

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

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

This section provides a detailed description of the state's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system, its alignment with the principles of the federal system, and provisions for integrating the two systems. Supporting documentation may be found in *Attachment 7*.

Background on the State's Accountability System

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

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

Under the provisions of Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 39, and the ESEA Title I School Improvement Program (SIP), the state is required to provide interventions to improve low-performing schools. TEC, Chapter 39, establishes a related system of interventions and sanctions for LEAs and schools, including charter schools. Interventions may include the appointment of campus intervention teams, monitors, conservators, management teams, and boards of managers and also may include required hearings, public notifications, and the development of improvement or corrective action plans. School-level interventions required in state statute include the appointment of an intervention team to any school that fails to meet

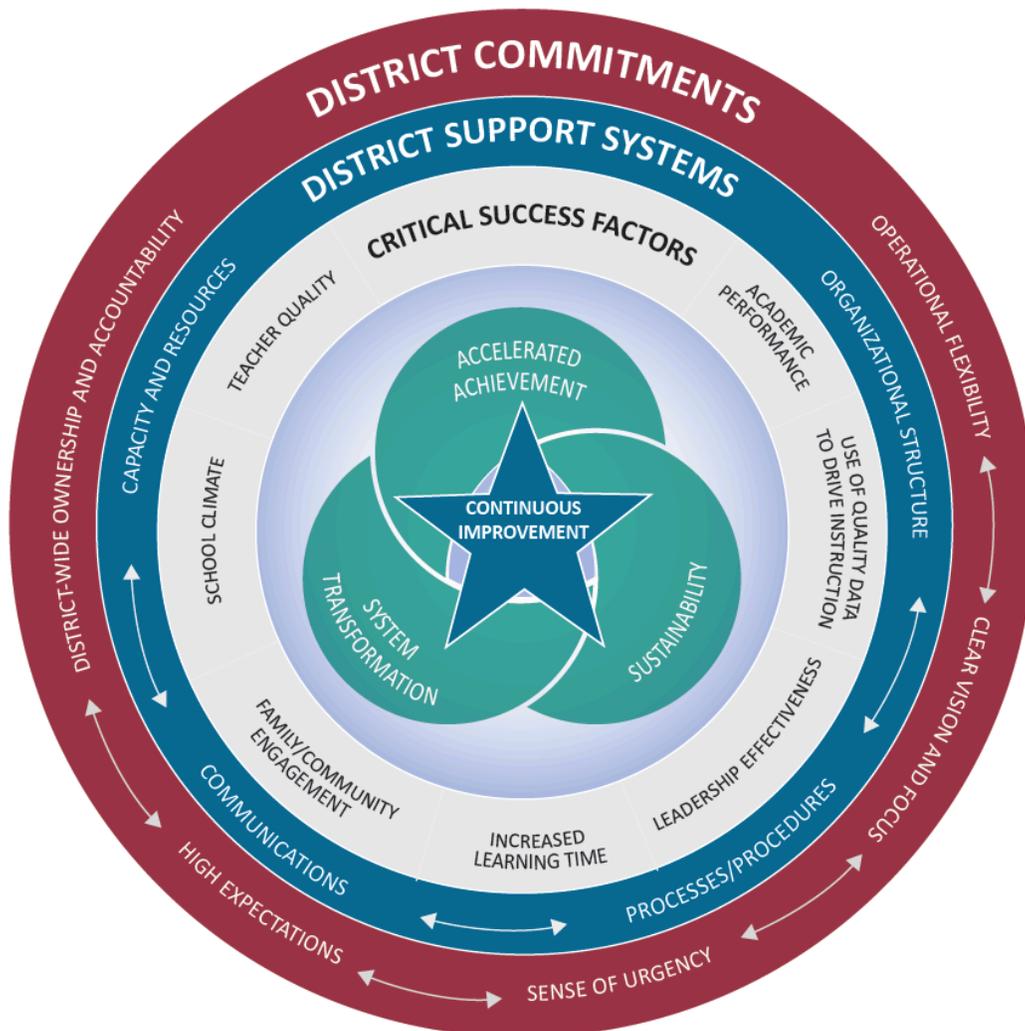
established performance standards, with escalated interventions imposed as a result of continuing low performance. Those graduated interventions include school reconstitution, the possible appointment of a monitor or conservator to provide LEA-level oversight, and a potential order of campus repurposing, alternative management, or closure (see Campus Intervention Matrix, *Attachment 7a*). The statute also establishes certain sanctions for LEA-level underperformance, including, but not limited to, LEA closure.

