



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

March 23, 2026

The Honorable Angélica Infante-Green
Commissioner of Education
Rhode Island Department of Education
255 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Commissioner Infante-Green:

I am writing in response to the Rhode Island Department of Education's (RIDE's) request on December 31, 2025, for a waiver extension of section 1111(b)(2)(D)(i)(I) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), which stipulates that a State may not assess more than 1.0 percent of all students in the grades assessed using an alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS). RIDE requested this waiver extension because, based on State data for school year (SY) 2024-2025, the State concluded that it may exceed the 1.0 percent cap on AA-AAAS participation in reading/language arts (R/LA) and mathematics.

After reviewing RIDE's waiver extension request, I am granting, pursuant to my authority under section 8401(b) of the ESEA, for SY 2025-2026, a waiver of section 1111(b)(2)(D)(i)(I) of the ESEA so that the State may assess with an AA-AAAS more than 1.0 percent of the total number of students assessed in R/LA and mathematics.

As part of this waiver, RIDE assured that it:

- Will continue to meet all other requirements of section 1111 of the ESEA and implement regulations with respect to all State-determined academic standards and assessments, including reporting student achievement and school performance, disaggregated by subgroups, to parents and the public.
- Had assessed in SY 2024-2025 at least 95 percent of all students and all students with disabilities who are enrolled in grades for which the R/LA and mathematics assessments are required.
- Will require that a local educational agency (LEA) submit information justifying the need of the LEA to assess more than 1.0 percent of its assessed students in any such subject with an AA-AAAS.
- Will provide appropriate oversight of an LEA that is required to submit such information to the State.
- Will verify that each LEA that is required to submit such information to the State is following all State guidelines in 34 CFR § 200.6(d) – excluding (d)(6) – and will address any subgroup disproportionality in the percentage of students taking an AA-AAAS.

400 MARYLAND AVE., SW, WASHINGTON, DC 20202
<http://www.ed.gov/>

The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

- Will implement, consistent with the plan submitted in RIDE’s waiver request, system improvements and will monitor future administrations of the AA-AAAS to avoid exceeding the 1.0 percent cap.

As a reminder, 34 CFR § 200.6(c)(3)(iv) requires a State to make publicly available the information submitted by an LEA justifying the need to assess more than 1.0 percent of its assessed students on the AA-AAAS, provided that such information does not reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student. I also encourage you to make available your State’s plan, timeline, and progress to date in reducing the percentage of students taking the AA-AAAS.

Given the workplan submitted by RIDE, I expect to continue to see positive results of this plan in 2025-2026 and beyond. RIDE has reduced the number and percentage of students assessed on an AA-AAAS over the past several years (from 2017-2018 to 2024-2025). Thank you for your continued efforts in achieving such progress. Future requests for a waiver extension will continue to expect both continued progress implementing your plan and progress in reducing the current percentage of students taking the AA-AAAS in all tested subjects.

I appreciate your work to improve Rhode Island’s schools and provide a high-quality education for your students. If you have any questions, please contact my staff at ESEA.Assessment@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Kirsten Baesler
Assistant Secretary
Office of Elementary & Secondary Education

cc: Phyllis Lynch, Director, Office of
Instruction, Assessment & Curriculum



Angélica Infante-Green
Commissioner

State of Rhode Island
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

December 30, 2025

U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C., 20202

RE: Rhode Island “One Percent” ESSA Waiver Request

To Whom It May Concern:

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) is formally requesting a waiver extension for mathematics and English Language Arts, pursuant to 34 C.F.R. §200.6(c)(4) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), from the following statutory provision:

34 C.F.R. 200.6(c)(2): For each subject for which assessments are administered under § 200.2(a)(1), the total number of students assessed in that subject using an alternate assessment with alternate academic achievement standards under paragraph (c)(1) of this section may not exceed 1.0 percent of the total number of students in the State who are assessed in that subject.

During the spring 2025 administration of our state assessments, RIDE exceeded the 1.0 percent participation rate for our alternate assessments in mathematics, English Language Arts, and science. Included in our waiver request are our plans for how Rhode Island will come into compliance with the requirement to assess no more than 1.0 percent of students using an alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS) and to increase our participation rate for students with disabilities on the general state assessments.

Prior to submitting this waiver request, RIDE prepared and disseminated its waiver application, the Plan and Timeline, and survey to collect public comment. Communication with these documents was presented for discussion during the December Test Coordinator Monthly Webinars, posted on the RIDE website, and distributed via email to various stakeholder groups. The document was posted for public comment for over three weeks. These approaches provided ample opportunity for public comment on this waiver request. RIDE received public comments from 13 individuals representing urban, suburban, and rural areas of Rhode Island. The feedback demonstrated unanimous support for Rhode Island’s waiver application and plan for implementation. Much of the feedback shared concerns regarding the eligibility process and the validity of 1.0 percent as the maximum percentage of students assessed using the alternate assessment. Public feedback received during this comment period is attached.

“One Percent” ESSA Waiver Request

December 30, 2025

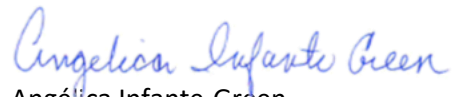
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You will find that our waiver demonstrates RIDE’s efforts at ensuring the following:

- A Plan and Timeline that outlines RIDE’s process for providing training on our eligibility guidance through online modules and technical assistance sessions. The online modules have been well received and based on the RI Individualized Education Program census we anticipate that the participation rate for alternate assessments will be reduced from 1.3% to 1.1%.
- A description of a tiered system of support including which tier each LEA is assigned.
- A Plan and Timeline for development and implementation of a LEA monitoring system for LEAs identified as being in Tier 2 or Tier 3.
- Continued technical assistance to LEAs to support understanding of the eligibility criteria and develop processes that support the use of appropriate evidence to make eligibility decisions.
- All parents are notified that their child’s achievement will be measured using alternate achievement standards; that participation in the alternate assessment may affect their ability to fulfill graduation requirements.
- RIDE conducts analysis of state and LEA data to identify areas of over-identification for the alternate assessment.

I look forward to your consideration of our request for a waiver of the ESSA One Percent Cap. Please contact Phyllis Lynch, Director, Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum (Phyllis.Lynch@ride.ri.gov or 401-222-4693) with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Angélica Infante-Green
Commissioner of Education

Rhode Island

ESSA waiver request for 2025-26 regarding the 1% threshold on assessing students using the alternate assessment



RIDE Rhode Island
Department
of Education

Rhode Island: Initial Waiver Request

Requirement 1: Fulfill the requirements in section 8401 of the ESEA regarding public comment.

- a. **The State provided the public and any interested local education agency (LEA) in the State with notice and reasonable opportunity to comment and provide input on the entire waiver request (including the plan and timeline).**
- b. **The State submitted the comments and input to the Department with a description of how the State had addressed the comments and input it received.**

RIDE posted its waiver request on the RIDE website December 8 – December 26, 2025. Notices to request comments were sent through various listservs including the Fieldmemo to Superintendents, District and School Testing Coordinators, Special Education Directors, Alternate Assessment Teachers, Participants in 1% self-paced modules and family advocacy organizations.

Requirement 2: Submit the waiver request at least 90 days before the beginning of the State’s testing window.

Rhode Island’s assessment window for the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) alternate assessment is from March 30 - May 29, 2026.

Ninety days prior to the start of Rhode Island’s testing window (December 31, 2025), the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) will submit a waiver request to the United States Department of Education for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics.

Requirement 3: Provide the data described in steps a, b, and c below.

- a. **Number and percentage of students in each required student group (race/ethnicity, economic disadvantage status, English learner status) who took the AA-AAAS during SY 2024-25 in each subject for which the State is seeking a waiver).**
- b. **Overall assessment participation rates for all students and students with disabilities during SY 2024-25.**
- c. **AA-AAAS participation rates for SYs 2017-18 through 2024-25 (including estimates for SY 2025-26, if available) in each subject for which the State is seeking a waiver.**

Requirement 3a: Number and percentage of students in each required student group (race/ethnicity, economic disadvantage status, English learner status) who took the AA-AAAS during SY 2024-25 in each subject for which the State is seeking a waiver).

Tables 1, 2, and 3 provide the number and percentage of students tested in each content area at the state level and in each subgroup for both general and alternate assessments administered in the 2024-25 school year. See Appendix 3 for the number and percent of students tested in Mathematics and ELA by subgroup from SY 2017 to SY 2025.

Table 1: Number and percent of students who took the alternate assessment overall and by subgroup, mathematics, grades 3-8, and 11 for 2024-25.

Percent of students who took the alternate assessment overall and by subgroup, mathematics, 2024-25			
Subgroup	Total number of students assessed, grades 3-8, 11 (RICAS, SAT, DLM)	Total number of students assessed, grades 3-8, 11 alternate assessment (DLM)	% of students assessed, grades 3-8, 11, alternate assessment (DLM)
All Students (STATE)	69,884	867	1.24%
Female	34,091	281	0.82%
Male	35,782	586	1.64%
Students with Disabilities	12,729	867	6.81%
Low Income	40,613	563	1.39%
Migrant	81	1	1.23%
English Language Learners	10,793	171	1.58%
American Indian	510	5	0.98%
Asian	2,344	42	1.79%
Black or African American	6,561	102	1.55%
Hispanic or Latino	22,020	275	1.25%
Pacific Islander	124	1	0.81%
White	34,661	378	1.09%
Two or More Races	3,664	64	1.75%

Table 2: Percent of students who took the alternate assessment overall and by subgroup, English language arts, grades 3-8, and 11 for 2024-25.

Percent of students who took the alternate assessment overall and by subgroup, English Language Arts, 2024-25			
Subgroup	Total number of students assessed, grades 3-8, 11 (RICAS, SAT, DLM)	Total number of students assessed, grades 3-8, 11 alternate assessment (DLM)	% of students assessed, grades 3-8, 11, alternate assessment (DLM)
All Students (STATE)	69,019	861	1.25%
Female	33,673	281	0.83%
Male	35,335	580	1.64%
Students with Disabilities	12,744	861	6.76%
Low Income	39,891	557	1.40%
Migrant	76	1	1.32%
English Language Learners	9,835	165	1.68%
American Indian	513	5	0.97%
Asian	2,279	42	1.84%
Black or African American	6,419	101	1.57%
Hispanic or Latino	21,417	270	1.26%
Pacific Islander	119	1	0.84%
White	34,608	378	1.09%
Two or More Races	3,664	64	1.75%

Table 3: Percent of students who took the alternate assessment overall and by subgroup, Science, grades 5, 8, and 11 for 2024-25.

Percent of students who took the alternate assessment overall and by subgroup, Science, 2024-25			
Subgroup	Total number of students assessed, grades 3-8, 11 (RICAS, SAT, DLM)	Total number of students assessed, grades 3-8, 11 alternate assessment (DLM)	% of students assessed, grades 3-8, 11, alternate assessment (DLM)
All Students (STATE)	30,063	325	1.08%
Female	14,587	117	0.80%
Male	15,470	208	1.34%
Students with Disabilities	5,032	325	6.46%
Low Income	17,195	207	1.20%
Migrant	38	0	0%
English Language Learners	4,506	51	1.13%
American Indian	223	1	0.45%
Asian	1,013	12	1.18%
Black or African American	2,990	44	1.47%
Hispanic or Latino	9,375	103	1.10%
Pacific Islander	60	0	0%
White	14,946	144	0.96%
Two or More Races	1,456	21	1.44%

Requirement 3b: Overall assessment participation rates for all students and students with disabilities during SY 2024-25.

Table 4 shows the overall participation rates for each assessment for 2017-18 through 2024-25. Rhode Island is seeking waivers for ELA and math. We are not seeking a waiver for science as we did not attain 95% participation for students with disabilities. However, science assessment participation data is included based on requests from reviewers in the past.

Prior to the pandemic, the number of students tested in Rhode Island schools exceeded 75,000 and the number of students with disabilities exceeded 12,000. During the pandemic, enrollment and the number of students tested dropped significantly. However, since 2021-22, the total number of students tested across all state assessments has slowly increased but is still not at pre-pandemic levels. Last year we tested approximately 71,000 students, a nearly 5,000 student difference from 2017-18. In science, the trend is the same, with the total number of students tested nearly 2,000 fewer than in 2017-18.

In contrast to the slow increase of our overall population, the total number of students with disabilities exceeded pre-pandemic levels by 2022-23 and has only increased each year since. From 2022-23 to last year, the RI population of students with disabilities increased by 9.4%. The percentage increase in our overall student population in the same timeframe is 0.5%. So, while our overall enrollment remains below pre-pandemic levels, the number of students with disabilities has increased and surpassed pre-pandemic levels and is increasing at a faster rate than our overall student population.

LEAs and schools continue to struggle with attendance, and this has affected participation rates across all state assessments. Two years ago, the Commissioner began a campaign to draw attention to the importance of attending school and gave the LEAs tools to track chronic absenteeism. Most notably, this campaign improved participation in the state science assessment from 93.0% to 94.5% in 2024-25. We expect to see continued improvement in this area.

The FY26 CRP requires that LEAs have a concrete, written plan that includes all their students with disabilities in the state assessments. We know that regular attendance at school continues to be an issue for many of our schools – with extra urgency at the high school level. We believe that requiring LEAs to have a plan to include all students with disabilities in the state assessments will support the Commissioner’s statewide initiative on attendance.

Over the last few assessment cycles, we noticed that many schools delayed the start of their state assessment administrations because they believed that an extra week or two of instruction would make a difference in their students’ performance. Because of this, many schools ran out of time to complete testing.

Delaying the start of testing affected participation in all our state assessments, but the most impacted was the science assessment. It is the last test to be administered, and most schools wait until the last week of the state testing window to begin testing.

As part of our strategy to improve participation across all tests, over the last two years, we published a primary testing window and a make-up testing window. This requires districts and schools to begin testing earlier and leaves time for make-up testing. This improved participation rates across the tests, but the largest impact was on the science test where participation increased by 1.5% from 93% to 94.5% students with disabilities participating and overall participation across assessments reaching more than 97% statewide. We anticipate that this year (2025-26) we will finally reach 95.0% in the state science test for students with disabilities.

Table 4: State participation rates for all students and for students with disabilities (2017-18 - 2024-25)

Content Area	Total Number of students	Number of students assessed	% Participation: all students	Number of students with disabilities	Number of students with disabilities assessed	% Participation: students with disabilities
MATH						
2017-18	76,570	75,171	98.2%	12,067	11,490	95.2%
2018-19	75,343	73,981	98.2%	11,807	11,375	96.3%
2019-20	<i>All state assessments were canceled.</i>					
2020-21	73,676	64,575	87.7%	11,965	10,045	84.0%
2021-22	72,304	70,112	97.0%	11,874	11,185	94.2%
2022-23	71,156	69,601	97.8%	12,207	11,644	95.4%
2023-24	71,241	69,969	98.2%	12,922	12,400	96.0%
2024-25	71,118	69,019	97.1%	13,197	12,744	96.6%
ELA						
2017-18	75,882	74,377	98.0%	12,031	11,436	95.1%
2018-19	76,062	74,669	98.2%	11,800	11,369	96.4%
2019-20	<i>All state assessments were canceled.</i>					
2020-21	73,459	64,907	88.4%	11,963	10,113	84.5%
2021-22	71,539	69,746	97.0%	11,874	11,185	94.9%
2022-23	70,338	68,878	97.9%	12,119	11,661	95.6%
2023-24	70,071	68,939	98.4%	12,918	12,426	96.2%
2024-25	71,084	69,884	98.3%	13,197	12,744	96.6%
SCIENCE						
2017-18	32,799	31,390	95.7%	5,040	4,634	91.9%
2018-19	32,513	31,486	96.8%	4,769	4,458	93.5%
2019-20	<i>All state assessments were canceled.</i>					
2020-21	32,159	26,469	82.3%	5,120	3,938	77.0%
2021-22	31,431	29,754	94.7%	4,896	4,416	90.2%
2022-23	30,603	29,511	96.4%	4,923	4,581	93.1%
2023-24	31,073	30,054	96.7%	5,240	4,873	93.0%
2024-25	30,875	30,063	97.4%	5,327	5,032	94.5%

Requirement 3c: AA-AAAS participation rates for SYs 2017-18 through 2024-25 (including estimates for SY 2025-26, if available) in each subject for which the State is seeking a waiver.

The AA-AAS participation rates for school years 2017-18 through 2024-25 are included in Appendix 3. While we have seen a 13% decrease in the number of students participating in the alternate assessment since 2017-18, RI was still above 1.0% participation in 2024-25. However, based on the 3% decrease we saw in the number of students who took the alternate assessment from 2024 to 2025, we anticipate that the number of students eligible for the alternate assessment will decrease further between now and the spring 2026 assessment administration. Estimates are provided in the charts in Appendix 3 and show a slight increase in the number of students tested last year but we know that this will likely change in the coming months as student IEPs are reviewed.

Requirement 4: Include a statement of assurance in the waiver request that the State has verified that each LEA the State anticipates will assess more than 1.0 percent of all students assessed in any subject using an AA-AAAS has:

- a. **Followed the State’s guidelines for participation in the AA-AAAS; and**
- b. **Will address any disproportionality in the percentage of students in any student group taking the AA-AAAS.**

Requirement 4a: Followed the State’s guidelines for participation in the AA-AAAS.

We require all LEAs to agree to the assurances as part of their Consolidated Resource Plan (CRP) application. LEAs have already completed the assurances for the 2025-26 school year. LEA responses are included with this waiver in a separate document and posted at www.ride.ri.gov/onepercent.

The assurances were updated in the 2024-25 school year to meet the ESSA requirements that states implement measures to help LEAs reduce the number of students participating in the alternate assessment to 1.0% or less. By answering these questions, the LEA assures RIDE that each of these activities is part of the LEA’s process for ensuring that students are correctly identified for participation in the alternate assessments:

- Does the LEA assure that it follows the state’s guidelines, criteria, and process for identifying students for participation in the alternate assessment as outlined in the *IEP Team Guidance on Eligibility for Alternate Assessment*? Yes/No
- Does the LEA assure that it is following the state’s definition of a *student with a significant cognitive disability*? For more information, please refer to the *IEP Team Guidance on Eligibility for Alternate Assessment* document posted at www.ride.ri.gov/dlm or www.ride.ri.gov/onepercent.
- Does the LEA assure that it is addressing all disproportionality that could be present in identifying students for the alternate assessment?
- Does the LEA assure that for each student evaluated for alternate assessment eligibility, the *Alternate Assessment Documentation Form*, along with all required documentation, is included in the student’s school record as a justification for why the student does or does not meet the state’s criteria for the alternate assessment?
- Does the LEA anticipate assessing more than 1% of students using the alternate assessment this year? If yes: Please provide a justification as to why the LEA needs to assess more than 1% of students using the alternate assessment. Write your justification in the space provided.
- Did the LEA assess 95.0% or more of students with disabilities on all state assessments? Yes/no If no, please provide a plan for increasing the LEA’s participation rate to 95.0% or more in each content area for which the LEA is below 95.0%.

To ensure that our state guidelines for participation in the alternate assessment are followed, we have accomplished the following:

- We continue to provide training for LEAs through our Alternate Assessment Eligibility Training Course. This course is designed to ensure that all educators involved in AA-AAAS participation decisions receive the same training on the state’s eligibility criteria and the process all IEP Teams are expected to follow to ensure defensible eligibility decisions. By offering everyone the same online course, we can ensure that everyone receives the same information, in the same way, and has the same interpretation of the new criteria, guidance, and policies. In addition to the three online modules, each participant must demonstrate their understanding with an end-of-course quiz.

The first round of the course was open to all LEAs from December 18, 2023, through March 29, 2024. The second round was open from August 1, 2024, through October 31, 2024, to provide an additional opportunity for LEA participants to complete the training. The third round of the course opened on May 29, 2025, and is set to close on December 31, 2025. RIDE tracks the completion of the courses and follows up with LEAs to ensure all appropriate staff complete the training. The course agenda is below.

Eligibility for Alternate Assessment Training Course Agenda

Module 1: The One Percent Rule and Introduction to the Revised Alternate Assessment Eligibility Guidance

Module 2: Understanding and Using Tool A: Intellectual Functioning Tool

Module 3: Understanding and Using Tool B: Adaptive Functioning Rubric and Tool C: Previous Test Participation and Performance Documentation Form

Required Quiz

- All LEA and school staff involved in the decision-making process must be trained through the RIDE online course. This requirement means that in addition to special education directors and the student's classroom teacher, school psychologists, LEA representatives on IEP Teams (usually school principals), general education teachers, occupational therapists, chairs of special education departments, etc., are all required to complete the Alternate Assessment Eligibility Training Course. RIDE provides the names and quiz grades of educators who completed the Alternate Assessment Eligibility Training Course to LEA special education directors. Since the opening of the course in December 2023, 1,172 educators in Rhode Island schools completed and passed the course. This is a substantial increase from the training program we used to have which only included classroom teachers.
- We continue to provide consultation sessions through Zoom meetings and in-person sessions for LEAs that request more targeted training and assistance in applying the eligibility criteria. In the 2024-25 school year we provided 36 individual consultation sessions for 20 public LEAs (out of 64 total LEAs) and two Private Special Education Schools. In addition, we held three question-and-answer sessions for special education directors. So far, for the 2025-26 school year, we have provided 27 individual Zoom consultation sessions for 12 public LEAs (out of 64 total LEAs), one private special education school, and two charter schools. We also held three in-person training sessions with three LEAs.
- Since our last waiver, we began to implement our tiered Alternate Assessment LEA Support Plan (submitted with this waiver). The first in-person training session for the nine LEAs in Tier 2 and Tier 3 was held in spring of 2025. LEAs reviewed the eligibility criteria, analyzed disproportionality data, and discussed and analyzed a case study. Two of the five LEAs identified for Tier 3 significantly decreased the percentage of students eligible for the alternate assessment from over 2% to just above 1%. September of 2025, we conducted the site visit record review and verification for one Tier 3 LEA. The remaining two LEAs will be monitored this year.
- We have begun to refine our Alternate Assessment LEA Support Plan to include additional tasks and verification steps for Tier 2 and Tier 3 LEAs. In addition, we are working on updating the Alternate Assessment Eligibility Training Course to include additional modules that will focus on instruction and presumed competence.

Requirement 4b: Provide assurance that any disproportionality in students taking the alternate assessment will be addressed.

RIDE will continue with its plan to address disproportionality in any student subgroup using statewide longitudinal data and by requiring LEAs to provide assurance that they have identified and addressed

any disproportionality. Most of our LEAs have fewer than 60 students participating in the alternate assessments, across all tested grades. Last year, to assist with identifying where disproportionality may exist, we provided LEAs with additional data and analysis, we provided a report to each Tier 2 and Tier 3 LEA during an in-person, guided data analysis activity. A sample of this report is included with this waiver. For example, we noticed that rates of identification for alternate assessment increase beginning in eighth grade, leading us to provide grade-level rates of identification for alternate assessment to LEAs.

