



News Release
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TEA's "Work in Progress" Preliminary Report: An On-going Process *Sets Groundwork for Future System of Evaluating Public School Systems*

In August 2018, a new A-F rating system mandated by House Bill 2804 and approved during the last legislative session will be implemented. The 84th Legislature also mandated that a preliminary report that assigns every campus and district an A-F rating in four domains of a new five domain accountability framework be developed. Region One Education Center reminds parents and community members that the released A-F letter designations for each of the four domains are preliminary and cautions against drawing conclusions.

"It is important for our communities to understand that the A-F designations for each of the four domains were intended only to provide a 'work in progress' report that will be presented to the legislature by January 2017 by the Texas Education Agency," explains Dr. Cornelio Gonzalez, Region One ESC Executive Director. "Additionally, and probably most significant, is that the released grade designations do not imply an overall grade of a campus or district's performance. Overall campus and district performance ratings will not be implemented until August 2018."

Using 2015-2016 data, the ratings provide a possible letter grade that districts and campuses *would have received* for Domains I-IV had the A-F rating system been in place, states TEA. The released ratings, according to TEA, are not intended to serve as "actual district and campus ratings that carry with them the possibility of interventions or sanctions, an inference on district and campus performance in the 2015-2016 school year, or a predictor of future district or campus performance or ratings."

The four domains in TEA's release examines several areas including student performance, student progress, achievement gaps, attendance and graduation rates, and student work in college level or advanced courses. As stated by TEA, "the system reflects a commitment to recognizing high achievement, but also recognizing the impact of highly effective educators."

The four domains that will be considered in the ratings system are comprised of the following:

- **Domain I: Student Achievement** is based on student performance on the STAAR test at the campus and district level;
- **Domain II: Student Progress** measures student academic progress from one academic year to the next;
- **Domain III: Closing the Gaps** addresses student achievement for a campus' economically disadvantaged student population using cut-off scores determined by TEA; and

Region One Education Service Center (www.esc1.net) serves over 427,000 students and educators in seven counties in south Texas including Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Starr, Webb, Willacy and Zapata counties. Region One works to assist school districts in improving student performance, assist districts to operate more efficiently and economically, and implement initiatives assigned by the legislature or the Commissioner of Education.

- **Domain IV: Postsecondary Readiness** examines various factors depending on grade levels.
 - At the elementary level, Domain 4 examines a campus' chronic absenteeism rate.
 - At the middle school level in addition to the campus' chronic absenteeism rate, the 7-8 grade annual dropout rate is evaluated.
 - At the high school level Domain IV will be based partially on the graduation rate and partially on the percentage of students graduating with a higher level graduation plan. But it will also examine the percentage of students who graduate ready for college, career, or the military, as evidenced by SAT/ACT/AP/IB/dual credit, an industry credential or appropriate CTE course sequence, or military enlistment. Ratings in this domain will be built so that schools will receive the same level of recognition for students who enter the military as they do for students who achieve industry-recognized credentials and as they do for students who achieve high SAT/ACT scores.

A fifth domain, not included in this ratings release, will be considered in the final reporting in August 2018. Domain V is a self-assessed rating evaluating a district's Community and Student Engagement based on parameters determined by the district.

During Spring 2017 and through Spring 2018, advisory groups will continue to examine the methodologies used to calculate Domain I-IV ratings, explains Dr. Belinda Gorena, Administrator, Region One ESC School Improvement, Accountability, and Compliance. "The methodologies for the A-F accountability system that were recently released are not the final system. The criteria and cut points, for example, are not final. The development of the new A-F accountability system is ongoing through final rule adoption in Spring 2018. It is important for all stakeholders to understand that what we are seeing with this preliminary report, as far as how a campus and district will be evaluated in each domain, will continue to be developed."

In the interim, Dr. Gorena says Region One staff will continue to focus on impacting student success and educator effectiveness in their work with school districts and charter school systems.