Regional and District Level Report

A Report to the 85th Texas Legislature from the Texas Education Agency

Submitted to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House,

and Members of the Eighty-fifth Texas Legislature

Contents

Figures

Introduction

The following report is prepared by the Texas Education Agency in response to Section 39.333 of the Texas Education Code. The report includes regional and district level information for the two preceding school years (i.e., 2014-2015 and 2015-2016) on the following five subjects.

Student-Teacher Ratios and Class Size Limitations

TEC §39.333(1) requires (i) a review of the number of campuses and classes at each campus granted an exemption from student-teacher ratio requirements per TEC §25.112, and (ii) for each campus granted an exemption from TEC §25.112, a statement of whether the campus has been awarded a distinction designation under Subchapter G or has been identified as an unacceptable campus under Subchapter E.

Exemptions and Waivers

TEC §39.333(2) requires (i) a summary of exemptions and waivers granted to campuses and school districts under §7.056 and §39.232, and (ii) a review of the effectiveness of each campus or district following deregulation.

Regional Education Service Centers (ESCs)

TEC §39.333(3) requires an evaluation of the performance of the system of regional education service centers based upon (i) the indicators adopted under Section 8.101, and

(ii) client satisfaction with services provided under Subchapter B, Chapter 8.

Accelerated Instruction Programs

TEC §39.333(4) requires an evaluation of accelerated instruction programs offered under TEC §28.006, which refers to accelerated reading programs for kindergarten through grade 2 (K – 2) and grade 7. TEC §39.333 also requires an assessment of the quality of such programs and the performance of students enrolled.

Classes Taught by Uncertified Teachers

TEC §39.333(5) requires a review of the number of classes at each school campus currently taught by individuals not certified in the content areas of their respective classes.

Student-Teacher Ratios and Class Size Limitations

Overview

TEC §25.111 and TEC §25.112 prescribe student-teacher ratios and class size limitations on school districts. TEC §39.333(1) requires (i) a review of the number of campuses and classes at each campus granted an exemption from TEC §25.112, and (ii) for each campus granted an exemption from TEC §25.112, a statement of whether the campus has been awarded a distinction designation under Subchapter G or has been identified as an unacceptable campus under Subchapter E. However, the 2014 and 2015 rating labels were *Met Standard, Met Alternative Standard, Improvement Required, Not Rated and Not Rated:Data Integrity Issues.*

TEC §25.111 states, "Except as provided by Section 25.112, each school district must employ a sufficient number of teachers … to maintain an average ratio of not less than one teacher for each 20 students in average daily attendance." TEC §25.112 states, "Except as otherwise authorized by this section, a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a kindergarten, first, second, third, or fourth grade class."[1] Therefore, school districts must maintain a 22:1 student-teacher ratio for all kindergarten through grade 4 (K – 4) classes. Per TEC §12.104, charter schools are not subject to student-teacher ratio requirements or class size limitations.

Student-Teacher Ratios[1]

The statewide student-teacher ratio for 2015-2016 was 15.2 (i.e., 15.2 students to one teacher). According to the data, the statewide student-teacher ratio remained relatively constant between 2002-2003 and 2010-2011. Between 2010-2011 and 2011-2012, the statewide student-teacher ratio increased 5%. Between 2011-2012 and 2015-2016, the statewide student-teacher ratio decreased slightly.
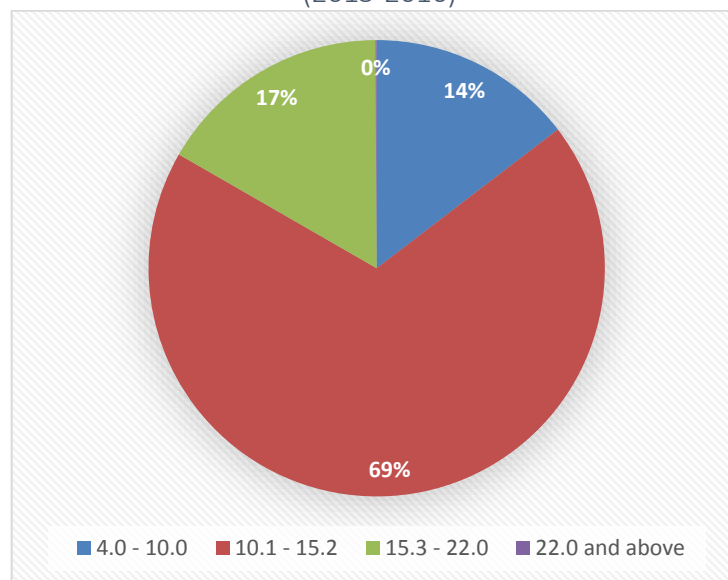
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[1] In this report, teacher data is presented by Full-Time Equivalents (FTE) instead of headcounts. While headcount is the actual number of teachers, FTE is the percentage of a teacher's day spent teaching. For example, an individual spending half a day in the classroom teaching and the other half as school counselor would be considered 0.5 teacher FTE.

Figure 1: Statewide Student-Teacher Ratios (2002-2003 and 2009-2010 to 2015-2016)[2,3]

School Year	Student-Teacher Ratio
2002-2003	14.7
2009-2010	14.5
2010-2011	14.7
2011-2012	15.4
2012-2013	15.5
2013-2014	15.4
2014-2015	15.2
2015-2016	15.2

The district-level analysis on student-teacher ratios indicated 15 or 1.24% of districts reported ratios greater than the student-teacher ratio requirement of 22.0. Additionally, 270 or 22% of districts reported ratios greater than the statewide student-teacher ratio of 15.2. However, the data includes observations of open-enrollment charter schools, which have no student-teacher ratio requirements per TEC §12.104. Therefore, these observations were excluded so only schools with student-teacher ratio requirements were analyzed.   After excluding open-enrollment charter schools from the analysis, the number of districts reporting a student-teacher ratio greater than 22.0 decreases to 1 or 0.09% of districts. The number of districts reporting ratios greater than the statewide student-teacher ratio of 15.2 decreases to 170 or 16.6% of districts. The figure below presents the percentage of districts reporting student-teacher ratios for the following four ranges: 4.0 to 10.0, 10.1 to 15.2, 15.3 to 22.0, and 22.0 and above. As Figure 2 shows, the majority of districts (i.e., 68.7%) reported student-teacher ratios between and 15.2 for the 2015-2016 school year.

Figure 2: District-Level Student-Teacher Ratios
Excludes Open-Enrollment Charter Schools
(2015-2016)

■ 4.0 - 10.0   ■ 10.1 - 15.2   ■ 15.3 - 22.0   ■ 22.0 and above

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Class Size Averages

In 2015-2016, the statewide class size averages for grades K – 4 were all below 22, satisfying the student-teacher ratio requirement of 22.0 per TEC §25.112 . Over a three year period, from 2012-2013 to 2015-2016, class size averages for grades K – 6 all decreased.   There are no class size average limitations for grades 5 and 6, or grades 9 through 12 (secondary).[4] However, the statewide class size averages for these grades were all   less than 22.   From 2012-2013 to 2015-2016, the statewide class size average for Math, Science and Foreign Language increased 0.5%. Over the same time period, secondary classes for Social Students and English Language Arts decreased.

Figure 3: Statewide Class Size Averages
(2012-2013 to 2015-2016)[5, 6]

Grade Level or Subject	2012-2013	2015-2016	Percentage Increase or Decrease Over 3 Year Period
K - 4			
Kindergarten	19.6	18.9	-3.5%
1st Grade	19.5	19.1	-2.0%
2nd Grade	19.4	19.1	-1.5%
3rd Grade	19.3	19.1	-1.0%
4th Grade	19.5	19.0	-2.5%
5th Grade	21.4	20.8	-2.8%
6th Grade	21.1	20.4	-3.3%
Secondary			
Math	18.0	18.1	0.5%
Science	19.0	19.1	0.5%
Social Studies	19.7	19.5	-1.0%
English/LA	17.4	17.1	-1.7%
Foreign Lang.	19.0	19.1	0.5%

The district-level analysis on grades K – 4 indicated between 5.3% and 6.6% of districts reported class size averages greater than 22 depending upon the grade level observed. However, the data includes observations of open-enrollment charter schools, which have no class size limitations per TEC §12.104. Therefore, these observations were excluded so only schools with class size limitations were analyzed.   After excluding open-enrollment charter

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[4] Secondary classes are considered to be grades 9 – 12 according to the TAPR Glossary. (Glossary for the TAPR 2015-2016, (http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/tapr/2016/glossary.pdf).)

[5] Data source: TAPR.

[6] The statewide class size averages reported in this section were obtained from TAPR reports. The TAPR reports do not distinguish between statewide class size averages for school districts and charter schools. Therefore, the statewide class size averages reported in Figure 3 include charter schools even though charter schools are not subject to class size limitations per TEC §12.104.

schools from the analysis, the percentage of districts reporting class size averages greater than 22 for grades K – 4 decreases to between 2.8% and 3.3% depending upon grade level observed.   Using the same methodology, approximately 14% of districts reported class size averages greater than 22 for grades 5 and 6.[7] For secondary subjects, between 1.2% and 10.2% of districts reported class size averages greater than 22 depending upon the subject observed.[8]

Figure 4: Districts with Class Size Averages Greater Than 22
Excludes Open-Enrollment Charter Schools
(2015-2016) [9]

Grade Level or Subject	Number of Districts with Class Size Averages Greater than 22	Number of Districts Observed[10]	Percentage of Districts with Class Size Averages Greater than 22
K - 4			
Kindergarten	32	978	3.3%
1st Grade	28	1,013	2.8%
2nd Grade	29	1,015	2.9%
3rd Grade	33	1,017	3.2%
4th Grade	33	1,019	3.2%
5th Grade	159	1,017	15.6%
6th Grade	125	1,018	12.3%
Secondary			
Math	32	1,012	3.2%
Science	66	1,012	6.5%
Social Studies	198	1,012	9.7%
English/LA	12	1,012	1.2%
Foreign Lang.	96	937	10.2%

Class Size Waivers

This section includes class size waiver data for school districts in and out of compliance with TEC §25.111 and TEC §25.112, both of which prescribe student-teacher ratios and class size limitations for public schools. More specifically, TEC §25.112 states, "a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a kindergarten, first, second, third, or fourth grade class."[11]   For schools unable to comply with the required student-teacher ratio of 22.0, they may apply to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for a class size waiver. However, the Commissioner of

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[7] When open-enrollment charters are included, approximately 16% of districts report class size averages greater than 22 for grade 5 and 6 in the 2015-2016 school year.
[8] When open-enrollment charters are included, between 3% and 11% of districts report class size averages greater than 22 depending upon the secondary subject observed in the 2015-2016 school year.
[9] Data source: TAPR.
[10] The number of districts observed changes between grade levels for several reasons (e.g., a district only serves high school students).
[11] Please see TEC §25.111 and TEC §25.112.

Education may only grant a class size waiver in cases of undue hardship and if the campus received a minimum academic performance rating. School districts must select at least one of the four undue hardship criteria when applying for a class size waiver. The four hardships include:

1) unable to employ qualified teachers;
2) unable to provide educational facilities;
3) financial hardship (i.e., a district which has budgeted for a class size ratio of 22:1 in grades K – 4 but has a campus (or campuses) with enrollment increases or shifts); or
4) unanticipated growth in student enrollment.

Approximately 270 and 257 school districts **applied** for class size waivers in 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, respectively.   However, not all class size waivers were approved by TEA due to waivers being withdrawn, duplicative, or denied. A class size waiver is denied when a campus has not met the minimum academic performance rating.[12] Figure 5 includes the number of class size waivers **approved** by TEA during the four preceding school years.