Providing data analysis to LEAs:

- **Rates of eligibility for alternate assessment by grade level.** We have noticed that the number of students found eligible in the 8th and 11th grades is greater than in the lower grades. We will provide lists of students to LEAs who were found eligible for the alternate assessment *for the first time* at 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th grades with the expectation that LEAs will review these students for eligibility. RIDE will also review these records during the monitoring process with the expectation that LEAs will be able to show that they followed the required process and applied the eligibility criteria appropriately. An example of the report we provided to each Tier 2 and Tier 3 LEA was submitted with this waiver.
- **Students who received scores on the general education assessments.** Lists of students who achieved a score on the general education assessments who were then found eligible for alternate assessment with the expectation that LEAs review these students for eligibility. RIDE will also review these records during the monitoring process with the expectation that LEAs will be able to show that they followed the required process and applied the eligibility criteria appropriately.
 - **For 2025-26:** This will be included as part of the 2025-26 LEA Disproportionality Report provided to Tier 2 and Tier 3 LEAs. *See the Plan and Timeline for more information.*
- **Rates of eligibility for alternate assessment by disability category** with the expectation that LEAs review eligibility decisions for students with the following disability categories identified as their *primary disability*: speech/language impairment, hearing impairment, deafness, deaf blindness, visual impairment; emotional disturbance, other health impairment, orthopedic impairment, developmental delay, multiple disabilities*. We expect that students who qualify for the alternate assessment are likely to have disabilities that fall into the autism spectrum disorder, traumatic brain injury, intellectual disability, and multiple disabilities* categories.
 - **For 2025-26:** This will be included as part of the 2025-26 LEA Disproportionality Report provided to Tier 2 and Tier 3 LEAs. *See the Plan and Timeline for more information.*
- **Rates of eligibility for alternate assessment of MLLs and by race/ethnicity.** While LEAs have this data in their student information systems, we have found that if we can provide easy access to the data to conduct disproportionality analysis and facilitate the conversations the LEAs can spend their time engaging in discussion about the data instead of trying to prepare the data. An example of the report we provided to each Tier 2 and Tier 3 LEA was submitted with this waiver. This report was used in a data analysis activity during an in-person workshop held specifically for Tier 2 and Tier 3 LEAs. See the *Alternate Assessment Eligibility Determination* workshop slide deck, *Reviewing Your Data*, slides 12 - 17.

**Depending on the individual disabilities.*

Requirement 5: Provide documentation that each LEA over the 1% submits a justification for why they need to exceed the 1% cap. States must show where these justifications are made publicly available, and that this information is easily accessible.

RIDE requires that each LEA that predicts it will be over the 1% in the following school year to provide a justification for why they feel they must exceed the one percent cap. Justification is provided through their Consolidated Resource Plan (CRP). RIDE staff monitor these responses and use them to provide targeted assistance to LEAs. Anyone wishing to view an LEA's justification for being over one percent, can view the full document of justifications at <http://www.ride.ri.gov/onepercent>.

Requirement 6: Provide a current plan and timeline by which the State will do the following:

- a. **Improve the implementation of its participation guidelines, including by reviewing and, if necessary, revising its definition of "students with the most significant cognitive disabilities" so that less than 1.0 percent of all students assessed take an AA-AAAS.**
- b. **Take additional steps to support and provide appropriate oversight to each LEA that the State anticipates will assess more than 1.0 percent of all students assessed in any subject with an AA-AAAS. This should include describing how the State will monitor and regularly evaluate each such LEA to ensure that the LEA provides sufficient training such that school staff who participate as member of an IEP Team of other placement team understand and implement the guidelines established by the State for participation in the AA-AAAS so that all students are appropriately assessed.**
- c. **Address any disproportionality in the percentage of students taking an AA-AAAS as identified through the State's data.**

Requirement 6a: Improve the implementation of its participation guidelines, including by reviewing and, if necessary, revising its definition of "students with the most significant cognitive disabilities" so that less than 1.0 percent of all students assessed take an AA-AAAS.

As part of our plan and timeline, we continue to provide training around the IEP Team Guidance on Determining Eligibility for Alternate Assessment document that was updated and required as of March 29, 2024. The IEP Team Guidance for Eligibility for the Alternate Assessment, and all required forms, including the Documentation of Eligibility Form, are posted at www.ride.ri.gov/dlm and at www.ride.ri.gov/onepercent.

In addition, we finalized the first draft of our Alternate Assessment LEA Support Plan.

The first in-person training session for nine LEAs in Tier 2 and Tier 3 was held in spring of 2025. LEAs spent a half day reviewing the criteria, analyzing disproportionality data, and discussing and analyzing case studies. In September of 2025, we conducted the first record review and verification for one Tier 3 LEA.

Our criteria, the tools LEAs must use to evaluate evidence for each student for alternate assessment, and the required training course, produced a decrease in the number of students found eligible for the alternate assessment even though our participation rate remains above 1.0% (currently 1.25%). We have seen a steady decrease since the 2022-2023 school year (see Table 9). Our guidance documents, the online training course, and the implementation of our Tired System of Support are improving the accuracy of LEA eligibility decisions.

The online training course has had the biggest impact. By increasing the scope of educators who are required to be trained, it has made everyone on the IEP team more aware and accountable for the decision to qualify a student for the alternate assessment. Since opening the course, Rhode Island has had 1,172 educators complete the course. This is a substantial increase from training just the 350 to 375 classroom teachers who teach students who participate in the alternate assessment.

Requirement 6b: Take additional steps to support and provide appropriate oversight to each LEA that the State anticipates will assess more than 1.0 percent of all students assessed in any subject with an

AA-AAAS. This should include describing how the State will monitor and regularly evaluate each such LEA to ensure that the LEA provides sufficient training such that school staff who participate as member of an IEP Team of other placement team understand and implement the guidelines established by the State for participation in the AA-AAAS so that all students are appropriately assessed.

RIDE will take the following steps to support and provide monitoring for each LEA that exceeds the one percent cap:

- **Require all LEAs to complete the online, self-paced course** in understanding and applying eligibility criteria correctly and the process that we expect all LEAs to implement to ensure defensible decisions.
- **Implement a Tiered System of Support and Monitoring Plan focusing on alternate assessment and implementing the eligibility criteria.** During the 2024-25 school year we began to implement our Tiered System of Support and Monitoring Plan. Below is the table outlining the criteria for each tier of support, what technical assistance is available to those LEAs, and the number of LEAs in that tier for the 2025-26 school year.

The Rhode Island Plan and Timeline includes additional details for this work.

TIER 1

Identification: LEAs that are below *or* just above 1.0% for one year *or* LEAs between 1% and 2% and decreasing from previous year.

Technical Assistance:

- LEA staff serving on IEP teams continue to participate in eligibility training.
- RIDE staff are available to answer questions about implementing the eligibility criteria or a specific student's situation.

Number of LEAs in Tier 1: 55 LEAs (out of 64)

TIER 2

Identification: LEAs between 1.0% and 2.0% and are seeing no change or have increased from the previous year.

Technical Assistance:

- LEA staff serving on IEP teams continue to participate in eligibility training.
- RIDE staff are available to answer questions about implementing the eligibility criteria or a specific student's situation.
- LEA leadership team to participate in technical assistance session with all Tier 2 LEAs to analyze data including examining disproportionality using the NCEO tool, review their eligibility process and student data, and develop/update a plan to ensure accurate eligibility decisions.

Number of LEAs in Tier 2:

- LEAs between 1.0% and 2.0% and are seeing no change: 2 LEAs (out of 64)
- LEAs between 1.0% and 2.0% and have increased from the previous year: 5 LEAs (out of 64)

TIER 3

Identification: LEAs with more than 2.0% of students participating in the alternate assessment in 2025.

Technical Assistance:

- LEA staff serving on IEP teams continue to participate in eligibility training.
- RIDE staff are available to answer questions about implementing the eligibility criteria or a specific student's situation.
- LEA leadership team to participate in technical assistance session with all Tier 2 LEAs to analyze data including examining disproportionality using the NCEO tool, review their eligibility process and student data, and develop/update a plan to ensure accurate eligibility decisions.

- RIDE staff conduct a sample record review of at least 10 students who qualify for the Alternate Assessment to ensure that the LEA is following the procedures outlined in the Guidance Document and the Online training course.
- RIDE staff review the results of the record review with LEA leadership team to feedback and technical assistance in areas identified as a need.

Number of LEAs in Tier 3:

- LEAs above 2.0%: 2 LEAs (out of 64)

Requirement 6c: Address any disproportionality in the percentage of students taking an AA-AAAS as identified through the State’s data.

Rhode Island uses the NCEO Disproportionality Calculator to examine possible under- and over-identification of students participating in the alternate assessment. Our analysis consists of reviewing participation rates from 2021 through 2025 to determine if disproportionality exists across grade levels, race/ethnicity, economic status, and English Learner status. The threshold for identifying disproportionality is a risk ratio of 1.5.

Our analysis (see tables 5 and 6) identifies students who are economically disadvantaged as likely overidentified with the risk ratio 1.15 for all content areas in 2025. This has not changed from 2024 data. We also identified English learners as a group that is likely still overidentified in ELA in 2025 (risk ratios of 1.26 and 1.27). To address this, RIDE will expand the disproportionality review and data analysis as part of the in-person training as many of the Tier 2 and one of the Tier 3 LEAs are urban districts.

Additionally, because Rhode Island assesses fewer than 900 students on the alternate assessment, additional analysis on disproportionality by subgroup and disability category will be conducted using data from our IEP Census and provided to the LEAs.

Most students who take the AA-AAAS have the diagnosis of Autism however, we found more than 100 students were identified as having a disability category that would likely not be consistent with the eligibility criteria including Learning Disabled, Other Health Impairment, Speech and Language, and Emotional Disturbance. As part of our targeted support, we have been asking LEAs to prioritize reviews of eligibility of students under these disability categories.

During our *LEA Monitoring for Tier 2 and Tier 3 LEAs* workshop held in April 2025, we provided LEAs with a disproportionality report that included grade level, subgroup, and historical alternate assessment participation rates. We also included a list that included all LEAs in Rhode Island and their alternate assessment participation rates.

Part of the conversation we facilitated in the *LEA Monitoring* workshop was looking at similar sized LEAs to broaden their understanding and move beyond the boundaries of their district. This helps them begin to see that other more urban or larger districts have reached 1.0%. This generated questions and conversations between the district teams at the workshop and helped them look at their policies and procedures through a different lens.

The report also includes the number of students who would take the alternate assessment if the LEA met the 1.0% threshold. This number was not presented as a goal to reach but as a gauge for them to ask more questions about why they were over 1%. Being over 1% by less than five students may not indicate a need for revising any part of the LEA eligibility process but being over the 1% by more than 10 students indicates a higher chance that there is a misunderstanding of the eligibility criteria or a district policy that is at odds with state eligibility criteria and required process.

LEAs found this report helpful. The goal was to provide them with actionable student data that would highlight areas where they could begin to reevaluate student eligibility. We plan on expanding this report this year to include information on student disability category and students who received a score on general education assessments in the past but who are now taking the alternate assessment.

The next *LEA Monitoring* workshop (see the Plan and Timeline for more information) will include the same report but with expanded information. To make the report more useful, we will include the number of students by primary disability category with flags for those categories that do not typically indicate a student with the most significant cognitive disability (such as speech/language, deaf and hard of hearing, etc.). We will also provide information on students who received a score on the general education assessment but who are now qualified for alternate assessment. Our goal is to eventually create a report that is informative and provides concrete next steps for the LEA to take next that are based on their data.

Table 5: Risk Ratio and Likelihood of Disproportionality by Grade Level (2021-2024) by Content Area¹.

	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 11	Economically Disadvantaged	English Learner
2021-2024	0.92	0.90	0.95	1.03	1.04	1.11	1.04	1.16	1.23
2021-2024	0.92	0.90	0.95	1.03	1.05	1.12	1.05	1.17	1.15
2021-2024			0.91			1.06	1.03	1.17	1.19
ELA	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Yes	Yes
Math	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Yes	Expected
Science			Expected			Expected	Expected	Yes	Expected

Table 6: Risk Ratio and Likelihood of Disproportionality by Grade Level (2021-2025) by Content Area¹.

	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 11	Economically Disadvantaged	English Learner
2021-2025	0.98	0.97	0.93	1.02	1.02	1.06	1.01	1.15	1.26
2021-2025	0.98	0.96	0.93	1.02	1.03	1.07	1.02	1.15	1.18
2021-2025			0.92			1.05	1.03	1.15	1.15
ELA	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Yes	Yes
Math	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Yes	Expected
Science			Expected			Expected	Expected	Yes	Expected

Table 7: Risk Ratio and Likelihood of Disproportionality by Race/Ethnicity (2021-2024) by Content Area¹.

	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi-racial	Pacific Islander	White	Economically Disadvantaged	English Learner
2021-2024	1.48	1.31	1.20	0.93	1.22	0.55	0.96	1.18	1.25
2021-2024	1.47	1.29	1.20	0.92	1.23	0.55	0.97	1.18	1.16
2021-2024	1.31	1.20	1.12	0.89	1.29	0.42	1.00	1.17	1.19
ELA	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Yes	Yes
Math	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Yes	Expected
Science	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Yes	Expected

Table 8: Risk Ratio and Likelihood of Disproportionality by Race/Ethnicity (2021-2025) by Content Area¹.

	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi-racial	Pacific Islander	White	Economically Disadvantaged	English Learner
2021-2025	1.34	1.35	1.21	0.94	1.26	0.58	0.94	1.16	1.27
2021-2025	1.34	1.32	1.21	0.94	1.27	0.57	0.95	1.16	1.19
2021-2025	1.15	1.18	1.16	0.91	1.30	0.33	0.98	1.15	1.15
ELA	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Less than expected	Yes	Yes
Math	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Less than expected	Yes	Yes
Science	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Expected	Yes	Expected

¹ *Expected: There is no evidence of disproportionality when the risk ratio is at or very near 1.*

Yes: Values greater than 1 that have a less than 5% chance that the real number is 1 are in this group. The risk ratio indicates that the probability or “risk” of a focal group student being a participant in the AA-AAAS is greater than expected.

Less Than Expected: Values less than 1 that have a less than 5% chance of being 1 are in the “less than expected” group. It indicates that a focal group student is less likely to be a participant in the alternate assessment than expected.

Requirement 7: Demonstrate that the State reduced its AA-AAAS participation rates in each subject for which the state is seeking a waiver. The Department expects that a State requesting to extent a waiver will have decreased its AA-AAAS rates in SY-2024-25 compared to SY 2023-24. A State with relatively high rates of AA-AAAS participation should demonstrate a greater reduction in its AA-AAAS participation rates compared to States near the 1.0 percent cap.

Table 9 shows the total number of tested students using the AA-AAAS in 2024 and the total number of those tested students who remain on the AA-AAAS as of October 2024. There is a reduction of 75 students. Comparing last year’s tested students to the October 2025 enrollment file for the AA-AAAS, a further 40 students have since been removed.

Table 9: Total number of students who took the AA-AAAS (grades 3-8, 11) and the total number of those tested students who still qualify for AA-AAAS.

Total Tested Students SY 2023-24	Tested Students Eligible for AA-AAAS as of Oct. 2024	Change
890 students	815 students	-75 students

Total Tested Students SY 2024-25	Tested Students Eligible for AA-AAAS as of Oct. 2025	Change
867 students	827 students	-40 students

In addition to the data above, we conducted analysis using the initial registration files for the 2025-26 state assessments to obtain a projection for this year’s participation in AA-AAAS. The tables in Appendix 3 show these projections. This analysis shows a 10-student increase in the number and percentage of students anticipated to take the AA-AAAS to 877 students (1.2%) over last year. This calculation is “live” and uses real-time enrollment data so it will go up and down. We still believe that this is a useful calculation and we anticipate that this number will actually go down as we get closer to the testing window and as we continue working with our Tier 2 and Tier 3 LEAs to ensure that they are properly identifying students, understanding and using the disproportionality data, and implementing a plan for students with disabilities to participate in the general education assessments appropriately.

States Applying to Extend a Waiver from SY 2024-25

1. Follow steps 1-7 to request a new waiver as described in section A above.

Rhode Island has completed steps 1-7, including submitting a plan and timeline that shows an improved monitoring process of LEAs exceeding 1.0 percent of students taking the alternate assessment.

2. Provide information demonstrating that the State made substantial progress towards achieving each component of the prior year’s plan and timeline with regards to:

a. Improving the implementation of the State’s guidelines for participation in the AA-AAAS.

Please see Requirement 6a for information on our efforts to improve LEAs’ understanding and use of the eligibility guidelines and plans for improvement for SY 2025-26.

b. Supporting and providing appropriate oversight to each LEA that the State anticipates will assess more than 1.0 percent of all students assessed with an AA-AAAS.

Please see Requirement 6b for information on our monitoring activities with the LEAs and plans for improvement for SY 2025-26.

c. Addressing any disproportionality in the percentage of students taking an AA-AAAS.

Please see Requirement 6c for information on how we addressed disproportionality with the LEAs and plans for improvement for SY 2025-26.

For this item, note that a State must describe both of the following items:

- a. **Progress implementing the plan it provided last year.**
- b. **Plan to improve or expand on its plan this year.**

Appendix 1: Supporting Documents for 2024 Waiver

All documents listed below, including this waiver, are posted at www.ride.ri.gov/onepercent.

- Rhode Island Plan and Timeline
- LEA justifications document
- *IEP Team Guidance on Eligibility for Alternate Assessment*
- *School Support Visits: Including Alternate Assessments*
- **Attendance Matters RI web page:** This web page contains resources for schools and districts to increase attendance rates. It also contains an attendance tool and leaderboard that shows rates of chronic absenteeism for all schools in Rhode Island.
- **Press Release of Nov. 6, 2023:** Governor McKee, Commissioner Infante-Green Recognize Weekly Attendance Leaders and Improved Schools
- **Participation memo to outplacement schools:** To improve the participation of students with disabilities who attend schools outside of their home district, RIDE drafted this memo to explain our participation requirements, steps to take to ensure they have the information they need to properly administer the state assessments and contact information when they have questions.

Appendix 2: Supporting Documents for 2025 Waiver

All documents listed below, including this waiver, are posted at www.ride.ri.gov/onepercent.

- Rhode Island Plan and Timeline
- LEA Justifications Document
- *IEP Team Guidance on Eligibility for Alternate Assessment*
- *Alternate Assessment Monitoring Plan*
 - Complete list of LEAs and their tier designation
- Letter to LEAs informing them of their tier of support
- Sample monitoring action plan (Newport)
- LEA Disproportionality Report
- Alternate Assessment: LEA Monitoring for Tier 2 & Tier 3 LEAs presentation and other materials
- **Press Release of September 2, 2025:** Governor McKee and Commissioner Infante-Green Talk Attendance and Outcomes in 2025-26 Kick-Off to Attendance Matters RI Campaign

Appendix 3: Number and Percent of Students Assessed by Subgroup for Mathematics and ELA (2017-18 through 2024-25)

MATHEMATICS	STATE	Female	Male	SWD	Low SES	Migrant	MLL	American Indian	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races
2017-18														
Number assessed all students	75,171	36,653	38,518	11,490	36,484	8	6,767	532	2,426	6,459	19,497	132	42,925	3,200
Number assessed DLM Math	997	308	689	997	525	0	76	12	25	110	230	1	574	45
% who took DLM Math	1.33%	0.84%	1.79%	8.68%	1.44%	0.00%	1.12%	2.26%	1.03%	1.70%	1.18%	0.76%	1.34%	1.41%
2018-19														
Number assessed all students	74,669	36,296	38,373	11,375	36,247	0	7,756	551	2,465	6,479	19,648	113	42,112	3,301
Number assessed DLM Math	933	282	651	932	483	0	101	11	27	100	229	1	522	43
% who took DLM Math	1.25%	0.78%	1.70%	8.19%	1.33%	0.00%	1.30%	2.00%	1.10%	1.54%	1.17%	0.88%	1.24%	1.30%
2020-21														
Number assessed all students	64,575	31,404	33,165	10,045	28,148	22	7,270	450	2,162	5,802	17,653	102	35,336	3,070
Number assessed DLM Math	815	245	570	814	441	0	115	10	31	92	199	0	433	50
% who took DLM Math	1.26%	0.78%	1.72%	8.10%	1.46%	0.00%	1.58%	2.22%	1.43%	1.59%	1.13%	0.00%	1.23%	1.63%
2021-22														
Number assessed all students	70,112	34,220	3,586	11,185	30,830	38	8,667	514	2,415	6,298	20,016	94	37,334	3,441
Number assessed DLM Math	904	291	613	902	481	0	117	11	38	97	228	1	476	53
% who took DLM Math	1.29%	0.85%	1.71%	8.06%	1.56%	0.00%	1.35%	2.14%	1.57%	1.54%	1.14%	1.06%	1.27%	1.54%
2022-23														
Number assessed all students	69,601	33,801	35,761	11,644	32,089	46	9,294	572	2,339	6,136	20,404	110	36,536	3,504
Number assessed DLM Math	899	276	623	897	498	0	134	10	41	97	242	1	454	54
% who took DLM Math	1.29%	0.82%	1.74%	7.70%	1.55%	0.00%	1.47%	1.47%	1.75%	1.58%	1.19%	0.91%	1.24%	1.54%
2023-24														
Number assessed all students	69,969	33,923	36,017	12,400	31,749	75	10,248	539	2,315	6,417	21,370	124	35,511	3,693
Number assessed DLM Math	890	284	606	890	458	1	158	8	42	91	262	1	427	59
% who took DLM Math	1.27%	0.84%	1.68%	7.18%	1.44%	1.33%	1.54%	1.48%	1.81%	1.42%	1.23%	0.81%	1.20%	1.60%
2024-25														
Number assessed all students	69,884	34,091	35,782	12,729	40,613	81	10,793	510	2,344	6,561	22,020	124	34,661	3,664
Number assessed DLM Math	867	281	586	867	563	1	171	5	42	102	275	1	378	64
% who took DLM Math	1.24%	0.82%	1.64%	6.81%	1.39%	1.23%	1.58%	0.98%	1.79%	1.55%	1.25%	0.81%	1.09%	1.75%

MATHEMATICS	STATE	Female	Male	SWD	Low SES	Migrant	MLL	American Indian	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races
ESTIMATE 2025-26*														
Number all students	71,128													
Number DLM Math	877													
% estimated to take DLM Math	1.23%													

**As of October 2025.*

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	STATE	Female	Male	SWD	Low SES	Migrant	MLL	American Indian	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races
2017-18														
Number assessed all students	74,377	36,277	38,100	11,436	35,916	4	6,046	528	2,386	6,351	18,995	128	42,808	3,181
Number assessed DLM ELA	996	307	689	996	524	0	75	12	25	110	229	1	574	45
% who took DLM ELA	1.34%	0.85%	1.81%	8.71%	1.46%	0.00%	1.24%	2.27%	1.05%	1.73%	1.21%	0.78%	1.34%	1.41%
2018-19														
Number assessed all students	73,759	35,970	38,011	11,369	35,770	0	7,042	548	2,422	6,393	19,163	113	41,046	3,296
Number assessed DLM ELA	933	281	652	932	482	0	101	11	27	99	229	1	523	43
% who took DLM ELA	1.26%	0.78%	1.72%	8.20%	1.35%	0.00%	1.43%	2.01%	1.11%	1.55%	1.20%	0.88%	1.24%	1.30%
2020-21														
Number assessed all students	64,907	31,616	33,285	10,113	28,355	19	7,123	456	2,154	5,844	17,712	104	35,543	3,094
Number assessed DLM ELA	817	245	572	816	411	0	115	10	31	92	200	0	434	50
% who took DLM ELA	1.26%	0.77%	1.72%	8.07%	1.45%	0.00%	1.61%	2.19%	1.44%	1.57%	1.13%	0.00%	1.22%	1.62%
2021-22														
Number assessed all students	69,476	34,059	35,651	11,266	30,723	38	8,017	517	2,355	6,273	1,926	93	37,323	3,459
Number assessed DLM ELA	905	291	614	903	482	0	118	11	38	92	228	1	476	53
% who took DLM ELA	1.30%	0.85%	1.72%	8.02%	1.57%	0.00%	1.47%	2.13%	1.61%	1.56%	1.16%	1.08%	1.28%	1.53%
2022-23														
Number assessed all students	68,878	33,419	35,423	11,661	31,648	41	8,512	554	2,276	6,069	19,953	109	36,404	3,510
Number assessed DLM ELA	900	277	623	898	498	0	137	10	41	97	242	1	455	54
% who took DLM ELA	1.31%	0.85%	1.76%	7.70%	1.57%	0.00%	1.61%	1.81%	1.80%	1.60%	1.21%	0.92%	1.25%	1.54%
2023-24														
Number assessed all students	68,939	33,436	35,474	12,426	31,113	61	9,112	518	2,266	6,272	20,622	114	35,461	3,686
Number assessed DLM ELA	892	284	608	892	458	1	158	8	43	91	262	1	428	59
% who took DLM ELA	1.29%	0.85%	1.71%	7.18%	1.47%	1.64%	1.73%	1.54%	1.90%	1.27%	1.27%	0.88%	1.21%	1.60%
2024-25														
Number assessed all students	69,109	33,676	35,335	12,744	39,891	76	9,835	513	2,279	6,419	21,417	119	34,608	3,664
Number assessed DLM ELA	861	281	58	861	557	1	165	5	42	101	270	1	378	64
% who took DLM ELA	1.25%	0.83%	1.64%	6.76%	1.40%	1.32%	1.68%	0.97%	1.84%	1.57%	1.26%	0.84%	1.09%	1.75%

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	STATE	Female	Male	SWD	Low SES	Migrant	MLL	American Indian	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races
ESTIMATE 2025-26*														
Number all students	70,036													
Number DLM ELA	877													
% estimated to take DLM ELA	1.25%													

**As of October 2025*

Rhode Island LEA Justifications for Exceeding 1.0% (2025-26)

As part of the Consolidated Resource Plan (CRP), each LEA is required to answer the following question and provide justification.

