

DATE:	January 7, 2021
SUBJECT:	Approval of January 2020 Amendment to the State’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan
CATEGORY:	Notice
NEXT STEPS:	Share with appropriate staff

This letter is to notify you that the Texas Education Agency (TEA) received approval from U.S. Department of Education (USDE) on December 22, 2020, of its January 2020 amendment to adjust the Closing the Gaps domain graduation rate methodology used in the academic accountability system, as well as the methodology used to identify schools for support and improvement.

As a reminder, TEA has proposed [ESSA addendum and amendment requests](#) currently open for public comment until January 11, 2021. These addendum and amendment requests propose additional adjustments to the state plan to account for the impact of COVID-19 on the 2020–21 school year.

Requests Approved

Graduation Rate Methodology

TEA and the USDE negotiated the following methodology for the graduation rate component of the Closing the Gaps domain:

1. Did the student group meet the four-year long-term graduation rate target of 94.0% and demonstrate improvement of at least 0.1% over its baseline rate?
2. If #1 is no, did the student group meet the four-year interim graduation rate target of 90.0% and demonstrate improvement of at least 0.1% over the prior year rate?
3. If #1 and #2 are no, did the student group meet its four-year graduation rate growth target? The growth target is calculated as follows.

Did the student group demonstrate sufficient growth from the prior year in order to meet the long-term graduation rate target of 94.0% (i.e. a 10% decrease in difference between the prior year rate and the long-term target)?

$$\frac{\text{current year four-year graduation rate} - \text{prior year four-year graduation rate}}{10} = \frac{94.0 \text{ (long-term target)} - \text{prior year four-year graduation rate}}{10}$$

For example, the 2019 four-year federal graduation rate for the special education student group was 66.7%, and the 2020 four-year federal graduation rate was 70.0%. Using this methodology, the student group would meet the growth target as demonstrated below:

$$70.0 - 66.7 = 3.3 > 2.73 = \frac{94.0 - 66.7}{10}$$

Federal School Improvement Identification

TEA will use of the six-year federal graduation rate to identify any Title I or non-Title I campus that does not attain at least a 67 percent graduation rate for comprehensive support and improvement.

TEA will escalate Title I additional targeted support campuses to comprehensive support and improvement after three consecutive years, rather than escalating Title I targeted support and improvement campuses. Additional information on the adjusted escalation timeline is available in the ESSA addendum currently posted for public comment.

For Further Information

If you have any questions regarding the approved amendment, please contact TEA's Performance Reporting Division at (512) 463-9704 or performance.reporting@tea.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

Jamie Crowe

Executive Director, Performance Reporting