Figure 5: Number of Approved Class Size Waivers
(2012-2013 to 2015-2016)

	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Districts	259	235	253	241
Campuses	1,514	1,286	1,243	1,109
K – 4 Classes				
Kindergarten	1,389	1,070	1,076	665
1st Grade	1,416	1,299	1,209	913
2nd Grade	1,358	1,108	1,198	773
3rd Grade	1,420	1,215	1,195	937
4th Grade	1,564	1,218	1,243	955
Total K – 4 Classes	7,147	5,910	5,921	4,243
Most Commonly Cited Hardship	Financial Hardship	Unanticipated Growth	Unanticipated Growth	Unanticipated Growth

As shown in Figure 5, between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, the number of class size waivers for districts and campuses decreased 9% and 15% respectively, while the number for total K-4 classes decreased 17%.

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[12] In 2013 to 2016, school districts, charter schools, and campuses received performance ratings of either Met Standard, Met Alternative Standard, Improvement Required or Not Rated. If a campus received an Improvement Required performance rating, the class size waiver was denied.

Between 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, the number of class size waivers for districts increased 8% and campuses decreased 3%, while the number for total K – 4 classes increased 0.2%. Between 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, the number of class size waivers for districts and campuses decreased 5% and 11%, respectively, while the number for total K – 4 classes decreased 28%

With the exception of the slight increase in class size waivers during the 2014-2015 school year, the overall number class size waivers has been decreasing. In 2012-2013, financial hardship was the most commonly cited hardship for class size waivers. Since 2013-2014, unanticipated growth was the most commonly cited hardship for class size waivers.

Agency Contact Person(s)

For information on **general state waivers**, please contact A.J. Crabill, Deputy Commissioner for Governance, or Leah Martin at (512) 463-5899 or accred@tea.state.tx.us.

Exemptions and Waivers

Overview

TEC §39.333(2) requires (i) a summary of exemptions and waivers granted to campuses and school districts under §7.056 and §39.232, and (ii) a review of the effectiveness of each campus or district following deregulation. The 2014 and 2015 rating labels were *Met Standard, Met Alternative Standard, Improvement Required, Not Rated and Not Rated:Data Integrity Issues.* As there were no exemplary ratings, the automatic exemption under TEC §39.232 does not apply. Therefore, this section only reviews waivers related to TEC §7.056.

State Waivers Granted 2014-2015 and 2015-2016

In the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, the Commissioner of Education granted a combined total of 4,338 state waivers and 494 class size exceptions applications. Please see the section on Student-Teacher Ratios and Class Size Limitations for an in-depth review of class size exceptions, referred to as class size waivers in this report. In Figure 14 below, state waivers granted in the two preceding school years are presented by waiver type.[13] As the figure below shows, the most frequently requested waivers were for staff development, early release days, missed school days, and low attendance days.

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[13] There are 16 types of waivers schools may submit to TEA for approval. Waiver types accounting for 2.0% or less total state waivers are included in the "All Other Waivers" category in Figure 6. The "All Other Waivers" category includes six types of state waivers and accounted for 168 total waivers over the two preceding school years.

Figure 6: State Waivers Granted (2014-2015 and 2015-2016)[14]

- Staff Development - General
- Early Release Days
- Staff Development for Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies
- Missed Instructional Days
- Low Attendance Days
- Teacher Data Portal
- Modified Schedule State Assessment Testing Days
- Timeline for Accelerated Instruction
- All Other Waivers
- Other Miscellaneous
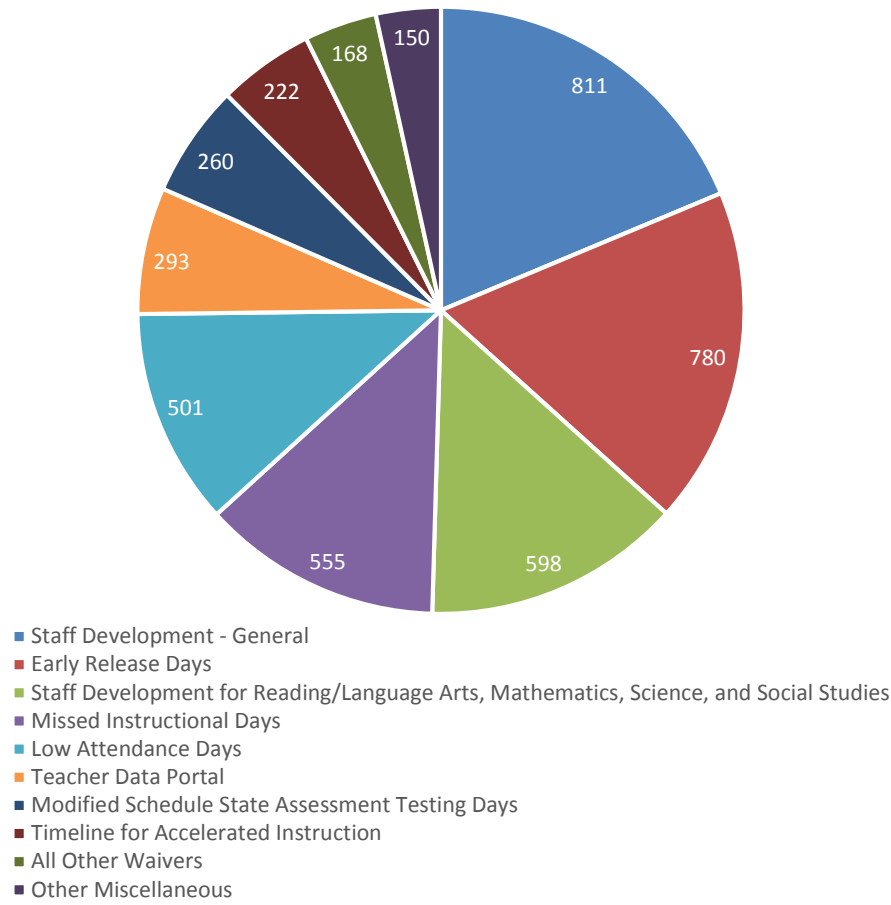
Staff Development Waivers

The type of waiver most frequently requested, "Staff Development – General," allows a school district or campus to modify its calendar, making additional time available for staff development. During the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, the commissioner approved a total of 811 of these waiver applications granting up to a maximum of three days for general staff development. To encourage staff development related to reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, the commissioner may approve two additional waiver days for staff development. The commissioner granted 598 of these types of waivers over the two preceding school years. One additional day of staff development was previously permissible to be approved for districts requesting to participate in eligible conferences appropriate to individual teaching assignments, however this type of waiver is no longer available as of October 2015. The commissioner had granted 37 of these types of

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[14] Waivers approved from 06/01/2014 through 05/31/2015 and from 6/01/2015 through 05/31/2016.

waivers over the two preceding school years.[15] Overall, waivers related to staff development accounted for 33.3% of total state waivers granted during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years.[16]

Early Release Day Waivers

The second type of waiver most frequently requested was classified as "Early Release Day." This type of waiver accounted for 18.0% of total state waivers granted during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years.   According to TEA, an Early Release Day waiver "allows the districts and charter schools to conduct school for less than seven hours for a total of six days of student instruction a year. These days may provide additional training in education methodologies or provide time to meet the needs of student and local communities."[17]

Attendance Waivers

The third type of waivers most frequently requested were classified as "Low Attendance Day" and "Missed School Day", accounting for 11.5% and 12.8%, respectively. Collectively, these attendance-related waivers accounted for 24.3% of total state waivers granted during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years. According to TEA, Low Attendance Day waivers are, "waiver[s] to excuse any instructional days from ADA calculations and FSP funding that have attendance at least 10 percent below the last school year's average attendance due to inclement weather, health, safety-related, or other issues."[18]   Missed Instruction Day waivers are, "for excused absences if instructional days are missed due to inclement weather, health, safety-related, or other issues."[19]

Agency Contact Person(s)

For information on general state waivers, please contact A.J. Crabill, Deputy Commissioner for Governance, or Leah Martin at (512) 463-5899 or accred@tea.state.tx.us.

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[15] The 37 waivers granted for "Staff Development through Eligible Conference" is included in the "All Other Waivers" category in Figure 14 since   it makes up less than 1% of total state waivers granted in the two preceding school years (37 /4,338 = 0.9%).
[16] Calculation:(811 + 598 + 37) / 4,338 = 33.3%.
[17] Texas Education Agency, "State Waiver Types – Expedited" (http://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=7085#ER).
[18] Texas Education Agency, "State Waiver Types – Attendance" (http://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=7089#MID).
[19] Texas Education Agency, "State Waiver Types – Attendance" (http://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=7089#MID).

Section III:
Regional Education Service Centers

Since their creation in 1967, the twenty regional education service centers (ESCs) have played an integral role in the provision of necessary and essential services to school districts and charter schools, as known as Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in the implementation of school reform and school improvement. In that effort, the ESCs have carried out the mandates of the legislature and the commissioners of education to assist LEAs of all sizes in their efforts to improve the education of Texas school children. These efforts have proved critical in the positive improvement of LEAs and the education of Texas school children over the past fifty years. In that cause, the ESCs have focused their collective and individual expertise and resources on providing Texas' educators with professional development and technical assistance as well as administrative and financial support, which have assisted in their success. In recent years, the ESCs have taken the lead in preparing Texas teachers in core subject areas to meet the ever-increasing demands of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Additionally, the ESCs have been focused on assisting the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in promoting the financial health and viability of Texas LEAs during rapidly changing and more complicated financial times.

Purpose

The Texas Legislature clearly defined the purpose of the ESCs (TEC 8.003):

- Assist LEAs in improving student performance in each region of the system;
- Enable LEAs to operate more efficiently and economically; and
- Implement initiatives assigned by the legislature or the commissioner of education.

In that effort, the commissioner, in consultation with the executive directors of the ESCs, establishes performance goals as they relate to LEAs and their students.

Background

The ESCs provide training, technical assistance, administrative support, and an array of other services as determined by the legislature, the commissioner of education, and the needs of LEAs across the state. The annual evaluation of client satisfaction indicates that superintendents, principals, and teachers in LEAs overwhelmingly rate the work of the ESCs as high across all sizes and types of districts.

ESC services are reviewed annually by the Commissioner of Education in a multi-phased review of the ESCs and the quality and effectiveness of their services as reflected in an analysis of both student achievement and client satisfaction measures.

At the direction of the 78th Texas Legislature, the ESCs as well as the TEA and the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) came under sunset review. Additionally, the legislature passed Senate Bill 929 requiring an extensive audit of the ESCs. Under the direction and supervision of the Legislative Budget Board (LBB), MGT of America, Inc. conducted the audit. Recommendations from that audit, the LBB, and the Texas Sunset Commission have directed the current and future work of the ESCs.

Education Service Center Location and Governance

The map of the ESCs, shown below, shows the location of the 20 ESCs. ESCs are assigned responsibility for providing core services to each LEA, within their respective regional boundaries. In accordance with state law, LEAs may elect to receive services from any ESC in the state. In 1967, the State Board of Education defined the regions as geographic areas of counties and the encompassed LEAs.

Each ESC is governed by a locally elected board of directors. Seven of those directors have voting power and are elected by the boards of trustees of school districts within the region. The eighth member is appointed by the Commissioner of Education to represent charter schools within the region and is a non-voting member. ESCs that do not currently have a charter operating within their region do not have a charter representative. Each ESC's board of directors, with the approval of the Commissioner of Education, selects an executive director who serves as the chief executive officer of that ESC. The ESC's board establishes policies that govern the operation of the ESC. In addition to its board of directors, each ESC has several advisory committees composed of stakeholders in the various service areas, including teachers, campus and central administrators, and superintendents and directors of charter schools. These committees provide input to the executive director regarding programs and services.