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

The State's Framework for Continuous District and School Improvement

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

Texas Framework for Continuous District and School Improvement



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

| Outcome | Description |
|-------------------------|--|
| Accelerated Achievement | Accelerated achievement is rapidly attained improvement resulting from an intense and urgent focus on identified areas of need. As barriers to achievement are uncovered and addressed, significant gains are accomplished and performance gaps are reduced. |
| Sustainability | Sustainability is the institutionalization of effective systems and processes that maintain progress over time, regardless of changing conditions. Districts ensure capacity for continuity, safeguard successful |

| Outcome | Description |
|------------------------|---|
| | practices, and maintain commitment to continuous improvement. |
| System Transformation | System Transformation is the comprehensive change of expectations and behaviors, resulting in sustained innovation and success. Transformation is reflected in all aspects of the organization through fully functioning and effective processes. |
| Continuous Improvement | Continuous Improvement is the result of the dynamic interaction of organizational commitments and support systems ensuring the effective implementation of all Critical Success Factors. When these elements are integrated and fully operational, the outcomes of accelerated achievement, sustainability, and system transformation are produced. |

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

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

| Critical Success Factor | Description |
|--------------------------------|--|
| School Climate | Recognizes increased attendance and reduced discipline referrals as indicators of a positive and welcoming environment. Increased attendance in extracurricular activities is another sign that students feel supported by an affirming school climate. |
| Teacher Quality | Focuses on the need to recruit and retain effective teachers while also supporting current staff with job-embedded professional development. A locally developed appraisal and evaluation system informs personnel decisions in order to ensure quality teaching and learning. |

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

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

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

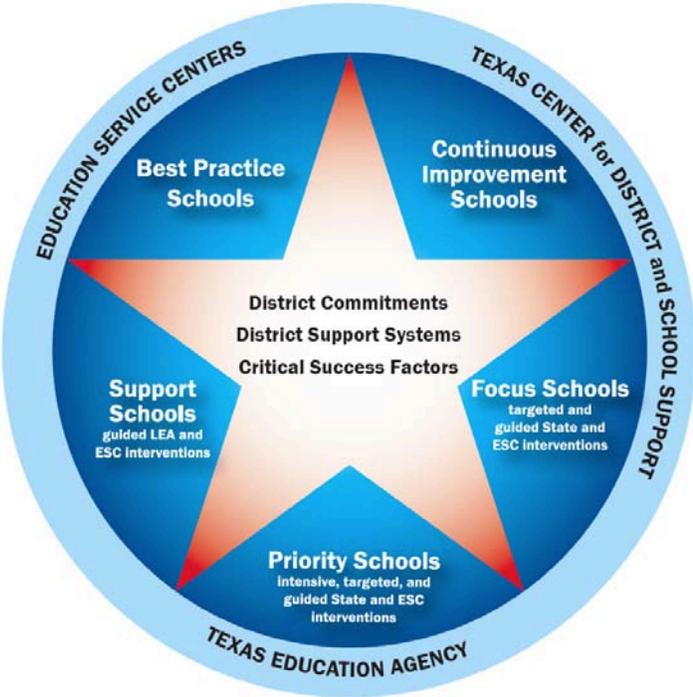
| District Commitment | Description |
|----------------------------|---|
| Operational Flexibility | The district permits the agility to shift resources, processes, and practices in response to critical needs identified. The district's ability to address the needs of all students is contingent upon allowing customized approaches, expedition of resources, and departures from standard practice when the need is substantiated. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Clear Vision and Focus | The district strongly articulates a focus on student achievement as its primary work. Clear plans across the district are developed to address increasing performance for all students on all campuses. This vision is embraced and embedded in daily practice by all staff members. |
| Sense of Urgency | District staff, compelled by an intolerance of failure and dissatisfaction with deficits of the current state, set a priority and press for rapid action to change ineffective practices and processes that impede student success. |
| High Expectations | Explicit, rigorous standards are in place for student learning with adult and student confidence that success is attainable. These expectations are pervasively evident and understood by all with a commitment to providing a timely response and/or adjustment when goals are not met. |
| District-Wide Ownership and Accountability | Throughout the district, leadership recognizes and accepts responsibility for all current levels of performance and transparently interacts with stakeholders to plan and implement improvement initiatives. The district is engaged in continuous review of systemic, district-wide practices to ensure effective impact on critical need areas, such as low-performing campuses. |

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

The Texas School Support System.

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



also identified areas of needed improvement and are working with their district, regional education service center, and have some statewide interventions targeting areas of need. *Priority schools* have multiple identified areas of needed improvement. They receive intensive, targeted, and guided district, education service center, and state interventions.