Does the LEA anticipate assessing more than 1% of students using the alternate assessment this year? If yes: Please provide a justification as to why the LEA needs to assess more than 1% of students using the alternate assessment. Write your justification in the space provided.

LEA Name	Justification for Exceeding 1.0% of Students Tested on the Alternate Assessment
Achievement First	NA
Barrington	NA
Beacon Charter School	NA
Blackstone Academy	NA
Bristol Warren	NA
Burrillville	NA
Central Falls	NA
Charette Charter School	NA
Chariho	LEA is unsure if it will be assessing more than 1% of students using alternate assessment this year. Over the course of the 2024-2025 school year utilizing the revised alternate assessment criteria, several students have not qualified. We began programming for them as stated above. Those that have been identified meet the new criteria and all documents are within students' confidential binders. In addition, the district has had several families move into the district where students were found eligible in their previous district and are enrolled in Special Education Day programs outside the district, i.e., Meeting Street School and Cornerstone.
Coventry	NA
Cranston	NA
Compass	NA

Rhode Island LEA Justifications for Exceeding 1.0% (2025-26)

LEA Name	Justification for Exceeding 1.0% of Students Tested on the Alternate Assessment
Cumberland	<p>In the 2022–2023 and 2023–2024 school years, the percentage of students assessed via the alternate assessment in Math, ELA, and Science exceeded the 1% cap:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math: 1.8% (22–23), 2.1% (23–24) • ELA: 1.8% (22–23), 1.8% (23-24) • Science: 1.9% (22–23), 2.3% (23-24) <p>The LEA's higher-than-average participation in alternate assessments is primarily due to a greater proportion of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Our district operates several specialized programs that serve students with complex support needs and significant cognitive impairments, many of whom meet the state’s criteria for participation in the alternate assessment.</p> <p>To ensure appropriate use of the alternate assessment, the LEA upholds a rigorous IEP team decision-making process. All teams receive annual professional development on eligibility requirements, and assessment decisions are closely monitored. Each IEP team is expected to provide clear justification when selecting the alternate assessment, and the district regularly reviews data to prevent over-identification.</p> <p>Although the LEA continues to work toward reducing participation rates below the 1% threshold, our current percentages reflect the genuine needs of our student population rather than misapplication of assessment criteria.</p> <p>While it is uncertain whether we will fall below the 1% threshold this year, we anticipate a notable decrease in alternate assessment participation. This expectation is based on the recent implementation of more clearly defined eligibility criteria, enhanced training for IEP teams, and the presence of a highly trained coordinator at all annual IEP meetings. These changes have strengthened the accuracy and consistency of eligibility determinations across the district.</p>
Davies Career and Technical School	NA
East Greenwich	NA
East Providence	NA
Excel Academy Rhode Island	NA
Exeter-West Greenwich	NA

Rhode Island LEA Justifications for Exceeding 1.0% (2025-26)

LEA Name	Justification for Exceeding 1.0% of Students Tested on the Alternate Assessment
Foster-Glocester	NA
Greene School	NA
Highlander (charter school)	NA
Hope Academy	NA
International Charter	NA
Jamestown	<p>The Jamestown School Department's small population results in over 1% of the student population qualifying for alternative assessment. The following steps have been taken to ensure that only students who meet the qualifications have IEPs that are based on the essential elements and are assessed using alternative assessment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual professional development is provided to the professionals in the special education department on the qualification criteria for alternative assessment. 2. The Director of Student Services attends IEP meetings when [the] alternate assessment is being considered for a student. This includes meeting[s] for student[s] who currently qualify for alternate assessment and students for whom [the] alternate assessment is being considered. 3. During the 2022-2023 school year, a team from the Jamestown School Department participated in RIDE's committee to revise the Alternative Assessment Eligibility Guidance Document. The Jamestown School Team included: two special educators who work with students who are assessed using alternative assessment, the school psychologist, and the Director of Student Services. Engagement in the committee provided the opportunity to deepen the understanding of the qualification criteria, to build capacity for understanding and applying the criteria, and the opportunity to review current cases with support from RIDE professionals.
Johnston	<p>The district has provided support to all support coordinators (LEAs) and school psychologists regarding the new alternate assessment criteria for eligibility to ensure proper teams are following eligibility criteria and state guidance for participation in alternate assessment. The district intends to provide additional support to teams during the 25-26 SY during professional development. Additional professional development will be provided through RIDE for all psychologists and SID teachers.</p>
Kingston Hill Academy	NA
The Learning Community	NA

Rhode Island LEA Justifications for Exceeding 1.0% (2025-26)

LEA Name	Justification for Exceeding 1.0% of Students Tested on the Alternate Assessment
Lincoln	Lincoln Public Schools anticipates that more than 1% of students will participate in the alternate assessment due to the specific needs of our student population. The district serves a relatively small total enrollment, and a higher percentage of students with significant cognitive disabilities compared to the state average. These students require extensive, direct instruction and substantial supports to access the curriculum and demonstrate their knowledge. Each student identified for alternate assessment participation meets the eligibility criteria outlined by the Rhode Island Department of Education. IEP teams make these determinations based on a comprehensive review of individual student needs, academic records, and performance data. LPS [Lincoln Public Schools] remains committed to ensuring that all assessment decisions are made thoughtfully and in alignment with state guidance, and the district continues to monitor and provide training to IEP teams to ensure appropriate participation decisions.
Little Compton	NA
Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center	NA
Middletown	All special education staff has been trained in the alternate assessment eligibility course. The team follows all state guidelines when determining eligibility. Due to the transient population in Middletown due to the military, the number of students enrolling in Middletown Public Schools continually varies, some of whom are alternate assessment. The team meets to review the scoring rubric prior to the meeting to be able to present clear and up to date data. At the meetings, we discuss with the parents/families if there is any evidence to support whether skills in the home and community, can be completed without intensive, frequent and individualized instruction and supports.
Narragansett	NA
New Shoreham	NA
Newport	Given our district's unique demographic and socioeconomic challenges, the proportion of students requiring alternate assessments exceeds the 1% cap through no fault or misuse of the assessment process. We remain committed to ensuring all students receive equitable, appropriate, and meaningful assessments aligned to their individualized education plans.
North Kingstown	NA
North Providence	Possible Reasons for Higher Alternate Assessment Participation in North Providence:

Rhode Island LEA Justifications for Exceeding 1.0% (2025-26)

LEA Name	Justification for Exceeding 1.0% of Students Tested on the Alternate Assessment
	<p>Student Population Characteristics North Providence may serve a higher proportion of students with significant cognitive disabilities who genuinely require alternate assessment methods to demonstrate their academic progress. The district's demographic composition and community characteristics could contribute to this student population profile.</p> <p>Comprehensive IEP Decision-Making Process IEP teams in North Providence, consisting of educators, parents, specialists, and related service providers, may be conducting thorough evaluations that lead to appropriate alternate assessment placements. These teams carefully consider each student's individual learning profile, developmental needs, curriculum access requirements, and long-term educational goals when making assessment determinations.</p> <p>Robust Special Education Programming The district may offer specialized educational programs and intensive support services specifically designed for students with significant disabilities. These comprehensive programs naturally align with alternate assessment frameworks, potentially resulting in higher participation rates as students receive appropriate educational placements.</p> <p>Elementary Teams' Collaborative Work on Accommodations The elementary teams have engaged in extensive collaborative work with RIDE support staff to thoroughly review and refine accommodation strategies for students who require assessment modifications. This comprehensive review process has involved analyzing individual student needs, evaluating the effectiveness of current accommodation practices, and ensuring that students receive the most appropriate assessment approach—whether through standard assessments with accommodations or alternate assessments. This detailed work has helped clarify which students truly require alternate assessment versus those who can successfully participate in standard assessments with proper accommodations.</p> <p>Ongoing Professional Development Initiative Recognizing the importance of appropriate assessment placement decisions, North Providence Public Schools is actively collaborating with the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) to provide targeted professional development. This initiative focuses specifically on alternate assessment eligibility criteria and decision-making processes, demonstrating the district's commitment to ensuring all assessment placements are appropriate and educationally justified.</p> <p>This comprehensive approach, including the elementary teams' focused work on accommodations, indicates the district's proactive effort to refine assessment practices and ensure compliance with state guidelines while maintaining focus on student-centered decision making.</p>
North Smithfield	NA
Sheila Skipp Nowell Academy	NA

Rhode Island LEA Justifications for Exceeding 1.0% (2025-26)

LEA Name	Justification for Exceeding 1.0% of Students Tested on the Alternate Assessment
Rhode Island Nurses Institute Middle College	NA
Paul Cuffee Charter School	NA
Pawtucket	NA
Portsmouth	NA
Providence	<p>Over the past 3 years, Providence has seen an increase of students with complex needs moving into the district. We have two alternate leads and have recently hired a manager who will oversee alternate assessment and programming for our district. This job has been vacant for about 8 months.</p> <p>On 12/12/24 our Alternate Assessments leads trained all collaborative coaches, LEAs, and managers on the new alternate criteria/rubric. We gave staff time to complete the training on the platform. The leads reviewed the process and answered all questions. The leads have continued to support and review all rubrics upon submission.</p> <p>On 2/25/25, our team asked Heather Heineke and Mary Ann Mello to present at our collaborative coach/LEA meeting to further clarify some outstanding questions. Heather and Mary Ann provided us with a power point and worked through a case study.</p> <p>On 4/28/25, a Providence team made up of the executive director, alternate leads, and psychologist specialist attended the 1% professional training at Save the Bay. We reviewed the criteria and were presented with a case study. We looked at how to cite evidence and how to cite data, especially for those students on the cusp [of qualifying for the alternate assessment].</p> <p>Our next steps are to present this power point at our collaborative coach/LEA meeting to further train our staff. Additionally, we will work with RIDE and follow the steps for monitoring our progress which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yearly presentation on the 1% rule • Group training around eligibility • One-on One meeting with RIDE to review process • In-person monitoring of eligibility decisions • RIDE alternate assessment training
Providence Preparatory Academy	NA

Rhode Island LEA Justifications for Exceeding 1.0% (2025-26)

LEA Name	Justification for Exceeding 1.0% of Students Tested on the Alternate Assessment
Rhode Island School for the Deaf	RI School for the Deaf is a unique LEA in that it is a public school district for some purposes and also considered a special education day school. One hundred percent of our students are on IEPs and RIGL [Rhode Island General Laws] allows for any student who is deaf or hard of hearing [and] for whom their district cannot meet their unique needs, is entitled to attend the school. As a result, the percentage of students participating in Alternate Assessment is inflated and not a true representation [of] were those numbers [are] distributed across the sending districts.
Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy	NA
RISE Mayoral Prep Academy	NA
Scituate	
Segue Charter School	NA
Smithfield	NA
South Kingstown	NA
SouthSide Academy Charter	NA
Tiverton	NA
The UCAP School	NA
Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts	NA
Village Green Virtual Charter School	NA
Warwick	Warwick Public Schools expects to exceed the 1% threshold due to continued enrollment of students with significant cognitive disabilities who meet RIDE’s updated eligibility criteria, effective March 29, 2024. During the 2024–2025 school year, all special educators, school psychologists, and LEAs received training on the new criteria. Any remaining staff will complete the self-paced Alternate Assessment Eligibility Training Course between August 1 and October 31, 2025.

Rhode Island LEA Justifications for Exceeding 1.0% (2025-26)

LEA Name	Justification for Exceeding 1.0% of Students Tested on the Alternate Assessment
	IEP Teams are now consistently applying the updated criteria to ensure only eligible students participate. Warwick remains committed to following these standards and reducing the number of students taking the alternate assessment through appropriate supports in the general education curriculum.
West Warwick	NA
Westerly	NA
Woonsocket	All students participating in the DLM meet the established guidelines and criteria for eligibility. Each student's file is thoroughly reviewed, with data and documentation carefully verified by administration to ensure compliance with the updated eligibility standards set by RIDE. Woonsocket has implemented this new system to accurately determine qualification for the alternate assessment. Although the district's participation rate exceeds the 1% threshold, significant progress has been made in refining the eligibility determination process.
YouthBuild Preparatory Academy	NA

Rhode Island State Assessment Program

**IEP Team Guidance on Determining Eligibility for
Alternate Assessment for 2025-2026**



RIDE Rhode Island
Department
of Education

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INTRODUCTION

Participation in the Rhode Island Assessment Program is an important way of ensuring that each student has the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills addressed in the Rhode Island Core Standards (RICS) and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and have access to the general curriculum. Students who take the alternate assessment are instructed and assessed on Essential Elements (EE). These are grade-specific statements about what students with the most significant cognitive disabilities should know and be able to do. The EEs are linked to the grade level expectations of the RICS and the NGSS.

What is an “alternate assessment”? The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA, states that the purpose of special education is to allow students with disabilities to access and make progress in the general curriculum in order to master the standards that apply to all students. The majority of students with disabilities are able to participate and make progress in the general education curriculum and will take the state assessments with accommodations and other supports. However, the federal government recognizes that a very small number of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities cannot effectively master and make progress on grade level standards. Therefore, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), allows states to assess the progress of **up to 1.0%** of their students using an alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards that are aligned to grade-level standards but with reduced breadth, depth, and complexity. These students require a different type of instruction and test for them to show what they know and can do.

The term “most significant cognitive disability” is not a separate category of disability. It is a designation given to a small number of students with disabilities for the purpose of identification for alternate assessment. The most significant cognitive disabilities are pervasive and affect learning across all content areas and have a significant impact on adaptive behavior. For a student in Rhode Island to be considered as having “the most significant cognitive disability” evidence collected must show that the student meets **ALL** the criteria for eligibility to receive instruction and be assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards.

Alternate assessments are designed around the unique needs of students and take into account motor, hearing, vision, and other physical disabilities as well as cognitive disabilities. While these assessments assess the Essential Elements, which are aligned to the Rhode Island Core Standards, the level at which the content is presented is less complex and students receive more scaffolding and supports than on the general education assessment. The number of standards assessed is also much less than what is assessed on the general assessment (RICAS, NGSA, SAT, and PSAT)

What is the purpose of this document? This document is intended to help Individualized Education Program (IEP) team members decide whether the alternate assessment or the general education assessment, either with or without accommodations, is the most appropriate test for a student and to outline the required process and evidence that LEAs and IEP Teams must use to make an eligibility decision.

To help LEAs and IEP Teams make the most accurate decisions possible, this document contains the following:

- RIDE policy around when *to* make eligibility determinations.
- RIDE policy around when *not* to make eligibility determinations.
- Required rubrics, tools, and documentation form that every student must have in their IEP at the completion of the eligibility process.
- An outline of the process LEAs and IEP Teams must follow to ensure that the decision to include or exclude a student from the alternate assessment is defensible.

OVERVIEW OF THE ELIGIBILITY PROCESS

The IEP team’s decision about whether a student’s learning should be measured against alternate academic achievement standards allowing them to participate in the alternate assessment is often one of the more difficult decisions that the team makes. This high-stakes decision must be made intentionally and keep legal, instructional, and equity implications in mind. To help IEP teams in this decision, several tools have been developed. These are based on a synthesis of the many tools that states may be using as they strive to provide relevant information to IEP teams so that the best and most accurate decisions are made for each student. It requires the consideration of many factors.

They were identified and developed by NCEO 2019 PLG 3 and NCEO to help states meet the assurances they must provide to the U.S. Department of Education:

- IEP teams in the state are adhering to the state’s alternate assessment participation guidelines and the state’s definition of a “student with the most significant cognitive disabilities”.
- IEP teams (and their LEAs) in the state inform parents of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities of the implications of participation in the alternate assessment.

This document outlines the process that should be followed to make eligibility decisions for students. Each step is explained and covered in detail in this document. The steps to the eligibility process are:

Step 1: Learn about the alternate assessments

Step 2: Understand the eligibility process

Step 3: Use the tools to make an eligibility determination

Step 4: Document the decision

WHEN TO MAKE ELIGIBILITY DECISIONS

For MLL students with significant cognitive disabilities (K-2)

Although RICAS and DLM are first administered at grade 3, the state assessments of English language development (WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS) are administered beginning in kindergarten.

MLL students’ participation in the WIDA Alternate ACCESS in K, first, or second grade **does not indicate** eligibility for DLM. Once the MLL student reaches the end of second grade or beginning of third grade, the IEP Team must make a formal eligibility decision using the processes and rubrics outlined in this guidance document.

Grade 2

IEP teams must conduct a formal eligibility process at some point in grade 2. This ensures that teachers and service providers have time to develop an instructional plan, IEP goals, etc., that will best position the student’s teacher and the student for success in grade 3. Try to avoid waiting to make eligibility decisions in grade 3.

Grades 3-8, and 11

Eligibility determination must be conducted annually. While there is no deadline for making eligibility determinations, it is important to do this as early in the school year as possible. Students found eligible at any point after the school year has started should take the DLM assessments for their designated grade level. However, if an IEP team reaches a decision two weeks or less before the start of the DLM test window, preparing for the assessments will be difficult.

In addition to the updates to the Enrollment and Special Education Censuses, registration must also happen in the DLM Kite Educator Portal. The First Contact Survey and Personal Needs Profile must be completed by the

student's teacher *prior to administering DLM*. If eligibility decisions are not made early, teachers run the risk of not being able to complete these steps with enough time to administer the DLM assessments

Grades 9, 10, and 12

Eligibility determinations must be conducted annually for students in non-tested grades. State academic assessments are not administered in these grade levels, but the WIDA Alternate ACCESS is.

STEP 1: LEARN ABOUT THE ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS

The basis for making decisions about which assessment is most appropriate for an individual student comes from having a solid foundation of knowledge about the state's assessment system, including the purpose of the general assessment and the alternate assessment. This knowledge should be demonstrated by all IEP team members, which may include parents or guardians, teachers, school psychologists, English language development specialists, speech language therapists, occupational therapists, paraprofessionals, administrators, and others who may participate in the IEP team meeting. Below is an overview of the general and alternate state assessments available in Rhode Island.

GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENTS

The English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science assessments are part of the federal elementary and secondary education legislation. The assessment program does the following:

- Measures specific claims related to the Rhode Island Core Standards in grades 3-8 and 11 in ELA and mathematics.
- Measures specific claims related to the Next Generation Science Standards in grades 5, 8, and 11 in science.
- Reports individual student scores along with each student's performance level.
- Provides subscale and total scores that can be used with local assessment scores to assist in improving a school's or district's programs in ELA, mathematics, and science.
- Learn more about the [Rhode Island Core Standards](#) and the [Next Generation Science Standards](#).

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS

English language arts and mathematics: grades 3-8 and 11

Science: grades 5, 8, and 11

Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) assessments are designed for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities for whom general state assessments are not appropriate, even with accommodations. DLM assessments offer these students a way to show what they know and can do in mathematics, English language arts, and science.

DLM assessments also help parents and educators establish high academic expectations for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Results from DLM assessments support interpretations about what students know and can do. Results will also inform teachers' instructional decisions and meet federal requirements for reporting student achievement.

Accommodations and Accessibility

DLM assessments are designed to maximize accessibility for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Assessments are built to allow multiple ways for students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. At multiple points during the assessment development process, teams of educators review the testlets to ensure instructional relevance and to minimize barriers for students.

During assessment administration, students have access to various tools and test supports that teachers will select to fit each student's needs and preferences. Some of these tools and supports are delivered through the online assessment system while others are provided outside the system, by the teacher. IEP teams will need to review these tools and test supports and make decisions about which ones are appropriate for the student.

Standards and Content

The DLM Alternate Assessments use a learning map model to diagram the relationship among the knowledge, skills, and understandings necessary to meet academic content standards. The learning map model plots individual concepts in nodes. The connections between these nodes show the multiple ways that students' knowledge, skills, and understandings develop over time.

By examining the learning map model and the relationships between its individual concepts (nodes), educators can better uncover reasons a student may be struggling with a particular concept and see paths ahead for that student to continue to expand their knowledge and skills.

To connect the model's extensive content to real-world expectations for students, certain nodes within the model are associated with **Essential Elements (EEs)**. EEs are specific statements about what students should know and be able to do. They are linked to grade-level-specific expectations described in college- and career-readiness standards, and they provide a bridge between those standards and academic expectations for students with **the most** significant cognitive disabilities.

Assessment Administration

Rhode Island administers the DLM alternate assessments each spring, with all students in a particular grade being assessed on the same Essential Elements.

The DLM assessments are adaptive tests. That means the students receive testlets of varying difficulty depending on their previous answers. The level of the first testlet given to the student is based on the information provided in the First Contact Survey. Completion of this survey is an important step in this process.