Figure 7 Map of the Education Service Centers of Texas
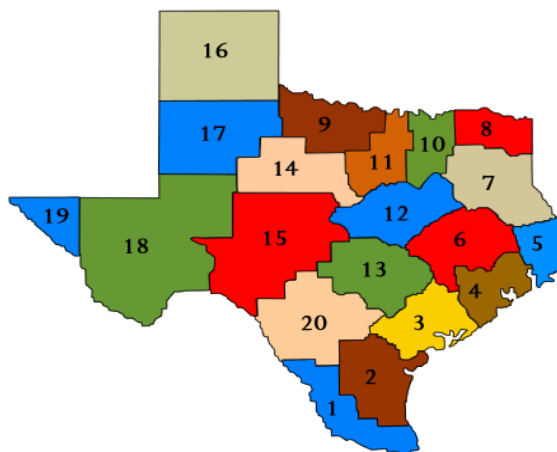
Education Service Center	Executive Director	Address	Phone Number
Region 1 – Edinburg	Dr. Cornelio Gonzales	1900 West Schunior, Edinburg, TX 78751	(956) 984-6000
Region 2 – Corpus Christi	Dr. Rick Alvarado	209 North Water St, Corpus Christi, TX 78401	(361) 561-8400
Region 3 – Victoria	Dr. Patty Shafer	1905 Leary Lane, Victoria, TX 77901	(361) 573-0731
Region 4 – Houston	Dr. Pam Wells	7145 West Tidwell, Houston, TX 77092	(713) 462-7708
Region 5 – Beaumont	Dr. Danny Lovett	350 Pine St. #500, Beaumont, TX 77701	(409) 838-5555
Region 6 – Huntsville	Mr. Michael Holland	3332 Montgomery Rd, Huntsville, TX 77340	(936) 435-8400
Region 7 – Kilgore	Mrs. Elizabeth Abernethy	1909 North Longview, Kilgore, TX 75662	(903) 988-6700
Region 8 – Mt. Pleasant/Pittsburg	Dr. David Fitts	4845 US Hwy 271 N, Pittsburg, TX, 75686	(903) 572-8551
Region 9 – Wichita Falls	Mr. Wes Pierce	301 Loop 11, Wichita Falls, TX 76306	(940) 322-6928
Region 10 – Richardson	Dr. Gordon Taylor	400 East Spring Valley, Richardson, TX 75081	(972) 348-1700
Region 11 – Fort Worth	Dr. Clyde Steelman	1451 South Cherry Ln, White Settlement, TX 76108	(817) 740-3600
Region 12 – Waco	Dr. Jerry Maze	2101 West Loop 340, Waco, TX 76702	(254) 297-1212
Region 13 – Austin	Dr. Rich Elsasser	5701 Springdale, Austin, TX 78723	(512) 919-5313
Region 14 – Abilene	Mr. Ronnie Kincaid	1850 Hwy 351, Abilene, TX 79601	(325) 675-8600
Region 15 – San Angelo	Mr. Scot Goen	612 South Irene, San Angelo, TX 76903	(325) 658-6571
Region 16 – Amarillo	Mr. Ray Cogburn	5800 Bell St, Amarillo, TX 79109	(806) 677-5000
Region 17 – Lubbock	Dr. Kyle Wargo	1111 West Loop 289, Lubbock, TX 79416	(806) 792-4000
Region 18 – Midland	Mr. John Thomas	2811 LaForce Blvd, Midland, TX 79711	(432) 563-2380
Region 19 – El Paso	Dr. Armando Aguirre	6611 Boeing Dr, El Paso, TX 79925	(915) 780-6537
Region 20 – San Antonio	Dr. Jeff Goldhorn	1314 Hines Ave, San Antonio, TX 78208	(210) 370-5200

Education Service Center Staffing

The responsibility of each ESC's executive director, operating under the policies of the ESC, is to employ necessary personnel to carry out the functions of the ESC. For the 2014–2015 school year, the ESCs employed a total of 4,969 full and part-time employees. Of these, 1,332 were Head Start employees, both professional and support, located in Regions 7, 9, 10, 14, 16, 19 and 20. 81 percent of all ESC employees are assigned to either direct or support services to schools and school personnel. The remaining employees represent the ESCs' administrative, operations, and management functions.

2014 – 2015 Budget Revenues

The ESCs have access to a combination of financial resources (state, federal, and local) to provide services within each region. For 2014 - 2015, federal grants were the largest element of ESC revenues representing 51 percent of total projected revenues for 2014 - 2015.

ESC Revenue for the 2014-2015 School Year	
Federal Grants	$285,238,078
State Grants	$54,755,840
Legislative Appropriations	$12,500,000
Local Revenue	$206,669,089
Total	$559,163,006

Source: Figure 8 FY 2016 ESC Annual Data Collection

Distribution of these funds ranges from over $10.7 million in Region 5 to over $77 million in Region 10. The three regions (Regions 4, 10, and 11) with the largest number of students (comprising 48.9 percent of the total students served in the state) received 23.5 percent of the total revenue. Likewise, the three regions (Region 3, 9, and 15) with the smallest number of students (comprising 2.7 percent of the total number of students served in the state received 6.6 percent of the total revenue.

A review of the primary sources of ESC revenue reveals that ten ESCs receive the greatest portion of the revenue from federal sources, including flow through funding. The remaining ten ESCs receive the greatest portion from local LEA revenue.
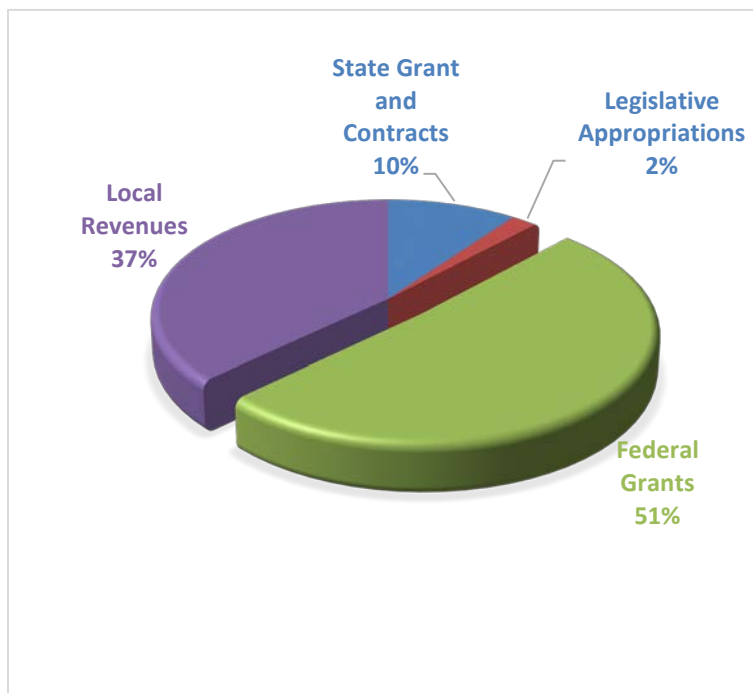
Legislative Appropriations

Rider 35 of the General Appropriations Act of 2015, 84th Legislative Session, directs the distribution of $12,500,000 in fiscal year 2016 and $12,500,000 in fiscal year 2017 to ESCs. These funds are divided and distributed by the commissioner of education. Twenty percent of the funding is divided equally among all the ESCs; 40 percent of the funding is distributed on a geographic basis determined by the number of students per square mile and give more money to those ESCs with a lower population density; and 40 percent of the funding is distributed to ESCs that serve LEAs with average daily attendance (ADA) of 1,600 or less (rural schools).[20]

Those revenues can be classified into the following categories: core services and ESC operations; legislative initiatives; and commissioner initiatives. ESCs supplement through other forms of revenue to ensure the completion of these categories.

For 2014 – 2015, the legislative appropriations totaled $12.5 million, or 2 percent of the total 2014 – 2015 ESC revenues.

State Grant and Contracts

State grants and contracts represent funds flowing from the TEA and other state agencies to the ESCs through several different means. Legislative initiatives include such appropriations as those for the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (TTESS), Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (TPESS), Reading Academies, and Math Academies.

For 2014 – 2015, the grants and contracts totaled $54.8 million or 10 percent of the total 2014 – 2015 ESC revenues.

Federal Grants

Federal grants represents federal (discretionary and formula) categorical funds, which flow through the TEA or other agencies to the ESCs either through a competitive or non-competitive grant process. Although classified as discretionary funds, federal grants such as Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funds are distributed on a formula basis. Federal grants also include direct federal grants (e.g., Head Start) and categorical funding that flows from other state agencies (e.g., Early Childhood Intervention). ESCs also receive funds from the Texas Department of Agriculture to help execute the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs for schools across the state. This program is funded through the United

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[20] Legislative Budget Board, *Regional Education Service Centers: An Issue Brief*, September 2012

States Department of Agriculture.

For 2014 – 2015, the federal grants totaled over $285.2 million or 51 percent of the total 2014-2015 school year ESC revenues.

In addition to federal program, technical assistance, and professional development funds, the ESCs also administer the statewide operation of certain federal competitive and non-competitive programs such as the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Grant.

Local Revenues

The ESCs have no taxing authority. Participation by LEAs in ESC programs/services is strictly voluntary. As a result, ESCs must customize and market their services to LEAs and private schools as well as outside individuals and entities to generate local revenue. In large measure, local revenues are generated in three ways: fee-for-service; fees generated from sources (e.g., sale of products, etc.), and revenues from other local sources including the internal service fund and from other public and private entities.

For 2014 – 2015, local revenues totaled over $206.7 million or 37 percent of 2014-2015 ESC revenues.

2014 – 2015 Budget Expenditures[2]

The ESCs budget, expend, and account for funds within the accounting system delineated in TEA's Financial Accountability System Resource Guide. This system utilizes multilevel accounting including accounting by fund, function, and expenditure codes. Because ESCs are organized to accomplish a service mission that is different from LEAs, the costs associated with various functions differ from that of LEAs. In the area of shared services arrangements, the ESCs frequently serve as fiscal agents for a large number of LEAs in order to increase the LEAs' buying power. For example, all ESCs operate or participate in various types of purchasing cooperatives. These purchasing cooperatives guarantee member districts greater purchasing power through economies of scale.

Cost of Services

The cost of providing similar levels of services in the different regions also varies by regional economic factors. Certain demographic variables, though not restricted to any one ESC, determine the cost levels of these similar services. Among the factors influencing these costs are:

21Financial data is taken from the 2016 Annual Data Collection

- Geographic size of the region;
- Average daily attendance (ADA) of the region;
- Scarcity and density of districts and campuses within the region;
- Number of districts and campuses served;
- Regional economic conditions; and
- Student population characteristics.

Fund Balances

According to the fund balance categories as outlined in the Financial Accountability System Resource Guide, all fund balances are listed within each ESC's independent audit report and reflect individual governmental funds' accumulated revenues in excess of expenditures. As recommended by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), fund balance in the general fund should be no less than 2 months of general fund expenditures; however, some ESCs may need larger fund balances due to cash flow issues with regards to the timing of reimbursements for large state and federal grants. Circumstances may require other fund balance classifications.

Services

Services provided by the ESCs to LEAs and other entities are of six major types: core services identified in statute; decentralized agency functions; administrative support for LEAs; instructional support for schools; direct student instruction; and other locally determined services. The chief purposes of these services are to assist in the improvement of student performance, to assist schools to operate more efficiently and effectively, and to carry out the initiatives of the legislature and the commissioner of education.

Distance Learning

In the 2014 – 2015 school year, 7,760 Texas school students accessed Interactive Video Conferences (IVC) distance learning classes to meet their needs in dual enrollment classes. Another 7,909 students accessed distance learning classes to meet the needs of the required high school curriculum. Approximately, 6,615 electronic field trips were taken by more than 238,300 students. In 2014-2015 more than 286,500 Texas educators accessed professional development, and over 5,000 Texas educators received certification coursework through distance learning means, resulting in a significant savings of time and funds.

Texas Educational Telecommunications Network (TETN**)**
Since its inception in 1996, the Texas Education Telecommunications Network (TETN) has provided video, voice, and data services among the 20 ESCs and the TEA. The TETN cooperative was formed to accomplish three main goals: save out-of-pocket expenses by reducing travel required to attend meetings in Austin; enhance productivity

to service ESC staff, district personnel, administrators, teachers and students; and create "added value" to network users.

The network was developed in a cost-share model in which all users shared equally, thereby assuring the inclusion of all ESCs across the state without undue burden. The network is currently highly utilized for video conferencing, statewide activities for students, distance learning, and traditional telecommunication services.

