



Arlington

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

More Than a Remarkable Education

A-F Rating System

HB 2804, passed by the 84th Texas Legislature in 2015, made significant changes to the state public school accountability system, including the creation of A-F rating labels for district and campus performance. This rating system won't be finalized and formally applied until August 2018 with ratings from the 2017-2018 school year. The Texas Education Commissioner was required to submit a report to the legislature by Jan. 1, 2017 to show what grade each district and campus would have received for 2015-2016 for the first four indicator domains as well as correlations between those ratings and the number of students reported as economically disadvantaged or English language learners.

The preliminary ratings published by TEA this month are based on incomplete data in domain IV, don't include domain V at all and represent TEA's first attempt at defining these ratings. The domain-level ratings are based on data from the 2015-2016 school year, and the state is not preparing an overall rating for each school or district although an overall rating will be required in 2018. The ratings do not reflect improvements made so far this school year. At this point, we have no information on how this is correlated to the current system (met standard/improvement required); this model is tentative and still very much evolving.

The AISD has a robust strategic plan that appropriately places emphasis on many aspects of a student's school experience and is not dependent on STAAR exams.

While A-F is one way to measure a school or district, we believe an emphasis on a student's comprehensive learning outcomes and experiences – such as fine arts, extracurricular participation, career preparation, advanced studies and community service – is more appropriate and reflective of a student's preparation for college, career and citizenship.

Many state organizations and districts have spoken out against A-F ratings, citing the incomplete picture represented and the high correlation between a school or district's ratings and poverty levels. There is no definitive research that suggests that the states (at least 16) that have implemented similar rating systems have improved student or school performance due to the A-F system.