

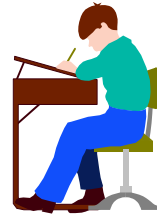
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Rhode Island School Performance and Accountability System

November 2005

School-Performance Classifications

An Explanation of the Process



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○ **Rhode Island's Accountability Plan**

Rhode Island's accountability plan, approved in May 2003 by the U.S. Department of Education and slightly revised in July 2004, specifies how the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) will comply with numerous provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act, 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.

This is a significant year in the implementation of the accountability plan: This year, Rhode Island has raised the bar – the target score that schools must achieve in order to make “adequate yearly progress.” This marks the first of several required step increases as Rhode Island approaches the goal of proficiency for all students by 2014.

○ **Standards: The New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP)**

Working with two other New England states (New Hampshire and Vermont), Rhode Island has formed the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP), the first such interstate agreement in the nation. The partner states have established standards – what students should know and be able to do at each grade level – for English language arts and mathematics for all school levels; work is underway to establish standards for science.

○ **Testing: New Standards Reference Exams and NECAP Assessments**

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

In 2004-05, as Rhode Island went through a transition to a new testing system, assessments were administered only in early-grade schools (highest grade of 1) and in high schools. Those schools are the only ones to receive a school-performance classification (e.g., high or moderately performing) in 2005. All schools, however, were evaluated to determine whether they made “adequate yearly progress” in 2004-05.

In the fall of 2005, elementary and middle schools were tested under the NECAP Assessments, developed by Measured Progress, of New Hampshire. The results of those tests will be released in the spring of 2006.

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

Schools and districts are classified based on an “Index Proficiency Score.” 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 is assigned to each level:

The Index Proficiency Score	
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 and participation rates of all students in each subtest either over the past three years or in the most recent year, whichever is higher.

Rhode Island's standard for proficiency is high by all measures — among the highest of any state in the nation. The index-proficiency score 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 classifications also note whether the school is making progress. These designations are based on both intermediate goals and annual measurable objectives (AMOs), or targets.

To set these goals and objectives, in 2002 RIDE established a baseline score for each grade level tested, in both English language arts and mathematics. These baseline scores were:

	<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 represented the 20th percentile, in 2002, 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 in 2002 were in schools with a higher score and 20 percent were in schools with that score or lower.

From each baseline, RIDE set five equal intermediate goals that will culminate in a score of 100 (100-percent proficiency) by the year 2014. For example, the high-school mathematics scores must improve by 9.2 points at each intermediate goal in order to reach 100 by the year 2014. ***The first intermediate goals go into effect this 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

So this year – 2005 – high schools must meet a target score of 68.8 for English language arts and 54 for mathematics, significant increases over the baseline scores that have been their targets since 2002.

○ **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 –program status (special needs, limited English).

<p>Equity for All Students NCLB addresses equity gaps by requiring data be disaggregated by the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Asian students ✓ Black students ✓ Hispanic students ✓ Native American students ✓ White students ✓ Students who are economically disadvantaged ✓ Students with limited proficiency in
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Three other factors determine school and district classifications: all schools and districts 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. 3

The graduation rate goal for 2014 is 95%

Note that the bar representing the graduation-rate goal also increased this year – from a baseline goal of 71.4 percent to the 2005 goal of 75.3 percent

Elementary and middle schools were evaluated by whether they met their attendance target. Those that met the target in 2005 have made “adequate yearly progress”; those who missed their attendance target did not make “adequate yearly progress.”

○ **How We Account for No Scores and Non-participants**

Students who do not participate in the state assessments and have no valid exemption (e.g., medical exemption) receive a “no score,” which equates to an index score of zero. This score is part of the calculation of the school and district index scores and the index scores for every group to which the student belongs.

Up to five percent of the nonparticipants, however, may be excluded from calculation of the school and district scoring. For example, if 2 percent of the students in a school do not participate, their scores are not counted as part of the index score for the school, nor for any group within the school. If 7 percent of the students in a school do not participate, 5 percent may be excluded from the calculation, but the “no scores” of the remaining 2 percent will count as part of the calculation of the index scores for the school. In effect, the scores of those students are marked against the school twice: they bring down both the participation rate *and* the index scores for the school.

○ **Targets/Indicators: How We Determine School Classifications**

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

Schools 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**
- **Group performance in ELA and mathematics;
16**
- **Non-academic indicator (attendance or graduation**

If a school has met all targets for all groups and its graduation rate and its index scores for the school as a whole are above the intermediate goals for the year 2011, the school is classified as **high performing**.

Other schools that have met all targets for all groups are classified as **moderately performing**.

All other schools are classified as **in need of improvement**, *except that*:

A school that meets its school-level targets and misses other targets may meet the criteria for being classified as high performing or moderately performing but with an added notation of “with caution” or “safe harbor.” (See next page for definitions.)