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

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

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

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

7. Align state and federal accountability requirements to the greatest extent possible.

The Need for a Single Integrated System

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Texas Accountability System Safeguards

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

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

Results for federal accountability purposes will be reported for any cell that meets accountability minimum size criteria (i.e., All Students—no minimum size criteria; if denominator is less than 10, data are aggregated across two or three years; Student Groups—denominator greater than or equal to 25). For the All Students group, the minimum size criteria of 25 or more tests are not applied in order to ensure that campuses and districts with very small number of students tested are still evaluated for federal accountability purposes. Specifically, small numbers analyses are conducted when there are fewer than ten test results in the current year. For the system safeguards evaluated for 2013 federal accountability, a two-year uniform average is computed based on the current year (2013) and prior year (2012) results. If there are ten or more test results available when both years are combined, then the two-year uniform average is used to evaluate the All Students group in 2013. In future years, a three-year uniform average will be used since STAAR test results will be available across three years beginning in 2014. [Note that a similar approach was used by Texas in the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) performance measure calculations for the All Students group for the 2002-03 through the 2011-12 school years, as described in Critical Element 5.5 of the Texas Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook that was approved by the USDE for each of those years.]

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

Federal Performance Rate Targets

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

Federal Participation Rate Targets

Participation rates targets of 95% that are applied to the STAAR assessments are unchanged from the targets applied to the TAKS assessments in the federal accountability evaluations in

prior years. Participation rate targets are applied to the seven student groups evaluated for performance in the reading/English language arts and mathematics subject areas.

Federal Graduation Rate Goals and Targets

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

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

Four-Year Graduation Rate Annual Target: For 2013 accountability determinations, 78.0 percent of students graduate with a regular high school diploma in four years.

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

Five-Year Graduation Rate Target: For 2013 accountability determinations, 83.0 percent of students graduate with a regular high school diploma in five years.

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

Assistance and Intervention

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

Districts and campuses are also subject to supports and interventions for failure to meet disaggregated system safeguard targets. As described earlier, the TAIS determines the level of intervention and support the campus or district receives, and is based on performance history as well as the current year state accountability rating and performance on the safeguard measures.

2.B Establishment of Ambitious but Achievable Annual Measurable Objectives

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

| Accountability System Measures and Safeguard (AMO) Targets Proposed AMOs for 2013 - 2020 (Option B) Based on 2012 State Proficiency Rates at Phase in 1 Level II Standards | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------|------------------|----------|-------|---------------|-------|---------------|
| | Year | All Students | African American | Hispanic | White | Econ. Disadv. | ELL | Special Educ. |
| Performance Rates | | | | | | | | |
| Reading/ELA | 2012 State Rates (Phase-in) | 79% | 71% | 73% | 88% | 71% | 50% | 58% |
| | 2012-2013 | 75% | 75% | 75% | 75% | 75% | 75% | 75% |
| | 2013-2014 | 79% | 79% | 79% | 79% | 79% | 79% | 79% |
| | 2014-2015 | 83% | 83% | 83% | 83% | 83% | 83% | 83% |
| | 2015-2016 | 87% | 87% | 87% | 87% | 87% | 87% | 87% |
| | 2016-2017 | 91% | 91% | 91% | 91% | 91% | 91% | 91% |
| | 2017-2018 | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% |
| | 2018-2019 | 98% | 98% | 98% | 98% | 98% | 98% | 98% |
| | 2019-2020 | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Mathematics | 2012 State Rates (Phase-in) | 77% | 65% | 73% | 86% | 69% | 58% | 55% |
| | 2012-2013 | 75% | 75% | 75% | 75% | 75% | 75% | 75% |
| | 2013-2014 | 79% | 79% | 79% | 79% | 79% | 79% | 79% |
| | 2014-2015 | 83% | 83% | 83% | 83% | 83% | 83% | 83% |
| | 2015-2016 | 87% | 87% | 87% | 87% | 87% | 87% | 87% |
| | 2016-2017 | 91% | 91% | 91% | 91% | 91% | 91% | 91% |
| | 2017-2018 | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% |
| | 2018-2019 | 98% | 98% | 98% | 98% | 98% | 98% | 98% |
| | 2019-2020 | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Participation Rates | | | | | | | | |
| Reading | 2013 through 2020 | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% |
| Mathematics | 2013 through 2020 | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% | 95% |
| Federal Grad. Rates | | | | | | | | |
| 4-year longitudinal rate | 2012-2013 | 78.0% | 78.0% | 78.0% | 78.0% | 78.0% | 78.0% | 78.0% |
| | 2013-2014 | 80.0% | 80.0% | 80.0% | 80.0% | 80.0% | 80.0% | 80.0% |
| | 2014-2015 | 83.0% | 83.0% | 83.0% | 83.0% | 83.0% | 83.0% | 83.0% |
| 5-year longitudinal rate | 2012-2013 | 83.0% | 83.0% | 83.0% | 83.0% | 83.0% | 83.0% | 83.0% |

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

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

The following comparisons to the AYP requirements for Texas schools in prior years demonstrate the rigor of the proposed AMOs for 2013 and beyond.