ASSESSMENT INFORMATION FOR IEP TEAM MEMBERS

There is a wealth of information available to assist IEP team members in making decisions about which instruction and assessment is most appropriate for a student to take. Unfortunately, local IEP teams may not know about this information unless it is provided to them. This tool includes information specifically designed for Rhode Island educators, as well as nationally available information from NCEO.

Information for Administrators, Teachers, School Psychologists, and Related Services Specialists

Alternate Assessment Information

- [Video *Who Are Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities?*](#) (video and supporting materials)
- [Rhode Island Eligibility Guidelines](#)
- [Essential Elements](#)

General Assessment Information

- [RIDE Accommodations and Accessibility Features Manual](#)
- [RICAS assessment overview](#)
- [Rhode Island Core Standards for ELA and mathematics](#)
- [Next Generation Science Standards](#)

Information for English Language Development Specialists

- [State Assessment Decision-making Processes for MLLs with Disabilities](#)
- [Participation of Multilingual Learners with Disabilities](#)
- [WIDA Alternate ACCESS for MLLs](#)
- [Accessibility and Accommodations WIDA](#)

Information for Parents

- [Parent Information Brochure about DLM](#)
- [Resources for Families](#) (RIDE web page)
- [Alternate Assessment Explanation and Information for Parents and IEP Teams](#)

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT EXPLANATION AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND IEP TEAMS

Academic Achievement Based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards

The Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) alternate assessment is designed for those students identified with the **most** significant cognitive disability who require instruction based on alternate academic achievement standards.

The decision to qualify a student to take the Alternate Assessment plays a pivotal role in the student's access to a variety of post-secondary opportunities. The longer the child participates in the instruction and assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards, the fewer post-secondary opportunities may be available.

The Essential Elements are descriptions of what students with **the most** significant cognitive disabilities are expected to know and be able to do at each grade level from kindergarten through 12th grade. They are essential skills that are linked to the Rhode Island Core Standards in English Language Arts, mathematics, and the Next Generation Science Standards. For students who qualify for the alternate assessment, the annual goals and short-term objectives in the students' IEP must be aligned to an Essential Element. Each Essential Element that is part of the student's goals must be clearly written in the IEP.

Alternate Achievement Based on Alternate Achievement Standards for K, 1, and 2 Students

The disability category of developmental delay is reserved for learners under the age of 8 and Rhode Island does not allow teams to make the decision for Alternate Assessment for learners under this age. It is understood that learners under the age of 8 should be instructed in the Rhode Island Core Standards using the High-Quality Curriculum adopted by their school. Since students under the age of 8 years old are unable to qualify for the Alternate Assessment, the use of the kindergarten through 2nd grade Essential Elements should only be used as an instructional progression reference as appropriate and not as the students' goal.

Differences Between Assessments Based on Grade-level Academic Achievement Standards and Those Based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards

All students with a disability and an IEP have a right to a free appropriate public education. This right includes the opportunity for students with **the most** significant cognitive disabilities to be involved in and make appropriate progress in the same general education curriculum as other students. Sometimes, students with **the most** significant cognitive disabilities are not able to achieve the standards in a meaningful way or to the same degree as other students. These standards are at a reduced depth, breadth, and complexity. These alternate academic achievement standards are called the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Essential Elements (EE) in English language arts (ELA), mathematics and science.

The Rhode Island State Assessment Program (RISAP) provides parents, educators, and policymakers with one piece of information about student learning. The DLM is used to test academic achievement for students with the **most** significant cognitive disabilities. It is an individualized test designed so that students can show what they know and can do in English language arts, mathematics, and science. The assessment is given over multiple testlets, which include an activity to help students engage in the content and then followed by 4-5 questions. Each testlet is administered to the student by the teacher in a one-to-one setting. The DLM allows for many types of accommodations and test supports to make it as accessible to students as possible.

The Impact of State and Local Policies for Students Who Take the DLM Alternate Assessments

Instructing students based on Alternate Academic Achievement standards and assessing their learning using the DLM alternate assessment can place a student on a different trajectory. These students are measured using performance standards at a reduced depth, breadth, and complexity which can result in fewer post-secondary opportunities. Teachers of students with **the most** significant cognitive disabilities use the Essential Elements to plan what is taught and how it is taught so that their students can learn as much as possible. The EEs may also be used to help teachers develop ways to measure student progress. They answer the question “What should my child be learning?”

If a student qualifies to be instructed based on alternate academic achievement standards and will participate in the DLM alternate assessment, IEP teams need to consider the EEs when developing the student’s IEP. The EEs help the teacher identify the student’s needs and plan grade level instruction and assessment for students with **the most** significant cognitive disabilities. Information regarding the students’ performance is included in the IEP under Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance. More information and copies of the EEs are available online at: www.ride.ri.gov/dlm.

Participation in the Alternate Assessment May Affect Completion of a Regular High School Diploma

Students whose instruction is based on alternate academic achievement standards will not be exposed to curriculum at the same depth, breadth, and complexity as their grade-level peers. For these reasons, participation in the alternate assessment may affect a students’ completion of the requirements for a high school diploma.

It is vital that students with severe cognitive disabilities receive academic instruction in order to be able to take advantage of all post high-school options available and to have as much independence as possible. Students who qualify for the alternate assessment may be eligible for a diploma by demonstrating proficiency through their coursework on modified proficiency expectations on state-adopted standards. Rhode Island Department of Education establishes the minimum requirements for all students; however, LEAs have the opportunity to implement additional requirements that go above and beyond RIDE’s minimum expectations. Therefore, the number and types of courses required for a diploma can vary by LEA.

STEP 2: UNDERSTAND THE ELIGIBILITY PROCESS

The decision about which assessment is most appropriate for an individual student can best be supported by preparing information directly relevant to the assessment participation decision before the meeting. This information should reflect considerations that are included in the state’s guidelines for participation in the alternate assessments.

According to ESSA regulations, states' guidelines and definition must address "factors related to cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior" (Sec 200.6(d)(1)). The regulations also clarified that a specific disability category or being an English learner does not determine whether a student has a significant cognitive disability (Sec 200.6(d)(1)(i)), nor does a student's "previous low academic achievement, or the student's previous need for accommodations to participate in general State or districtwide assessments" (Sec 200.6(d)(1)(ii)). The regulations state:

A student is identified as having **the most** significant cognitive disabilities because the student requires extensive, direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains on the challenging State academic content standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled. (Sec 200.6(d)(1)(iii)).

WHEN TO USE THESE ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

LEAs are required to use the eligibility guidelines and tools for the following students:

- Students who are in tested grades and previously qualified for alternate assessment.
- Students who are in non-tested grades and previously qualified for alternate assessment.
- Students who are being considered for alternate assessment.

LEAs are not required to apply eligibility guidelines and tools to the following students:

- Students without IEPs.
- Students with IEPs who are not being considered for alternate assessment
- Students in grades K-2 who may qualify to take the WIDA Alternate ACCESS

LEA REPRESENTATIVE AND TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

It is important that anyone fulfilling the role of LEA representative understand their role and responsibilities during the eligibility process. It is not the responsibility of the student's teacher to conduct the eligibility decision making process on their own. The lists below outline the responsibilities of the LEA representative and the teacher.

LEA REPRESENTATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Meet with the teacher before the IEP Team meeting to ensure that the teacher understands the process and what data they need to gather.
- Ensure that the most current evaluations and evidence are available to the team.
- Ensure the draft rubrics are complete.
- Review how the evidence and recommendations will be communicated to the family.
- Review how the IEP Team Assurances Form will be explained to families.
- Ensure that the families provide input on the eligibility decision.
- Make sure that the completed rubrics, Tool C (the Previous Test Participation and Performance Documentation form), and the IEP Team Assurances Form are attached to the student's IEP.
- Ensure that the family also receives copies of the completed rubrics, assessment sheet, and the signed IEP Team Assurances Form.
- For students that are found eligible for the alternate assessment, ensure the annual goals and short-term objectives are aligned to an Essential Element

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Read this document.
- Meet with the LEA and/or special education director to clarify any questions regarding the process and data needed.
- Collect and analyze the appropriate evidence and data about the student.
- Complete a draft of the Intellectual Functioning Rubric, the Adaptive Rubric, and the Previous Test Participation and Performance Documentation form with input from team members as needed.

GATHERING EVIDENCE FOR THE ELIGIBILITY DECISION

Using multiple pieces of evidence to inform this decision is important because it prevents decision-making that relies on one type of evidence (e.g., IQ score or disability category) and because it provides a complete picture of the student both academically and in social settings.

Below is a list of possible evidence that should be gathered **before** using Tools A, B, and C. It is important to remember that no one piece of evidence should be used to make an eligibility decision and no one person should be making the decision; it must be a decision agreed to by all members of the IEP team.

APPROPRIATE SOURCES OF EVIDENCE AND DATA TO USE FOR ELIGIBILITY DECISIONS

- Curriculum, instructional, and classroom evidence:
 - Examples of instructional objectives and materials
 - Work samples and data on progress from both school- and community-based instruction
 - Classroom work samples and data
 - Teacher observations
- Assessment data and evidence:
 - Past state assessment results to compare with classroom work
 - **NOTE:** Poor performance on state- or district-wide assessments cannot be used to make decisions about eligibility for the alternate assessment.
 - Reading assessments
 - Other academic achievement tests
 - Language assessments like ACCESS for ELLs or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs
 - **NOTE:** qualifying for WIDA Alternate ACCESS in grades k-2 **does not** automatically qualify a student for the DLM alternate assessments.
 - Results of the initial or most recent evaluations of the student (all evaluations must be within 6 years)
 - Observations by teachers and other service providers
 - Observations by family members or guardians, such as the student's adaptive behavior, in settings outside of school.
- IEP information, including:
 - Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, goals, and short-term

- objectives or post-school outcomes from the IEP
- Considerations for students with specific communication needs or modes
- Considerations for students who may be learning English as a second or other language (i.e., English language learners)
- Evaluations, including:
 - Adaptive behavior assessments
 - Functional behavior assessments
 - Informal assessments
 - Psychological assessments and evaluations, including information associated with cognitive tests
 - Speech and communication evaluations

NOTE: If any of the evaluations are over six years old, the team must complete a new assessment in that area before proceeding with determining eligibility.)

RHODE ISLAND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR THE ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

The term “most significant cognitive disability” is not a category of disability. It is a designation given to a small number of students with disabilities for the purpose of providing appropriate instruction and assessment. For a student to be found to have the most significant cognitive disability, each of the three criteria must be true as determined by the student’s IEP team:

1. The student meets the definition of having the most significant cognitive disability.
2. Formative and summative evaluations and data show that the Essential Elements will be challenging for the student.
3. The student is unable to generalize daily living and community skills consistently in home, school, and community settings without intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction and supports.

STEP 3: USE THE TOOLS TO MAKE ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS

This section contains three tools that IEP teams must use to guide their eligibility decisions. They must look at the evidence collected and use the rubrics and the assessment table to help them understand the data and evidence they collected.

NOTE: *If the necessary evaluations and assessments are not available or the student demonstrated substantial changes in their cognitive abilities since the evaluations and assessments were last completed, or the evaluations are more than 6 years old, the IEP team may **not** continue with the eligibility process until the evaluations and assessments are complete.*

DIRECTIONS FOR USING TOOL A: INTELLECTUAL FUNCTIONING TOOL

Measuring intelligence and intellectual functioning is a common approach to trying to quantify cognitive functioning. Cognitive functioning is a general term that is broad in scope. It generally includes a number of mental abilities, including “learning, thinking, reasoning, remembering, problem solving, decision making, and attention” (Fisher, Chacon, & Chaffee, 2019). A single measure of intelligence should not determine cognitive functioning, nor should it determine the potential for grade-level academic performance (McGrew & Evans, 2004). Nevertheless, documentation of information on intellectual functioning is one element of determining if a student may appropriately participate in the alternate assessments. Please keep in mind the following as the rubric is completed:

- Teams need to remember that approximately 1% or fewer of the assessed students in the state meet the criteria for the most significant cognitive disability and are eligible to take the alternate assessments.
- Teams also need to remember that the following information **should not be used for determining eligibility for participation in the DLM Alternate Assessments**. Definitions and descriptions of this information can be found in Appendix A.
 - Disability category (or categories)
 - Physical capabilities and/or medical needs
 - Poor attendance or extended absences, for any reason
 - Poor performance on the general education academic assessments
 - English Language Learner (EL) status
 - Impact of the student’s test scores on the accountability score of the school and/or LEA
 - Location of special education services in more restrictive settings
 - Amount of time receiving special education services
 - Variety of services a student receives
 - Behavior issues, including test anxiety
 - Administrator decision

Directions: The Intellectual Functioning Tool is designed to help IEP Teams determine if a student has the most significant cognitive disability. Circle the description in each row that most closely matches the student’s measured intellectual information. Which column you circle in each row may be different because a student’s skills and knowledge can vary.

For a student to be eligible for the alternate assessments as a student with the most significant cognitive disability, cognitive evaluation results should be in column 3 and 4 with the overall verbal and nonverbal IQ being 2 ½ standard deviations below the norm (63). Follow the guidelines below for using evaluations:

- **Initial evaluations:** You cannot continue to determine if a student is eligible for the alternate assessment until you have the initial set of evaluations: a cognitive evaluation, functional evaluation, and any other evaluations needed for special education services and qualification for alternate assessment.
- **Three-year or tri-annual reevaluations:** Unless there are substantial changes to a student’s disability or cognitive functioning, teams may opt to use previous cognitive and functional evaluations. However, if the student has not had a three-year or triannual evaluation for more than six years (two cycles of reevaluations), then new evaluations must be completed before continuing with the eligibility process.

However, if the student has not had a three-year or triannual evaluation in more than six years and there are extenuating circumstances preventing evaluations from being completed, LEAs should contact RIDE to discuss options for moving forward with the eligibility process.

- **Conflicting results from multiple evaluations:** There may be instances when the validity of the evaluation results fall into question, such as:
 - *when a student cannot or will not complete a section of the evaluation.* In this case, it is important to understand why the student wasn’t able to complete the full evaluation. If the reason is because of the student’s behaviors, then finding the ideal setting and person to perform another evaluation should be the next step. If a student is unable to complete the

evaluation because they are nonverbal or do not speak English, then finding a different evaluation that better suits the student or supplementing the missing portions of the evaluation with other evidence to ensure that you have a fuller picture of the student, is important.

- *when multiple evaluation results conflict.* In this case, it's important to consider the other evidence to see if it supports one result or the other. For example, if a teacher's functional evaluation of the student is high and the parents' evaluation is low, does other evidence confirm the teacher's evaluation results or the parents'? As another example, if multiple evaluations were conducted in a short amount of time but have different results, does additional evidence confirm one of the results, but not the other?
- **Annual and Short-Term Goals in the IEP:** When completing the *Learning* section of the rubric, whether or not the student has annual and short-term goals and objectives aligned to the Essential Element depends on if the student is being considered for the alternate assessment for the first time or was found eligible in the previous year. If the student may be found eligible for the first time, the annual goals and short-term objectives must be rewritten to align to the EEs. If a student was already found eligible in the previous year, their goals should also be reevaluated to ensure they are sufficiently aligned to grade-level Essential Elements and continue to be challenging for the student. All goals in the IEP must include the Essential Element they are aligned to.

TOOL A: INTELLECTUAL FUNCTIONING TOOL

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Fill in the names, dates, and results of each evaluation done. The completed rubric must be included in the student’s special education record and provided to the family along with the IEP. Be sure to add additional comments or documentation as necessary to justify a team’s decision as needed.

Type of Evaluation	Name of Evaluation	Date	Results
Individual Cognitive Ability Evaluation			Full scale IQ: Visual/Spatial: Fluid Reasoning: Working Memory:
Speech Evaluation			Receptive Score: Expressive Score:
AAC Evaluation			
OTHER			

Average Cognitive Ability		Most Significant Cognitive Disability	
1	2	3	4
Verbal Intelligence/Cognition (related to language skills)			
<i>Comments:</i>			
Verbal intelligence in average range or above (85 or above).	Verbal Intelligence 1 to 2 standard deviations below the mean (between 84 and 76).	Verbal Intelligence 2 to 2.5 standard deviations below the mean (between 75 and 64).	Verbal Intelligence 2.5 standard deviations or more below the mean (63 or lower).
Nonverbal Intelligence/Cognition (related to nonverbal reasoning, visual/spatial, nonverbal memory)			
<i>Comments:</i>			
Non-verbal intelligence in average range or above (85 or above).	Non-verbal Intelligence 1 to 2 standard deviations below the mean (84-76).	Non-verbal Intelligence 2 to 2.5 standard deviations below the mean (75 – 64).	Non-verbal Intelligence 2.5 standard deviations below the mean (63 or lower).
Thinking/Reasoning/Problem-Solving			
<i>Comments:</i>			
Reasoning and problem-solving skills at age-level or within average range on an assessment.	Minimal assistance (e.g., general education interventions/supports) needed to carry out reasoning and problem-solving tasks.	Requires moderate assistance, interventions, and supports to support learning and completing cognitive tasks involving thinking, reasoning, and problem solving.	Requires intensive and consistent assistance, interventions, and supports to support learning and completing cognitive tasks involving thinking, reasoning, and problem solving.

Executive Function/Attention/Memory			
<i>Comments:</i>			
Cognitive planning and working memory at age-level or within average range on an assessment.	Minimal assistance (e.g., general education interventions/supports) needed to support cognitive planning and working memory.	Requires moderate modifications and levels of scaffolding to support cognitive planning and working memory.	Requires intensive modifications and substantial levels of scaffolding to support cognitive planning and working memory.
Learning			
<i>Comments:</i>			
Learning RI Core Standards as part of the general education curriculum with minimal to no support provided.	Learning RI Core Standards as part of the general education curriculum with maximum support provided and making progress.	Learning RI Core Standards as part of the general education curriculum with maximum levels of support and no progress. OR Learning Essential Elements and mastering the Target linkage level with moderate to maximum levels of support.	Learning Essential Elements and making progress through linkage levels with maximum levels of support. OR Learning Essential Elements and not making progress through linkage levels even with maximum levels of support.

DIRECTIONS FOR USING TOOL B: ADAPTIVE FUNCTIONING TOOL

Adaptive functioning, sometimes referred to as adaptive behavior, is defined as “coping with everyday environmental demands and includes daily living skills that people perform to care for themselves and to interact with others” (Mitchell, 2018). It is recommended that information for formal or informal assessments of adaptive behavior be collected from people who regularly interact with the student, including family members, educators, and other professionals.

Teams need to remember that approximately 1% or less of the assessed students in the state would meet the criteria for the alternate assessments. Please keep in mind the following as the rubric is completed:

- Teams need to remember that the following information **should not be used for determining eligibility for participation in the DLM Alternate Assessments**. Definitions and descriptions of this information can be found in Appendix A.
 - Disability category (or categories)
 - Physical capabilities and/or medical needs
 - Poor attendance or extended absences, for any reason
 - Poor performance on the general education academic assessments
 - English Language Learner (EL) status
 - Impact of the student’s test scores on the accountability score of the school and/or district
 - Location of special education services in more restrictive settings
 - Amount of time receiving special education services
 - Variety of services a student receives
 - Behavior issues, including test anxiety
 - Administrator decision

Directions for using the Adaptive Functioning Rubric: Teams should circle the cell in each row that most closely matches the student’s measured adaptive behavior information. Which column is marked for each row may be different. This is to be expected because students can vary in their skill levels or exhibit splinter skills that impact their adaptive functioning.

Behavior skills assessments should reflect skills and knowledge expected for a typical peer and be appropriate for the student’s physical capabilities and communication skills. For a student to be eligible as a student with the most significant cognitive disabilities in adaptive functioning, most data should appear in column 4. Follow the guidelines below for using evaluations:

- **Initial evaluations:** You can’t continue to determine if a student is eligible for the alternate assessment until you have the initial set of evaluations: a cognitive evaluation, functional evaluation, and any other evaluations needed for special education services and qualification for alternate assessment.
- **Three-year reevaluations:** Unless there are substantial changes to a student’s disability or cognitive functioning, teams may opt to use previous cognitive and functional evaluations. However, if the student has not had an evaluation for more than six years (two cycles of reevaluations), then new evaluations should be completed before continuing with the eligibility process.
- **Conflicting results from multiple evaluations:** There may be instances when the validity of the evaluation results fall into question, such as:

- *when a student cannot or will not complete a section of the evaluation.* In this case, it is important to understand why the student wasn't able to complete the full evaluation. If the reason is because of the student's behaviors, then finding the ideal setting and person to perform another evaluation should be the next step. If a student is unable to complete the evaluation because they are nonverbal or do not speak English, then finding a different evaluation that better suits the student or supplementing the missing portions of the evaluation with other evidence to ensure that you have a fuller picture of the student, is important.
- *when multiple evaluation results conflict.* In this case, it's important to consider the other evidence to see if it supports one result or the other. For example, if a teacher's functional evaluation of the student is high and the parents' evaluation is low, does other evidence confirm the teacher's evaluation results or the parent's? As another example, if multiple evaluations were conducted in a short amount of time but have different results, does additional evidence confirm one of the results, but not the other?

TOOL B: ADAPTIVE FUNCTIONING RUBRIC

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Fill in the names, dates, and results of each evaluation done. The completed rubric must be included in the student’s special education record and provided to the family along with the IEP. Be sure to add additional comments or documentation to justify the team’s decision as needed.

Type of Evaluation	Name of Evaluation	Date	Results
Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment*			Teacher Report: Parent Report:
Speech Evaluation			Receptive Score: Expressive Score:
AAC Evaluation			
OTHER			

**Behavior skills assessments should reflect the skills and knowledge expected for a typical peer and be appropriate for the student’s physical capabilities and communication skills.*

Average Adaptive Ability		Most Significant Disability	
1	2	3	4
Adaptive Behavior Scale (If the teacher and parent report do not match, please see the section on conflicting scores)			
<i>Comments:</i>			
Overall adaptive behavior score in average range or above (standard score 85 or above).	Adaptive behavior 1 to 2 standard deviations below mean (standard score between 84 and 71).	Adaptive behavior 2 to 2.5 standard deviations below mean (standard score between 70 and 64).	Adaptive behavior 2.5 standard deviations or more below mean (standard score of 63 or lower).
Conceptual (Do not consider communication mode but rather how proficient and independent the student is in using their communication system).			
<i>Comments:</i>			
Has appropriate age and grade level expressive and receptive communication skills.	Has expressive and receptive communication skills that requires minimal prompting or assistance.	Beginning communicator. Minimal expressive and receptive communication skills. Communication is limited to wants, needs, and preferences.	Has limited to no reliable communication system.
Social and Interpersonal Skills			
<i>Comments:</i>			
No instruction is needed on age and grade appropriate interpersonal skills.	Instructional needs addressed through general education interventions for age and grade appropriate interpersonal skills.	Systematic, direct instruction in age and grade appropriate interpersonal skills.	Intensive, systematic, and direct instruction in age and grade appropriate interpersonal skills.

