in ~~tenths or hundredths of~~ points indicates that one principal is "better" than another principal. Principals will receive ordinal scores for each level of the rubric

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and summative evaluation – for each indicator, each domain, and for each component of the summative score. The summative score will be determined through a matrix approach and will also yield an overall ordinal score. As indicated in the table below, six total results (those marked by asterisks) would require additional investigation and consideration by both the evaluator and the principal, as the divergence of the student growth score and the observation and goal-setting results would indicate an incongruity that required further explanation.

	Rubric Evaluation and Goal-Setting Results (80-100%)					
		Improvement Necessary	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	Distinguished
Student Growth Results (0-20%)	Well Below Expectations	Improvement Necessary	Developing	Proficient	Proficient*	Accomplished*
	Below Expectations	Improvement Necessary	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	Accomplished*
	At Expectations	Improvement Necessary	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	Distinguished
	Above Expectations	Developing*	Developing	Proficient	Accomplished	Distinguished
	Well Above Expectations	Developing*	Proficient*	Proficient	Accomplished	Distinguished

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Evaluation Systems Rollout

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Pilot Year 2014-2015

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During the 2014-2015 school year, TEA ~~will~~ is piloting both the teacher and principal evaluation systems ~~with 60 to 70~~in 64 school districts and 430 campuses across the state. Participating districts ~~will be~~were trained during the summer of 2014, ~~will~~ have implemented the evaluation systems beginning in the fall of 2014, and ~~will~~ have provided TEA with continuous feedback on components of the systems so that appropriate revisions can be made to training, instruments, and guidelines provided in conjunction with the systems. TEA, with support from the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) and McREL International (McREL), ~~will~~ has conducted focus groups and facilitated feedback sessions throughout the pilot year so that principals, teachers, and their appraisers have an opportunity to articulate the strengths and weaknesses of the pilot evaluation systems. In addition, both NIET and McREL will assist TEA in examining the validity of both teacher and principal observation rubrics at the conclusion of the 2014-2015 school year so that adjustments to specific indicators can be made prior to the beginning of the refinement year in 2015-2016 and statewide rollout in 2016-2017.

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During the 2014-2015 pilot year, TEA has or will have collected stakeholder feedback and validated the evaluation systems through the following processes:

Feedback:

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- ESCs communicate regularly with pilot districts (at least once a month, but much more frequently than that in practice) and send feedback to ESC 13 (the evaluation hub) and TEA through email, face-to-face meetings, monthly virtual teleconferences, and quarterly reports.
- TEA talks directly with pilot participants through email, phone calls, and occasional face-to-face opportunities.
- NIET's and McREL's project managers work with pilot districts and collect feedback and share with TEA, as the occasions arise.

Surveys:

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- For T-TESS, two parts of a survey are put in the field. -Part A occurred in October to gather qualitative impressions of training, orientation, the evaluation system and materials. -Part A could only cover stages through the Goal-Setting portion of the process, so exposure to the process was limited.- Part B will occur in May and will circle back to the same questions on the evaluation system, the materials, and the observation cycle. –This will gauge perceptions of the entire process as well as how perceptions evolved from the beginning of the school year.
- For T-PESS, two surveys ~~will be~~are being put in the field.- The first ~~will~~ occurred in late February and ~~will~~ covered training, orientation, the evaluation system and materials through the mid-year conference. -The second will occur at the end of May and will cover the same subjects, but through the end-of-year conference.

Focus Groups:

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- For T-TESS, NIET conducted focus group sessions in four regions in February.- Each location hosted two separate one hour meetings – one with just teachers and one with just appraisers of teachers. -NIET will repeat this process in late May in four different regions to capture whole-process feedback, including end-of-year conferences.
- For T-PESS, McREL also conducted focus group session in four regions in March.- Each location hosted two separate one hour meetings – one with just principals and one with just appraisers of principals.- McREL will repeat this process in late May/early June in four different regions to capture whole-process feedback, including end-of-year conferences.

