

## A Quick Guide to the 2003 School Report Cards

The pages marked “English Language Arts Assessments” and “Mathematics Assessments” show the results of the 2003 state assessments – the New Standards Reference Exams in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics.

Each exam is scored at the six levels shown: Achieved the Standard with Honors, Achieved the Standard, Nearly Achieved the Standard, Below the Standard, Little Evidence of Achievement, and No Score (eligible, but did not take or complete the test).

The tables show the percentage of students who scored at each level in ELA and mathematics. They also show the percent of students who met or exceeded the proficiency standard in the school, the district, and the state as a whole, for 2002 and 2003.

The first rows in each table show the results for the school as a whole in 2002 and 2003; the rest of the rows show the results for several groups of students within the school: African-American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, and White students; Students with disabilities (i.e., with Individualized Educational Programs, or IEPs); Students with Limited English Proficiency (English-language learners); and Economically Disadvantaged Students (eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, or FRL); Male students; and Female students. The state is required by federal law to report results for each of these groups. If there were fewer than 10 students in any group in the grades tested, no results are reported.

The page labeled “Accountability” shows whether the school has met its annual targets, and it compares the school’s results with those of the district and the state as a whole.

The data on this page is based on aggregations of three years of data; the years 2000-2002 are compared with the years 2001-2003.

The numbers on the table represent a score, which was calculated using the results of the state assessments. Each level on the assessments is equal to a certain number of points: 0 points for No Score, 25 points for Little Evidence, 50 points for Below Standard, 75 points for Nearly Achieved, and 100 points for Achieved the Standard or better.

As required by federal law, the R.I. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) has established 2003 targets, or annual measurable objectives (AMOs) in both ELA and mathematics for each school level: elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. The school as a whole and students in each of the eight groups listed must meet the targets. Otherwise, the school is classified as “in need of improvement.”

The federal law, however, allows other provisions for meeting the targets. Safe Harbor (SH) allows the school or any of its groups to meet the target if they fall short of the target but have made sufficient progress from the previous year’s score. (Target Met Code 3 or 5). In addition, if the school or any of its groups missed the target based on three years of test results but would have met the target based on the most recent year only, they have met the target (Target Met Code 4).

Finally, if there were fewer than 45 students in any group (over the three years of testing) the results are not calculated and the target has been met (Target Met Code 1).

The school must also meet nonacademic targets: a 95% participation rate on both assessments and either a 71.4% graduation rate (for high schools) or a 90% attendance rate (for elementary and middle schools).

At the bottom of the page, the report shows the school’s performance classification - high performing, moderately performing, or in need of improvement – and its level of progress: making progress, caution (meaning that all academic targets were met but one of the nonacademic targets was missed), or insufficient progress.

District report cards are similar to school report cards except that they will include pages for each school level – elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. The scores are aggregations of the scores of all schools in the district at each level. Districts that have missed targets at more than one school level and districts in which more than 40% of the schools are making insufficient progress are classified as districts in need of improvement.

All school report cards are published on line at on the RIDE Web site, <http://www.ridoe.net/>  
A Spanish-language version will be published soon.