Daily Living Skills – Instruction			
<i>Comments:</i>			
No instruction needed on age and grade appropriate daily living skills.	Minimal instruction needed for student to learn age and grade appropriate daily living skills.	Requires frequent, individualized instruction, and supports across multiple settings to learn age and grade appropriate daily living skills.	Requires intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction and supports in multiple settings to learn and apply age and grade appropriate daily living skills.
Daily Living Skills – Application Across Multiple Settings			
<i>Comments:</i>			
Student is independently able to generalize age and grade appropriate daily living skills.	Student requires minimal supports to successfully generalize age and grade appropriate daily living skills.	The student’s ability to successfully generalize age and grade appropriate daily living skills is inconsistent and they routinely need support.	The student is unable to successfully generalize age and grade appropriate daily living skills without intensive support.
Community Living Skills			
<i>Comments:</i>			
No instruction needed on age and grade appropriate community living skills.	Minimal instruction needed for student to learn age and grade appropriate community living skills.	Requires frequent, individualized instruction, and supports across multiple settings to learn age and grade appropriate community living skills.	Requires intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction and supports in multiple settings to learn and apply age and grade appropriate community living skills.

TOOL C: PREVIOUS TEST PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE DOCUMENTATION

Whether a student participated in the alternate assessments in the past should not be a definitive indication that a student should continue to participate in the alternate assessments. Similarly, participation in the general assessment does not necessarily mean that the student should continue to take the general assessment. With extreme caution, then, IEP team members should look at data on test participation and performance.

For every year in which the student was in a tested grade, the IEP team should document and review which test the student took and how the student performed on the test. In cases where a student, year after year, consistently achieves the Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on DLM alternate assessments, it may be necessary to consider whether the alternate assessments, and the limited content assessed in the Essential Elements, is truly appropriate for the student. In these cases, it may be necessary to transition the student to the general assessment in order for the assessment to be ambitiously challenging (Endrew F.).

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Enter the student’s proficiency level or score for each test the student took. Once complete, place a copy in the student’s special education records. **For grade 2 students** who do not have state assessment scores, use their universal screening scores instead.

Grade	Reading/Language Arts		Mathematics		Science	
	DLM/ Alternate Assessment	General/ Universal Screening	DLM/ Alternate Assessment	General/ Universal Screening	DLM/ Alternate Assessment	NGSA/ Science Assessment
2	 		 		 	
3					 	
4					 	
5						
6					 	
7					 	
8						
10	 		 		 	
11						

STEP 4: DOCUMENT THE DECISION

IEP Team Eligibility for Alternate Assessment Documentation Form

Directions: This form should be completed, signed, and attached to the IEP at the time of the student’s annual IEP review along with completed copies of the Intellectual

Functioning Rubric, Adaptive Functioning Rubric, and the Previous Test Participation and Performance Documentation sheet. Copies of this form, the rubrics, and the test participation documentation sheet should be provided to the family with their copy of the IEP.

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____

State-Assigned Student ID (SASID): 1000-_____ IEP Meeting Date: _____

What is the disability that is impacting the student’s cognitive functioning? _____

Participation Criteria		
CRITERIA 1: Student meets the definition of having the most significant cognitive disability.		
In Tool A: Intellectual Functioning Rubric , is the student’s verbal and non-verbal scores 2.5 or more standard deviations below the mean (63 or lower)?	YES	NO
In Tool A: Intellectual Functioning Rubric is the majority of evidence in column 4?	YES	NO
CRITERIA 2: Formative and summative evaluations and data show that the Essential Elements will be challenging for the student.		
In Tool A: Intellectual Functioning Rubric , <i>Learning</i> section, is the majority of evidence in columns 3 and 4?	YES	NO
Does the Previous Test Participation and Performance Documentation Form Tool C , show that the student is making progress toward the Essential Elements and/or that the Essential Elements are (or will be) challenging to the student?	YES	NO
CRITERIA 3: The student is unable to generalize daily living and community skills consistently in home, school, and community settings without intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction and supports.		
In Tool B: Adaptive Functioning Rubric , is the student’s adaptive behavior scale score 2.5 or more standard deviations below the mean (63 or lower)?	YES	NO
In Tool B: Adaptive Functioning Rubric , is the majority of evidence in columns 3 and 4?	YES	NO
In Tool B: Adaptive Functioning Rubric , <i>Daily Living Skills</i> and <i>Community Skills</i> sections, is the majority of evidence in columns 3 and 4?	YES	NO

**If any decision is no, the IEP team must follow the instructions on page 22, If the Decision is NO.*

IEP Team Assurance: The IEP team has thoroughly discussed the evidence gathered to determine eligibility, completed the Intellectual Functioning Rubric, Adaptive Functioning Rubric, and the Previous Test Participation and Performance Documentation sheet and affirms that they followed the processes and procedures outlined in this document.

The IEP team has informed the parent(s) of the implications of their child’s participation in the alternate assessments, namely that:

- Their child’s academic progress towards achievement of the content standards in English language arts, mathematics, and science will be measured using the Essential Elements.
- The annual goals and short-term objectives are aligned to an Essential Element. Each Essential Element that is part of the student's goals is clearly written in the IEP.
- They understand the graduation options for their child.
- They have been informed of any other implications, including any effects of local policies on the student’s education, resulting from taking an alternate assessment.
- The IEP team *does / does not (circle one)* find this student eligible to participate in the alternate assessments.

Name of LEA Representative (print): _____ Date: _____

Signature of LEA Representative: _____

IF DECISION IS YES

If the IEP team determines that the student is eligible, they must document their decision using the *Participation Criteria for Alternate Assessments Form* and include it with the IEP. An IEP team LEA representative must sign the completed form and a copy must be attached to the IEP, placed in the student's file, and a copy provided to the family. **This must be completed each year at the time of the IEP annual review for students in grades 3 – 11 unless the student is also an MLL student. If the student may be found eligible for the first time, the annual goals and short-term objectives must be rewritten to align to the EEs. If a student was already found eligible in the previous year, their goals should also be reevaluated to ensure they are sufficiently aligned to grade-level Essential Elements and continue to be challenging for the student. All goals in the IEP must include the Essential Element they are aligned to.** If the student is also an MLL student, then this form would need to be completed in grades K-12 for the student to take the WIDA Alternate ACCESS. See page 4 of this manual for more details on when eligibility decisions should be made.

IF DECISION IS NO

If the IEP team decides that the student is not eligible, then four things must happen:

1. The student must participate in the state assessments for their current grade level with appropriate accommodations as determined by the IEP team.
2. The student's instruction must be based on the Rhode Island Core Standards and NGSS via the general education curriculum with accommodations and modifications as appropriate. Without access to the general education curriculum, students will not be able to learn the academic skills and knowledge for their grade level and which will be assessed through the state assessments.
3. The student must receive instruction in their least restrictive environment.
4. The decision must be recorded on the *Participation Criteria for Alternate Assessments Form*, attached to the IEP and placed in the student's file.

DISAGREEMENT WITH THE DECISION

If the parent or guardian of the student disagrees with the IEP team decision regarding eligibility for the alternate assessments, they have the right to request mediation or initiate a due process hearing as described within the procedural safeguards by visiting the Rhode Island Department of Education webpage "When Schools and Families Disagree" at the address below or by contacting the Rhode Island Department of Education Call Center at 401-222-8999 or email at ridecallcenter@ride.ri.gov.

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/SpecialEducation/WhenSchoolsandFamiliesDoNotAgree.aspx>

Additionally, the Rhode Island Parent Information Network (RIPIN), a nonprofit organization not affiliated with RIDE, also provides peer mentors to help parents through the IEP process. Any parent who would like access to a mentor can contact RIPIN's resource center at 401-270-0101 and ripin.org. RIPIN does not provide advocates.

REVIEW OF ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS

To ensure that students are appropriately identified for the alternate assessments, and to ensure that guidance to the field from RIDE is clear and leads to appropriate identifications, RIDE will review data on eligibility determinations. RIDE will use this data to identify schools and districts that may need additional support and guidance to use the eligibility criteria to make valid and appropriate determinations.

APPENDIX A: DO NOT USE THESE FACTORS OR DATA TO INFORM AN ELIGIBILITY DECISION.

The following factors are not appropriate to include in decision-making because they do not add to the IEP Team's understanding of what the student knows and can do. While some of the factors listed below make it difficult for a student to come to school ready to engage and learn, these issues should be addressed with staff that have appropriate expertise and experience in these areas.

- **Disability category (or categories).** There is no disability category that is able to predict 100% of a student's cognitive potential. Disability categories alone are not sufficient evidence to determine eligibility for the alternate assessment.
- **Physical capabilities and/or medical needs.** Many students who take the alternate assessments have physical disabilities in addition to cognitive disabilities and some have ongoing and serious medical conditions. It is important to remember that determinations around eligibility for the alternate assessment must be based on the student's *cognitive* ability, not physical ability or any medical issues.
- **Poor attendance or extended absences, for any reason.** Some students have medical conditions that prevent them from attending school regularly enough to receive instruction. While this is recognized as a factor that inhibits a child's exposure to educational experiences, it is not evidence of a child's ability or their potential to learn and must be addressed through the appropriate school resources.
- **Poor performance on the general education academic assessments.** Most students receiving special education services can and do participate in general education assessments with accommodations and other supports. Poor performance on these assessments is not an appropriate factor to use when making an eligibility decision. To consider accommodations and supports available on other state assessments, please refer to the *RISAP Accommodations and Accessibility Features Manual*: www.ride.ri.gov/accommodations.
- **Multi-lingual Learner (MLL) status.** It is important to understand that a student's ability to learn and their knowledge of English are not connected. How well a student understands and speaks English has an impact on his/her ability to learn; however, it does not indicate a learning disability. Alternative methods of understanding what a student knows and can do may need to be investigated depending on the student's English proficiency level. Please contact your district MLL Director for options.
- **Impact of the student's test scores on the accountability score of the school and/or district.** How well or poorly a student may perform on any state assessment may not be used as a deciding factor in determining which assessment is appropriate for a student.
- **Location of special education services in more restrictive settings.** The setting in which a student receives his/her education is not a factor in determining cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior. Districts routinely utilize staff with expertise in the challenges of a specific disability, behavior, or mental health issue, either within the school, district, or in another setting. Regardless of where a student accesses specialized care or services, meaningful academic instruction should always be given to the student. Because of this requirement, the educational placement of a student is not to be used as factor for eligibility.
- **Amount of time receiving special education services.** Students receive special education services in a variety of ways and in varying degrees of intensity. It is more meaningful to consider the type and intensity of the structures and supports the student requires so they can participate academically and socially in their school than it is to count the number of hours or days a student requires to receive special education services.

- **Variety of services a student receives.** Many students receive a variety of related services that address their physical, behavioral, or other challenges beyond their cognitive ability. The type of services a student receives does not indicate a significant cognitive disability.
- **Behavior issues, including test anxiety.** Behavior challenges can make learning difficult for some students and should be treated appropriately and professionally. Behavior challenges should not be considered when deciding if a student meets the criteria for an alternate assessment as they are not indicators of cognitive ability.
- **Administrator decision.** Under no circumstances is it appropriate for a school, district, or program administrator to unilaterally make an eligibility decision without the full cooperation and consensus of the IEP team, of which the parents or guardians are equal participants, or without following all standard procedures regarding educational decision-making for a student.

APPENDIX B: FAQ ON COGNITIVE EVALUATIONS

Below are some of the questions around how to handle cognitive evaluations for students who either haven't had any completed or it is difficult to obtain a full-scale IQ.

- **What do we do if we can't get a cognitive score for a student?** Follow these additional guidelines if you have trouble obtaining a cognitive score for a student:
 - You must have norm-referenced evaluations.
 - You can use raw scores from subtests of the norm-referenced evaluations.
 - You can use raw scores from subtests from multiple norm-referenced evaluations to arrive at a complete picture of the student's cognitive ability.
 - The evaluations must meet the recency criteria outlined in our guidance and in the Eligibility Training Course (less than six years old).
 - You **may not** use informal observations, checklists, or parent interviews to complete the cognitive sections of the rubrics.
- **If I use the standard error provided on the evaluations, the student falls below the 63 required for Tool A: Intellectual Functioning rubric. Can I use the standard error to qualify the student for DLM?**
No, you cannot apply the standard error. Standard error (or confidence intervals) is the range of scores that are possible if the student was evaluated multiple times. This means the student could score lower *or* higher than the score reported on the evaluation. In other words, the student could move farther away from the required 63.
- **What additional evidence or comments are required for a team to justify the decision?**
 - For Tool A:
 - Excerpts from the psychological report
 - Data collected over time from previous IEP progress reports
 - Scores from additional tests that were completed
 - Historical assessments results
 - For Tool B:
 - Data collected over time from previous IEP progress reports
 - Scores from additional tests that were completed
 - Historical assessment results
- **How do I complete Tool A: Intellectual Functioning, for a nonverbal student?**
 - **Tool A:** For nonverbal students, do not complete the **Verbal Intelligence/Cognition** section of the rubric. Document on the rubric that the student is nonverbal. The **Nonverbal Intelligence/Cognition** section of the rubric must be completed using an evaluation appropriate for nonverbal students.
- **What cognitive tests are available for nonverbal students?** There are many options available for nonverbal students. Here are *some* of the evaluations that were either designed with nonverbal students in mind or that have nonverbal components built in. If your district uses a different test, there is no need to change unless it is inappropriate for the student. If, after using an appropriate cognitive test, a score still cannot be obtained, contact Heather Heineke or Mary Ann Mello to discuss the data you gathered.

- **Reynolds Adaptable Intelligence Test – Nonverbal (RAIT-NV)** - Created for use with individuals who do not speak English, those with hearing impairments, individuals unwilling to communicate verbally, or populations with minimal language capabilities.
- **Comprehensive Test of Nonverbal Intelligence, Second Edition (CTONI-2)** This is a nonverbal test tool that allows an evaluator to measure general intelligence when that child has barriers in verbal communication. It can be used to evaluate individuals from age 6 to 89 years.
- **Test of Nonverbal Intelligence, Fourth Edition (TONI-4)** – Requires no reading, writing, speaking, or listening on the examinee’s part. It is completely non-verbal. Can be used from ages 6 to 89 years of age. Can be administered in 15 to 20 minutes.
- **Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children, Second Edition (KABC-II)** - This tool measures general intelligence and can be used for students from 3 to 18 years of age. It takes anywhere from 25-55 minutes to administer the core battery or 35-70 minutes for the core plus additional subtests. A nonverbal option can be used to assess a child whose verbal skills are significantly limited.
- **Leiter International Performance Scale, Third Edition (Leiter-3)** - Offers a completely nonverbal measure of intelligence that is ideal for use with those who are cognitively delayed, non-English speaking, hearing impaired, speech impaired, or on the autism spectrum. This tool can be used for ages 3-75 years to measure intelligence and cognitive abilities. It takes 20-45 minutes to administer.
- **Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test, Second Edition (UNIT2)** – This nonverbal intelligence test can be used for ages 5 years to 21 years. The abbreviated test battery takes only 10 – 15 minutes and there is a standard battery that has an administrations time of 30 minutes. All subtests are nonverbal and require a nonverbal response.
- **Wechsler Preschool & Primary Scale of Intelligence, Fourth Edition (WPPSI-IV)** has nonverbal components.
- **Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales, Fifth Edition (SB-5)** - This tool is used to assess levels of intelligence across several age spans and ability levels. It takes approximately an hour to complete and looks at 5 areas. Each of the subtests are given in a verbal or non-verbal method to accommodate very young children, even two-year-olds, and non-readers.

APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY

Accommodation: A change in materials or procedures that provide access during instruction and assessment. Accommodations do not change what is being taught or measured. Assessment accommodations are intended to produce valid results that indicate what a student knows and can do.

Adaptive behavior: Behavior that is essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.

Rhode Island Core State Standards (RICSS): The Core Standards are a set of content standards for English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics that define what students are expected to learn at each grade in order to leave school ready for college or careers. The Core Standards were developed by teachers, school administrators, and experts, with support from the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers.

Extensive direct individualized instruction: Concentrated instruction designed for and directed toward an individual student. This type of instruction is needed by students with significant cognitive disabilities to acquire knowledge and skills in content. Students with significant cognitive disabilities are likely to need this extensively to apply knowledge and skills in multiple contexts.

English Language Learner (ELL): An ELL is a student who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency. An ELL's difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be a barrier to learning in classrooms instructed in English and to performance on assessments presented in English.

Learning progression: A learning progression is a description of the way that student learning of skills may develop and build over time.

Modification: A change in materials or procedures that may provide access during instruction and assessment, but that also changes the learning expectations in instruction and what an assessment measures. Modifications during instruction may be appropriate on a temporary basis for scaffolding the student's understanding and skills. Assessment modifications result in invalid measures of a student's knowledge and skills and thus should be avoided.

Pervasive: Present across academic content areas and across multiple settings (including school, home, and community).

Substantial Supports: These include support from the teachers and others (e.g., aides) and various material supports within the student's environment. Examples of substantial supports in instruction include adapting text, using manipulatives and other concrete objects, and extensive scaffolding of content to support learning.

Substantially adapted materials: Substantially adapted materials include various classroom and other materials that have been altered in appearance and content from the materials that peers without disabilities use for instruction or assessment.

R.I. DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400



RIDE Rhode Island
Department
of Education

To: Michael Sollitto, Burrillville

From: Phyllis Lynch, Director, Office of Instruction, Curriculum, and Assessment
David Sienko, Director, Office of Student, Community, and Academic Services

CC: David Alba

Re: *Alternate Assessment Participation Rates and Monitoring District Implementation of new Alternate Assessment Eligibility Criteria*

As you may know, all states must make progress toward meeting the federal requirement to test no more than 1.0% of students using the alternate assessment. In Rhode Island, we use the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) alternate assessments to test students with significant cognitive disabilities in ELA, math, and science. Over the last two years, we have taken several steps to improve the accuracy of the IEP teams’ decision-making when it comes to qualifying a student to take the DLM. These steps include:

- Providing technical assistance by request both in-person and via Zoom call.
- Releasing revised eligibility criteria and guidance that includes new required protocols and tools to determine student eligibility.
- Providing uniform training for educators involved in making eligibility decisions through the Canvas course *Alternate Assessment Eligibility Training Course*.

Your district’s alternate assessment participation rates for 2023 - 2025 are below.

DISTRICT: Burrillville

TIER in 2025: 1

Percent of Students Tested	2023	2024*	2025
DLM Math	2.5 %	2.1 %	1.2%
<i>Number of students tested DLM Math</i>	28	22	13
DLM ELA	2.5 %	2.5 %	1.2%
<i>Number of students tested DLM ELA</i>	28	22	13
DLM Science	3.4 %	2.0 %	0.2 %
<i>Number of students tested DLM Science</i>	16		

***Tier in 2024:** 3

This year, we are continuing to provide technical assistance opportunities to districts and introducing a monitoring plan that will address district implementation of the new eligibility criteria exclusively. This monitoring plan has three tiers of support.

Descriptions of the three tiers:

- **Tier 1:** LEAs that are below 1.0% *or* just above 1.0% for one year *or* LEAs between 1.0% and 2.0% and are *decreasing from 2024 to 2025*.
- **Tier 2:** LEAs between 1.0 and 2.0% *and* are seeing no change from 2024 *or* have increased from 2024 to 2025.
- **Tier 3:** LEAs with more than 2.0% of students participating in the alternate assessment in 2025.

Monitoring Support for Tier 1, 2, and 3 LEAs: *What is required for Tier 1, 2, and 3 LEAs?*

- Ensure all educators involved in determining participation must complete the Alternate Assessment Eligibility Training Course. If an educator has either not completed the course or did not pass the final quiz, they can complete this requirement by taking the course at <https://ride.instructure.com/enroll/FKPEA3>. If you need more information about who completed this course, please contact us at alternate.assessment@ride.ri.gov.
- Attend the yearly presentation on the One Percent Rule. Each year, all LEAs with students who may take the DLM should attend the One Percent Rule webinar that reviews the eligibility criteria, the 1% rule, current 1% data, and DLM assessment data. Registration information will be announced in the coming weeks.
- Zoom calls by request. We are always available to answer questions about implementing the eligibility criteria or a specific student's situation. Please reach out to us at alternate.assessment@ride.ri.gov to schedule a time to meet.

Monitoring Support for Tier 2 LEAs: *What is required for Tier 2 LEAs?*

Tier 2 LEAs are not experiencing progress toward reducing the percentage of students taking the alternate assessment. In addition to the supports listed above for Tier 1, 2, and 3 LEAs, monitoring for this group of LEAs includes:

- Group training for Tier 2 districts. *We will reach out to district special education directors with dates, times, and location.*

Monitoring Support for Tier 3 LEAs: *What is required for Tier 3 LEAs?*

LEAs in Tier 3 need the most intensive support to make progress in reducing the percentage of students participating in the alternate assessments. In addition to the supports listed above for Tier 1, 2, and 3 LEAs (including the group training for Tier 2 LEAs) monitoring for

this group of LEAs includes:

- One-on-one meetings with RIDE to review LEA processes around implementing the eligibility criteria, conducting data analysis to uncover any disproportionality in identifying students for the alternate assessment, and reviewing LEA eligibility decisions. Specific information on the monitoring process will be shared with Tier 3 districts by the end of October.
- In-person monitoring by RIDE of a sampling of IEP eligibility decisions to be completed by the end of the 2025-26 school year. More information will be shared with the Tier 3 districts by the end of September.

Resources:

- To learn more about the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) assessments, the Alternate Assessment Eligibility Criteria or the current training course, please visit www.ride.ri.gov/DLM.
- If you have questions about this data or the monitoring plan for your district, please reach out to alternate.assessment@ride.ri.gov.

Alternate Assessment Use in Central Falls

Federal law places a statewide 1% cap on participation in alternate assessments.¹ The law specifies these assessments are “for students with the *most significant cognitive disabilities*”.² In the 2022-23 school year, 21 states reported alternate assessment participation rates of less than 1.0%. Seventeen states reported rates of 1.0-1.3%, and 14 states reported more than 1.3% of students taking the alternate assessments. Rhode Island reported 1.32% during the 2022-23 and 2023-34 school years.

Federal law also requires Rhode Island to address discrepancies in student populations that are disproportionately assigned to DLM. This represents an opportunity to ensure students are assigned to the state assessments that are most appropriate for them. Figure 1 shows the percentage of student groups assigned to DLM-math in Central Falls. The red dashed line represents the district average. The blue dashed line represents 1.0%; bars ending in the blue region are under the 1% threshold.

In the 2023-24 school year, Central Falls had **1.64% of students taking alternate assessments** (21 of 1277 students). The district was **8 students above the 1% target** (13 students).