Validation Studies:

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- For T-TESS, NIET will examine observation and summative scores to ensure that appropriate spreads in ratings exist across the system. –If certain dimensions exhibit unusual spreads or abnormal ceilings, then that will signal a potential area for revision.
- For T-PESS, McREL will run validation analysis on all three major system check-ins – the goal-setting conference, the mid-year check-in, and the end-of-year conference. -They will also look for unusual spreads and abnormal ceilings in rubric scoring.

Additionally, TEA will convene stakeholder groups during the fall of 2015 to revise the current administrative rules concerning the state appraisal system, housed in Chapter 150 of the Texas Administrative Code, based on feedback from both the stakeholder groups and the pilot districts implementing the new state systems. ~~–~~For the principal evaluation system, new rules will be created, as this will be the state's first recommended appraisal system for principals.

Through April of 2015, based on feedback from pilot districts implementing T-TESS and T-PESS, TEA has made the following changes to the systems and the support apparatus around the systems:

~~———~~*Rubric Changes for T-TESS:*

- Changes in the design to ensure that a bullet/descriptor carries across each performance level
- Changes to certain dimensions where phrases that seemed hollow/ambiguous were pulled
- Changes to certain dimensions where a practice described in one performance level actually seemed more rigorous than a practice described in the higher level
- Changes in the design to where teacher-centered to student-centered became a continuum at the bottom of the page

Appraiser Training Changes for T-TESS:

- From two day face-to-face to three day face-to-face
- More training on Domains 1 and 4 of the rubric
- More training on the Goal-Setting and PD Plan Process
- More training on conducting effective End-of-Year Conferences
- More practice on developing conferencing and coaching skills

Professional Development Changes for T-TESS and T-PESS:

- Redesigning Instructional Leadership Development, a required five day training for new principals, to meet the needs of principals based on pilot feedback - more focus on soft skills - coaching, conferencing, creating collaborative campuses, etc.
- Training and preparation for districts on how to plan effectively for the implementation of new appraisal systems
- Conducting symposiums with educator preparation programs to strength~~ht~~en a continuum - so teachers, principals, and superintendents are coming out of programs with the dispositions necessary to do formative appraisal well

Documents/~~r~~Resources Created for T-TESS and T-PESS:

- Building out overviews/materials that districts have asked for throughout the year ~~—~~, Goal-Setting and Professional Development Plan Overview, End-Of-Year Conference Overview, and others~~etc.~~
- Creating just-in-time webinar support for T-TESS ~~—~~, Goal-Setting and PD Plan webinar, Pre-Conference webinar, Post-Conference webinar, EOY Conference webinar

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- Redesigning the Teach for Texas teacher appraisal portal so that it is organized by the part of the process (Overview, Orientation, Goal-Setting and PD Process, Pre-Conference, Observations, Post-Conferences~~, etc...~~)
- Building a new T-PESS webpage that is better organized and more user friendly

Refinement Year 2015-2016

~~TEA will seek to include about 135 100 additional districts for the refinement year during the 2015-2016 school year, bringing total participation to approximately 200 160 districts.~~ TEA gathered feedback during the summer of 2014 from districts, ~~Education Service Centers~~ESCs, professional organizations~~,~~ and other stakeholders about the timeline for implementation and the state's readiness to roll out new, rigorous evaluation systems. Based on the unanimity of the feedback and recognition of the strong potential for poor implementation with an accelerated timeline, TEA determined that the 2015-2016 school year would need to be a refinement year. The refinement year will allow TEA to take all 2014-2015 pilot feedback into consideration, adjust appraiser training materials and evaluation tools as appropriate, and expand participation prior to statewide rollout so ~~Texas's regional service centers~~the ESCs are not required to train appraisers from approximately 600 districts in a single summer. TEA will seek to include about 100 additional districts for the refinement year ~~during the 2015-2016 school year~~, bringing total participation to approximately 160 districts.

