



DURÓN'S DIGEST

UPDATE FROM SUPERINTENDENT ROBERT J. DURÓN
SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
141 LAVACA • SAN ANTONIO, TX • (210) 299-5506



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**TEA ratings
reinforce:
SAISD is
making good
progress**

The final results have been released by the Texas Education Agency on 2011 accountability ratings, and as I shared with you last month, SAISD has been officially rated Academically Acceptable. This rating will remain with the district through 2013.

I am proud of the progress our District has made and recognize the tremendous work by our teachers, students, administrators, staff and community groups in helping to realize this gain. I know we are all committed to continuing this upward trajectory.

The Acceptable rating, upgraded from Academically Unacceptable, is the result of a significant increase in the percentage of students graduating or continuing their education for a fifth year in high school. And I am pleased to say that the improvement in Completion Rate was driven by a seven-percentage-point increase in on-time graduates. That plus a continued focus on improving academic performance is moving us in the right direction.

We earned this improved rating at a time when the State implemented stricter standards for determining district and campus ratings. This year, TAKS results for special education students who took alternative forms of the test were included in the ratings. The TEA increased math and science passing standards by 5 percentage points. And for those campuses rated Exemplary or Recognized, they had the additional hurdle of five more measures that reflected performance by English Language Learners and Commended performance for Reading and Math.

In addition, the TEA removed the Texas Projection Measure (TPM) provision, which gave schools credit for students who did not meet the TAKS passing standard but whose scores indicated that they were on track to meet standards in the future.

What did this mean for our campuses?

Three campuses maintained the highest state rating of Exemplary, 26 were Recognized, 47 were Academically Acceptable, and six were Academically Unacceptable.

If we compare 2011 performance ratings to 2010 without TPM, SAISD has half as many Academically Unacceptable schools (from 12 to 6).

That shows progress -- but we need to put our shoulders to the wheel and provide the support needed to substantially improve student performance at these Academically Unacceptable schools. A number of initiatives have been put in place to help ensure success.

And we look to all of our campuses to continue their focus on improving student achievement and working toward our mission of graduating all students.

As we face a more rigorous accountability system with STAAR (the new state assessment that debuts this year), we must remain focused on the quality of instruction in the classroom and ensuring that every student is successful at mastering the state-required standards.

We have a lot of work in front of us. We are by no means satisfied with an Academically Acceptable District rating. But I am proud of the hard work and progress, and the signs point to our being on the right pathway.

Best regards,