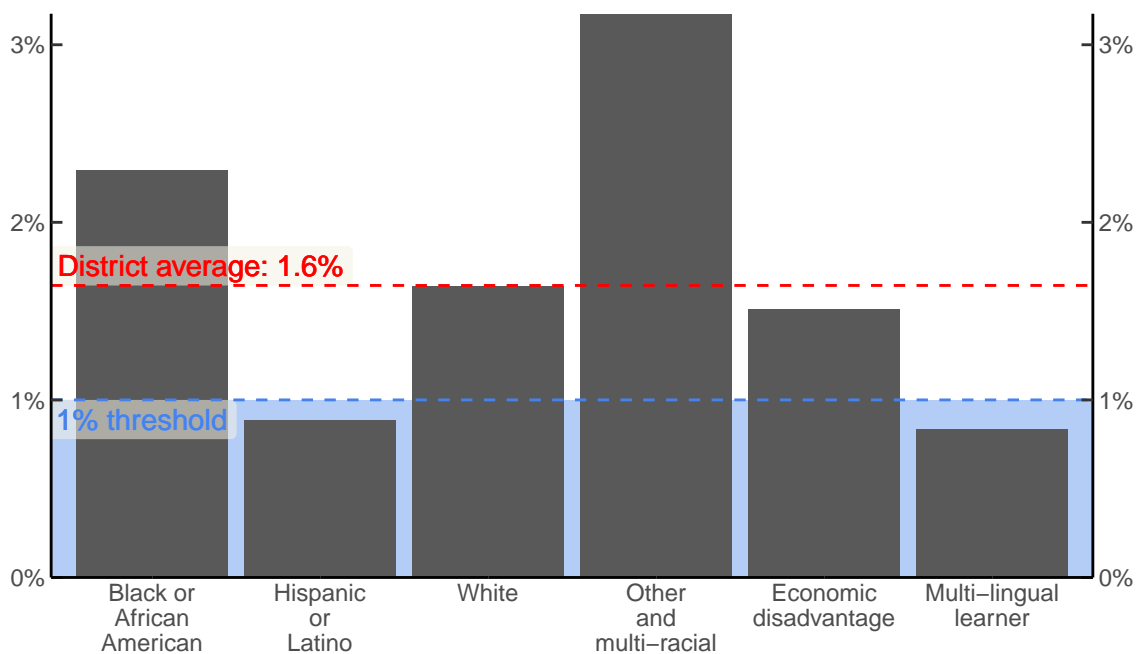


Figure 1: Alternate assessment participation in Central Falls, 2023-24

Table 1 gives more detailed information on students who participated in the DLM. The data represent the count and percentage of students in the indicated group who took the DLM last year.

Table 2 shows the count of students in the indicated groups who took the DLM in each of the past several years.

Table 3 includes districts with more than 300 total tested students. It shows the total number of students in each district who took alternate assessments, and the number of students tested if the LEA were to meet the 1% threshold.

¹Rhode Island alternate assessments affected by this regulation include all DLM subject tests; for simplicity this brief focuses on the math DLM.

²This cap went into effect with the passage of the 2015 bill Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Table 1: Students taking alternate assessments, 2023-24

	# Tot. tested students	# DLM tested students	% DLM tested students
All students	1277	21	1.6%
<i>Target</i>	<i>1277</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>1.0%</i>
Black or African American	218	5	2.3%
Hispanic or Latino	565	5	0.9%
White	305	5	1.6%
Other and multi-racial	189	6	3.2%
Economic disadvantage	1125	17	1.5%
Multi-lingual learner	718	6	0.8%
Grades 3-5	515	5	1.0%
Grades 6-8	559	10	1.8%
Grade 11	203	6	3.0%

Table 2: Students taking alternate assessments, by year

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
All students	24	21	20	21
Black or African American	6	6	4	5
Hispanic or Latino	11	9	6	5
White	5	3	8	5
Other and multi-racial	2	3	2	6
Economic disadvantage	19	19	19	17
Multi-lingual learner	8	5	8	6
Grades 3-5	9	9	8	5
Grades 6-8	13	10	8	10
Grade 11	2	2	4	6

Table 3: Students by district, 2023-24

	Total tested students	Total DLM tested students	If 1% of students were tested
<i>Statewide</i>	69,969	890	700
Providence	10,322	184	103
Cranston	5,341	67	53
Pawtucket	4,221	36	42
Warwick	4,077	59	41
Woonsocket	2,827	51	28
East Providence	2,538	32	25
Cumberland	2,520	52	25
Coventry	2,122	19	21
North Kingstown	1,903	16	19
North Providence	1,823	26	18
Barrington	1,782	11	18
Lincoln	1,738	24	17
West Warwick	1,717	25	17
Johnston	1,656	32	17
Achievement First Rhode Island	1,525	2	15
Chariho	1,476	25	15
Bristol Warren	1,421	14	14
East Greenwich	1,344	9	13
Central Falls	1,277	21	13
Blackstone Valley Prep, A RI Mayoral Academy	1,250	8	12
Smithfield	1,243	14	12
South Kingstown	1,207	10	12
Westerly	1,114	14	11
Portsmouth	1,097	11	11
Burrillville	1,052	22	11
Middletown	1,016	15	10
Newport	921	26	9
Tiverton	869	14	9
North Smithfield	839	5	8
Exeter-West Greenwich	809	7	8
Foster-Glocester	651	5	7
Scituate	639	4	6
Narragansett	508	4	5
Paul Cuffee Charter Sch	435	3	4
Learning Community	379	0	4
RISE Prep Mayoral Academy	309	0	3
Highlander	307	2	3

Alternate Assessment LEA Support Plan

2025-2026

Office of School, Academic, and Community Supports and
the Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

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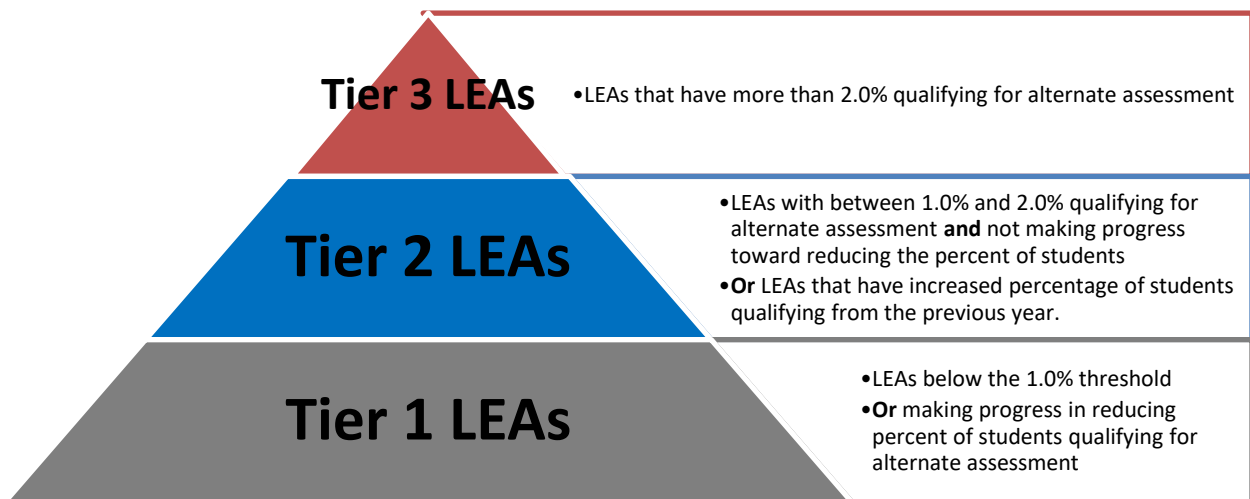
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Introduction

To ensure that all LEAs are using and implementing the [eligibility criteria](#) with fidelity, RIDE created a three-tier system of support. Each LEA will be placed into one of the tiers based on the percentage of students participating in the alternate assessment for the most recent testing year and data trends. For LEAs in Tiers 2 and 3, data from the previous two years will be used to determine if progress was made toward reducing the number of students taking the alternate assessment.

Tiers of Support

RIDE uses annual data to determine what level of support is most appropriate for each district. More details about each tier are found in the subsequent sections.



Tier 1 LEAs

LEAs that are either below the 1.0% threshold for participating in the alternate assessment or are making progress in reducing the percentage of students taking the alternate assessment are placed in Tier 1.

Support for Tier 1 LEAs

1. **Individual Reviews:** As needed, LEAs can contact RIDE to schedule an in-person or zoom call meeting to discuss individual student data used for the eligibility process (file review), discuss process questions, ask questions about instruction, or review DLM test data including disproportionality, and alternate assessment eligibility policy questions.
2. **Webinars:** Attend the One Percent Rule webinar that reviews the eligibility criteria, the 1% rule, current 1% data, and the DLM assessment data.
3. **Online Modules:** Access the eligibility criteria training module. This should be assigned to all new staff members involved in the eligibility process and can be used throughout the year as a refresher or recalibration training opportunity.

Tier 2 LEAs

LEAs that are between 1.0-2.0% **and** are not making progress toward reducing the percentage of students taking the alternate assessment **or** have increased from the previous year are placed in Tier 2.

Support for Tier 2 LEAs

1. **Individual Reviews:** As needed, LEAs can contact RIDE to schedule an in-person or zoom meeting to discuss individual student data used for the eligibility process (file review), discuss process questions, ask questions about instruction, or review DLM test data including disproportionality, and alternate assessment eligibility policy questions.
2. **Webinars:** Attend the One Percent Rule webinar that reviews the eligibility criteria, current 1% data, and DLM assessment data.
3. **Online Modules:** Access the eligibility criteria training module. This should be assigned to all new staff members involved in the eligibility process and can be used throughout the year as a refresher or recalibration training opportunity.
4. **Required Training for Tier 2 LEAs:** LEA must attend an in-person group training presented by RIDE on the 1% rule, that includes a close examination of the eligibility criteria, and district data. The content of the Tier 2 in-person training will be adjusted

based on the identified needs of the LEAs. LEA participants must bring a team of at least 5 but no more than 10 members. Teams must include the special education director, school psychologist, special education teacher, and the person who serves in the role of the LEA representative.

Tier 3 LEAs

LEAs that have more than 2.0% of students participating in the alternate assessment are placed in Tier 3.

Support for Tier 3 LEAs

1. **Individual Reviews:** As needed, LEAs can contact RIDE to schedule an in-person or zoom call meeting to discuss individual student data used for the eligibility process (file review), discuss process questions, ask questions about instruction, review DLM test data including disproportionality, and alternate assessment eligibility policy questions.
2. **Webinars:** Attend the One Percent Rule webinar that reviews the eligibility criteria, current 1% data, and DLM assessment data.
3. **Online Modules:** Access the eligibility criteria training module. This should be assigned to all new staff members involved in the eligibility process and can be used throughout the year as a refresher or recalibration training opportunity.
4. **Required Training:** LEA must attend an in-person group training presented by RIDE on the 1% rule, with a close examination of the eligibility criteria, and district data. LEA participants must bring a team of at least 5 but no more than 10 members. Teams must include the special education director, school psychologist, special education teacher, and the person who serves in the role of the LEA representative. (The content of the Tier 3 in-person training will be adjusted based on the identified needs of the LEA).
5. **The LEA will provide RIDE with a detailed written summary of their eligibility process as well as a detailed written explanation of their continuum of services for students who do not qualify for the Alternate Assessment.**
6. **Required Record Review:** RIDE will conduct a file review of 10 or 10% (whichever is greater) records of students who qualify for the alternate assessment and provide the LEA with written feedback. LEAs will be provided with a corrective action plan and any necessary TA as a result of the file review.
7. **Targeted Technical Assistance:** Depending on findings from the Record Review, RIDE may offer required technical assistance to LEAs.

Required Training and Monitoring for Tier 2 and Tier 3 LEAs

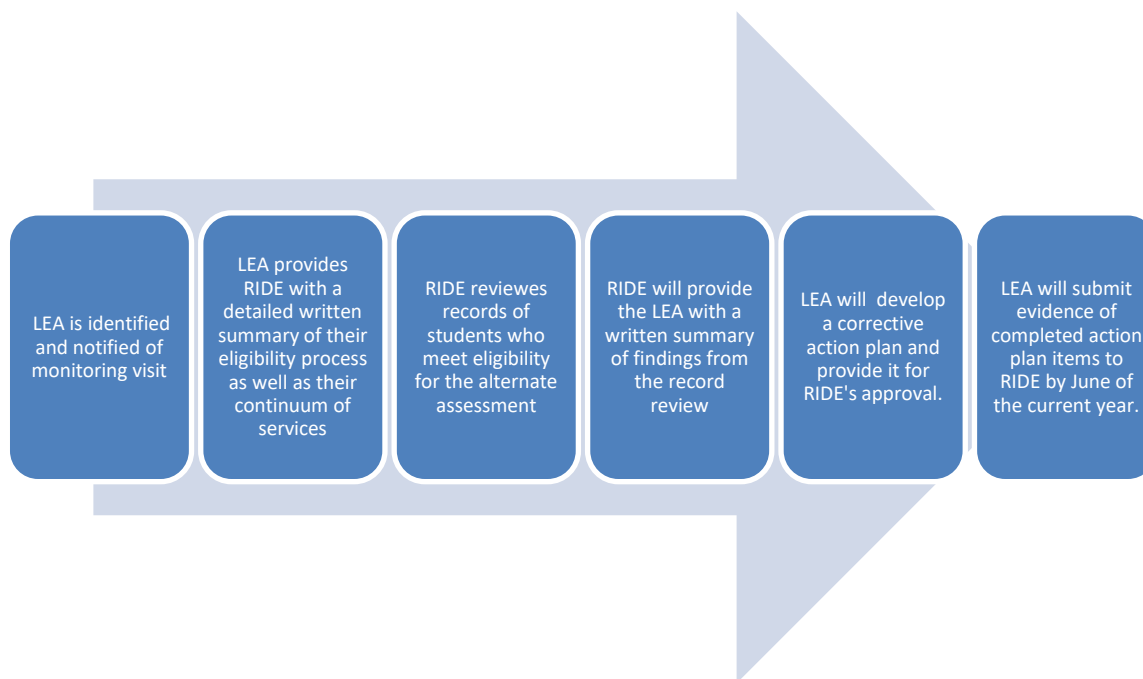
Tier 2 and Tier 3 In-Person Training Description

LEA teams will attend an in-person half day training* presented by RIDE that will consist of:

- Review of the 1% rule and current eligibility guidelines
- Presuming Competence activity
- Case study example for teams to discuss and or LEA independent file review
- LEA data analysis activity
- Root Cause Analysis to support district understanding of why they are over the 1%
- Discussion of instruction for students who no longer meet eligibility criteria

*Content of the training may change depending on the needs of the LEAs at any given time

Monitoring Process for Tier 3 LEAs



Detailed Tier 3 Monitoring Process for LEAs:

LEAs who have been identified as Tier 3 will be monitored annually by RIDE. If a Tier 3 LEA is scheduled to receive their School Support System Review Visit in that year (IDEA monitoring), then the Alternate Assessment Monitoring record review will happen as part of the School

Support Visit. If a Tier 3 LEA is **not** scheduled to receive their School Support System Review Visit in that year, then a monitoring visit targeting only the records of students who met the Alternate Assessment eligibility will be scheduled. More information about the record review process is in the next section.



Monitoring Approach 1: Tier 3 LEA scheduled to receive a School Support Visit

1. RIDE staff will contact the LEA to inform them that they are a Tier 3 district and will be monitored for their Alternate Assessment eligibility process during their scheduled School Support visit.
2. RIDE will pull 10 or 10% (whichever is greater) of the records of students who met the Alternate Assessment eligibility to review **in addition to the records routinely pulled for the School Support System Review Visit.**
3. RIDE staff will complete the Alternate Assessment Record Review protocol.
4. RIDE staff will provide the LEA with a written summary of the record review findings.
5. LEA will prepare a detailed written summary of their eligibility process and submit that to RIDE. RIDE will review the LEAs continuum of services provided in the school support documentation.
6. LEA will provide a corrective action plan and provide it to RIDE for approval.
7. LEA will provide evidence of completed action plan items by the end of the school year.

Monitoring Approach 2: Tier 3 LEA **NOT** scheduled to receive a School Support Visit

1. RIDE staff will contact the LEA to inform them they are a Tier 3 district and set up a day to conduct a record review.
2. LEA will prepare a detailed written summary of their eligibility process as well as a detailed description of their continuum of services for all students who take the alternate assessment and submit to RIDE prior to the completion of the file review.
3. RIDE will pull 10 or 10% (whichever is greater) of the records of students who met the Alternate Assessment eligibility for review.
4. RIDE staff will complete the Alternate Assessment Record Review protocol.
5. RIDE staff will provide the LEA with a written summary of the file review findings.

6. LEA will provide a corrective action plan and provide it to RIDE for approval.
7. LEA will provide evidence of completed action plan items by the end of the school year.

Record Review Process for Tier 3 LEAs

As outlined in the previous section, LEAs who have been identified as Tier 3 will go through a record review process. RIDE will identify 10, or 10%, whichever is greater, records to review using an Alternate Assessment Record Review Protocol.

If Tier 3 LEA is scheduled to receive a School Support Visit, this **additional** record review will take place during that time. If the Tier 3 LEA is not scheduled to receive a School Support Visit, the LEA and RIDE will find a mutually agreed upon time for RIDE staff to visit the LEA and review the records.

LEAs will also provide RIDE with a detailed written description of their eligibility process as well as a written detailed description of their continuum of services for all differently abled students. This written description must be provided to RIDE prior to the completion of the record review date.

During the record review process, RIDE staff will be looking for evidence of the following in each record:

- Completed eligibility tools A, B, C, and the Eligibility Documentation Form attached to each IEP
- Meeting minutes that identify that the eligibility was discussed
- Any additional data that may be needed to support the team's decision
- Evidence that the appropriate placement options (continuum of services) are in place for students
- The student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAF) along with annual goals that support the need for instruction that is significantly below grade level

As outlined in the previous section, once the record review is complete, RIDE will provide the LEA with a written summary of the findings along with any corrective action and professional development and technical assistance that the LEA needs to complete.

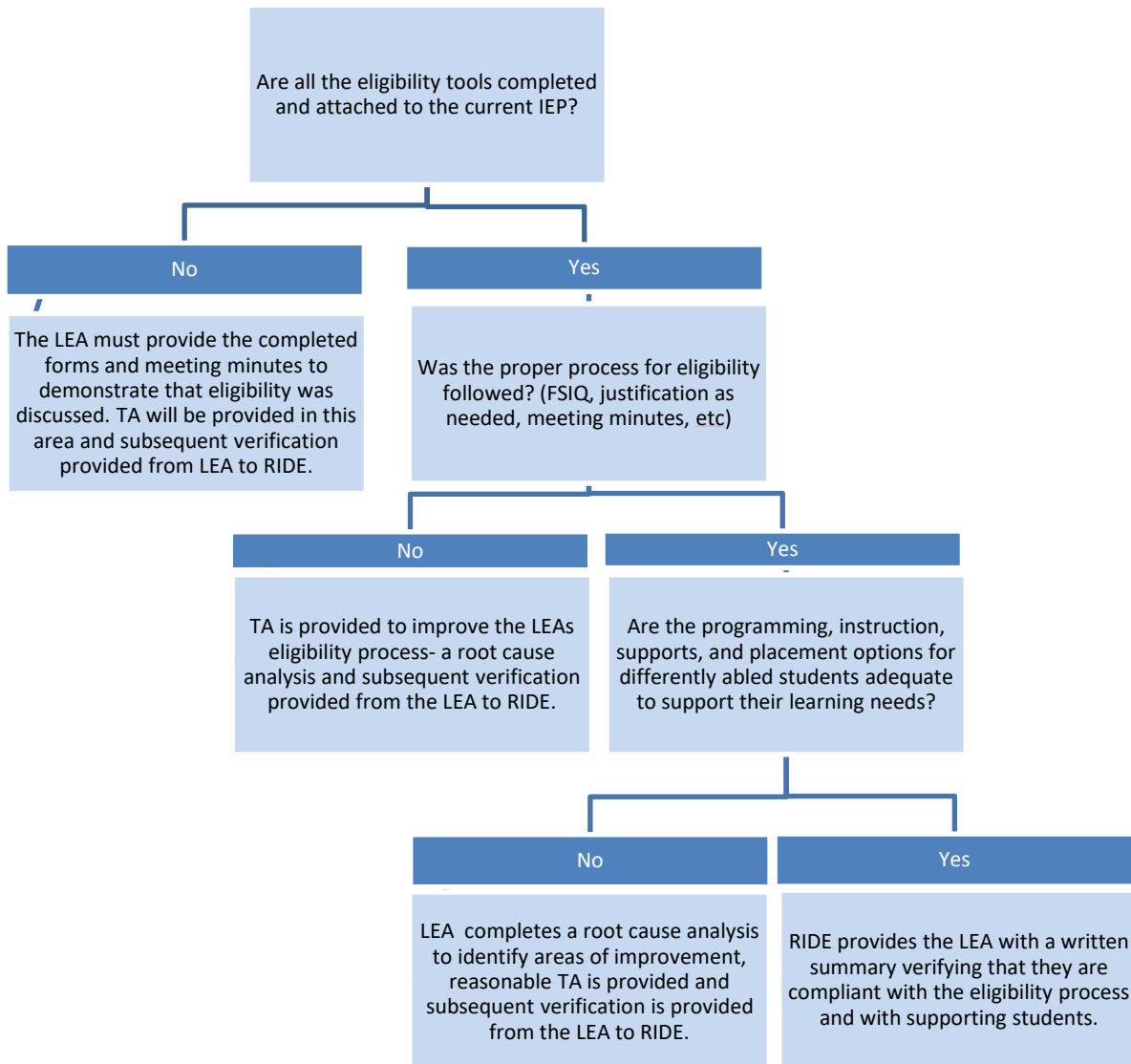
Record Review Feedback Process for Tier 3 LEAs

Upon completion of the record review, RIDE will provide the LEA with feedback that includes the following:

1. A written statement about the process that includes:
 - a. Date(s) the files were reviewed
 - b. Number of files that were reviewed
 - c. Required components the record review was looking for:
 - i. Completed Tool A
 - ii. Completed Tool B
 - iii. Completed Tool C
 - iv. Completed Eligibility Determination form
 - v. Additional data that may be needed to support the team's decision
2. A summary of the findings:
 - a. Number of IEP's that had:
 - i. Missing or incomplete Tool A
 - ii. Missing or incomplete Tool B
 - iii. Missing or incomplete Tool C
 - iv. Missing or incomplete the Eligibility Determination form
 - v. Missing additional data as appropriate
 - vi. Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAFFF) that support the need for academic skills that support which are several grade levels below age-appropriate peers for all content areas
 - vii. IEP goals for conceptual skills, social skills, and/or practical skills
3. Next steps for LEA:
 - a. Required actions that the LEA must take in response to the results of the record review.

Appendix

Alternate Assessment Record Review Protocol



Example of Record Review Feedback Form

R.I. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Date:

To: LEA Special Education Director

From: Office of Student, Community, and Academic Support Director
Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum Director

CC: LEA Superintendent

Re: Alternate Assessment Monitoring results

Participation in the Rhode Island Assessment Program is an important way of ensuring that each student has the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills addressed in the Rhode Island Core Standards (RICS) and the Next Generation Science Assessment (NGSA) and have access to the general curriculum.

The majority of students, with and without disabilities, are able to participate in the general education curriculum and will take the Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS) assessment. However, a small number of students with **the most** significant cognitive disabilities cannot participate in the general education assessments even with accommodations. These students require a different kind of test for them to show what they know and can do.

In 2015 The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) placed a 1.0% cap on state participation on the alternate assessment for each tested content area based on total number of students assessed in that content area. (34 CFR 200.6 (c)(2)). Rhode Island monitors LEAs 1.0% data and places them into a Tired system of support based on those numbers.