In anticipation of a refinement year for both the new principal and teacher evaluation systems, TEA ~~will~~ is overseeing a train-the-trainer model during the spring of~~beginning in early~~ 2015. Train-the-trainer academies ~~will be~~are run by NIET for the teacher evaluation system ~~and~~. The academies have brought ~~will bring~~ together ~~regional service center~~ESC staff, district trainers~~,~~ and trainers from higher education so that they can become experts on each system and the delivery of training for each system. The academy for each system ~~will~~ includes approximately four face-to-face training days with multiple days for online instruction, follow-up and~~,~~ the inclusion of revisions based on pilot feedback and certification. Once trainers graduate from the train-the-trainer academy, they will co-train with NIET or McREL trainers during the summer of 2015 prior to being released to provide training to ~~refinement year~~ districts participating in the refinement year activities.

During the fall of 2015, after pilot-year feedback has been collected and analyzed, TEA will also work through the process of revising administrative code rules around teacher evaluations and writing the rules around the principal evaluation process. TEA will continue to work with both the teacher steering committee and the principal steering committee in this process, and will convene multiple stakeholder events to gather feedback on the rules revision and creation process.

Monitoring of Evaluation Systems

TEA will continue to support districts that choose to pursue locally adopted evaluation systems that either favorably compare to or go beyond the ~~state~~ state-recommended evaluation systems. TEA will monitor the implementation of both state and locally adopted evaluation systems to ensure fidelity of implementation and alignment with state statute and rule. The goal of monitoring is to ensure that each district is implementing an evaluation system that focuses on continuous

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improvement of performance, provides clear, useful and timely feedback that informs professional development, appropriately differentiates between performance levels, uses multiple valid measures, provides for observations and evaluations on a regular basis, and is used to place personnel in the best position to succeed. Monitoring will include:

- ~~Annual~~ annual recertification of appraisers to maintain inter-rater reliability on the state systems;
- ~~Continued~~ continued training and support to local districts so that fidelity of implementation of the statewide system exists beyond the initial training on the statewide system;
- ~~District~~ district reporting of evaluation systems used and the components of those systems (if not the state systems) to the Region ~~XIII~~13 ESC;
- ~~Annual~~ annual spot monitoring of districts ~~in each region of the state~~ to evaluate implementation and adherence to evaluation requirements (see Outcomes-Based Monitoring, below); and
- ~~Continued~~ continued opportunities for training and collaboration regarding methods of capturing student growth for non-tested grades and subjects .

Personnel Decisions

The Texas Education Code requires that school districts use recent evaluation results before making decisions not to renew teachers if evaluation is relevant to the nonrenewal decision (TEC §21.203(a)). -TEC also requires school districts to use evaluation results from multiple years when making employment decisions and developing career recommendation for teachers (TEC §21.352(e)).

3.B Ensure LEAs Implement Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems

This section addresses the state's process for ensuring that each LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements evaluation and supports systems consistent with the state's guidelines yielding high-quality local teacher and principal evaluation systems.

Teacher Evaluation Implementation

Current Texas Education Code ~~[~~(TEC §21.352~~]~~) requires LEAs to use the state-developed evaluation system *or* a locally developed system that contains the same components required of~~as~~ the state system. As mentioned earlier, 86 percent of school districts in the state presently use PDAS, Texas's approved instrument for teacher evaluation., ~~while new s~~State law~~,~~ TEC §21.352(c-1), requires components of the appraisal process, including classroom observations and walk-throughs, to be conducted more frequently for new teachers and teachers who show deficiencies in evaluation results~~requires that districts conduct frequent and regular observations of all teachers (HB 2012, 83rd Regular Legislative Session)~~.

At the core, Texas believes in the ability of local districts to implement comprehensive evaluation systems that work best in their communities. TEA believes that most of ~~our~~ the state's more than 1000 independent school districts have used the state-approved appraisal system due to the quality

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of tools and training provided by ~~the Agency and education service centers~~TEA and the ESCs. Additionally, districts have embraced the system because of the collaborative nature of the rollout as opposed to implementing a top-down approach.