- As described in Section 1.C, the emphasis on postsecondary readiness in the new STAAR assessment program, in comparison with the previous TAKS assessments, directly impacts the rigor of the performance indicator AMOs evaluated in the system safeguards.
- The starting point of the AMOs of 75% for every student group is aligned with 2011-12 statewide proficiency rates on average across all student groups in reading/ELA and mathematics. The AMOs then increase annually to the goal of 100% proficiency for all student groups by the 2019-20 school year. In 2002-03, the AMO starting point in the first year of the prior AYP system was 33% for mathematics and 47% for reading/English language arts. An AMO of 75% or higher was not required in the prior AYP system until the ninth year (2010-11) for reading/English language arts (80%) and mathematics (75%).
- The minimum size criteria of 25 will be applied to all racial/ethnic, students with disabilities, and English language learners student groups in the system safeguard system. These criteria are significantly more rigorous than the minimum size criteria in prior AYP system of 50, in which the student group was required to comprise at least 10 percent of all students up to 200 students; groups of 200 student or more met the criteria even if that group represents less than 10% of all students.

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

In May 2010, the USDE approved the graduation rate goal and targets for Texas following the graduation rate peer review, as required by the October 2008 Title I regulations. The graduation rate targets approved for Texas are increased over time to ensure that the Texas reaches the goal of 90%. The approved growth target approved by the USDE in May 2010 for the four-year

graduation rate is a 10.0 percent decrease in the difference between the prior year rate and the 90% goal. All districts and campuses must meet the federal graduation rate AMO targets for either the four-year or five-year adjusted cohort graduation rates as part of the underlying System Safeguards. Failure to meet one or more of the AMO graduation rate targets triggers the Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS) which requires intervention activities.

2.C Reward Schools

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

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

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

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

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

Reward high-progress schools will be identified as Title I school in the top 25% in annual improvement and/or schools in the top 25% of those demonstrating ability to close performance gaps based on system safeguards. Any school that has significant achievement gaps across subgroups that are not closing will not be considered a reward school. Schools are identified for

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

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

Additional Information on calculating the progress measure:

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

- Have a valid score from the prior year and the current year
- Have tested in successive grade levels or end of course (EOC) tests in the prior year and the current year. Students who took the same grade-level or EOC test in the prior year and the current year will not receive a progress measure. Students who skipped a grade level between the prior year and the current year, with the exception of grade 7 mathematics to Algebra I, will not receive a progress measure.
- Have taken the same version or type of test in the prior year and the current year (i.e., STAAR, STAAR Modified, or STAAR Alternate)
- Have taken tests in the same language in the prior year and the current year (i.e., English or Spanish)

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

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

The following steps apply for students who took STAAR tests. Additional documentation for STAAR Modified and STAAR Alternate progress measures will be posted in fall 2013.

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

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

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

Step 3 Compute STAAR progress measure.

Use the “Guide to Computing STAAR Progress Measures” and Table 1 on the following pages to calculate a student’s STAAR progress measure.

These schools are encouraged to continue to participate in the improvement process and are given greater autonomy on how to implement the interventions based on their findings. Schools are recognized for their accomplishments and are invited to participate at the annual Advancing Improvements in Education (AIE) conference. AIE provides over 100 breakout sessions to over 2000 participants and includes national speakers on improvement and turnaround.

2.D Priority Schools

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

Identification

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

Texas priority schools will include Tier I or Tier II SIG schools, schools with graduation rates less than 60%, and the lowest achieving schools, ranked by the difference between school

performance and proficiency targets. The total number of schools will equal 5% of Title I campuses in Texas.

Explanation of Data Run to Determine List of Priority Schools

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

As the information needed to define this category will not be available until Summer 2013, a list of Priority Schools will be provided.

System Safeguards

Accountability System Safeguards include participation rates, graduation rates, and limits on the use of alternate assessments. These have been calculated to meet federal requirements and federal targets. Results will be reported for any subgroup that meets accountability minimum size criteria as described previously. Failure to meet the safeguard target for any reported cell must be addressed in the campus or district improvement plan. Campuses will be encouraged to work with the regional Education Service Center Turnaround Teams if they have areas of underperformance within the system safeguards. Based on the modeling assumptions described above, the estimated percentage of campuses that will not meet one or more of the federal accountability targets for performance rates, participation rates, or federal graduation rates more than 50% in 2013.

