

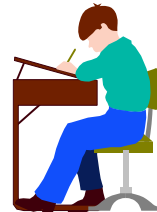
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School and District Performance and Accountability System

September 2003

School-Performance Classifications

An Explanation of the Process



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Rhode Island's new accountability plan, approved in May 2003 by the U.S. Department of Education, specifies how the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) will comply with numerous provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, most notably the requirements to test students in grades 3 through 8 plus a high-school grade, to develop timelines to bring all students to proficiency by the year 2014, and to establish a system to determine which schools and districts are failing to make adequate yearly progress.

□ **Standards: The New England Compact**

In conjunction with three other New England states (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont), Rhode Island has been working to develop grade-level expectations for grades 3 through 8. Over the next year, staff members from RIDE and educators from throughout the state will work together to align these new standards to curriculum and classroom instruction and to the state assessments.

□ **Testing: New Standards Reference Exams**

The state assessment system in Rhode Island determines whether students have met the standards appropriate for their grade in school.

To determine school classifications, Rhode Island uses the New Standards Reference Examinations (NSRE) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. These exams are administered in grades 4, 8, and 11.

English-language learners in grades 3 through 8 are assessed in their understanding of the content area of English language arts and mathematics. All English-language learners take the MAC II exams to assess their progress toward becoming proficient in English.

In future years, classroom-embedded assessments in both English language arts and mathematics will be administered in grades 3, 5, 6, and 7, and a science assessment will be added in two grades.

□ **School-Performance Classifications: High, Moderate, In Need of Improvement**

Schools and districts are classified based on an "Index Proficiency Scale." Rhode Island's assessments report results in five levels: achieved the standard with honors, achieved the standard, nearly achieved the standard, below the standard, little evidence of achievement. Those eligible students who did not take the test receive "no score." On the proficiency scale, a score will be assigned to each level:

The New Index Proficiency Scale	
Rhode Island's Performance Levels	Index Proficiency Scale
Achieved the Standard with Honors	100
Achieved the Standard	100
Nearly Achieved the Standard	75
Below the Standard	50
Little Evidence of	25

School and district classifications are determined by the scores of all students in each subtest over the past three years. A school or district has the option, however, of using only the most recent year of data rather than the three-year average if that method of calculation would remove them from the category "In Need of Improvement/Insufficient Progress."

Rhode Island's standard for proficiency is high by all measures —among the highest of any state in the nation. The index-proficiency scale gives schools and districts credit as they move students, at every level, toward proficiency. It encourages continuous improvement for students and teachers as they make progress toward achieving the standard.

□ **Annual Measurable Objectives, or Targets**

School and district classifications also note whether the school or district is making progress. These designations are based on both intermediate goals and annual measurable objectives (AMOs), or targets.

To set these goals and objectives, RIDE has established a baseline score for each grade level, in both English language arts and mathematics. These baseline scores are:

	<u>English language arts</u>	<u>Mathematics</u>
Elementary School	76.1	61.7
Middle School	68.0	46.1
High School	62.6	44.8

Roughly speaking, these baselines represent the 20th percentile for each test at each level. For example, the elementary-school English language arts baseline of 76.1 means that 80 percent of the state's elementary-school pupils are in schools with a higher score and 20 percent are in schools with that score or lower.

From each baseline, RIDE has set five equal intermediate goals that will culminate in a score of 100 (100-percent proficiency) by the year 2014. For example, the elementary-school mathematics scores must improve by 6.4 points at each intermediate goal in order to reach 100 by the year 2014; the first intermediate goal for elementary mathematics, therefore, is a score of 68.1 by the year 2005.

Annual Measurable Objectives/Targets						
	Elementary		Middle		High	
Year	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
2014	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
2013	96.1	93.7	94.5	91.1	93.6	90.8
2012	92.1	87.3	89.2	82.1	87.4	81.6
2011	88.1	80.9	83.9	73.1	81.2	72.4
2010	84.1	74.5	78.6	64.1	75.0	63.2
2009	84.1	74.5	78.6	64.1	75.0	63.2
2008	84.1	74.5	78.6	64.1	75.0	63.2
2007	80.1	68.1	73.3	55.1	68.8	54.0
2006	80.1	68.1	73.3	55.1	68.8	54.0
2005	80.1	68.1	73.3	55.1	68.8	54.0
2004	76.1	61.7	68.0	46.1	62.6	44.8
2003	76.1	61.7	68.0	46.1	62.6	44.8
Baseline 2002	76.1	61.7	68.0	46.1	62.6	44.8

Though the intermediate goals are equal, the time between the intermediate goals is not equal. The first goals are separated by three-year intervals (2005, 2008, 2011), then by one-year intervals (2012, 2013, final goal at 2014). RIDE believes that the most rapid progress will take place in later years, as the grade-level expectations, the new assessments, teacher practices, and

school culture align to respond to school-improvement initiatives. The intermediate goals provide time for school-reform efforts to be fully implemented.

□ **Additional Factors: 21 Indicators**

Schools and districts are measured by the performance (index-proficiency score) and the yearly progress of all students in the aggregate and by disaggregated groups: by race, ethnicity, poverty status, and education status (special needs, limited English).