The culture of local control has aided TEA in designing a new teacher appraisal system. -TEA has selected effective approaches to teacher appraisal based on the successes of districts throughout the state that have implemented locally adopted appraisal systems that were more effective and robust than the former state system. -In studying the practices of Austin ISD, Houston ISD, Dallas ISD, Pflugerville ISD, and other similar districts ~~like them~~ throughout the state that implemented unique yet rigorous, evidence-based appraisal systems, TEA was able to capitalize on the efforts of districts not constrained by the state system and free to innovate beyond that system at the local level.- ~~Those local innovations provided the evidence base and de facto field testing that TEA utilized in making determinations on what components and tools would best belong in a state-designed appraisal system.~~

For example in Dallas ISD, teachers are evaluated using the locally developed Teacher Excellence Initiative which requires an annual evaluation along with using up to 35% of student achievement as a performance measure for some teachers. Houston ISD's locally developed Teacher Appraisal and Development System, requires regular feedback along with annual teacher evaluation based on value-added student performance data. These local innovations provided the evidence base and de facto field testing that TEA utilized in making determinations on what components and tools would best belong in a state-designed appraisal system.

Due to the cost-effectiveness of using the state system, desire from districts for a better measure of teacher effectiveness, and historical precedent, TEA anticipates that most districts will ~~want to~~ use the newly approved teacher evaluation standards, observation instruments, Goal-Setting and Professional Development Plan~~self-assessments~~, student growth measures, and related tools and training. ~~Although Texas has not had a standardized principal evaluation system, TEA anticipates most districts will also use that tool developed as the result of SB 1383 (82nd Regular Legislative Session) as we plan to rollout both systems simultaneously beginning in the 2016-2017 school year.~~

TEA currently works with one lead Education Service Center (ESC 13) and at least one representative from the other 19 ~~Education Service Centers~~an existing ~~Education Service Center Professional Development Appraisal System Advisory Group (ESC PDAS Advisory Group)~~ ESCs to standardize training, introduce and refine training materials~~,~~ and refine teacher evaluation in districts that use the state evaluation system~~PDAS~~. TEA will continue to utilize that infrastructure and leverage that expertise to provide training, monitor implementation~~,~~ and refine the revised teacher appraisal system when it launches statewide.

In coordination with the ESCs and pilot districts ~~PDAS Advisory Group~~, TEA ~~will~~ is developing an implementation manual that captures procedures and best practices consistent with the goal of providing valuable feedback to teachers and principals ~~to improve practices and student performance~~ for all districts, including the 14 percent of districts using locally-developed teacher evaluation systems. This guidance will be used by each of the regional ESCs to provide ongoing support and ~~guidance~~ training to districts using locally developed plans to ensure consistent

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implementation of evaluation systems across the state. TEA and the ESCs will have these materials developed prior to the 20156-20167 school year and refined prior to the 2016-2017 school yearto assist any district not using the new state evaluation system.

TEA will revive data collection of teacher evaluations through the current reporting system that is coordinated by ESC 13. Prior to 2011 the Agency and ESC 13 regularly collected data on the usage and results of the state-approved evaluation system in accordance with commissioner's rule. The creation of a more robust and significant evaluation system makes this data tool more relevant. During the pilot years, these evaluation systems data will provide useful comparisons between existing pilot and newly developed appraisals. During statewide implementation, these data will enable TEA to monitor LEA use of teacher appraisals, with the concurrent ability to adapt and intervene as required. In addition, the Agency will implement random spot checking of LEAs to monitor compliance coupled with providing technical assistance to ensure they receive the necessary support needed. As a result of the spot monitoring, if the Agency finds a district is not complying with state law by implementing the state model or a system that has the same components as the state model, the Agency will require districts to comply with state law and revert to implementing the state model and will take enforcement action to ensure implementation as needed.

