

**August 2, 2018**

**To the Administrator Addressed:**

**Subject: U.S. Department of Education's Approval of Texas's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan Amendments and Denial of Waiver Request Related to TELPAS Changes**

The purpose of this communication is to provide information about the U.S. Department of Education's (USDE) response to Texas's ESSA waiver and amendment requests and the impact on 2018 academic accountability ratings.

### **TELPAS Progress Measure Waiver History**

In April 2018, TEA submitted a waiver request to USDE related to two ESSA requirements.

- 1) The waiver requested a one-year exclusion from the requirement to include the progress of English Learners (EL) in the state's accountability system due to recent changes to the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS), which made it difficult to compare EL student results on TELPAS from the 2017-18 school year to those from the 2016-17 school year.
- 2) Based on the request to waive the requirement to include the EL progress measure noted above, the waiver also requested a one-year exclusion of English learners in their second year in U.S. schools for 2018 accountability.

On July 31, the USDE notified TEA that the waiver request was denied. You can find the request and the USDE response on TEA's [ESSA webpage](#).

### **Impact on 2018 Academic Accountability Ratings**

The English language progress measure is evaluated using the English Language Proficiency (ELP) component in the Closing the Gaps domain. For 2018 academic accountability, the ELP component will use prior year TELPAS data to evaluate district and campus English language progress. Additional information about ELP methodology is available in Chapter 4 of the [2018 Accountability Manual](#).

Additionally, EL students in their second year in U.S. schools will be included across all domain calculations for 2018 academic accountability ratings. The inclusion of these students adds approximately 67,000 assessments statewide.

### **Amendment of ESSA Targets and Weights Approved**

The USDE approved an amendment to the state's ESSA plan to adjust the student group targets and component weights used to evaluate districts and campuses in the Closing the Gaps domain. The amended targets and weights are available in Chapter 4 of the [2018 Accountability Manual](#). You can find the request and the USDE response on TEA's [ESSA webpage](#). This letter also approved an amendment to include Texas' latest teacher equity data reporting.

**Contact Information**

If you have questions about 2018 academic accountability, please contact the Performance Reporting Department at (512) 463-9704 or [performance.reporting@tea.texas.gov](mailto:performance.reporting@tea.texas.gov).

Sincerely,

Mike Morath  
Commissioner of Education