



87th Legislative Session

Texas PTA Legislative Priority

A-F ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

Monitor legislation impacting the state's A-F system. Advocate for an accountability system that more broadly reviews school performance and includes a family engagement component.

BACKGROUND

- In the 2015 legislative session, lawmakers switched from a pass/fail system of school accountability to an A-F graded system of assessing schools and districts, in part because they thought A-F grades would be easier for parents to understand.
 - While it is likely true that an A-F system is easier for parents to understand, Texas PTA believes the current system is too dependent on standardized tests and does not accurately reflect how students are being taught in the classroom.
- State-mandated test results are one measure of student progress but should not be the predominant measure on which to judge schools.
- The lack of a meaningful evaluation of family engagement opportunities in schools is a major concern as well. Schools should be recognized when they implement meaningful opportunities for parent and family engagement.
- In [A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement](#), researchers concluded that there is a positive and convincing relationship between family involvement and student success, regardless of race/ethnicity, class, or parents' level of education.
- Texas PTA supports implementation of the [2018 State Board of Education's \(SBOE\) Long-Range Plan for Education](#) that recognizes the critical role families play through their involvement in their students' education at all levels.
 - The long-range plan states, "The SBOE defines family engagement and empowerment as engaging and integrating families and parents in the education of students and facilitating parent and family education to support their children, looking at how the system works or does not work to help families and community members serve as advocates for and partners in the success of the education system."
 - The vision and many of the recommendations for family engagement in the plan are based on the [National Parent Teacher Association Standards for Family-School Partnerships](#).
- On December 10, 2020, the [Texas Education Agency announced](#) that A-F accountability ratings would be paused due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Texas students will still take STAAR tests, but their campuses and districts won't be graded by the state.
 - This will make it the second year in which the state will not rate schools and school districts on the A-F scale.
 - When operational, the system rewards schools that perform well on the STAAR exams and enforces consequences for those that repeatedly receive low scores.
 - If a school receives enough consecutive failing grades, the state can move to intervene in the operation of a school district or close a campus. The last time the state awarded A-F grades was in 2019.

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