Beginning in 2007 with the initiation of the TETN Plus project, TETN began building Gigabit connections to provide a high-speed, high capacity backbone as recommended in the Texas Education Long Range Plan for Technology. Peering with Texas higher education was implemented and shared Internet2 services were established by utilizing the infrastructure of the Lone Star Education and Research Network (LEARN).

Network Services

TETN's distinct network services to ESCs includes: video, intranet, internet2, commodity internet, disaster recovery transport, and backhauling. Benefits of the network include:

- Access to internet bandwidth at significantly reduced rates
- Enhanced quality access to over 90,000 institutions, agencies, and corporations on Internet2
- Enhanced quality access to the commodity internet through Internet2
- Direct access to state universities and ESCs and their services, allowing for the removal of dedicated circuits for significant cost savings; and
- Shared applications and service between ESCs without bandwidth constraints or quality of service issues via the private intranet.

Video Services

Utilizing the TETN video network, all ESCs provide Interactive Video Conferences (IVC) to classrooms across the state. IVC is used to provide dual-credit and graduate courses, professional development, certification programs, TEA policy updates, and student programs.

TETN works with the ESCs to design and market: programs that utilize state specific content standards, events customized to fit ESC needs, broadband specific tools, and a host of other services (http://www.tetn.net). In collaboration with consortium members, the TETN activities include:

- 3,162 electronic field trips statewide from July 2014 to June 2015 to over 147,541 students
- 3,162 professional development events from July 2014 to June 2015 to 35,617 to staff

Due to changes in the IVC technology, students and teachers are able to utilize more direct connections to electronic field trips and resources for their classrooms. These direct connections do not require access through

TETN and ESCs. TETN and ESCs continue to promote valuable content and provide the broadband support and resources for LEAs to enrich their curriculum through IVC opportunities.

Texas State Virtual School Network (TxVSN)

The Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) provides a statewide course catalog of supplemental online courses for credit toward high school graduation to students enrolled in grades 8 to 12. Since its inception in January 2009, the TxVSN has provided Texas high school students with a valuable avenue for interactive, collaborative, instructor-led online courses taught by state certified and appropriately credentialed teachers. Statute authorizes the commissioner of education to contract with an ESC to operate the network. Region 10 currently serves as central operations for the TxVSN and is responsible for managing all systems used to operate the network, providing and maintaining TxVSN telecom and infrastructure, managing course review, and coordinating activities with providers, receiver districts, and stakeholders.

Alternative Certification Programs

During the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, the 16 ESCs which operate alternative certification programs (ACPs), issued 3,780 certifications to teachers and principals for successful candidates passing the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES). Of that number, 3,168 were teacher certificates and 612 were principal certificates. The following table lists the combined number of teacher and administrator certifications issued during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years from the 16 ESCs which operate ACPs. There was a significant drop in total certifications issued due to districts reducing staff and increasing student to teacher ratios.

Figure 9: ESC Alternative Certification Programs			
School Year	Number of Teacher Certifications	Number of Principal Certifications	Number of Superintendent Certifications	Total
2014-2015	1,672	310	60	2,042
2015-2016	1,496	302	50	1,848
Total	*3,168*	*612*	*110*	*3,890*

Source: TEA Department of Educator Preparation and Program Accountability, November 2016

Core Services (Section 8.051 and 8.121):

The ESCs develop, maintain, and deliver services designed to improve student performance. Additionally, the ESCs offer services which enable LEAs to operate more efficiently and economically, and core services in the following areas:

- Training and technical assistance in teaching reading, mathematics, writing, English language arts, social studies, and science.
- Training in personal financial literacy
- Training and technical assistance to programs of special education, compensatory education, bilingual education, and gifted and talented education.
- Assistance specifically designed for an LEA rated academically unacceptable or a campus whose performance is considered unacceptable.
- Training and assistance to teachers, administrators, members of district boards of trustees, and members of site-based decision-making committees.
- Assistance specifically designed for an LEA that is considered out of compliance with state or federal special education requirements, based on the agency's most recent compliance review of the district's special education programs; and
- Assistance in complying with state laws and rules.

List of Products and Services Offered by the ESCs:

The following is a list of products/services provided by various ESCs; however, services do change to meet the needs and requests of LEAs:

504
5E Instructional Model
Academic Achievement Record (AAR)
Accelerated Curriculum
Accessible Instructional Materials
Accommodations in Instruction and Assessment
Accountability
Accountability Monitoring
Accountability Turnaround Team
Adapted PE
Advanced Academics
Advancing Educational Leadership
Alternative Education Program
Adapted Literature/Digital Books Library
Adopted Materials (Textbooks)
Adult Basic Education (GED and ESL)
Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD)
Administrative Services
Advancing Educational Leadership (AEL)
Advanced Academics
Affordable Care Act (ACA) Training and Support
Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) Grant Cycles
    7 and 8
Agency Partners
Alternative Certification Programs
Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives
(AMAOs)
AppleCare Warranty Support
Application and Compliance Preparation
Assessment Creation and Support
Assessment/Progress Monitoring
Assistive Technology / Lending Libraries
Attendance Accountant Compliance Assessment
At Risk /Dropout Prevention
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
    Support/Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)
    Support
Authentic Learning and Assessment
Background Checks
Behavior
- Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs)
- Classroom
- Discipline Management
- Incident Tracking and Reporting
- Restorative Discipline

Bilingual Education Monitoring
Bilingual/ English As a Second Language (ESL)

Bridging the Leadership Team Institute
Bright Bytes Clarification
Bullying Prevention
Bus Audits
Bus Driver Training
Business Managers Roundtable, Training and
Support
Business Services
- Information Management
- TxEIS and iTCCS Support

Calendar and Required Minutes Training and
Support
Canvas- Learning Management System
Career and Technical Education Work Study Program
Career Clusters
Career Day
Career / Technical Education
Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist Services
CHAMPS
Charter Schools
Child Find Services
Campus/District Improvement Team Training
Coaching (Instructional, Leadership)
College and Career Readiness
College Preparation for English Language Arts and
    Mathematics
Commissioner's Rule Review Process
Communities in Schools (CIS)
Community Resource Coordination Groups
Compliance Services
Content Filtering Services
Cooperative Purchasing Networks
Co-Teaching
Counselor Support and Certification
CPR/First Aid Training
Credit by Exam (CBE)
Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI)
Crisis Management
Curriculum Leadership for Principals
Curriculum Services
Cycle Menus for Schools
Data Backup Solution
Data Digs
Data Processing/Information Management
Data Validation Monitoring
Deaf Education Certification Program
Dell Warranty Support

Desktop Computer Support
Diagnostician Support
Differentiated Instruction (DI)
Digital Media Production
Disabilities Services-
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorders (ADD/ADHD)
- Auditory Impairments
- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Deaf-blindness
- Dyslexia
- Emotional Disturbances/Behavior Disorders
- Intellectual Disabilities
- Learning Disabilities
- Other Health Impairments
- Orthopedic/Physical Impairments
- Speech/Language Disorders
- Traumatic Brain Injuries
- Visual Impairments

Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP)
Discovery Education/Streaming
Disproportionate Representation
DMAC Solutions- Data Management for Assessment Curriculum
DNS Services
Driver Education Classroom- Simulation and In-Car Instruction
Driver Education 32 House License on Line (LOL)
Driver Education Parent Taught Course "Ready, Set, Drive"
Dropout Training and Supports
Dual Credit Classes – Scheduling and Bridging Via Video Conference
Dual Language Support
Early Childhood Data System (ECDS)
Early Childhood Education
Early Childhood Intervention
Early Childhood Transition
Early Head Start
Early Reading Instruments
Ecoland Learning Center
Educator Placement Service
Eduhero
Eduphoria
Email Scanning Services
EMAT
English Language Arts Support
English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) Academics
Email Hosting
Employment Application Software and Support
End of Course Success Support

English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) Academies
E-Rate Training
ETEDA- East Texas Educational Diagnosticians' Association
Evaluation for Special Education
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
Everyone S.H.A.R.E. the Road Program
Facilitated Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
Fine Arts
Firewall Services
Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG) Training and Support
Financial Integrity Rating System (FIRST)
Financial Review and Support
Focus Campus Grant Support
Focus/Priority Schools Support
Food Services
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- Child Nutrition Services
- Commodity Processing
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
- Summer Food Programs

Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)
Gifted and Talented (G/T)
Grade Point Average/Transcript Audits
Grade Placement Committee (GPC)
Grade Advancement (SSI)
Graduation Requirements
Grants Management
Guidance/Counseling
HB 5 Training and Support
Head Start
Help Desk Ticketing Services
High Quality Prekindergarten Grant Program Training and Support
High Reliability Schools
High School Redesign and Restructuring
Higher Education Support
Highly Qualified Paraprofessional Recruitment
Homebound Services
Homeless
Homeschool Support
Human Resources Assistance
IT Services
IT Network Services
Immigrant Support
Information Management Software – Business
Information Management Software – Student
Information Technology (IT) Services
Individualized Education Programs (IEP)
Innovation Districts Support

Instructional Materials Allotment (IMA)
Instructional Rounds Training and Support
Instructional Technology and Coordination
Internet Access
- Broadband
- Equipment Support/Ordering/Troubleshooting
- Filtering
- Network Assessment Services
- Network Server Support
- Safety
- Server Hosting

Interactive Television (ITV) - Equipment Support/Troubleshooting
ITV - Scheduling/Instruction
Job Fairs
Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Services
Kindergarten Readiness System (KRS)
Language Proficiency Assessment Committees (LPAC) Decision-Making
Languages Other Than English
Leadership Development
LearnKey – Online training and Certifications
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process
Lesson Study
Library/Librarian Support
Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) Support
Literacy Academies
Literacy Cohort
Local Area Network Support and Maintenance
Lynda.com – Online Training Manual
Maintenance Efficiency Study
Management Services
Manifestation Determination Review (MDR)
Mapping a Pathway to Student Success (MAPPS)
Math Academies
Math Coaching Academy
Meeting Rooms
Mentoring for Teachers and Administrators
Middle School Students in Texas: Algebra Ready
Migrant Education Information
Military Child Education Coalition
Mobile Application Services
Moodle
Multi-Cultural and Diverse Learners
Multi-Regional Library System (MrLibS)
National School Lunch Program
NCCER Certification Training
Netstart/Website Software for School Districts

New Teacher Orientation and Training
NovaNet Consortium
Nutrition
Occupational Therapy
Occupational Therapy Technical Assistance and CEUs
Online Expert – Online Training and Coaching
Online Professional Development
Online Storage Services
On TRACK
Open Records Requests
Operations Support
Opportunity Culture
Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Support
Outreach Grant
P-16 Initiative
Parenting and Paternity Awareness (PAPA)
Paraprofessional Training
Parent Complaints (Calls and Resolution)
Parent Involvement
Parent Training
Pathway for Emerging Leaders Academy
Performance-Based Monitoring (PBM) Support
Person Enrollment Tracking (PET) Training and Support
Person Identification Database (PID) Training and Support
Personal Financial Literacy Training
Personnel Services – including on demand personnel
Physical Fitness Assessment Initiative
Physical Therapy
Physical Therapy Technical Assistance and CEUs
Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS)
Poverty Training
Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD)
Pregnancy, Education, and Parenting (PEP)
Principal Certification Program
Principal Mentoring
Principal Tools for STAAR
Printing Services
Priority and Focus Schools Support
Private Schools
Project Share (see Texas Gateway)
Program Director Support (Curriculum, Career/Technical, English Language, Special Education, Title I)
Program Reviews
Progress in the General Curriculum (PGC)
Promotion/Retention Law (Student Assessment)
Public Education Grant (PEG)
Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS)
PEIMS Edit Plus