Equity for All Students
NCLB addresses equity gaps by requiring data be disaggregated by the following groups:

- ✓ **Economically Disadvantaged [school lunch status]**
- ✓ **Native American**
- ✓ **Asian**
- ✓ **Black**
- ✓ **Hispanic**
- ✓ **White**
- ✓ **IEP**

Only schools and districts in which all disaggregated groups have met the most recent intermediate goals are classified as high or moderately performing. If any of the groups fails to meet its goals, the school (or district) is classified as in need of improvement. As a result, *RIDE expects the number of schools in need of improvement to increase during the first year under the new accountability system.*

Three other factors determine school and district classifications: all schools must have a participation rate (percent of students who completed or attempted the state assessments) of 95 percent; high schools must meet annual objectives regarding the graduation rate; middle schools and elementary schools must meet annual objectives regarding the attendance rate.

High School Graduation Rate

2014	95. 0
2013	90. 9
2012	87. 0
2011	83. 1
2010	79. 2
2009	79. 2
2008	79. 2
2007	75. 5

The graduation rate target for 2014 is 95%

In summary, school and district classifications are based on 21 pieces of data, or indicators.

Schools and districts will be classified as high, moderate, or in need of improvement

✱ **Classifications will be based on 21 pieces of data:**

- **School-level performance in ELA and mathematics;
2**
- **Subgroup performance in ELA and mathematics;
16**
- **Non-academic indicator (attendance or graduation**

□ **School Improvement: Improving, Sustaining, Making Progress, Insufficient Progress**

To be considered improving, high-performing and moderately performing schools and districts must raise their scores by 2 points each year and maintain or increase their attendance or graduation rate. Otherwise, these schools and districts will be classified as “sustaining.” If a school or district meets all the academic indicators but misses its target for attendance, graduation rate, or test participation, it will be classified as high- or moderately performing with caution; it can retain this classification for one year only.

Schools and districts classified as in need of improvement may invoke the "safe-harbor provision." A school or district has met safe harbor if it has decreased by 10 percent the gap between a score of 100 (100-percent proficient) and its previous year's score. Schools or districts that are in need of improvement are classified as “making progress” if they have met the annual objective or the safe-harbor provision, both for the school or district as a whole and for all subgroups.

Schools and districts that are in need of improvement and have not met safe harbor are classified as making “insufficient progress.”

The Safe Harbor Provision

The Safe Harbor provision requires that:

- ➔ **a school or district that has not met its AMOs *but*;**
- ➔ **has reduced by 10 percent the gap between a score of 100 and the previous year's score;**
- ➔ **has then met the Safe Harbor Provision and is not subject to NCLB sanctions and corrective actions;**
- ➔ **the state will classify this school or district as In Need of Improvement/Making Progress.**

Example:

A school has a
Mathematics Index
Proficiency Score of 42.

$$100 - 42 = 58 \text{ [the gap]}$$

$$10\% \text{ of the gap is } 5.8\%$$

$$42 + 5.8 = 47.8$$

THE CLASSIFICATIONS

Rhode Island's Accountability System will classify every public school and district in the state. Each school and district will be classified in one of the following categories:

High Performing and Improving

or

High Performing and Sustaining

or

High Performing with Caution

(attendance, graduation rate, test participation)

Moderately Performing and Improving

or

Moderately Performing and Sustaining

or

Moderately Performing with Caution

(attendance, graduation rate, test participation)

School/District in Need of Improvement/Making Progress

or

School/District in Need of Improvement/Insufficient Progress

✎ Minimum Sample Sizes and Accounting for Measurement Errors

Under the Rhode Island system, decisions are made about subgroups only when there are at least 45 students within the group over a three-year span. Schools that have fewer than 45 students across a three-year span must still be classified, however. In these small schools, it is not possible to disaggregate any of the subgroups.

Cell Size of 45				
Rhode Island will make decisions about subgroups only when there are a minimum of 45 students within the group across a three-year timeframe.				
Example: School A				
	2001	2002	2003	Total
IEP	15+	24+	21 =	60
LEP	6+	8+	9 =	23
Black	7+	6+	11 =	24
Hispanic	16+	14+	18 =	48

Cell Size of 45, continued				
School A				
	2001	2002	2003	Total
IEP	15+	24+	21 =	*60
LEP	6+	8+	9 =	**23
Black	7+	6+	11 =	**24
Hispanic	16+	14+	18 =	*48

So for this school, AMOs would be calculated for the following subgroups:

- *IEP: N = 60
- *Hispanic N = 48

AMOs would **not** be calculated for the following subgroups:

- **LEP: N = 22

The Rhode Island accountability system takes into account measurement errors associated with any testing program. We want to be sure that each school and district index-proficiency score, and the scores for each subgroup, are related to actual improvement rather than to random measurement errors.

So the system applies "error bands" to each measurement. The error band for each school or district varies depending on the size of the school or district, but is always plus or minus less than 1 point on the scale; the error band for each subgroup is plus or minus 2 points on the scale. A district, school, or subgroup has met its target if the score falls within the error band. For example, if the target is a score of 76.1, the subgroup will have hit the target if its index proficiency score is 74.1 or higher.

For additional information, see the RIDE Web site, www.ridoe.net