Safe Harbor: Making Progress toward the Targets

Schools may meet their targets through the “safe-harbor provision.” A school has met safe harbor if it has decreased by 10 percent the gap between an index score of 100 and its previous year's score. The safe-harbor provision applies to all assessment targets.

The Safe Harbor Provision

**The Safe Harbor provision requires that if:
a school has not met its AMOs *but*
has reduced by 10 percent the gap between a score of 100 and the
previous year's score, then
this school has then met the Safe Harbor Provision and is not
subject to NCLB sanctions and corrective actions;**

Example:
A school has a previous
Mathematics Index
Proficiency Score of 42.

**100 - 42 = 58 [the gap]
10% of the gap is 5.8%
42 + 5.8 = 47.8
47.8 = the new target to
pass Safe Harbor**

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

High-performing and moderately performing schools that raise their schoolwide scores by 2 points each year will be classified as “**improving**.” Otherwise, these schools will be classified as “**sustaining**.”

If a high-performing or moderately performing school misses only one target or misses both targets for only one student group, it is classified as high performing or moderately performing “**with caution**,” a status it may retain for one year only.

If a high-performing or moderately performing school meets all of its targets but meets some through the safe-harbor provision, it will be classified as “**safe harbor**.”

If a school classified as “in need of improvement” meets its schoolwide targets through the safe-harbor provision, it will be classified as “**making progress**.”

Other schools in need of improvement will be classified as making “**insufficient progress**.”

- **Adequate Yearly Progress, or AYP**

All schools that have met all targets – whether by meeting their annual measurable objectives (AMOs) or through the safe-harbor provision – have made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). That is, all schools that are **improving, sustaining, safe harbor, or making progress** have made AYP. Schools that are **with caution** or **making insufficient progress** have not made AYP.

Notes for 2005 Classifications:

Note that, in 2005, only high schools and early-grade elementary schools received full classifications; other schools were designated as either making “adequate yearly progress” or not making “adequate yearly progress.”

In 2005, all untested elementary and middle schools that met their attendance target made AYP.

THE CLASSIFICATIONS

In Rhode Island's Accountability System schools are classified in one of the following categories:

High Performing and Improving
or
High Performing and Sustaining
or
High Performing – Safe Harbor
or
High Performing with Caution

Moderately Performing and Improving
or
Moderately Performing and Sustaining
or
Moderately Performing – Safe Harbor
or
Moderately Performing with Caution

School in Need of Improvement/Making Progress
or
School in Need of Improvement/Insufficient Progress

○ **Minimum Sample Sizes and Accounting for Measurement Errors**

Under the Rhode Island system, decisions are made about groups of students only when there are at least 45 students within the group – either over a three-year span or, if a single year of test results is used to determine the classification, in that single year. 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 groups.

Cell Size of 45				
Rhode Island will make decisions about groups only when there is a minimum of 45 students within the group. Here is a three-year timeframe:				
Example: School A (enrollment by group)				
	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, index scores would be calculated for the following groups:

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

Group scores would **not** be calculated for the following groups:

- **LEP: N = 23**

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 group, 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 (except for very small schools); the error band for each group is plus or minus 2 points on the scale. A district, school, or group has met its target if the score falls within the error band. For example, the 2005 target for English language arts for high schools is 68.8; a group has hit that target if its index proficiency score is 66.8 or higher.

○ **What are the Consequences If A School Does Not Make AYP?**

Through a process known as “Progressive Support and Intervention,” RIDE works with the districts in which schools have been classified as “in need of improvement” for two consecutive years and may offer additional help to schools classified as making “insufficient progress,” under the authority of the state law on “Intervention and support for failing schools” R.I.G.L. 16-7.1-5. The law mandates that RIDE offer technical and policy support for at least three years to these schools. After three years of insufficient progress, “there shall be progressive levels of control” by RIDE, which may lead to “reconstitution” of the schools. Reconstitution can involve restructuring of schools or even closing schools. State law does not establish a specific timetable or sequence of actions.

Schools that receive federal Title I funds, aimed at high-poverty schools, are also subject to the provisions of the federal No Child Left Behind Act, which *does* establish a specific timetable and sequence for state actions.

Title I schools may be “identified for improvement” if they do not make AYP for two consecutive years:

- Two consecutive years of missing targets (in the same subject area or set of indicators): Students may transfer to other schools in the district (school choice)
- Three consecutive years: School choice, plus students may receive free supplemental educational services
- Four years: School choice, supplemental services, plus the school may be subject to various forms of corrective action
- Five years: School choice, supplemental services, plus the school face restructuring, which may mean replacing most of the staff, reopening the school as a charter school, or turning the school operations over to the state.

To be absolved from these consequences, a school must make AYP for two consecutive years.

For additional information:

See the RIDE Web site, www.ride.ri.gov , under “*School and District Report Cards*”

Or see the *Information Works!* Web site, www.infoworks.ride.uri.edu