Purchasing Cooperatives
RDSPD - Regional Day School Programs for the Deaf
Reading Academies
Reading is Fundamental (RIF)
Reading Recovery
Recommendations for Serving on Educator
    Committees
Regional Education Television Network (RETN)
Regional Emergency and Mass Communications
Related Services
Residential Facilities
Resources for Teaching (Creative Corner, Copy
    Center, Print Shop)
Response to Intervention (RtI)
Retirement Asset Management System (RAMS)
REVEAL Data Warehouse Dropout Early Prevention
RIF - Reading Is Fundamental
Router Maintenance
Rural Schools Support
Satellite Downlinks
Scholarship Resources
School Board Member Training
School Bus Driver Drug and Alcohol Testing
School Bus Driver Training – 20 hour Certification
    and 8 hour Recertification Training
School Bus Safety
School Bus Simulation Training
School Finance Support for School Districts
School Health Education
School Meal Initiative and Menus
School Reach
School Readiness Integration (SRI)
School Safety and Audits
Science
Scripting and Automation of Data Exchanges
    between Software Packages
Server Administration
Shared Services Arrangements (SSAs)
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) Carl
  Perkins
- Private Non-Profit
- Title I A
- Title I C Migrant
- Title II
- Title III Bilingual/ESL
Sheltered Instruction
Six Traits Writing
Skyward Software Training, Support and Accounting
    Services
Social Studies
Spanish Language Arts
Spam Filtering Services

Special Education Compliance
Special Education Funding
Special Education Monitoring
Speech and Language Pathology
Speech Language Pathologist Support
Spinal Screening Certification Training
STAAR
STAAR Alternate 2
STAAR Online
STARR One Item Bank
State and Federal Statutes, Rules, Regulations, and
    Guidance
State Initiatives
State Performance Plan (Special Education)
State Waivers Applications
Streaming Video
Student Attendance Accounting Handbook (SAAH)
    Training and Support
Student GPS Dashboards
Student Information Management Software
Student Learning Objectives
Strategic and Systemic Planning
Substitute Teacher Training
Suicide Prevention
Superintendent Academy
Superintendent Certification Program
Superintendent of the Year
Surrogate Parent Training Support
Survey Services
Teacher Appraisal
Teacher Certification
Teacher Effectiveness
Teacher of the Year
Teacher Recruitment
Technical Support Services
Technology Assessments
Technology Integration
Technology Planning
TEKS Bank
TEKS Clarification
TEKS Professional Development in Core Content
    Areas
TEKS Resource System
Testing – Federal and State
TETN
Texas 21 Career Investigation and Career Planning
Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR)
Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS)
    Training
Texas Adolescent Literacy Academies (TALA)
Texas Behavior Support Initiative (TBSI)
Texas Center for District and School Support (TCDSS)
Texas Computer Cooperative (TCC)

- CareerPortal
- Internet-based Texas Computer Cooperative Software (iTCCS)
- Texas Education Information System (TxEIS)

Texas Counselor Academy

Texas Education Agency Login (TEAL)/ Educator Certification Online System (ECOS) Account Support

Texas Education Data Standards (TEDS) Training and Support

Texas Education Telecommunications Network Access (TETN)

Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS)

Texas Gateway

Texas High School Project

Texas Library Connection

Texas Literacy Initiative (TLI)

Texas Math Initiative

Texas Math and Science Diagnostic (TMSDS)

Texas Middle School Fluency Assessment (TMSFA)

Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI)

Texas Principal Excellence Program (TxPEP)

Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS)

Texas Records Exchange System (TREx)

Texas Regional Math Collaborative

Texas Regional Science Collaborative

Texas School Ready Certification System

Texas Student Data System (TSDS)

Texas Success (online supports for Reading and Math)

Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS)

Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN)

Texas Women's University Speech-Language Pathologists Masters TETN Program

Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES)

TexQuest

Textbook Viewing Room

Time & Effort Software

TimeClock Plus Software Training and Support

Title I School Support

Title III Support

Texas Math and Science Diagnostic System (TMSDS)

Traffic SAFETY Education Staff Training

Transition Planning - High School

Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (T-STEM)

Unlicensed Diabetic Care Assistance Training

Unique ID Training and Support

Upward Bound Grants

Video Conference Bridging

Video Conference CD/DVD Recording and Distribution of Events

Video Conference Scheduling and Bridging of Dual Credit Classes

Video Conference Technical Support

Vision Screening Certification Training

Visually Impaired/Orientation and Mobility Services (VI/O&M)

Visually Impaired Teacher Services

Videoconference Fieldtrip Facilitation

Videoconference Services and Support

VISION Computing and Network Support Services

Vision/Hearing/Scoliosis Screening Training/Certification

Voice-Over IP Solutions

Web Hosting

Wireless Internet Consortium

Write for Texas

Writing Coaches and Support

Region Composition and Student Demographics

School Districts and Charter School Districts

The ESCs also provide a full range of services to all 1,160 school districts and 201 operating charter school districts in the state. Services, which are available to LEAs and campuses, includes professional development, instructional services, financial and administrative support. As with school districts, charter schools may choose the ESCs from which they receive services. In additional to LEAs, ESCs provide services to private schools in each region.

The chart below illustrates the number of school districts and charter school districts each ESC serves. Please note, this graph describes how many charters are held within each region. ESCs might have charter school campuses within their region, that are not accounted for because the charter is held in a different region.

Figure 10: Texas School Districts and Charter School Districts 2014 – 2015 School Year by Region		
Region	**Number of School Districts**	**Number of Charter School Districts**
1	37	7
2	42	4
3	39	0
4	49	47
5	32	3
6	57	3
7	95	6
8	48	0
9	37	1
10	80	44
11	77	16
12	76	6
13	60	19
14	42	1
15	42	1
16	62	0
17	57	2
18	33	3
19	12	8
20	54	30
Total	1003	201

Source: TEA, Division of Charter Schools, 2016 and ESC Snapshot Report Data, 2016

Figure 11 Student Demographics by ESC Region

ESC Region	Regional ADA	Number Campuses	Percent Black or African American	Percent Hispanic	Percent White	Percent American Indian or Alaska Native	Percent Asian	Percent Native Hawaiian/Other or Pacific Islander	Percent Two or More Races	Percent Economically Disadvantage
1	422,894	629	0.2	97.5	1.6	0.1	0.4	0	0.1	83.7
2	105,301	219	2.6	74.4	20.5	0.2	1.2	0.1	1.1	62.9
3	54,146	147	8.8	56.2	32.2	0.1	1.1	0	1.4	60.2
4	1,170,896	1,428	19	50	22.3	0.5	6.5	0.1	1.7	58
5	81,462	169	26.6	18.8	49.6	0.6	2.3	0.1	2	57.8
6	184,524	316	10.7	34.3	50.1	0.5	2.1	0.1	2.2	49.5
7	171,224	400	17.4	26.9	51.6	0.4	1	0.1	2.6	60.9
8	56,352	155	20.1	20.2	54.6	0.6	0.8	0.1	3.6	64.3
9	37,821	115	7.4	26.7	60.1	0.8	1.3	0.1	3.6	57.6
10	810,622	1,235	18.5	42.9	29.3	0.6	6.4	0.1	2.1	56.6
11	569,487	912	14.3	35.6	42.1	0.5	4.6	0.3	2.7	49.4
12	169,637	379	19.7	33	40.3	0.5	2	0.7	3.9	58.9
13	394,846	630	7	46.9	38.6	0.3	4.3	0.1	2.8	47.3
14	59,871	178	7.6	35.1	51.9	0.4	1.9	0.1	3	50.5
15	49,364	162	2.6	57.4	37.7	0.3	0.6	0	1.5	59.9
16	85,739	223	5	46.3	43.3	0.5	2.8	0.1	2	58.6
17	83,903	222	6.9	57.5	32.6	0.3	1.1	0.1	1.5	60.2
18	87,686	157	4.4	67.7	25.4	0.3	1.1	0.1	1.1	47.3
19	179,096	261	2.4	89.6	6.2	0.2	0.7	0.2	0.8	74.5
20	440,411	709	6.1	71.1	18.7	0.2	1.7	0.2	1.9	62.1
State Totals	5,215,282	8,646	10.365	49.405	35.435	0.395	2.195	0.135	2.08	59.01

Source: TEA Student Data, 2016

Accountability

The current accountability system for ESCs includes the following (TEC 8.103):

> The commissioner shall conduct an annual evaluation of each executive director and regional education service center. Each evaluation must include:
>
> 1. An audit of the ESC's finances;
> 2. A review of the ESC's performance on the indicators adopted under Section 8.101;
>   - Student performance in districts served;
>   - District effectiveness and efficiency in the LEAs served resulting from technical assistance and program support;
>   - Direct services provided or regionally shared services arranged by the ESC which produce more economical and efficient school operations;
>   - Direct services provided or regionally shared services arranged by the ESC which provided for assistance in core services; and
>   - Grants received for implementation of state initiatives and the results achieved by the ESC under the terms of the grant contract.
> 3. A review of client satisfaction with ESC core services, state initiatives, and any other services provided in excess of those core services and state initiatives; and
> 4. A review of any other factor the commissioner of education determines to be appropriate.

At the direction of the 78th Texas Legislature, the ESCs as well as the TEA and the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) came under sunset review. Additionally, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 929 requiring an extensive audit of the ESCs. As a result of the MGT Audit and the findings of the LBB, the Sunset Commission recommended the continuation of the ESCs. The 79th Texas Legislature reauthorized the ESCs and did not call for their future review by the Sunset Commission. The 82nd Texas Legislature placed the ESCs back under sunset review; all ESCs are due to go under sunset review in 2019.

For 2013-14, the commissioner contracted with The Organizational Excellence Group of The University of Texas at Austin's School of Social Work. The Organizational Excellence Group developed an on-line survey, which was modified and approved by the commissioner of education, and sent to each LEA in the state. The 2015 evaluation of the ESCs occurred over the period of October 20, 2015 to December 20, 2015 and received a 69 percent response rate. The results of the survey indicated that, of the 845 respondents, 771 were traditional independent school district superintendents, and 74 were charter school administrators.

The survey provides an opportunity for LEAs to indicate their evaluation of the ESCs' products/services. Fourteen different services were rated on a five (5) point scale: five (5) being the highest rating and one (1) being the lowest. Additionally, demographic information was collected on the participants including length of time of service for both superintendents and charter school directors. The following chart provides an overview of the areas surveyed and the ratings ESCs received:

Survey Item Score Summary		
Items	Score	Standard Deviation
Reading and Language Arts	4.80	0.433
Mathematics	4.80	0.438
Social Studies	4.75	0.480
Science	4.78	0.462
Special Education	4.80	0.433
At-Risk and Compensatory Education	4.79	0.443
Bilingual and ESL Education	4.78	0.479
Advanced Academic Education (e.g. gifted and talented and AP)	4.71	0.521
Migrant Education	4.75	0.518
Services to help the district/charter school operate more efficiently and economically (e.g. shared services, cooperatives, curriculum support business services, teacher recruitment, etc.)	4.82	0.454
Services and support for PEIMS	4.86	0.402
Services to assist the district/charter school in complying with federal and state regulation and guidelines (e.g. ESSA, PBM, Child Nutrition)	4.85	0.420
Services and assistance to help improved student performance	4.77	0.479
School Board training services	4.80	0.484

Source: ESC Client Satisfaction Survey, Organizational Excellence Group, U.T. Austin, 2015

As stated in the survey results, "any item with an average (mean) score above the neutral point of '3.0' suggests that the respondents perceive the issue more positively than negatively. Scores of '4.0' or higher indicate a substantial strength for the organization. Conversely, scores below '3.0' are viewed more negatively and should be a significant source of concern."

Student Achievement

The TEA's accountability system ratings are based largely on performance on state standardized tests, including the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). Ratings specifically examine student achievement, student progress, efforts to close the achievement gap, and post-secondary readiness.

The following chart displays on a regional basis the latest STAAR data from the 2015 and 2016 Accountability Data Tables. Figure 12. 2016 Performance on STAAR by ESC Region and Figure 13. 2015 Performance on STAAR by ESC Region.

