



Rhode Island School Performance and Accountability System

Schools & Districts

May 2009

School-Performance Classifications

An Explanation of the Process

**“Working together to bring all students to proficiency”
--Peter McWalters, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education**

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Rhode Island's Accountability Plan

Since 1998, the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) has administered state tests in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics at three grade levels. The federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) required all states 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 (AYP). States were given several years of transition to expand their testing systems to cover all required grades.

Standards: The New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP)

Working with two other New England states (New Hampshire and Vermont), Rhode Island 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, mathematics, and science. (Work is underway in Rhode Island to develop standards in civics/government and engineering and technology.) The standards, known as Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) and Grade Span Expectations (GSEs), are posted on the RIDE Web site, <http://www.ride.ri.gov/Instruction/gle.aspx>

The NECAP assessments are based entirely on these standards.

Testing: The NECAP Assessments

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

The NECAP Assessments in English language arts and mathematics (developed by educators from Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Vermont, with the NECAP testing contractor, Measured Progress, of New Hampshire) are administered annually in grades 3 through 8 and Grade 11 in October. (Reading and mathematics tests are administered in all tested grades; writing tests are administered in Grade 5, 8, and 11.) The school-performance classifications based on these tests are released annually the following spring.

NECAP science assessments are administered annually in May; science assessments are not used in the determination of school-performance classifications.

School-Performance Classifications and the Index Proficiency Score

Schools (and districts) are classified based on an “Index Proficiency Score.” The NECAP assessments report results in four levels: Proficient with Distinction, Proficient, Partially Proficient, and Significantly Below Proficient. Each level (with the “significantly below proficient” level being divided into two bands) is worth a specific index score:

The Index Proficiency Score	
Scoring Levels	Index Proficiency Scale
Proficient with Distinction	100
Proficient	100
Partially Proficient	75
Significantly Below Proficient (Upper Range)	50
Significantly Below Proficient (Lower Range)	25
No Evidence of Achievement	0

All students receive test reports that indicate their performance level; RIDE translates the performance levels to scores (from 0 to 100) on the Index Proficiency Scale. The scores of all eligible tested students in each school are aggregated, and the school receives schoolwide Index Proficiency Scores (from 0 to 100) in both English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. (Results of the reading and writing tests are aggregated to yield an index proficiency score in ELA.)

Annual Measurable Objectives, or Targets

School classifications are based on whether the school has met its annual measurable objectives (AMOs), or targets.

To set these goals and objectives, in 2002, using a formula established by NCLB, RIDE set a baseline index-proficiency score for each school level, 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, as required by NCLB, set five equal intermediate goals that will culminate in a score of 100 (100-percent proficiency) by the year 2014. For example, the middle-school mathematics scores must improve by 9.0 points at each intermediate goal in order to reach 100 by the year 2014.

Annual Measurable Objectives/Targets Index Proficiency Scores						
	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

To meet their targets for 2009, elementary schools needed an index score of 84.1 for English language arts (ELA) and 74.5 for mathematics. Middle schools must have an index score of 78.6 for ELA and 64.1 for mathematics. High schools needed an index score of 75.0 for ELA and 63.2 for mathematics.

Additional Factors: 37 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.

Equity for All Students
Schools must meet the ELA and mathematics targets for the school as a whole and for each of these eight student groups:
✓ Asian students
✓ Black students
✓ Hispanic students
✓ Native American students
✓ White students
✓ Students who are economically disadvantaged
✓ English-language learners
✓ Students with disabilities
The targets are the same for the school as a whole and for each student group, as required by NCLB.

Minimum Sample Sizes

Under the Rhode Island system, decisions are made about groups of students only when there are at least 45 students within the group (across all tested grades in the school or, among high schools, across three years of testing). When a school has fewer than 45 students in a tested group, the school is not held accountable for meeting the ELA, mathematics, or participation-rate targets for that student group.

Therefore, few if any schools will be held accountable for meeting all 37 targets.

Additional Indicators

Two other types of targets determine school classifications: all schools and districts must have a participation rate (percent of students who completed or attempted the state assessments) of 95 percent for the school as a whole and for each of the student groups; middle schools and elementary schools must also have an attendance rate of 90 percent. High schools must have a four-year graduation rate of 70.1 percent. (Note that the 2009 classifications are based on the graduation rate for the Class of 2008.) The target for the graduation rate rises steadily, reaching 90 percent in the year 2014:

2014	90.0
2013	86.6
2012	83.3
2011	80.0
2010	76.7
2009	73.4
2008	70.1

In summary, school classifications are based on 37 pieces of data, or indicators.

The 37 Indicators

ELA and mathematics scores, schoolwide	2
ELA and mathematics scores, 8 student groups	16
Participation rates, both tests, schoolwide	2
Participation rates, both tests, 8 student groups	16
Attendance rate or Graduation rate	1
Total :	37

THE SCHOOL-PERFORMANCE CLASSIFICATIONS

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

Met Adequate Yearly Progress

Schools that have met all of their targets have made adequate yearly progress and are classified as **“Met AYP.”**

Some schools that have Met AYP are honored as Regents’ **Commended** Schools. These are schools that have been consistently high performing in both ELA and mathematics for at least two years, that have made significant progress in both ELA and mathematics, or that have significantly closed achievement gaps that separate the various student groups.

Did not meet AYP

All schools that have missed targets have not met AYP.

Schools that have missed three or fewer targets may be classified as **“Caution”** for one year only.

All other schools that have missed targets are classified as **“Insufficient Progress.”**

For schools that did not meet AYP, the RIDE Report Cards and other reports on school classifications indicate how many of the 37 targets the school faced and how many targets it met.

Schools Identified for Improvement

Schools that have not met AYP for two consecutive years are **Identified for Improvement**. Schools remain in that status until they have met AYP for two consecutive years.

What are the Consequences If A School Does Not Meet AYP?

Through a process known as “Progressive Support and Intervention,” RIDE works with the districts in which schools have been Identified for Improvement 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:

- First year Identified for Improvement: Students may transfer to other schools in the district (school choice)
- Second year Identified for Improvement: School choice, plus students may receive free supplemental educational services
- Third year Identified for Improvement: School choice, supplemental services, plus the school may be subject to various forms of corrective action
- Fourth year Identified for Improvement: School choice, supplemental services, plus the school faces 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 meet AYP for two consecutive years.

District Classifications:

Districts that miss one or more targets at more than one school level (elementary, middle, high school) or in which more than 40 percent of the schools are making insufficient progress have not met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

Districts that have not met AYP for two years in a row are in “intervention status,” and they remain in that status until they have met AYP for two consecutive years.

For additional information:

See the RIDE Web site:

www.ride.ri.gov

“School and District Report Cards” or “NECAP Test Results”

For a detailed explanation of the Accountability/Classification System, see the Accountability Technical Bulletin, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/assessment/accountability.aspx>

For an explanation of the newly calculated graduation rates, see:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/ride/GraduationRates.aspx>

“Questions and Answers regarding the new Graduation-Rate Formula”

Questions or comments may be directed to:

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