Additionally, TEA will update Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 150 to provide specific guidance on what components should be included in a locally developed system. In accordance with TEC §21.352(c-1)newly legislated HB 2012(83rd Regular Legislative Session), administrative rules will reflect the expectations that evaluations happen on a regular and timely basis including multiple observations, walk-throughs, and measures of student learning, and provide an opportunity for teacher self-reflection. Finally, the AgencyTEA will set guidance for districts on the appropriate use of evaluations data to help inform career decisions for all teachers.

Principal Evaluation Implementation

Current statute and commissioner's rules allow districts to implement their own principal evaluation systems based on state established standards. Because of Texas's commitment to local control, we will continue to follow this model with the new principal standards. However, in addition to standards, Texas will havehas new principal evaluation instruments. While many districts will continue to use or adapt their current principal evaluation instruments, many will chose to use the new TEA principal evaluation system. Although Texas has not had a standardized principal evaluation system in the past, TEA anticipates most districts will also use that tool developed as the result of SB 1383 (82nd Regular Legislative Session) as we rollout both systems simultaneously beginning in the 2016-2017 school year.

MBy mirroring the system currently used for teacher evaluation, TEA will has established a lead ESC for principal evaluation, and an advisory group to facilitate training, standardization, refinement and development of the principal evaluation system. TEA will has leveraged that expertise to provide training, monitor implementation, and refine the revised principal evaluation tools for the 2014-2015 pilot year, and will continue to engage this advisory group during the 2015-2016 refinement year and when they new principal evaluation system launches statewide in the 2016-2017 school year.

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~~Districts which opt to continue using their existing principal evaluation tools, or elect to adapt their tools to the new standards, will be supported in their efforts as long as the components are state approved. The Agency will implement spot checking of random LEAs to monitor compliance coupled with providing technical assistance to ensure they receive the necessary support needed. As a result of the spot monitoring, if the Agency finds a district is not complying with state law by implementing the state model or a system that has the same components as the state model, the Agency will require districts to comply with state law and revert to implementing the state model and will take enforcement action to ensure implementation as needed.~~

TEA still has the data collection systems it used to gather data for Phase II of the Education Fund under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (CFDA Number 84.394). These data, especially those for Descriptor/Indicators (a)(2) – Part 1, (a)(2) – Part 2, (a)(6) and (a)(7) will allow TEA to monitor LEA use of principal appraisals, with the concurrent ability to adapt and intervene as required.

Outcomes-Based Monitoring

As described earlier, all ~~p~~Priority and ~~f~~Focus schools ~~identified in the Texas accountability system as *Improvement Required*~~ will be assigned a professional services provider (PSP)~~,~~ to engage in the continuous improvement process~~,~~ and address and correct areas of campus low performance. Districts also must designate a district coordinator of school improvement (DCSI). ~~-~~The PSP will be selected, trained, monitored and evaluated each year. Both the PSP and the DCSI work together to support the campus through the improvement process and identified interventions. This improvement process includes addressing each of the Critical Success Factors described earlier in section 2.A.

In addition, state statute defines the duties of the PSP, including facilitating data analysis and development of a needs assessment; working on curriculum and instruction; addressing teacher quality; reviewing principal performance; and recommending which educators to retain (see full statutes TAC 97.1063 and 97.1064 in *Attachment 11~~7~~d*). The PSP's role is to monitor progress and to ensure (1) an increase in quality instruction; (2) effective leadership and teaching; and (3) that student achievement and graduation rates for all students, including English ~~l~~Language Learners, students with disabilities, and the lowest achieving students, improves. ~~-~~The Department of Educator Evaluation and Support at TEA will work with the Department of School Improvement to review ~~how~~ways in which ~~p~~Priority and ~~f~~Focus schools are implementing teacher and principal evaluation systems and ensuring that they are consistent with state requirements and that they promote the primary purposes of the state evaluation systems – to facilitate the growth of all educators.

Campuses that did not achieve results that allow them to exit ~~p~~Priority status will be required to utilize additional services to assist in the data analysis and needs assessment process of their improvement planning. In addition to quarterly reporting on their improvement plans, campuses will be required to participate in regular conference calls with their TEA support specialist to discuss progress over time.

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