As part of the Tier 3 Alternate Assessment Monitoring process, a record review of (number) students was conducted on (Date) by the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE). This review focused on ensuring compliance with the eligibility determination process of the alternate assessment.

Specifically, the following areas were reviewed:

- Were evaluations for eligibility completed within the past six years?
- Were Tools A, B and C from the eligibility protocol fully and appropriately completed?
- Was the IEP Team Eligibility for Alternate Assessment Documentation Form filled out correctly using the information from the tools and signed by the appropriate team members?
- Did meeting minutes document that an eligibility discussion took place at the IEP meeting?
- Was additional data, as needed, documented to support the team’s decision?
- Do the Present Levels of Academic and Functional Performance as well as the IEP goals support the need for instruction that is significantly below grade level?

The findings from this review are summarized in the table below.

Summary Table

Review Item	Number of complete records over records reviewed	Notes (with record code)
Is the most recent cognitive evaluation 6 years old or less?	9/10	4MM- There was no score for one of the evaluations with no explanation.
Is the most recent adaptive functioning evaluation 6 years old or less?	10/10	
Is Tool A completed and in the student record?	7/10	1HH and 3MM Tool A was missing 2MM scores listed do not match the score on the rubric
Is Tool B completed and in the student record?	10/10	
Is Tool C completed and in the student record?	9/10	1HH Tool C did not include any data
Do the meeting minutes document the discussion of the Alternate Assessment?	9/10	2HH No meeting minutes were evident
Was additional data, as needed, included to support the team’s decision?	10/10	

Do the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements support the need for academic skills which are several grade levels below age-appropriate peers for all content areas?	9/10	3MM The PLAAFP does not demonstrate that the student has skills at several grade levels below.
Does the student's IEP include goals for conceptual skills, social skills, and/or practical skills?	10/10	

Next steps:

1. A Corrective Action Plan must be submitted to RIDE no later than March 31, (appropriate year)
2. A Root Cause analysis must be submitted to RIDE no later than June 30, (appropriate year). Directions and template for the Root Cause activity can be found here: [Root Cause Fishbone.docx](#)
3. Completed Corrective Action Plan, along with verification documentation will be submitted to RIDE no later than June 30, (appropriate year)

Please submit to:

RI Department of Education

Office of Student, Community & Academic Supports (ATTN: Mary Ann Mello)

255 Westminster St, Providence RI 02903

If you wish to submit electronically, email maryann.mello@ride.ri.gov to receive a secure link for your documents.

Resources:

- To learn more about the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) assessments, the Alternate Assessment Eligibility Criteria or the current training course, please visit www.ride.ri.gov/DLM.

Example of RIDE Identified Corrective Actions:

The LEA must complete this form and provide it along with any necessary documentation to RIDE staff no later than June 30, (appropriate year)

Individual Student Corrective Actions:

Individual Corrections Record reference code	Required Correction	Evidence from the LEA
1HH	LEA must reconvene the IEP and follow the eligibility process to obtain the missing tools	
2HH	LEA must provide the missing meeting minutes from the meeting or reconvene the IEP team and follow the eligibility process	
2MM	LEA must reconvene the IEP and follow the eligibility process to obtain any missing documentation to justify Tool A	
3MM	LEA must reconvene the IEP and follow the eligibility process obtain the missing tool and to document a discussion on the Present Level of Performance.	
4MM	LEA must provide why the data is missing.	

Operational Corrective Actions:

Systemic Corrections Record reference code	Required Correction	Evidence from the LEA
1HH, 2MM, 3MM	Provide professional development on the Alternate Assessment eligibility process and how the tools should be completed and included in the student record.	
2MM	Provide professional development on how to take meeting minutes and how to include them in the student record.	
3MM	Provide professional development in writing a detailed and appropriate present level of academic achievement and functional performance. (PLAAF)	
4MM	Provide professional development on documentation of additional data to justify.	

Record Review Code

1HH- Student Name

2HH- Student Name

2MM- Student Name

3MM- Student Name

4MM-Student Name

Root Cause Analysis Protocol: Fishbone

Adapted from Minnesota Department of Education Fishbone Protocol

Principles of Root Cause Analysis

- Aims performance improvement measures at root causes that are more effective than treating the symptoms or factors that may contribute to the problem.
- To be effective, Root Cause Analysis (RCA) must be performed systematically with conclusions that are backed by documented evidence.
- There is usually more than one potential root cause for any given problem.
- To be effective, the analysis must establish all known causal relationships between the root cause(s) and the defined problem.

3 Basic Types of Causes:

1. **Physical causes-** Tangible, material items failed in some way
2. **Human causes-** People did something incorrect or did not do something that was needed. These causes may lead to physical causes.
3. **Organizational causes-** A system, process, or policy used for decision-making or to do the work of an organization is faulty.

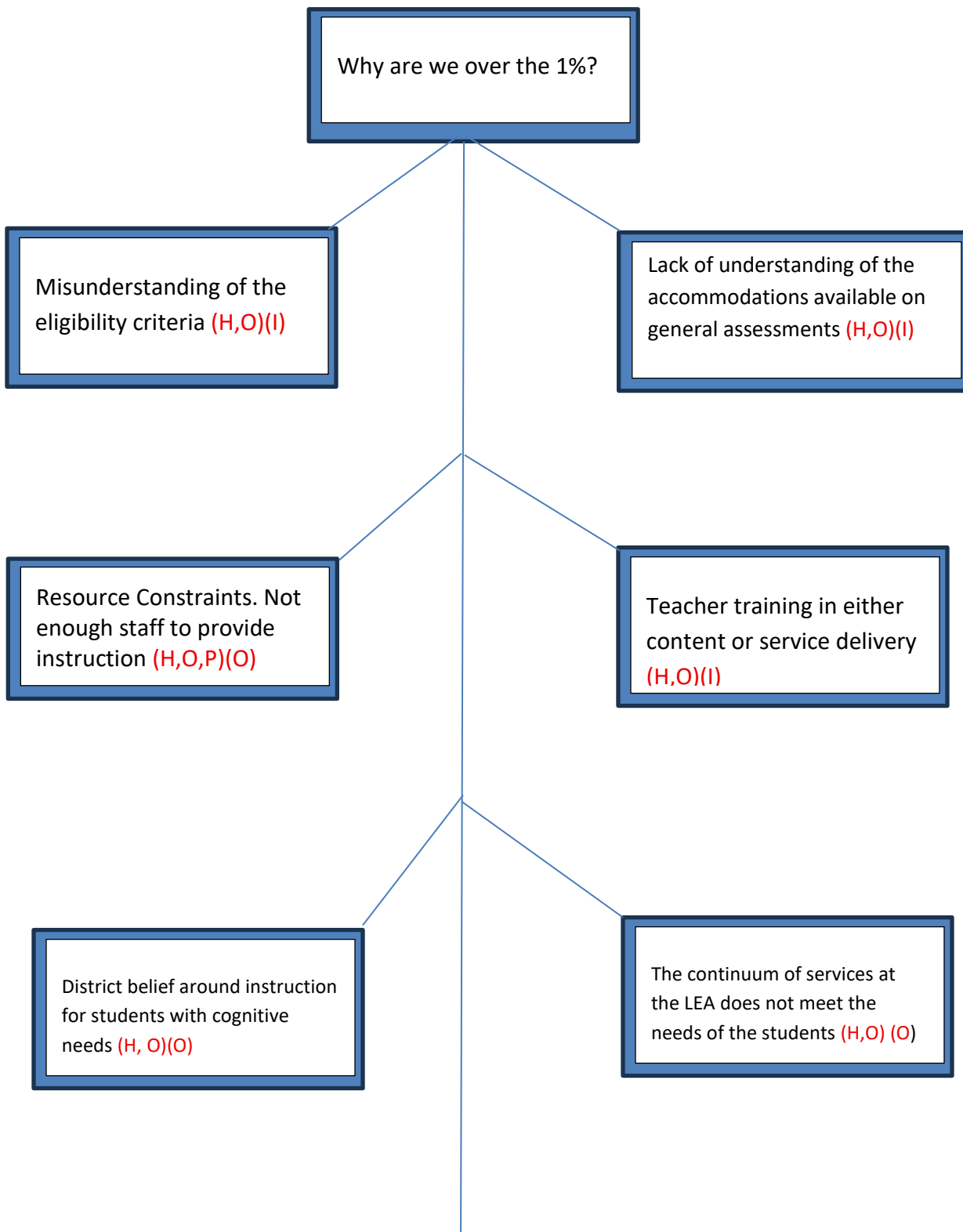
Root Cause Analysis (RCA) looks at all three cause types. RCA involves investigation of patterns of negative effects, finding in-depth challenges/problems. This often means that RCA reveals more than one potential root cause.

Steps to Complete Fishbone

1. **Define the challenge/problem:** This is already defined for you.
 - a. Why are we over the 1%?
2. **Brainstorm:** Be sure to list all factors and suggested causes
 - a. Team members hypothesize causes for the defined challenge/problem
 - i. Why do our numbers keep growing?
 - ii. Why are we not seeing improvement in our students?
 - iii. What in our systems is causing this?
 - iv. What in our practices is causing this?
3. **Label Part 1:** Label each factor with the type of cause- note some factors have more than one.

- a. "P" Physical
 - b. "H" Human
 - c. "O" Organizational
4. **Label Part 2:** Label each factor based on the team's ability to control it.
 - a. "I" for in our control
 - b. "O" for out of our control
5. **Analyze:** Look at your information and discuss the following questions. You may wish to cross off the possible causes that are not in the team's ability to control.
 - a. Are there any common themes or buckets we can put some of the possible causes in?
 - b. What possible cause do you think is making the biggest impact?
 - c. What possible cause do you think is making the least impact?
 - d. How accurate is the possible cause? Do you have data to back it up?
6. **Decide:** Identify one of the possible causes that you can act on in the next school year. What would the plan be to remove that possible cause?

Fishbone Root Cause Analysis Example



One Percent LEA Monitoring Lists

Support for Tier 1 LEAs: Tier 1 LEAs require the least amount of support because they are either below the 1.0% threshold for participation in the DLM or they are making progress in reducing the percentage of students taking the DLM.

- We are always available to answer questions about implementing the eligibility criteria or a specific student's situation. Please reach out to us at alternate.assessment@ride.ri.gov to schedule a time to meet.
- Each year, all LEAs with students who may take the DLM should attend the One Percent Rule webinar that reviews the eligibility criteria, the 1% rule, current 1% data, and DLM assessment data.

Tier 1

LEAs that are below 1% or just above 1% for one year or LEAs between 1% and 2% and decreasing from previous year.

LEAs at or below 1% (2023) (2024) (2025):

- Beacon Charter School (0) (0) (0)
- Bristol Warren (1.4%) (1.0%) (0.7)
- Charette Charter (0) (0) (0)
- MET (0) (0)(0)
- Davies Career and Tech (0) (0)
- New Shoreham (0) (0) (0)
- Providence Preparatory Charter (0) (0) (0)
- RINI (0) (0) (0)
- The Compass School (0) (0) (0)
- The Greene School (0) (0) (0)
- Urban Collaborative (0) (0) (0)
- Village Green Virtual (0) (0) (0)
- YouthBuild Preparatory Academy (0) (0) (0)
- Learning Community (0.3) (0) (0)
- Achievement First (0.3) (0.1) (0.29)
- Segue Inst. (0.4%) (0) (0)
- Scituate (0.6%) (0.6%) (0.5)
- Highlander (0.7%) (0.6%) (0.3)
- Coventry (0.7%) (0.9%) (0.67)
- South Kingstown (0.7) (0.8) (0.6)
- North Kingstown (0.7) (0.8) (0.7)
- Paul Cuffee (0.7%) (0.7%) (0.9)
- Blackstone Academy (0) (0) (0.96)
- Excel Academy (0) (0) (0.65)
- Kingston Hill (0) (0) (0)
- Little Compton (0) (0) (0)
- RISE Prep Mayoral Academy (0) (0) (0)
- Sheila Skip Nowell (0) (0) (0)
- SouthSide Charter (0) (0) (0)
- Blackstone Valley (0.7%) (0.6%) (1.0)
- East Greenwich (0.8%) (0.7%) (0.8)
- Exeter-W. Greenwich (0.8%) (0.9%)(1.0%)
- Foster-Glocester (0.9%) (0.8%) (0.7)
- Foster (0.9%) (1.0%) (0)
- Barrington (1.0%) (0.7%) (0.5)
- Glocester (1.0%) (0.4%) (0.3)
- International Charter (0) (0)
- Nuestro Mundo Charter (0) (0)

LEAs that were above 1% and are now below 1%:

	LEA NAME	2022	2023	2024	2025
7.	Smithfield	1.2%	1.3%	1.1%	0.8%
		15 students	15 students	14 students	10 students
2.	Tiverton	1.4%	1.8%	1.6%	0.7%
		12 students	15 students	14 students	
2.	Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts	0%	0%	1.9%	0.7%
3.	The Hope Academy	0.6%	1.0%	1.4%	0.9%

LEAs above 1% for one year:

	LEA NAME	2022	2023	2024	2025
	Portsmouth*		1.2	1.0%	1.2%
			13 students	11 students	13 students
	Pawtucket*		0.7%	0.9%	1.1%
			29 students	36 students	44 students
	North Smithfield*		0.7%	0.6%	1.3%
					11 students
	Narragansett*		0.7%	0.8%	1.3%

*New in 2025

LEAs between 1% and 2% and decreasing from the previous year:

	LEA NAME	2022	2023	2024	2025
1.	West Warwick	1.6%	1.6%	1.5%	1.2%
		29 students	29 students	25 students	20 students
2.	Jamestown	3.0%	2.5%	1.9%	1.1%
3.	Middletown	1.8%	1.5%	1.5%	1.4%
		18 students	15 students	15 students	13 students
4.	Warwick	1.2%	1.3%	1.5%	1.4%
		52 students	51 students	59 students	56 students
5.	Chariho	1.6%	1.5%	1.7%	1.5%
		25 students	23 students	25 students	22 students
6.	Lincoln	1.3%	1.2%	1.4%	1.1%
		21 students	21 students	24 students	19 students
7.	Burrillville	2.1%	2.5%	2.1%	1.2%
		23 students	28 students	22 students	13 students
8.	Cumberland	2.3%	1.8%	2.1%	1.2%
		56 students	44 students	52 students	31 students
9.	Johnston	1.8%	1.9%	2.0%	1.9%
		41 students	31 students	32 students	31 students

Tier 2: LEAs between 1-2% *and* are seeing no change *or* have increased from previous year.

Support for Tier 2 LEAs: Tier 2 LEAs are not experiencing progress toward reducing the percentage of students taking the alternate assessment. Monitoring for this group of LEAs includes:

- Individual Zoom calls by request.
- Yearly presentation on the One Percent Rule. Watch for registration notification in the coming weeks.
- Group training for Tier 2 districts. We will reach out to the district special education director with dates, times, and location.

LEAs between 1 and 2% and are seeing no change:

LEA NAME		2022	2023	2024	2025
1.	Central Falls	1.8%	1.7%	1.8%	1.8%
		22 students	20 students	21 students	21 students
2.	East Providence	1.4%	1.5%	1.3%	1.3%
		36 students	37 students	33 students	32 students

LEAs between 1 and 2% and have increased from the previous year.

LEA NAME		2022	2023	2024	2025
3.	Cranston	0.9%	0.9%	1.3%	1.5%
		50 students	51 students	67 students	78 students
4.	Woonsocket	1.8%	1.9%	1.8%	2.0%
		49 students	51 students	51 students	54 students
5.	Westerly	1.7%	1.5%	1.3%	1.9%
		20 students	18 students	14 students	21 students
6.	North Providence	1.7%	1.5%	1.4%	1.5%
		30 students	27 students	26 students	28 students
7.	Providence	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%
		207 students	198 students	184 students	190 students

Tier 3: LEAs with more than 2% of students participating in the alternate assessment.

Support for Tier 3 LEAs

LEAs in Tier 3 need the most intensive support to make progress in reducing the percentage of students participating in the alternate assessments. These are the supports that RIDE will provide to Tier 3 LEAs.

- Individual Zoom calls, by request. We are always available to answer questions about implementing the eligibility criteria or a specific student’s situation. Please reach out to us at alternate.assessment@ride.ri.gov to schedule a time to meet.
- One-on-one meetings with RIDE to improve their processes around understanding the eligibility criteria, conducting data analysis to uncover any disproportionality in identifying students for the alternate assessment, and reviewing LEA eligibility decisions. *We will begin scheduling these meetings in October.*
- In-person monitoring by RIDE of all IEP eligibility decisions for tested grades to be completed by the end of the 2024-25 school year. Specific information on the monitoring process will be shared with Tier 3 districts by the end of October.

LEAs with more than 2% of students participating in the alternate assessment.

	LEA NAME	2022	2023	2024	2025
1.	Newport	1.5%	3.1%	3.0%	2.7%
		17 students	29 students	26 students	23 students
2.	RI School for the Deaf	18.2%	20.0%	23.5%	22.0%

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Plan and Timeline for 2023-2024

	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023	January 2024	February 2024	March 2024
STATUS	COMPLETE	COMPLETE	COMPLETE	COMPLETE	COMPLETE	COMPLETE	COMPLETE
<i>Timeline and Plan for Implementing the Revised Eligibility Criteria and Guidance</i>	<p>Sept. 26 & 27: Introduction to the Revised Eligibility Criteria and Guidance webinars. Kick-off training to the roll-out of the new criteria and guidance that resulted from our collaboration with four LEAs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recording at: www.ride.ri.gov/dlm. 186 attendees from 36 LEAs and 9 outplacements. 	<p>LEA planning time: LEAs use this time to implement the required eligibility process, revise local policies as necessary, and identify who should receive the training.</p>	<p>LEA planning time: LEAs use this time to implement the required eligibility process, revise local policies as necessary, and identify who should receive the training.</p>		<p>Dec. 18: The Alternate Assessment Eligibility Criteria Training Course opens.</p>		<p>March 29: Alternate Assessment Eligibility Training Course closes and statewide implementation of new criteria and guidance begins.</p>
			<p>Nov. 29 (2-3 pm): Technical Assistance Webinar</p>	<p>Dec. 27 (2-3 pm): Technical Assistance Webinar</p>	<p>Jan. 31 (2-3 pm): Technical Assistance Webinar</p>	<p>Feb. 29 (2-3 pm): Technical Assistance Webinar</p>	<p>March 27 (2-3 pm): Technical Assistance Webinar</p>
<i>Increase attendance and participation in state assessments</i>			<p>Attendance Matters initiative announced. This initiative brings awareness and resources to districts, schools, and the public around chronic absenteeism.</p>	<p>Participation Memo to Outplacement Schools clarifying state assessment requirements for testing RI students tutored to their schools.</p>		<p>Discussion of participation in state assessments with special education directors.</p>	<p>Monitor test completion and participation in state assessments; notify LEAs and schools at risk of not completing testing on time.</p>
<i>Professional Learning Opportunities</i>	<p>Sept. 14 & 15: Alternate Assessment Foundations of Math Training – Cohort 2</p>	<p>Oct. 25 & 26: DLM Data Use PD Day 1: Review of data notebooks; creating data displays to identify conceptual areas across students. Day 2: Discussion of formative assessment strategies, creating instructional plans, using that info for IEP goals.</p>	<p>Nov. 10 & 30: Alternate Assessment Foundations of Math Training – Cohort 2</p>	<p>Dec. 1: Alternate Assessment Foundations of Math Training – Cohort 2</p>	<p>Jan. 11 & 12: Alternate Assessment Foundations of Math Training IEP Goal Writing – Cohort 2</p> <p>Jan. 25 & 26: Alternate Assessment Foundations of Math Training – Cohort 3</p>		<p>March 28 & 29: Alternate Assessment Foundations of Math Training – Cohort 3</p>
	<p>Sept. 28: Foundations of Math Community of Practice for Cohort 1.</p>	<p>Oct. 26: Foundations of Math Community of Practice for Cohort 1.</p>	<p>Nov. 16: Foundations of Math Community of Practice for Cohort 1.</p>		<p>Jan. 25: Foundations of Math Community of Practice for Cohort 1.</p>	<p>Feb. 29: Foundations of Math Community of Practice for Cohort 2.</p>	<p>March 21: Foundations of Math Community of Practice for Cohort 2.</p>
<i>SETTT Grant</i>		<p>Oct. 20: Presentation of SETTT grant info. to RIDE Special Education Director’s Meeting.</p>				<p>Beginning of Year 5. Three LEAs will continue, and three LEAs will be added.</p>	

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	April 2024	May 2024	June 2024	July 2024	August 2024	September 2024	October 2024
STATUS	COMPLETE	COMPLETE	COMPLETE	VARIOUS	COMPLETE	VARIOUS	VARIOUS
Timeline and Plan for Implementing the Revised Eligibility Criteria and Guidance		Begin working on how to incorporate alternate assessment more equally into IDEA School Support Visits.	Monitoring Plan: Develop draft plan for multi-tier monitoring and support.	Monitoring Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize monitoring process. NOT YET STARTED. Begin requirements gathering for database to collect information about eligibility decisions. COMPLETE: Eligibility Guidance: Complete draft of 2024-25 Eligibility Guidance document.	Monitoring Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calculate state and LEA participation rates. Place each LEA into a tier of support. Announce 5 Zoom sessions for any LEA team to reserve to discuss eligibility decisions or other policy/procedural issues. Issue notices to each LEA that provides their participation rate, disproportionality rates, and their tier of support. Eligibility Guidance: Release updated Eligibility guidance document.	Monitoring Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>All Tiers:</i> Provide 3 Zoom sessions for any LEA team to reserve to discuss eligibility decisions or other policy/procedural issues. NOT YET STARTED. Complete requirements gathering for database to collect information about eligibility decisions.	Monitoring Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>All Tiers:</i> Provide 3 Zoom sessions for LEA teams to reserve to discuss eligibility decisions or other policy/procedural issues. <i>Tier 2 LEAs:</i> Provide 3 office hours sessions at RIDE for LEAs to reserve as needed for eligibility discussions. <i>Tier 3 LEAs:</i> Begin scheduling in-person meetings to discuss implementation of the eligibility criteria, review IEP decisions, answer questions, and review disproportionality data. COMPLETED. Statewide announcement on how AA-AAAS will be incorporated into School Support Visits.
						Alternate Assessment Eligibility Criteria Training Course August 1 - October 31, 2024	
Increase attendance and participation in state assessments	Monitor test completion and participation in state assessments; notify LEAs and schools at risk of not completing testing on time.	Monitor test completion and participation in state assessments; notify LEAs and schools at risk of not completing testing on time.	Review CRPs and provide feedback to LEAs to ensure 95% or more participation of students with disabilities in state assessments. NOT YET STARTED. Develop reports on participation for LEAs that focus on outplacement schools.				
Professional Learning Opportunities	April 25: Foundations of Math Community of Practice for Cohort 2.	May 30: Foundations of Math Community of Practice for Cohort 2.	June 6 & 7: Foundations of Math Training – IEP Goal Writing - Cohort 3 June 27: Foundations of Math Community of Practice for Cohort 3.				October 28 & 29: Teaching Writing to Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities.

