
September 11, 2023

Dear LISD State Senators, House Representatives, and Commissioner Morath:

Since 2012, Lewisville ISD has advocated for an accountability system that includes multiple sources of data and does not consist primarily of a multiple choice test. While in the last decade there have been steps taken for the accountability system to include more data points for high schools, unfortunately elementary and middle schools are primarily rated based on student performance on STAAR. One of our core beliefs in LISD is that our students are more than a test score.

Let us be clear, we believe in accountability and over the last ten years have developed an accountability system to our community that reports on the performance of our schools with multiple indicators in the form of our [campus profile sheets](#) that include input from our parents on their feedback about our schools.

It is evident that the longstanding concerns about the state accountability system we have expressed are not unique to LISD. There were multiple bills filed throughout the 88th Legislative Session that attempted to address concerns.

The TEA continues to move the expectations associated with College and Career Readiness in a manner that does not allow or provide districts with an opportunity to be proactive. The significant change to the College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) indicator target score is being applied to classes who have already graduated, making it impossible to take any actions that will impact both the 2023 and 2024 ratings. No additional funding is being provided for districts to expand course offerings as the expectation for readiness is expanding to not only include certification but also pathway completion.

The ultimate goal of the K-12 setting is for students to graduate indicating the successful completion of their K-12 education. The adjusted cohort graduation rate for public high school students was 87% in 2019-20 (National Center for Education Statistics. (2023). Public High School Graduation Rates.). The current accountability system scales graduation rates down by only awarding a campus with a graduation rate of 95% a score of 75 even though 95% far exceeds the national average.

It might be tempting to minimize graduation rates as a viable data source when college enrollment as reported on the TAPR seems to be declining. The data presented in the TAPR, is misleading because students who attend college out of state are not included. We feel strongly that truncating the data set on college attendees misleads the public by not accurately stating the percentage of our graduates who successfully move into college post graduation.

The new accountability system is overly complex and continues to use the same piece of data multiple times.

- A student in grades 3-8 can have their one RLA test count 13 times.
- Domain 1 calculations equally weight the approaches, meets and masters levels. The current accountability system would rate elementary and middle schools a D/F in this domain if all students attained an approaching performance level.

- Domain 3 replicates Domains 1 and 2 but breaks the data into student groups. Campuses and districts are penalized repetitively for the same data set.
- It is important to note that student performance at the approaching level indicates according to TEA "... that students are likely to succeed in the next grade or course with targeted academic intervention. Students in this category generally demonstrate the ability to apply the assessed knowledge and skills in familiar contexts." All students as part of the regular school day receive targeted instruction in subsequent school years. Students are required to achieve an approaching performance level for a satisfactory performance on the test.

According to Educational Accountability 3.0: (Educational Accountability 3.0: Beyond ESSA. (2023). Beyond Test Scores Project and National Education Policy Center:

- Measures of school quality under NCLB and ESSA have placed an outsized emphasis on test scores, at the expense of other important measures (Lee & Lee, 2020; National Research Council, 2011; Schneider, 2017).
- This test-driven accountability policy has failed to encompass a whole-child development approach, including non-cognitive measures of achievement such as socioemotional skills, mental and physical well-being.
- This narrow set of measures also has failed to highlight the lack of resources and supports needed to improve student outcomes and close racial and socioeconomic achievement gaps (Kirsh & Braun, 2016; Lee & Wong, 2004).
- One of the recommendations indicated accountability systems should include reciprocal accountability. A system's demands on schools must be linked to the provision of capacity, support, and resources from elected officials. Currently accountability systems are *unidirectional* holding school systems accountable for meeting demands regardless of the provision of resources in order to meet those demands

The Texas Education Agency asserts it improves outcomes for all public school students in the state by providing leadership, guidance, and support to school systems. We stand before you, alongside hundreds of other school board members, who represent millions of Texas Public School students, asking you to pause these changes until further study can be completed and some of the very valid feedback you've received from the districts and students you exist to lead, guide and support, can be factored into the accountability system.



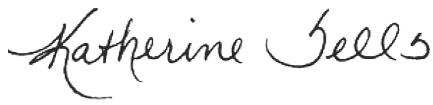
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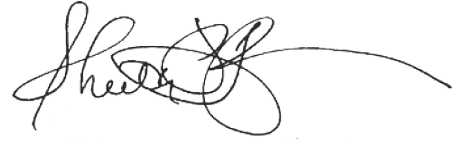
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