

PeterMcWalters  
Commissioner

Stateof Rhode Island and ProvidencePlantations  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
ShepardBuilding  
255Westminster Street  
Providence,Rhode Island 02903-3400



January 15, 2008

**TO:** Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, District Data Managers  
**FROM:** Edward Giroux, Director  
Office of Network and Information Systems  
**SUBJECT:** Review of Student Data for Cohort Graduation Rate Calculations

As you may know RIDE is currently calculating the graduation and dropout rates based on a real cohort of students. Reporting graduation rates by cohort is required by the federal NCLB act and by NGA compact that Rhode Island has signed. NCLB requires that the graduation rate used for AYP/Accountability give credit for four-year (or less) graduates only.

For the graduating class of 2007, RIDE has already published the graduation rate based on the "leaver-rate" formula, and this rate has been used to determine AYP status for 2006-07. In the spring (of 2008), RIDE will publish a four-year graduation rate for the class of 2007 based on the new cohort formula. This rate will be published for information purposes only. (Note: RIDE has not yet decided how to determine the graduation-indicator AYP status for 2007-08.)

For the graduating class of 2008 and for all future classes, RIDE will use the cohort formula to determined the four-year graduation rate, which will be used to determine AYP status for 2008-09 and beyond. RIDE will use the cohort formula to publish 5-year and 6-year graduation rates for information purposes only.

Using your submitted student enrollment and the program-based census data that you have submitted in your State reporting in the last 4 years, RIDE has compiled the first set of cohort data with student demographic and program status information, as well as enrollment history each each student. This data and the summary cohort statistics for each schools and student subgroups are now available online for your final review and corrections through eRIDE. Along with a full set of step-by-step online instructions (<https://www.eride.ri.gov/exitsUpdate/instructions.asp>), we have provided a set of easy-to-use tools for you to complete the review and update process.

Look for the application 'Update Student Exits' in the data managers' eRIDE portal. There are basically two levels of access to this application: read-only and full access. We leave it to each district to determine a process for your data manager, administrators and other staff. Once determined, data managers may then deliver the application with the right access level to the right individuals in your district.

Please complete the updates and sign off the data no later than February 15th. Upon completion of this process, RIDE will recalculate, publish and release the rates to the public in late February. This timeline will not be extended. This is an important opportunity for you to ensure that your schools' data are accurate for accountability purposes. Please make every effort to clean your data in the allotted time.

To help State and local data managers, administrators and program managers better understand the process and the procedures used in the calculation of cohort graduation and dropout rates, RIDE has provided multiple focus group meetings and workshops in the past two months. Two more similar workshops will be offered at RIDE, one on Thursday January 24<sup>th</sup> and another on Thursday January 31<sup>st</sup>, 9:30-11:30AM, Conference Room 501. If you have missed the earlier workshops, this is another opportunity to learn about the process.

To attend one of the two workshops, please register online on eRIDE <http://www.eride.ri.gov/>, click on Trainings/Workshops. Capacity may be limited, please sign up at your earliest convenience that fits your needs. You may sign up for yourself or for your staff in your district/school.

Please don't hesitate to call myself (222-8965) or Dr. Kenneth Gu (222-8957) if you have any questions or concerns.