



# Rhode Island

## School Performance and Accountability System

Schools & Districts

December 2007

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. 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 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; work is underway to establish standards and assessments for science. 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/standards/gle/default.htm>

The NECAP assessments are based entirely on these standards.

- **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.

The NECAP Assessments (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 in October. The school-performance classifications based on these tests are released annually the following spring.

Through the 2006-07 school year, high-school students (Grade 11) took the New Standards Reference Exams (NSREs), developed by Harcourt Inc.. Rhode Island has phased out the NSREs. They were administered for the last time in March 2007, and results were released in September 2007; high-school students (Grade 11), along with students in Grades 3-8, took the NECAP Assessments in the fall of 2007.

○ *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. The NSREs report results in five levels. For both exams, those eligible students who received the minimum possible score are classified as “No Evidence of Achievement” or “No Score.” For both exams, each level (with one level on the NECAP being divided into two bands) is worth a specific index score:

NECAP Scoring Levels	NSRE Scoring Levels	Index Proficiency Scale
Proficient with Distinction	Achieved Standard w.Honors	100
Proficient	Achieved the Standard	100
Partially Proficient	Nearly Achieved the Standard	75
Significantly Below Proficient (Upper Range)	Below the Standards	50
Significantly Below Proficient (Lower Range)	Little Evidence of Achievement	25
No Evidence of Achievement	No Score	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.

○ *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 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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						
Year	Elementary		Middle		High	
	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 this year – 2007 – elementary schools must have an index score of 80.1 for English language arts (ELA) and 68.1 for mathematics. Middle schools must have an index score of 73.3 for ELA and 55.1 for mathematics. High schools must have an index score of 68.8 for ELA and 54 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 (special needs, limited English).

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:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Asian students</li> <li>✓ Black students</li> <li>✓ Hispanic students</li> <li>✓ Native American students</li> <li>✓ White students</li> <li>✓ Students who are economically disadvantaged</li> <li>✓ English-language learners</li> <li>✓ Students with disabilities</li> </ul>
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). 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 graduation rate of 75.3 percent. The target for the graduation rate will rise steadily, reaching 95 percent in the year 2014:

2014	95.0
2013	90.9
2012	87.0
2011	83.1
2010	79.2
2009	79.2
2008	79.2
2007	75.3
2006	75.3
2005	75.3
2004	71.4
2003	71.4
Baseline 2002	71.4

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

Schools are classified as  
high performing, moderately performing,  
or insufficient progress

\* Classifications can be based on 37 pieces of data:

ELA and mathematics scores, schoolwide	2
ELA and mathematics scores, 8 student group	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:

### High Performing

Met schoolwide targets for the year 2011

*(Elementary: 88.1 ELA, 80.9 mathematics; Middle, 83.9 ELA, 73.1 mathematics; High schools, 81.2 ELA, 72.4 mathematics)*

### Moderately Performing

Met schoolwide targets for the current year (2007)

*(Elementary: 80.1 ELA, 68.1 mathematics; Middle, 73.3 ELA, 55.1 mathematics; High schools, 68.8 ELA, 54.0 mathematics)*

### Insufficient Progress

Missed targets

High-performing and moderately performing schools that have improved substantially in both ELA and mathematics (as determined by a data calculation done by RIDE) or that have attained exceptionally high schoolwide index scores (Elementary: ELA 94, mathematics 92; Middle: ELA 94, mathematics, 89; High Schools: ELA 91, mathematics 88) are classified as **Commended Schools**

High-performing and moderately performing schools that have missed up to three targets (other than schoolwide ELA and mathematics targets) are classified as **With Caution** for one year only.

### School Status

#### Under the Federal No Child Left Behind Act

#### Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Schools that have missed any targets – i.e., all schools classified as “With Caution” or “Insufficient Progress” – have not made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), under the terms of the federal No Child Left Behind Act. **All other schools have made AYP.**

#### Schools Identified for Improvement

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

**Note: For the 2006-07 school year, high schools will be classified only by “school status,” i.e., Made AYP, “with caution” (Missed AYP for the first year), or Insufficient Progress (missed AYP for multiple years/multiple targets).**

○ *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 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 make AYP for two consecutive years.

**District Classifications:**

Not all Districts receive a performance classification.

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 made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

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

**For additional information:**

See the RIDE Web site

[www.ride.ri.gov](http://www.ride.ri.gov)

*“School and District Report Cards” or “Assessment and Accountability News”*

*Or see the Information Works! Web site*

[www.infoworks.ride.uri.edu](http://www.infoworks.ride.uri.edu)