Interventions and Supports

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

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

Additional Information on Professional Service Providers

PSPs are experienced, successful educators with experience in campus or district turnaround who have qualified by (1) submitting a resume and applying for membership in the PSP Network, overseen by the TEA and the Texas Center for District and School Support (TCOSS), (2) undergoing a thorough screening, including reference checks and interviews, (3) being trained in the Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS), (4) receiving annual training at the PSP Network Conference around effective strategies to facilitate school change and improvement, including turnaround principles, development of leadership, school organization and design, rigorous instructional program that serves all learners, data-driven decision-making, culture and climate, facilitating parent and community involvement, and student supports and intervention strategies, (5) providing monthly progress reports (based on their role in each campus improvement process) that are reviewed and discussed by TEA and TCOSS, (6) participating in ongoing professional development based on state, district, and campus need, (7) receiving an annual evaluation based on campus performance, principal and district feedback, and review of monthly progress reports.

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

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

Attachments (previously submitted): 2012 PSP Summer Institute Agenda
PSP Evaluation Process
PSP Job Description

With respect to increasing the quality of instruction and improving outcomes for all students, the PSP monitors the progress of the campus and provides monthly reports. Additionally, the DCSI provides quarterly updates on the progress of identified campuses and works with the PSP and TEA staff to develop sustainability plans once the campus *meets safeguard targets*. As prescribed in current state statute (TAC 97.1063i), the PSP will continue to work with the campus until the campus satisfies all performance standards for a two-year period. Therefore,

interventions will continue for at least three years. Additional information on specific interventions are included in the sections on Priority and Focus schools below.

Applying Principles of School Turnaround

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

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

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

Additional/Expanded Information on Interventions for Priority Schools

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

and closely aligned to the turnaround principles).

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

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

- providing strong leadership (**Critical Success Factor: Leadership Effectiveness**)
 - *2013-14: SIG Priority schools will have a campus intervention team (CIT) assigned that may include a professional service provider (PSP) and the district coordinator of school improvement (DCSI); all members of the CIT are approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA, or the agency). PSPs are experienced, successful educators, with experience in school and district improvement and turnaround, who have been trained in the Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS) and received annual training at the PSP Network Conference around effective strategies to facilitate school change and improvement, including turnaround principles, development of leadership, school organization and design, rigorous instructional program that serves all learners, data-driven decision-making, culture and climate, facilitating parent and community involvement, and student supports and intervention strategies. As part of the application and interview process, PSPs are questioned around specific skill sets (including core content knowledge, leadership, working with students with disabilities, and providing bilingual and/or ELL instruction and support). Priority schools are provided a list of approved PSPs with skills that match the identified need of the campus. Priority schools may select from that list of PSPs.*
 - *2013-14 Non-SIG Priority schools will work with the TCDSS and regional ESCs and participate in the improvement cycle as part of the TAIS. Data Analysis, needs assessments, and improvement plans will be centered on identifying the model for turnaround that will have the biggest impact on student performance, planning for implementation of the model in the 2014-15 school year, and determining the ability of the current principal to serve as a turnaround leader. ESCs and TCDSS will provide guidance on how to identify traits of a turnaround leader, and resources to build turnaround educator pipelines so that campuses can replace leaders with turnaround principals as needed.*
 - *Schools in priority School status are required to engage in reconstitution planning if they continue to underperform following the first year interventions. Principals who have been employed by the campus in that capacity may not be retained by the campus, unless the CIT determines the retention of the principal will be more beneficial to student achievement and campus stability. Principals that are retained at the campus will be*

provided training and support by the CIT, and will be further supported by the regional education service center (ESC). A list of Campus Intervention Team duties includes stipulations that the CIT will determine interventions and staff development for campus administrators. The CIT will document the determination regarding retention of the principal. If the determination is made to retain the principal, the state will review submitted documentation.

- *Principals of priority schools will participate in targeted training, including the Advancing Improvement in Education (AIE) conference.*

