Texas Education Agency
Performance-Based Monitoring

2014-Current Year PBMAS Masking Rules

"Masking" refers to the use of special symbols to conceal data for the purpose of protecting student confidentiality. The Performance-Based Monitoring Analysis System (PBMAS) masks data in order to comply with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Data is masked by concealing information that could lead to the identification, either directly or indirectly, of a student. There are two cases in which a student could be identified:

1. When very few students in a group are evaluated, it may be possible to identify a particular student or students within the group.

2. When all the students in a group have the same result, e.g. all passing or all failing, it may be possible to identify all the students within the group. Revealing that all (or no) students in a group achieved the same result violates the students' individual privacy, even if the result achieved is a positive one.

PBMAS masks numerators, denominators, and percentages (rates) according to the procedure below. State standards and performance levels **are not** masked. The asterisk (*) is used as the masking character.

Procedure

The following rules are listed in order of priority. The masking rules are applied to each year of data independently of other years of data that may be available.

Step 1: Masking for all Indicators

1) If the number of students in the denominator is less than 5 (including 0):
   Rate: print an asterisk (*)
   Numerator: print an asterisk (*)
   Denominator: print an asterisk (*)

2) If the rate is 100% or rounds to 100%:
   Rate: print an asterisk (*)
   Numerator: print an asterisk (*)
   Denominator: print an asterisk (*)

3) If the rate is 0% or rounds to 0%:
   Rate: print an asterisk (*)
   Numerator: print an asterisk (*)
   Denominator: print an asterisk (*)

4) If the difference between the numerator and the denominator is less than 3:
> Rate: print the rate
> Numerator: print an asterisk (*)
> Denominator: print an asterisk (*)

5) If the numerator is less than 5 (including 0):
> Rate: print the rate
> Numerator: print an asterisk (*)
> Denominator: print an asterisk (*)

Step 2: Additional Masking

The following rules are used for certain PBMAS indicators to prevent the ability to calculate numerators, denominators, or rates of related indicators that were masked by previous rules.

6) If the **SPED Representation** indicator is masked:
> Print an asterisk (*) for the numerators and denominators of all the student group representation[1] indicators and all the special education instructional settings[2] indicators.

7) If the indicator is a **difference**[3] indicator:
> If a value is masked then print an asterisk (*) for the rates, numerators, and denominators for **that** indicator, except for the percentage difference.

8) If the indicator is a special education **student assessment participation** indicator:
> If a value is masked then print an asterisk (*) for the rate, numerator, and denominator for **that** indicator only.

9) If the indicator is any one of the special education **instructional settings**[2] indicators:
> If a value is masked then print an asterisk (*) for all numerators and denominators for **all** the instructional settings indicators.

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[1] Student group representation indicators: African American (Not Hispanic/Latino) Representation, Hispanic Representation, and LEP Representation.

[2] Instructional settings indicators: Placements in Instructional Settings 40/41 (Ages 3-5), Regular Early Childhood Program Rate (Ages 3-5), Regular Class ≥ 80% Rate (Ages 6-11 and 12-21), and Regular Class < 40% Rate (Ages 6-11 and 12-21).

[3] Difference indicators: The student group representation indicators plus Discretionary DAEP Placements, Discretionary In-School Suspensions (ISS), and Discretionary Out-of-School Suspensions (OSS).