	2016 Performance on STAAR by ESC Region									
	Performance Index				**% Student Achievement Per Subjects**					
	1	2	3	4	All Subjects	Reading	Math	Writing	Science	Social Studies
Set Target	60	22	28	60						
Statewide Average					75	73	76	69	79	77
ESC Region										
1	73	43	45	81	73	68	77	69	78	74
2	70	41	37	73	70	68	73	66	72	70
3	70	37	34	71	70	68	72	64	75	70
4	76	40	41	75	76	74	78	69	80	78
5	71	36	35	72	71	69	71	67	75	74
6	76	39	37	74	76	74	77	70	80	77
7	74	38	36	75	74	72	75	67	77	74
8	74	38	36	75	74	73	76	69	75	74
9	73	35	35	75	73	73	74	67	75	75
10	76	41	40	77	76	74	77	71	80	80
11	77	39	40	74	77	76	78	72	81	80
12	73	38	37	69	73	72	75	66	77	75
13	78	40	39	78	78	77	79	72	81	81
14	74	38	36	70	74	75	74	68	74	71
15	72	36	37	74	72	70	73	68	74	73
16	76	38	42	69	76	73	79	69	79	76
17	72	37	35	77	72	71	73	67	77	74
18	63	36	31	68	63	63	63	58	68	65
19	76	40	43	74	76	73	79	72	80	77
20	72	39	39	75	72	71	73	65	77	75

Source: 2016 State Accountability Data

2015 Performance on STAAR by ESC Region										
	Performance Index				% Student Achievement Per Subjects					
	1	2	3	4	All Subjects	Reading	Math	Writing	Science	Social Studies
Set Target	60	20	28	57						
Statewide Average					77	77	81	72	78	78
ESC Region										
1	73	39	40	81	73	71	79	71	75	72
2	72	35	37	72	72	73	79	66	73	70
3	73	35	34	73	73	74	78	68	74	70
4	77	37	41	75	77	77	81	72	79	79
5	74	32	36	73	74	75	77	70	74	76
6	79	37	38	74	79	80	82	73	80	79
7	76	34	37	73	76	77	82	71	77	75
8	79	34	40	75	79	81	85	74	78	77
9	76	32	36	74	76	78	84	66	74	76
10	79	38	40	76	79	79	83	74	80	80
11	79	36	40	74	79	80	83	73	80	81
12	75	35	37	70	75	76	77	69	76	75
13	81	39	40	78	81	81	85	74	82	82
14	77	35	37	70	77	80	82	71	75	74
15	74	34	38	72	74	75	78	68	75	75
16	77	34	38	67	77	78	83	71	78	74
17	76	35	36	76	76	77	79	68	77	77
18	65	31	29	66	65	66	70	56	64	63
19	77	37	44	76	77	76	82	75	78	75
20	76	37	40	75	76	76	79	69	78	76

Source: 2015 State Accountability Data

Education Service Centers: Positioned to Assist

ESCs provide a wide variety of products/services that support LEAs. These products/services range from professional development, technical assistance, and support in the instructional, technology, and administrative areas. As indicated on surveys, LEAs are consistently very satisfied with ESCs' products/services and strongly believe that ESCs assist LEAs to improve student performance and operate more efficiently and economically. The ESCs have also played a vital role in implementing legislative and commissioner initiatives. As LEAs continue to face both financial and school performance challenges, ESCs are positioned to assist LEAs in that endeavor.

Accelerated Instruction Programs

Overview

Several state statutes require additional instructional support (i.e., accelerated instruction) for students who exhibit academic difficulties or fail to meet the passing standard on a state assessment. TEC §39.333(4) requires an evaluation of accelerated instruction programs offered under TEC §28.006, which refers to accelerated reading programs for kindergarten through grade 2 (K–2) and grade 7. This section presents information on accelerated instruction programs currently in place for various student populations enrolled in the Texas public school system. This section provides information on the products and services used by schools to assist students who require additional instructional support. This section also provides the number of educators and other participants trained to implement and support these programs.

Accelerated instruction programs reviewed in this section include the following:

(a) Accelerated Reading Instruction for K–2 Students (TEC §28.006)
(b) Accelerated Reading Instruction for Middle School Students (TEC §28.006)
(c) Accelerated Instruction for High School Students (TEC §§28.0217, 29.081, and 39.025(b-1))
(d) Accelerated Instruction under the Student Success Initiative (TEC §28.0211)

Accelerated instruction policies are designed to give schools flexibility in determining the appropriate form, content and timing of instruction. The policies also provide discretion for districts to determine how best to improve student performance based on individual student's needs.

Accelerated Reading Instruction for K–2 Students

TEC, Section 28.006 requires school districts to administer reading instruments to students in kindergarten through grade 2 to assess their reading development and comprehension. The statute further requires that a school district implement an accelerated reading instruction program for students who are determined, on the basis of their reading instrument results, to be at risk for dyslexia or other reading difficulties. In the case of a student in special education who does not perform satisfactorily on a reading diagnostic instrument, the student's admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee must determine the manner in which the student will participate in an accelerated reading instruction program.

According to TEC, §28.006, school districts must provide accelerated reading instruction to students in kindergarten through grade 2 who may be at risk for reading difficulties, including dyslexia, based on the results of a reading diagnostic instrument. The reading diagnostic instrument used may be chosen from the *Commissioner's List of Reading Instruments* ("Commissioner's List"), which is available on the TEA website. There are several reading instruments school districts and charter schools may choose from for each grade level requiring an assessment. For example, the 2014–2018 Commissioner's List of Reading Instruments included the following English language reading

diagnostic instruments for kindergarten:

- **Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI)**
- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, Next (DIBELS Next)
- easyCBM
- Istation's Indicators of Progress, Early Reading (ISIP-ER)
- mCLASS: Reading 3D—Text Reading and Comprehension (TRC)
- Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)
- Phonemic Awareness & Phonics Inventory (PAPI-E)
- Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)
- Reading Analysis and Prescription System (RAPS 360)
- Woodcock Johnson Diagnostic Reading Battery (WJ III DRB)

The 2014–2018 list also included the following Spanish language reading diagnostic instruments for kindergarten:

- **El Inventario de Lectura en Español de Tejas (Tejas LEE)**
- Indicadores Dinamicos Del Exito en la Lectura Solution (IDEL)
- Istation's Indicators of Progress, Española (ISIP Español)
- Phonemic Awareness and Phonics Inventory—Spanish (PAPI-S)

The TPRI and its Spanish counterpart, Tejas LEE, have been the most widely used reading diagnostic instruments according to TEA data. The TPRI and Tejas LEE were developed as part of the Governor's Reading Initiative, which began in 1997. The initiative required that research-based diagnostic reading assessments be developed and disseminated in kindergarten through grade 2 in order to measure students' reading proficiency. The reading diagnostic instruments are designed to identify struggling students in kindergarten through grade 2 before they become vulnerable to failing the Grade 3 STAAR® reading assessment.

TPRI and Tejas LEE are available at no cost to all public school districts and open-enrollment charters. If a school district or open-enrollment charter chooses to use another instrument included on the Commissioner's List (i.e., other than TPRI or Tejas LEE), it is reimbursed $5 per student at the time of purchase. (Districts may purchase new instruments and apply for reimbursements every four years.) TEC §28.006, states that a district may also form a district-level committee to review and "adopt a list of reading instruments for use in the district in addition to reading instruments on the commissioner's list." If a district opts to select an alternate instrument, the district-level committee must ensure that the instrument is "based on scientific research concerning reading skills development and reading comprehension."

Training on how to use the instruments and how to apply students' results to accelerated reading programs varies across districts. For those that use TPRI and/or Tejas LEE, support teams at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston provide training and support. Several education service centers (ESCs) also provide training on

TPRI and Tejas LEE. For districts that elect to purchase other instruments on the Commissioner's List or to select an alternate assessment (i.e., a district-level committee selection), districts typically complete training provided by the vendor for the product.

Literacy Achievement Academies

In 2015, the 84th Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 925, establishing literacy achievement academies for teachers who provide reading instruction to students at the kindergarten or first, second, or third grade level. Following a competitive solicitation, a contract was awarded to Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk (MCPER) in collaboration with the Institute for Public School Initiatives (IPSI) at The University of Texas at Austin for development of the content and training-of-trainers for three-day literacy achievement academies. Literacy Achievement Academies provide support for teachers of students in Kindergarten-grade 3 and focus on effective and systematic instructional practices in reading, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. In summer 2016, TEA launched Literacy Achievement Academies for teachers who provide reading instruction to students in kindergarten and grade 1. In 2016, over 8,500 teachers participated in Literacy Achievement Academies. Teachers who successfully complete an academy are eligible to receive a $350 stipend. Teachers who attended academies will also receive access to online resources hosted on the Texas Gateway to support reading instruction. Literacy Achievement Academies for teachers who provide reading instruction to students in grades 2 and 3 will be made available in summer 2017. Additionally, Reading-to-Learn Academies will be made available in summer 2017 for teachers who provide reading comprehension instruction to students in Grades 4 and 5. Reading-to-Learn Academies will include effective instructional practices that promote student development of reading comprehension and inferential and critical thinking.

Additional Resources for Students in Grades 3–8

Additional resources for students in grades 3–8 are listed in the "Accelerated Instruction under the Student Success Initiative" section below.

Mathematics Achievement Academies

In 2015, the 84th Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 934, establishing mathematics achievement academies for teachers who provide mathematics instruction to students at the kindergarten or first, second, or third grade level. Following a competitive solicitation, a contract was awarded to Education Service Center (ESC) Region 13 in collaboration with ESC 4 and ESC 20 for development of the content and training-of-trainers for three-day mathematics achievement academies. Mathematics Achievement Academies provide support for teachers of

students in Kindergarten-grade 3 and focus on effective and systematic instructional practices in mathematics, including problem solving, the place value system, whole number operations, and fractions. In summer 2016, TEA launched Mathematics Achievement Academies for teachers who provide mathematics instruction to students in grade 2 and grade 3. In 2016, approximately 9,000 teachers participated in Mathematics Achievement Academies. Teachers who successfully complete an academy are eligible to receive a $350 stipend. Teachers who attended academies will also receive access to online resources hosted on the Texas Gateway to support mathematics instruction. Literacy Achievement Academies for teachers who provide mathematics instruction to students in kindergarten and grade 1 will be made available in summer 2017.

Accelerated Reading Instruction for Middle School Students

In 2007, the 80th Texas Legislature added a requirement to TEC §28.006 that grade 7 students who failed the state reading assessment in grade 6 be administered a reading instrument adopted by the commissioner. The instrument developed in response to the new requirement was the Texas Middle School Fluency Assessment or TMSFA. Currently, districts and open-enrollment charters may use the TMSFA or another instrument included on the Commissioner's List of Reading Instruments. Districts may also select an "alternate diagnostic reading instrument" that meets criteria established in Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §101.6001. Just as with TMSFA and other instruments included on the commissioner's list, "an alternate diagnostic reading instrument must

> (1) be based on published scientific research in reading;
>
> (2) be age and grade-level appropriate, valid and reliable;
>
> (3) identify specific skill difficulties in word analysis, fluency, and comprehension, and
>
> (4) assist the teacher in making individualized instructional decisions based on the assessment results."

The results of grade 7 reading diagnostic assessments give teachers information on how to provide accelerated instruction based on individual student needs. The Texas Adolescent Literacy Academies (TALA), which were created as a result of legislation passed in the 80th Texas Legislature (R), provide training on reading instruction and interventions at the middle school level. The TALA model consists of two academies: the Content Area Academy (Tier I) and the English Language Arts (ELA) Academy (Tiers II & III).

The Content Area Academy prepares all middle school teachers to provide appropriate reading instruction for all students, including those struggling with reading due to limited English proficiency, learning disabilities, dyslexia, and other risk factors for reading difficulties. Training is available at no cost to teachers through ESCs and through an online course. The online course, posted on the Texas Gateway, is open to all teachers. Teachers who complete the training receive nine continuing professional education (CPE) credits and are able to download materials for classroom use.