- ensuring that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction (**Critical Success Factor: Teacher Quality**)
 - *2013-2014 SIG Schools CITs are required to conduct a needs assessment that includes assessment of staff quality and preparation for the assignment, determination of compliance with class size limitations, and the assessment of the quality, quantity, and appropriateness of instructional materials, including the availability of technology-based instructional materials. The CIT must make recommendations for professional development for instructional staff, and, as appropriate, determine interventions for specific teachers. The CIT also must examine teacher recruitment and retention strategies and incentives for highly qualified teachers. TEA, ESCs, and TCDSS staff will provide guidance and resources for non-SIG priority schools to complete the assessment of staff quality.*
 - *2013-14 SIG schools CIT members work with principals on implementation of effective teacher observation and feedback strategies. Such observations are targeted at teacher actions, student engagement, effective use of questioning, alignment with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), and instructional rigor. The observation protocol results in immediate feedback to the teacher and, as appropriate, determination of ongoing and job embedded professional development. TEA, ESCs, and TCDSS staff will provide guidance and resources for non-SIG priority schools to complete the assessment of staff quality in 2013-14.*
 - *Interventions for teachers that address the needs of all students will include, as appropriate, training in: Response to Intervention (RtI) and/or tiered interventions, sheltered instruction, accommodated/modified instruction for students with learning differences, positive behavior interventions, data informed instruction, effective use of allocated learning time, extended learning opportunities, and instructional collaboration between/among general education and special program teachers.*
 - *Online professional development and collaboration via Project Share, and through the Texas English Language Learner Instructional Tool (TELLIT) coursework, sheltered instruction online training, and the ELL web portal.*

- *Multiple online courses that emphasize RtI strategies. One example is the MSTAR Academy II training that emphasizes research-based Tier II strategies from the [IES Practice Guide for Assisting Struggling Students with Mathematics: Response to Intervention \(RtI\) for Elementary and Middle Schools](#) and engages participants in how to identify students needing Tier II support in mathematics and meet their instructional needs. Participants learn how to interpret results of the MSTAR Universal Screener; use the screener results and other forms of data to make instructional decisions; and provide practical strategies for implementing evidence-based interventions for students receiving Tier II mathematics support.(Additional examples available, if required).*
- redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration (**Critical Success Factor: Increased Learning Time**)

 - *2013-2014 SIG schools: the CIT needs assessment and recommendations process requires the CIT to identify any needed changes in school procedures or operations, whether resources should be reallocated, and whether the campus should request waivers from state requirements and/or to fund extended year services for students who are unsuccessful on state assessment. ESCS and TCDSS will provide resources and guidance on how non-SIG priority schools can begin to address increased learning time in 2013-2014 and fully implement in 2014-15.*
 - *Additionally, for Priority Schools required to reconstitute, the campus must implement campus redesign, approved by the commissioner of education, that: provides a rigorous and relevant academic program; provides personal attention and guidance; promotes high expectations for all students; and addresses comprehensive school-wide improvements that cover all aspects of a school's operations, including, but not limited to, curriculum and instruction changes, structural and managerial innovations, sustained professional development, financial commitment, and enhanced involvement of parents and the community.*
 - *Resources and lessons learned from our participation in the SIG work will be utilized for future priority schools*
- strengthening the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with State academic content standards (**Critical Success Factor: Use of Quality Data to Drive Instruction/Academic performance**)

 - *Campus improvement planning processes are organized around the turnaround principles and CSFs (including Academic Performance, Quality Data, Leadership Effectiveness, Learning Time, Family and Community Support, School Climate, Teacher Quality), and around a research-based systemic approach that focuses on Curriculum and Assessment, Instruction, Culture and Climate, Parent and Community Engagement, Adult Advocates, Academic Supports and*

Interventions, Behavior and Social Skills Development, and Personalized Environment. By organizing improvement planning around the CSFs and by focusing on improvement of major systems that impact teaching and learning, dropout rates, and graduation rates, the TAIS provides a framework for development of a strong instructional program that addresses student needs.

- *Curriculum and Instruction program improvement processes require the campus to assess rigor, relevance, and alignment to the TEKS (state academic content standards), and to address in the improvement plan the means by which these programs will be strengthened.*
- *Campuses and LEAs in interventions will submit periodic reports on their progress toward full implementation of the targeted improvement plan. These progress reports will include data showing the impact of the plan initiatives and strategies, and the January progress report includes benchmark and/or CBA data for the first semester.(2013-2014 SIG priority schools; 2014-2015 non-SIG priority schools)*
- using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data(**Critical Success Factor: Use of Quality Data to Drive Instruction/Academic performance**)
 - *Each priority school will work with the through the improvement cycle that includes extensive data analysis. A data analysis guidance document and related training has been created and will be provided to each school and their DCSI and PSP.*
 - *Two examples of ESC designed resources specifically focused on data analysis include the Formative Assessment Success Tracker (FAST) and the Transformational Teacher Cadre*
- establishing a school environment that improves school safety and discipline and addressing other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs (**Critical Success Factor: School Climate**)
 - *Each priority school will work with the through the improvement cycle that includes extensive focus on factors that influence school environment.*
 - *Two examples of ESC-designed resources specifically focused on school environment include the Warming up the Classroom Climate and Culture & Climate Improvement Targets (C2IT)*
- providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement (**Critical Success Factor: Family/Community Engagement**).