Figure 14: Online Texas Adolescent Literacy Academy Tier I

The ELA Academy (designed specifically for English language arts teachers) provides additional training in administering the Texas Middle School Fluency Assessment (TMSFA), interpreting TMSFA results, and providing Tiers II and III interventions for struggling readers. Training is available at no cost to teachers through ESCs and through an online course. The online course, posted on the Texas Gateway, is open to all teachers. Teachers who complete the training receive 10 continuing CPE credits and are able to download classroom materials and the TMSFA.

Figure 15: Online Texas Adolescent Literacy Academy Tiers II & III

Other Accelerated Instruction for Middle School Students

OnTRACK Lessons for Middle School Students

In 2010, TEA began development and delivery of online lessons in English, mathematics, science, and social studies. The lessons, referred to as OnTRACK lessons, are available at no cost to Texas educators, students, and parents through the Texas Gateway. The lessons are searchable by Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), keywords, subject, grade level, and audience.

OnTRACK lessons are used by school districts and open-enrollment charters to serve students who require accelerated instruction, who need additional practice in preparation for local and state assessments, or who are

preparing to transition to college-level work. The lessons can also be used for full-class instruction or to fill gaps in knowledge and skills. Each lesson typically includes the following:

- Sections of text (e.g., instructions, explanations, descriptions, literary excerpts) to introduce and explain new knowledge and skills
- Videos and images to support and further explain knowledge and skills
- Interactives to practice what has been learned
- Formative assessments to check for understanding
- Links to additional lessons and other online resources to build upon new knowledge and skills

Teachers, students, and parents have open access to the lessons and may use them at school and at home.

The lessons can also be shared electronically, which allows districts and teachers to use the lessons in their local learning management systems and to track students' use of the lessons at the local level.

Figure 16: Sample OnTRACK Lesson for Grade 8 English Language Arts

OnTRACK lessons are updated each year in response to educator requests and instructional needs identified through STAAR® results. Content-related updates include the creation of new lessons to further explain complex ideas and the addition of new videos and interactives. The lessons are also updated as a result of changes in technology,

including changes in format to improve user experience on mobile devices and to ensure that the lessons function well across the many online learning systems used by Texas schools. Lessons developed specifically for middle school students requiring accelerated instruction are as follows:

- OnTRACK Lessons for English Language Arts, Grades 6, 7, and 8
- OnTRACK Lessons for Mathematics, Grades 6, 7, and 8

Additional Resources for Middle School Students

Additional resources for middle school students are listed in the "Accelerated Instruction under the Student Success Initiative" section below.

Accelerated Instruction for High School Students

TEC, §§28.0217, 29.081, and 39.025(b-1) require that a school district provide accelerated instruction in the applicable subject area to a student who does not pass an end-of-course (EOC) assessment administered under TEC, §39.023(c). Furthermore, the accelerated instruction must be provided before the next administration of the applicable assessment. These provisions also apply to students in special education, including those who take alternate state assessments.

Accelerated instruction is only required for students who do not perform satisfactorily on the EOC assessments currently required under TEC, §39.023(c) (i.e., Algebra I, English I (reading/writing), English II, (reading/writing), biology, and U.S. history). A school district is not required to provide accelerated instruction to students who failed an EOC assessment that is no longer required for graduation.

OnTRACK Lessons for High School Students

OnTRACK lessons such as those described in the "OnTRACK Lessons for Middle School Students" section above are also available for high school students. Lessons developed specifically for high school courses requiring accelerated instruction are as follows:

- OnTRACK Lessons for Algebra I
- OnTRACK Lessons for English I
- OnTRACK Lessons for English II
- OnTRACK Lessons for Biology
- OnTRACK Lessons for U.S. History

Figure 17: Sample OnTRACK Lesson for Algebra I

Additional Resources for High School Students

Additional resources for high school students are listed in the "Accelerated Instruction under the Student Success Initiative" section below.

Accelerated Instruction under the Student Success Initiative

TEC, §28.0211 (also referred to as the Student Success Initiative, or SSI) requires a school district to provide students in third through eighth grade who do not perform satisfactorily on a state assessment with accelerated instruction in the applicable subject area. For students in grades 3–8, TEC, §28.0211 outlines accelerated instruction requirements while also addressing grade advancement requirements for students in grades 5 and 8. TEC, §39.025 addresses accelerated instruction for students participating in an End-of-Course (EOC) assessment.

Students in grades 5 and 8 who fail to perform satisfactorily on the appropriate reading and mathematics assessment and who are promoted to the next grade level through a Grade Placement Committee (GPC) must complete accelerated instruction before placement in the next grade level. A student who fails to complete required accelerated instruction may not be promoted.

TEA provides SSI resources through the Texas SUCCESS (Students Using Curriculum Content to Ensure Sustained Success) initiative. Texas SUCCESS provides access to interactive math and reading programs for Texas public school

students in grades 3–8, Algebra I, and English I and II.

The online math and reading programs available to schools for the 2015–16 and 2016–17 school years are designed to support students requiring accelerated instruction and encourage progress and achievement as students complete lessons. Each program, which is intended to supplement general instruction and/or to serve as one part of a comprehensive intervention program, assesses an individual student according to the student's skill level and then automatically assigns and delivers instruction and practice tailored to that student's needs and abilities. Reporting tools available in the programs inform teachers and parents when additional instruction is needed or confirm that the student is making appropriate progress. The programs provide no-cost access at school and at home for teachers, students, and parents.

TEA issued a request for proposals (RFP) in August 2015 for online math and reading programs for students in grades 3–5, grades 6–8, Algebra I, and English I and II. The vendors who were awarded contracts are provided in the table below. In addition to providing a statewide license, each vendor is responsible for training district representatives on the correct and effective use of its program, managing the account creation and enrollment process, providing monthly reports to the Texas SUCCESS Support Center, and responding to questions and requests from district representatives and parents.

Table 18: SSI Vendors for the 2015–2016 and 2016–2017 School Years

Vendor	Product	Grades/Subjects Served
Think Through Learning	Think Through Math	3–8 math and Algebra I
Istation	Istation	3–5 reading (English) 3 reading(Spanish)
Compass Learning	Pathblazer	6–8 reading
Apex Learning	Tutorials	English I and II

The Texas SUCCESS Support Center at Education Service Center Region 20 maintains a single web portal (http://texassuccess.org) through which teachers, students, and parents may access Texas SUCCESS resources. The SSI Support Center serves as a liaison among districts and charter schools, education service centers, and Texas SUCCESS vendors. In addition to creating and managing the portal, the support center's services include scheduling teacher trainings, providing assistance and support to teachers and parents, and working with vendors to ensure consistent messaging and services throughout the state. The following tables provide usage data at the close of year

one (2015–2016 school year) and the beginning of year two (2016–2017 school year).

Figure 19: Texas SUCCESS Usage Data at Close of Year One

Vendor/Product	Number of Participating Districts	Number of Participating Campuses	Number of Student Accounts
Think Through Math	842	6,027	2,699,928
Istation	605	2,928	844,889
Compass Learning	89	214	121,057
Apex Learning	244	457	200,660

Figure 20: Texas SUCCESS Usage Data at Beginning of Year Two

Vendor/Product	Number of Participating Districts	Number of Participating Campuses	Number of Student Accounts
Think Through Math	843	6,208	2,569,509
Istation	861	3,674	1,121,230
Compass Learning	59	96	201,021
Apex Learning	327	570	222,562

Support for Teachers Working with Struggling Students

Write for Texas

The SSI for 2016–2017 includes the final year for professional development designed to improve writing instruction in grades 6–12. Particular attention is given to (1) making connections between reading and writing in all subjects and at all grade levels and (2) supporting teachers preparing students for the STAAR® writing assessment for grade 7 and the STAAR® assessments for English I and English II. The professional development, *Write for Texas*, includes both online materials and face-to-face sessions in which coaches personally meet with teachers to observe, co-teach, model, mentor, and provide feedback. Topics covered in *Write for Texas* include the following:

- Using Reading and Writing to Support Learning
- Teaching Sentence Skills
- Teaching Revising and Editing Skills
- Teaching Expository and Persuasive Texts

- Teaching Personal Narrative Texts

During the 2015–2016 school year, *Write for Texas* coaches served 194 schools in 104 districts. During their visits to the schools, coaches worked with teachers (or groups of teachers) across the content areas. Table 21 provides information about meetings with classroom teachers by teacher type or subject area. Meetings included opportunities for coaches to assist teachers in planning lessons, evaluating student writing, identifying new instructional strategies, and planning interventions for struggling students.

Table 21: Coach Visits

Teacher Category	Number of meetings	Number of participants
English language arts and reading	4,798	1–50
Social Studies	806	1–27
Science	722	1–26
Math	534	1–2-
Special Education	409	1–8
English language learners	323	1–11
Career and Technical Education	125	1–45
Instructional Aide	58	1–11
Languages Other than English	42	1–13

The initiative also provides an online writing evaluation program, PEG writing®, to school districts with teachers participating in professional development. Teachers receive training on use of the program and support throughout the school year. The program gives formative feedback to students as they complete assignments. The feedback, when combined with teacher feedback, guides students through multiple drafts of an assignment. Table 22 provides active enrollment data. ("Active enrollment" reflects the actual number of students using the program, as opposed to "enrollment."

Table 22: Online Writing Evaluation Program Active Enrollment by Region for 2015–2016 School Year

Region	Active Enrollment
ESC Region 1	1,550
ESC Region 2	3,029
ESC Region 3	764
ESC Region 4	8,450
ESC Region 5	1,617
ESC Region 6	891
ESC Region 7	2,894
ESC Region 8	788
ESC Region 9	755
ESC Region 10	2,617
ESC Region 11	4,693
ESC Region 12	3,614
ESC Region 13	2,747
ESC Region 14	1,107
ESC Region 15	343
ESC Region 16	1,432
ESC Region 17	97
ESC Region 18	1,335
ESC Region 19	11,804
ESC Region 20	3,499
Total	**54,026**

Agency Contact Person(s)

For information on accelerated instruction programs, contact Kerry Ballast, Director of Digital Learning, at (512) 463-9601 or kerry.ballast@tea.state.tx.us.

Classes Taught by Out-of-Field Teachers

Overview

TEC §39.333(5) requires a review of the number of classes at each school campus currently taught by individuals not certified in the content areas of their respective classes. This section provides information on the number of teachers (a) not certified in the content area or grade level of their respective classes overall and (b) not certified in the content area or grade level of their respective classes at the campus level[22]. This report uses teacher full-time equivalent (FTE) counts instead of teacher headcounts from 2015-2016. Teacher FTE counts are based on the percentage of an individual's day spent teaching and are the best statistical approximation of "number of classes at each campus." Teachers teaching in traditional school districts are counted in this report[23]; teachers at public charter schools are also included for Bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) and Special Education. Data for 2014-2015 were not available at the time of this report.

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[22] The teacher out-of-field data is a combination of PEIMS and certification data that includes the following.
- Total FTEs. The aggregate number of teacher FTEs by campus that are (a) in field and (b) out of field.
- In field. FTEs assigned to an appropriate field and grade level based on the teacher's certification. Standard, Provisional (lifetime), Probationary, One-year, and Visiting International Teacher certificates were included, as were Renewals and Probationary Extensions. Permits for persons teaching JROTC were included as in field. In-field certificates included only certificates that were effective and unexpired on the PEIMS Snapshot date and Renewals occurring between the PEIMS Snapshot date and the end of August. Certificates that are considered in field with work approval or verification of competency were counted as in field. Self-Contained, Core Subjects, Bilingual, and English as a Second Language certificates that are in field for other subject areas, such as Mathematics and Social Studies, were counted as in field for those subject areas.
- Out of field. The number of teacher FTEs (a) not certified in the appropriate field and/or grade level, or (b) have no teaching certificate at all. Permits other than for JROTC were counted out of field. Certificates that are considered in field only with additional coursework or a specified degree were counted as out of field.

[23] Teacher FTEs have been excluded for the following reasons.
- Teachers assigned to subjects in the "Other" and "Not Applicable" categories were not included in the data because these subjects do not require certification that TEA can confirm. Examples include study hall, tutorials, and locally developed courses.
- For teachers assigned both to subjects which do and do not require certification, only the FTEs assigned to the "Other" and "Not Applicable" subject(s) are excluded from the data.
- Self-contained assignments at the high school level were excluded.