- *Each priority school will work with the through the improvement cycle that includes extensive focus on factors that influence family and community engagement.*
- *Two examples of ESC-designed resources specifically focused on family and community engagement include The Parent Connection-Go Social and Grown Locally: Parent Power Community Capacity*

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

Attachment (previously submitted): TAIS and improvement process

Timeline for Implementation of Intervention Process for Priority Schools

The table below presents the implementation timeline for 2012–2013 identified priority schools.

| Activity | Timeline |
|--|---|
| Accountability ratings released | August 8, 2013 |
| Parent notification/public notice/hearing (as required) | August 15, 2013 |
| District submits names of PSP and DCSI, as applicable | September 9, 2013 |
| Data analysis, needs assessment, improvement plan completed; improvement plan submitted for approval | October 31, 2013 |
| PSP progress reports | Monthly |
| Quarterly review of improvement process progress | November 2013, February 2014, June 2014 |
| Reconstitution Plan drafts submitted (as required) | October 2013 – January 2014 |
| Final Reconstitution Plan approved (as required) | June 2014 |

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

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

Exiting Priority Status

To exit priority status, a campus must make significant progress toward meeting AMOs and graduation targets for two consecutive years following interventions and no longer fit the criteria to be identified as a priority campus. Significant progress is defined as reducing the gap between campus performance and AMO and graduation targets by at least fifty percent. If a priority

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

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

Schools in priority status are required to engage in reconstitution planning if they continue to miss the safeguards created for the federal system following a year of interventions. The reconstitution plan will include the required turnaround principles. Requirements of Texas Education Code (TEC) §39.107, Reconstitution, Repurposing, Alternative Management, and Closure stipulate the following: *Reconstitution requires the removal or reassignment of some or all campus administrative and/or instructional personnel, taking into consideration proactive measures the district or campus has taken regarding campus personnel; and the implementation of a campus redesign, approved by the commissioner of education.* Principals who have been employed by the campus in that capacity may not be retained by the campus, unless the CIT determines the retention of the principal will be more beneficial to student achievement and campus stability. Principals that are retained at the campus will be provided training and support by the CIT, and will be further supported by the regional education service center (ESC). TEC §39.106, Campus Intervention Team Duties, includes stipulations that the CIT will determine interventions and staff development for campus administrators.

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

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

All priority schools will participate in three years of interventions.

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

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

2.E Focus Schools

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

Identification

Texas focus schools will be Title I schools that have the widest gaps in student performance between student groups. Schools will be ranked based on the largest gaps of performance between student groups and the AMO target of 75%. Ten percent of Title I schools, not otherwise identified as priority schools, will be identified as focus schools using this methodology.

Explanation of Data Run to Determine List of Focus Schools

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

Additional Information on Interventions for Focus schools

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

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

- Improve Academic Performance
 - Transformational Teach Institute (TTI)
- Curriculum Audits Increase Leadership Effectiveness
 - Leaders’ Portfolio
- Enlist, Educate, Empower, Evaluate (4E) Increase Teacher Quality
 - Peer Observation Data-Driven Dialogue (PODZ)

- Teacher Quality Portfolio
- Products, on-line courses, websites, and assessments developed to identify, assess, and provide instruction to English Language Learners, underperforming students in core content areas, strategies to close the achievement gap, and to assist struggling students identified as underperforming through the Response to Intervention (RTI) process. For example, participation in the Elementary Students in Texas: Algebra Ready (ESTAR) Academy I examines the big ideas in the grades K-2 mathematics TEKS that prepare students for success in algebra. Participants engage in hands-on, student-centered activities and lessons designed to provide connections to and strengthen participants' knowledge of the elementary mathematics that is critical for success in algebra; and explore how to embed the [English Language Proficiency Standards \(ELPS\)](#) into instruction as well as how to differentiate instruction to align with the expectations of [Response to Intervention \(RtI\)](#).

As the information needed to define this category will not be available until Summer 2013, a list of Focus Schools will be included soon.

System Safeguards

Accountability System Safeguards include participation rates, graduation rates, and limits on the use of alternate assessments. These have been calculated to meet federal requirements and federal targets. Results will be reported for any subgroup that meets accountability minimum size criteria. Failure to meet the safeguard target for any reported subgroup must be addressed in the campus or district improvement plan. Campuses will be encouraged to work with the regional Education Service Center Turnaround Teams if they *miss a system safeguard*. Based on the modeling assumptions described above, the estimated percentage of campuses that will not meet one or more of the federal accountability targets for performance rates, participation rates, or federal graduation rates is more than 50% in 2013.