Teachers who were assigned to more than one campus and teachers assigned to campus names that could not be found in the PEIMS data, AskTED, or the online Campus Lookup were excluded.

Teachers Outside Content Area or Grade Level - Statewide Results

In 2015-2016, 280,683 (93.3%) teacher FTEs in Texas were teaching in an appropriate field and grade level (in field), and 6.7% were teaching outside the content area or grade level of their certification (out of field). At the elementary school level, 97.5% of 144,580 teacher FTEs were in field. At the middle school level 56,281 (93.6%) FTEs were in field, and at the high school level 82,992 (90%) FTEs were in field[24]. Statewide, 16,317 (94.3%) of Bilingual FTEs and 21,232 (85.7%) of Special Education FTEs were in field[25].

Figure 23: Percentage of FTEs In and Out of Field Statewide 2015-2016


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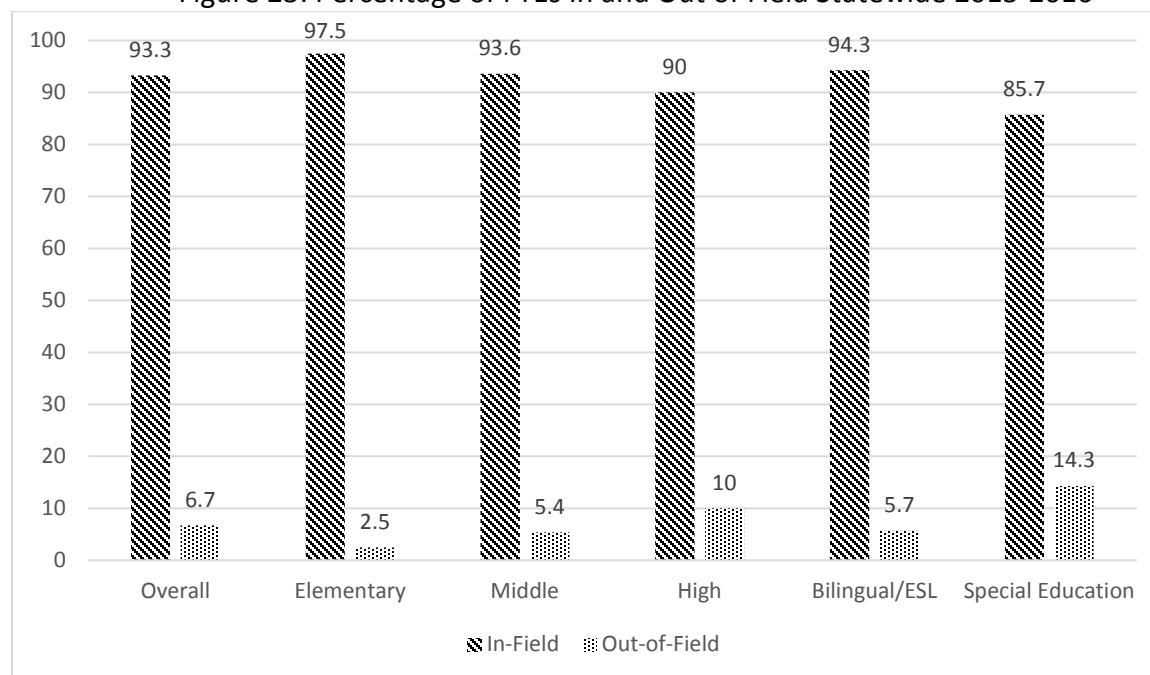
[24] Only certificates that are in field for each grade 7-12 or grade 9-12, respectively, were counted as in field for High School (Grades 7-12) or High School (Grades 9-12).

[25] Traditional districts and charters were included for the Bilingual/ESL and Special Education subject areas. Only traditional districts were included for all other subject areas. Although open-enrollment charter schools are not required to follow all teacher certification requirements, they must follow the certification requirements for teachers in Special Education and Bilingual positions. Please see TEC Chapter 12, Subchapters C and D (http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.12.htm#12.051).

Teachers Outside Content Area or Grade Level - Regional Results

The incidence of out-of-field teaching varies across Texas, with the smallest percentage occurring in Region Education Service Center (RESC) 20 and the largest in RESC 18. RESC 14 has the fewest out-of-field teachers (187.8 FTEs) while RESC 4 has the most out-of-field teachers (3,969.8 FTEs).

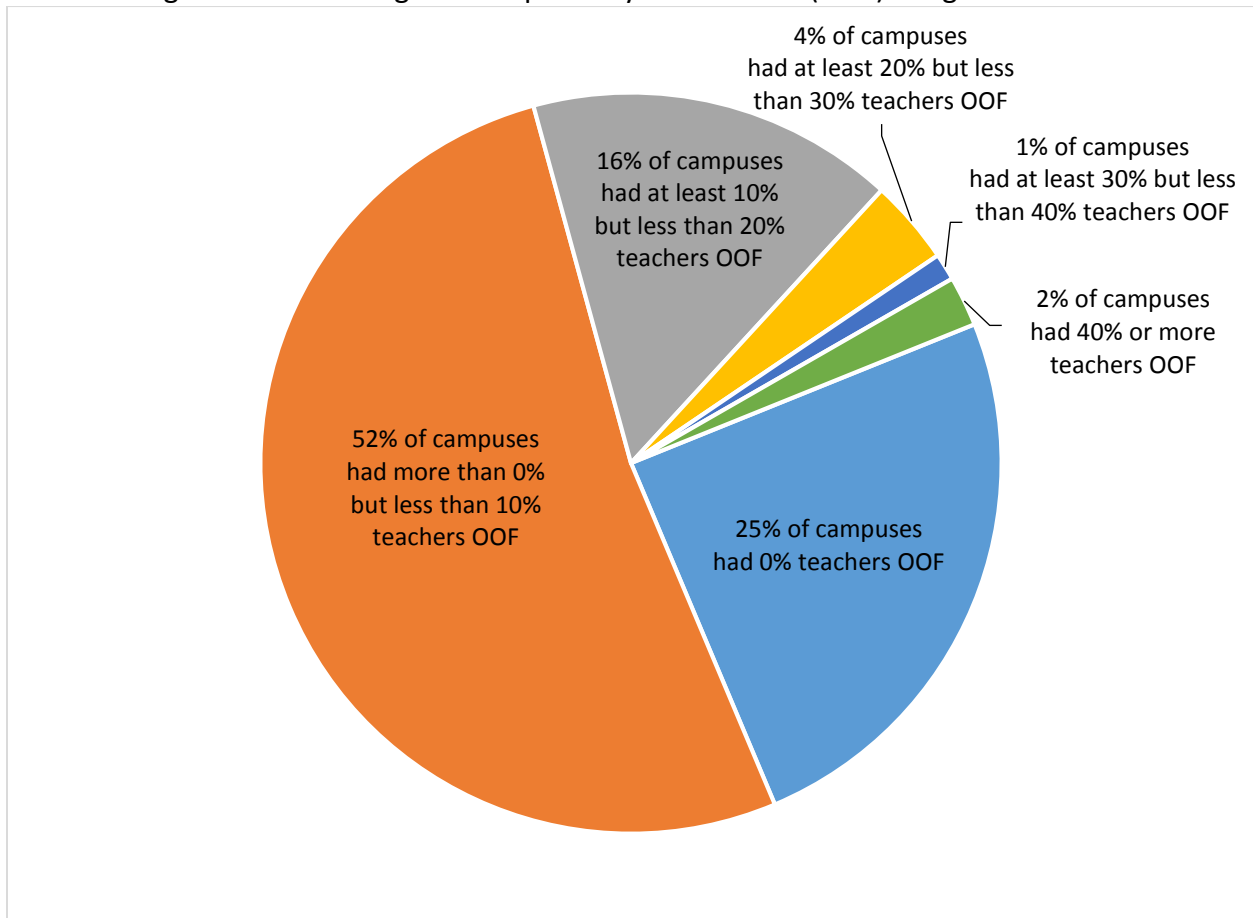Figure 24: Percentage of Out-of-Field Teachers by Region 2015-2016
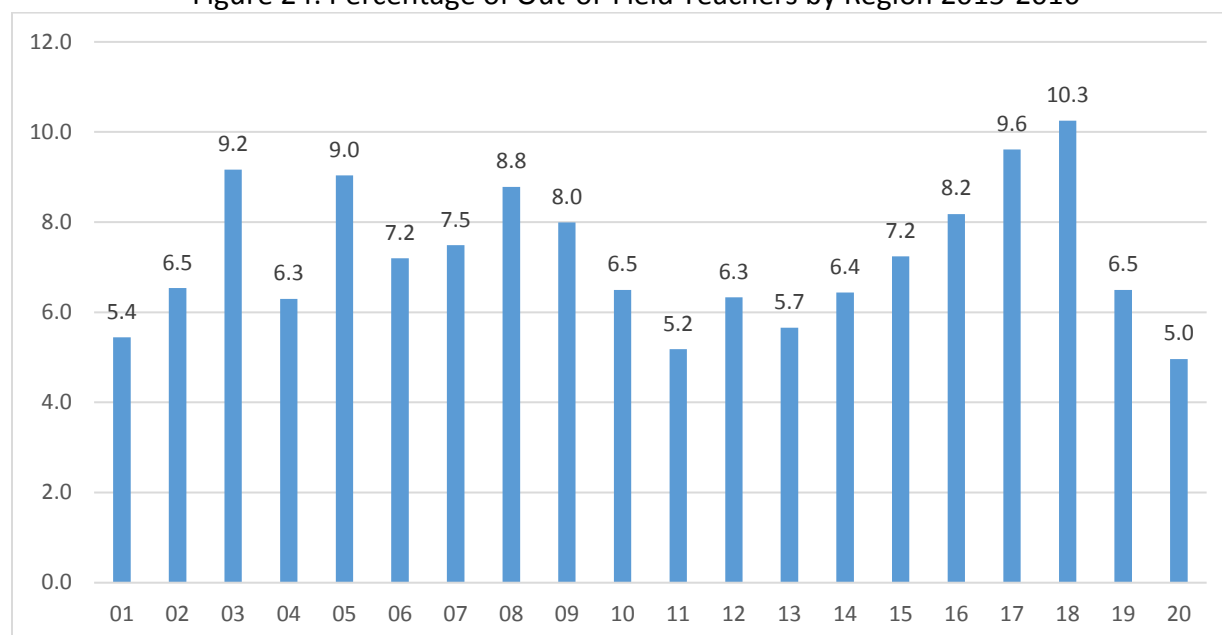
Teachers Outside Content Area or Grade Level - Campus Results

Of the 8,153 campuses included in this analysis, 7,577 (approximately 93%) reported that 20% or less of their teacher FTEs were assigned outside their field or grade level, including 2,019 campuses (24.8%) with 0% out-of-field FTEs[26] There were 178 (2.2%) campuses that reported 40% or more of their teacher FTEs being assigned outside their field or grade level. Many of the campuses reporting a high percentage of out-of-field FTEs were alternative or disciplinary campuses. Teachers in campuses with high out-of-field percentages represented approximately 2% of the overall out-of-field teacher population.

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[26] The raw data included 8,182 campuses; campuses listed as "District Administration" and "Shared Services Arrangement" were excluded.

Figure 25: Percentage of Campuses by Out-of-Field (OOF) Range 2015-2016

4% of campuses had at least 20% but less than 30% teachers OOF

1% of campuses had at least 30% but less than 40% teachers OOF

16% of campuses had at least 10% but less than 20% teachers OOF

2% of campuses had 40% or more teachers OOF

52% of campuses had more than 0% but less than 10% teachers OOF

25% of campuses had 0% teachers OOF

Agency Contact Person(s)

For information on teacher placement, please contact Mike Ramsay at mike.ramsay@tea.texas.gov or Mike Vriesenga at michael.vriesenga@tea.texas.gov.