Timeline for Implementation of Intervention Process for Focus Schools

The table below presents the implementation timeline for 2012–2013 identified focus schools.

| Activity | Timeline |
|--|-------------------|
| Accountability ratings released | August 8, 2013 |
| Parent notification/public notice/hearing | August 15, 2013 |
| District submits names of PSP and DCSI, as applicable | September 9, 2013 |
| Data analysis, needs assessment, improvement plan completed; improvement plan submitted for approval | October 31, 2013 |
| PSP progress reports | Monthly |

All identified focus schools will begin interventions aligned with the reason for identification in 2013-2014. At least one intervention impacting instruction must begin by the end of the first semester.

Exiting Focus Status

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

To exit focus status, a campus must make significant progress toward closing achievement gaps of student groups, and no longer fit the criteria to be identified as a focus campus. Significant progress is defined as reducing the gap between student group performance and AMO by at least fifty percent.

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

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

All focus schools will participate in three years of interventions.

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

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

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

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

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

determined by the principal and/or the district; the CLT is responsible for developing, implementing, and monitoring the improvement plan; monitoring student performance; and determining student interventions and support services.

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

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

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

With the increase in identified low-performing districts and schools, there is a need to mobilize

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

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

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

As noted earlier, the Texas Center for District and School Support (TCDSS) has evolved to support LEAs and schools around school improvement and interventions. Initial coordination efforts to align systems focused on similar intervention requirements for schools that were identified as academically unacceptable in the state accountability system and were subject to the school improvement program under federal accountability requirements. Evolving from early work on the accountability system was the creation of the TAIS, which is built upon the best aspects of both the state and federal systems. TEA determined that the fundamental issues for underperforming campuses are the same in both systems, and students with academic needs are often the same regardless of the identification process. Therefore, the TAIS was designed to assist LEAs and schools to focus on engaging in the improvement process as opposed to completing and checking off state and federal requirements. The comprehensive Texas system continues to develop along with ongoing investments in improving the initial system. Along these lines, partnerships have been built between TEA, ESCs, Texas LEAs and schools that have strengthened the accountability and improvement processes.

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

Under NCLB, many LEAs were required to reserve 20 percent of the districts' Title I allotments to implement choice and/or Supplemental Educational Services (SES). With approved waivers, funds that the LEA previously reserved to meet requirements of ESEA section 1116(b)(10) will be used to support the implementation of interventions in an LEA's Focus Schools or Priority Schools in accordance with allowable use of Title I funds. Once the LEA demonstrates that sufficient resources are available to support interventions in its Priority and Focus schools, funds may be used to support instructional programs at the district-level or by providing Title I funds in school allocations under ESEA section 1113(c). An LEA may also reserve funds to support the implementation of interventions in an LEA's Focus Schools or Priority Schools in accordance with allowable use of Title I funds. Although, the SEA will not require LEAs to use the funds in

a specific way, all decisions must be made based on an LEA's careful analysis of local capacity and based on a comprehensive needs assessment. The LEA must demonstrate in its Title I Application that resources have been allocated to its Priority and Focus schools sufficient to support the interventions described.

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

Interventions for Local Education Agencies

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

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

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

Attachment (provided in initial submission): District TAIS Workbook

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

Building Capacity (General)

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

Texas works closely with the Texas Comprehensive Center, the Edvance Center of State Productivity, and other entities to stay current on turnaround research and practices. Previous collaborators and/or trainers have included: Public Impact, Sam Redding/CII, Lauren Rhim, University of Virginia School Turnaround Program, Edvance, and Mass Insight. In addition, USDE conferences and trainings are used to develop capacity at the state-level and to network and learn from other states.

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

LEA Accountability

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

The TAIS was designed with a LEA focus and district capacity is addressed via specific trainings for DCSIs and LEA staff. LEA-focused meetings have included the District Sustainability Summit, and the District Institute-Rethinking Central Office. Districts will be held accountable for student achievement and interventions will be based on specific district areas of need. TEA, TCDSS, and ESCs will work regionally to provide professional learning and content area support. District Improvement Plans will be required to include identified areas of need and will be part of the ongoing monitoring of interventions at the district and campus level. If goals are not met within a two year period, the district policies and procedures will be reviewed and specific districts will be identified to receive a district level on-site review based on achievement data.

Additionally, as previously described, to build LEA capacity the commissioner may: order a hearing to be held before the commissioner or the commissioner's designee at which the

president of the board of trustees of the district and the superintendent shall appear and explain the district's low performance, lack of improvement, and plans for improvement; arrange an on-site investigation of the district; appoint an agency monitor to participate in and report to the agency on the activities of the board of trustees or the superintendent; appoint a conservator to oversee the operations of the district; appoint a management team to direct the operations of the district in areas of insufficient performance; or require the district to acquire professional services under a contract with qualified another person or entity.

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