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Plan and Timeline for 2024-2025

	November 2024	December 2024	January 2025	February 2025	March 2025	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025
STATUS	COMPLETE	COMPLETE	COMPLETE	COMPLETE		COMPLETE	<i>To be completed in 2025-26</i>	<i>To be completed in 2025-26</i>
LEA Supports and Monitoring	Monitoring Plan: All Tiers: Provide Zoom sessions for any LEA team to reserve to discuss eligibility decisions or other policy/procedural issues. Post waiver for public comment.	Monitoring Plan: All Tiers: Provide Zoom sessions for any LEA team to reserve to discuss eligibility decisions or other policy/procedural issues. Webinar overview of 1% waiver and outline LEA monitoring system (all tiers).	Monitoring Plan: All Tiers: Provide Zoom sessions for any LEA team to reserve to discuss eligibility decisions or other policy/procedural issues. Submit waiver to OESE.	Monitoring Plan: All Tiers: Provide Zoom sessions for any LEA team to reserve to discuss eligibility decisions or other policy/procedural issues. Tier 2 & 3 LEAs: Provide in-person training on monitoring process in preparation for monitoring visits.		Alternate Assessment: LEA Monitoring for Tier 2 & Tier 3 LEAs: In-person workshop for LEAs to review how to make eligibility decisions and review disproportionality data. <i>See Appendix B for workshop materials</i>	Conduct monitoring visits with Tier 3 LEAs.	Conduct monitoring visits with Tier 3 LEAs.
		<i>Break: Dec. 23 - 31</i>	ACCESS Administration Window		State Assessment Administration Window <i>(Notify LEAs/schools at risk of not meeting participation requirements).</i>			
Increase attendance and participation in state assessments	Develop reports on participation for LEAs that focus on outplacement schools.						Discussion of participation in state assessments with special education directors.	

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Plan and Timeline for 2025-2026

Area of Focus/ Improvement	July 2025	August 2025	September 2025	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026
STATUS	COMPLETE	COMPLETE	COMPLETE	COMPLETE			
Breaks and State Assessment Testing Windows						<i>Break</i>	WIDA ACCESS Administration Window
Ensuring the Eligibility Criteria and Guidance Are Followed and Providing Supports and Monitoring to LEAs.	All Tiers: Provide Zoom sessions or in-person meetings, as requested.	Opened 2025-26 Eligibility Training Course All Tiers: Provide Zoom sessions or in-person meetings, as requested.	Notified LEAs of their Tier of Support (<i>see LEA Monitoring Letter, Appendix 2 and One Percent Monitoring List</i>) Conducted monitoring visit with one Tier 3 LEA. All Tiers: Provide Zoom sessions or in-person meetings, as requested.	All Tiers: Provide Zoom sessions or in-person meetings, as requested.	All Tiers: Provide Zoom sessions or in-person meetings, as requested.	All Tiers: Provide Zoom sessions or in-person meetings, as requested. Conduct monitoring visits with Tier 3 LEAs , including remaining LEAs from 2024-25 SY.	Begin development of training modules on instruction and presumed competence. Conduct monitoring visits with Tier 3 LEAs , including remaining LEAs from 2024-25 SY.
Addressing Disproportionality					Begin working on changes to Disproportionality Report.		
Increase attendance and participation in state assessments				Discussion of participation in state assessments with special education directors.	Finalize review of accommodations changes and recommendations.	Develop reports on participation for LEAs that focus on outplacement schools. Accommodations in state assessments training begins.	Discussion of participation in state assessments with special education directors. Include suggestions for increased participation of students with disabilities in Test Coordinator Training for State Assessments. Accommodations in state assessments training begins.

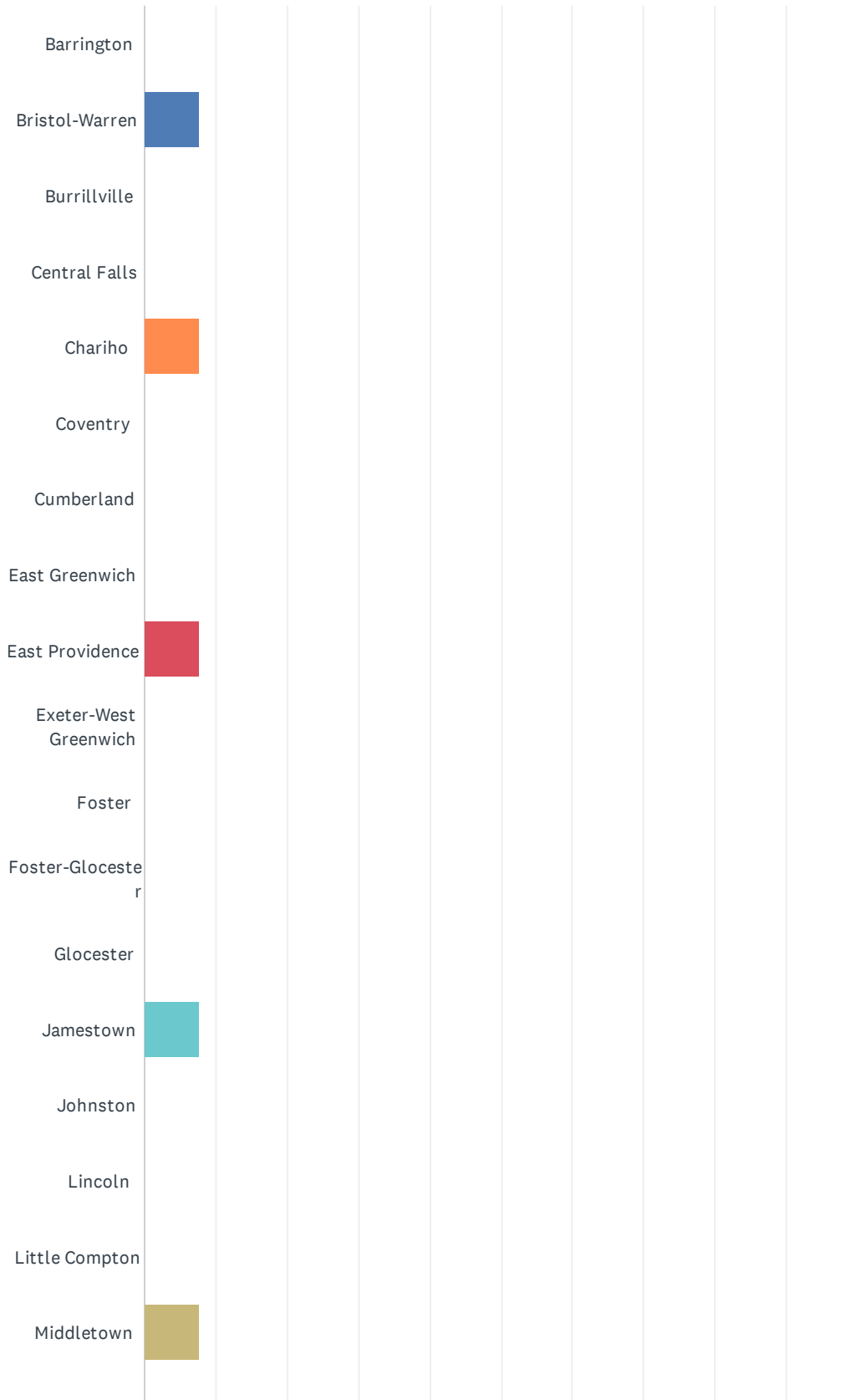
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Plan and Timeline for 2025-2026

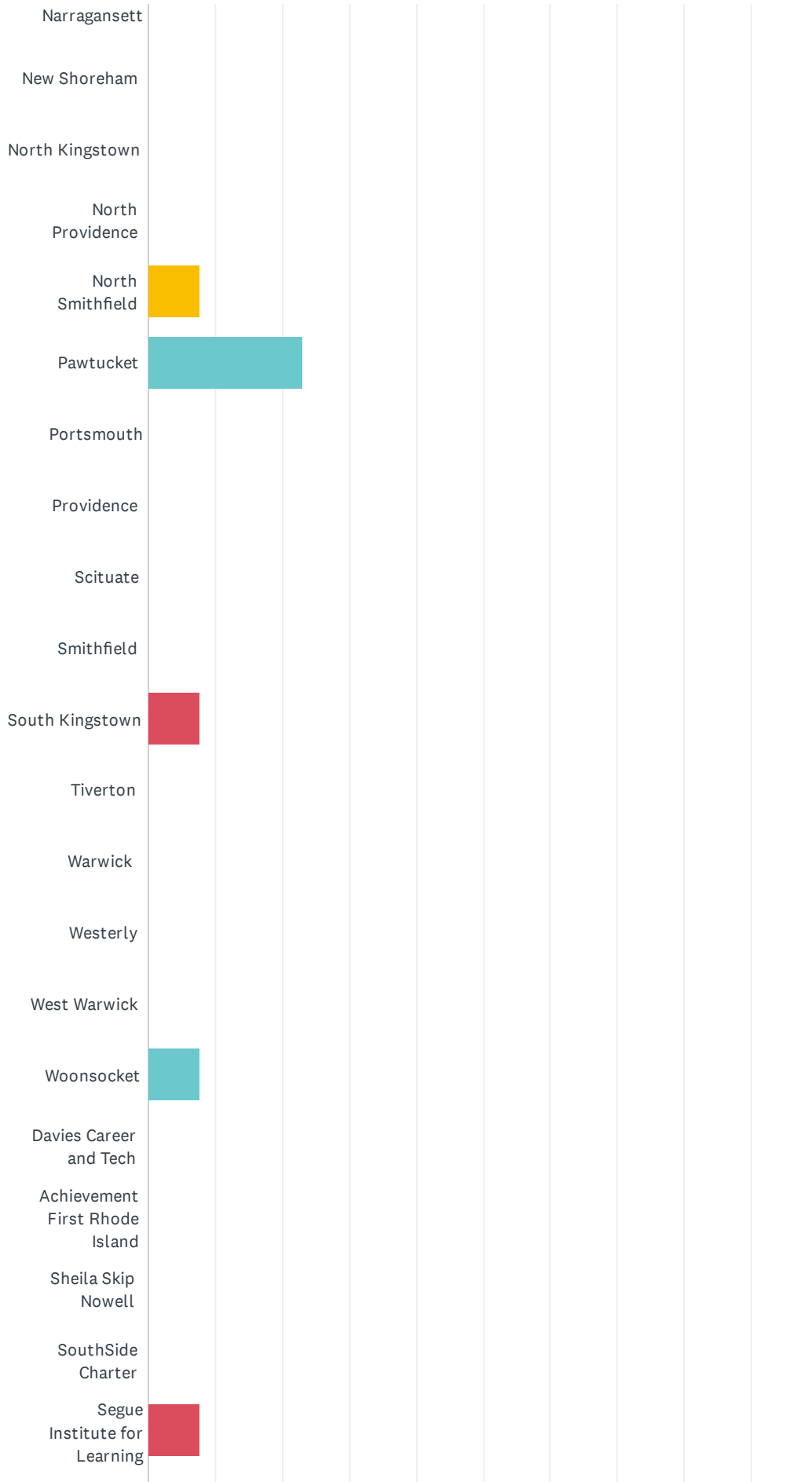
Area of Focus/ Improvement	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026	May 2026	June 2026	July 2026
STATUS						
State Assessment Testing Windows	WIDA ACCESS Administration Window	State Assessment Administration Window: RICAS, DLM, SAT, PSAT 10, and NGSA				Receive DLM data files for cleaning.
Ensuring the Eligibility Criteria and Guidance Are Followed and Providing Supports and Monitoring to LEAs.	Send Monitoring Summary Letters to Tier 3 LEAs. All Tiers: Provide Zoom sessions or in-person meetings, as requested.	Tier 3 LEA Corrective Action Plan Due to RIDE for review. All Tiers: Provide Zoom sessions or in-person meetings, as requested.	All Tiers: Provide Zoom sessions or in-person meetings, as requested. Completion of additional training modules on instruction and presumed competence.	All Tiers: Provide Zoom sessions or in-person meetings, as requested. Tier 2 & 3 LEAs: Provide in-person training on monitoring process in preparation for monitoring visits.	Tier 3 LEA Corrective Action Plan evidence due to RIDE.	All Tiers: Provide Zoom sessions or in-person meetings, as requested.
Addressing Disproportionality	Finalize changes to the LEA Disproportionality Report.	Include disproportionality data in DLM test coordinator training.			Distribute Disproportionality Report to all Tier 2 and Tier 3 LEAs at in-person training.	
Increase attendance and participation in state assessments	Include suggestions for increased participation of students with disabilities in Test Coordinator Training for State Assessments.	Notify LEAs/schools at risk of not meeting participation requirements.	Notify LEAs/schools at risk of not meeting participation requirements.	Notify LEAs/schools at risk of not meeting participation requirements.		

Q1 Please select your district from the drop-down box.

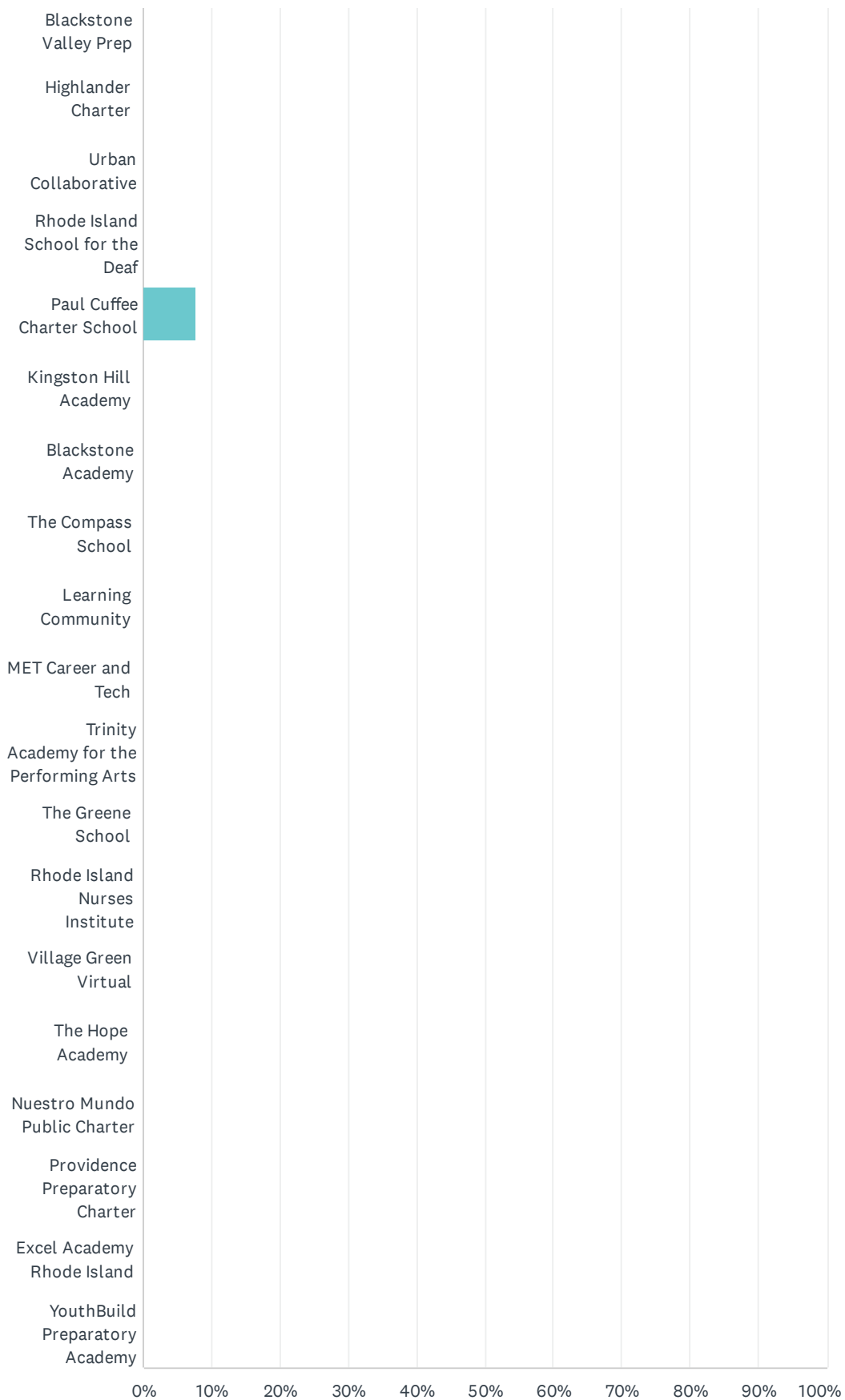
Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



Copy of Alternate Assessments: One Percent Waiver Feedback Form 2025-26



Copy of Alternate Assessments: One Percent Waiver Feedback Form 2025-26



Copy of Alternate Assessments: One Percent Waiver Feedback Form 2025-26

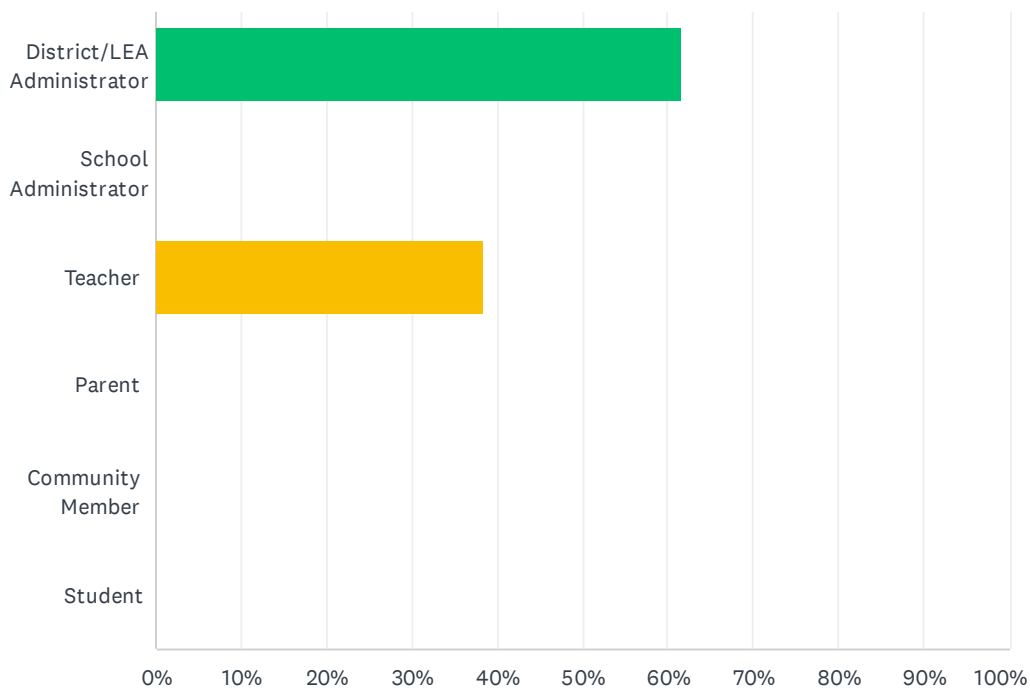
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Barrington	0.00%	0
Bristol-Warren	7.69%	1
Burrillville	0.00%	0
Central Falls	0.00%	0
Chariho	7.69%	1
Coventry	0.00%	0
Cumberland	0.00%	0
East Greenwich	0.00%	0
East Providence	7.69%	1
Exeter-West Greenwich	0.00%	0
Foster	0.00%	0
Foster-Glocester	0.00%	0
Glocester	0.00%	0
Jamestown	7.69%	1
Johnston	0.00%	0
Lincoln	0.00%	0
Little Compton	0.00%	0
Middletown	7.69%	1
Narragansett	0.00%	0
New Shoreham	0.00%	0
North Kingstown	0.00%	0
North Providence	0.00%	0
North Smithfield	7.69%	1
Pawtucket	23.08%	3
Portsmouth	0.00%	0
Providence	0.00%	0
Scituate	0.00%	0
Smithfield	0.00%	0
South Kingstown	7.69%	1
Tiverton	0.00%	0
Warwick	0.00%	0
Westerly	0.00%	0

Copy of Alternate Assessments: One Percent Waiver Feedback Form 2025-26

West Warwick	0.00%	0
Woonsocket	7.69%	1
Davies Career and Tech	0.00%	0
Achievement First Rhode Island	0.00%	0
Sheila Skip Nowell	0.00%	0
SouthSide Charter	0.00%	0
Segue Institute for Learning	7.69%	1
Blackstone Valley Prep	0.00%	0
Highlander Charter	0.00%	0
Urban Collaborative	0.00%	0
Rhode Island School for the Deaf	0.00%	0
Paul Cuffee Charter School	7.69%	1
Kingston Hill Academy	0.00%	0
Blackstone Academy	0.00%	0
The Compass School	0.00%	0
Learning Community	0.00%	0
MET Career and Tech	0.00%	0
Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts	0.00%	0
The Greene School	0.00%	0
Rhode Island Nurses Institute	0.00%	0
Village Green Virtual	0.00%	0
The Hope Academy	0.00%	0
Nuestro Mundo Public Charter	0.00%	0
Providence Preparatory Charter	0.00%	0
Excel Academy Rhode Island	0.00%	0
YouthBuild Preparatory Academy	0.00%	0
TOTAL		13

Q2 Title or role:

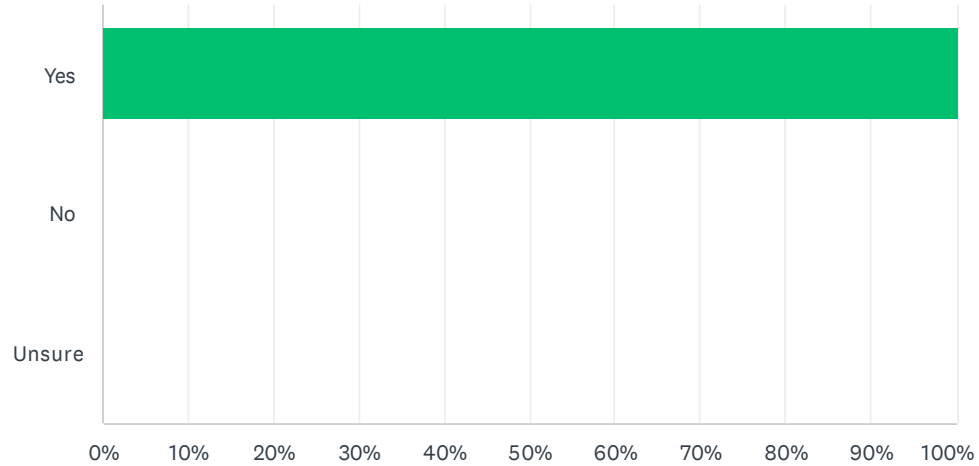
Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
District/LEA Administrator	61.54% 8
School Administrator	0.00% 0
Teacher	38.46% 5
Parent	0.00% 0
Community Member	0.00% 0
Student	0.00% 0
Total Respondents: 13	

Q3 Do you agree with the waiver and the plan and timeline (posted at www.ride.ri.gov/onepercent) that Rhode Island is seeking for exceeding the one percent threshold for the DLM alternate assessments?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	13
No	0.00%	0
Unsure	0.00%	0
TOTAL		13

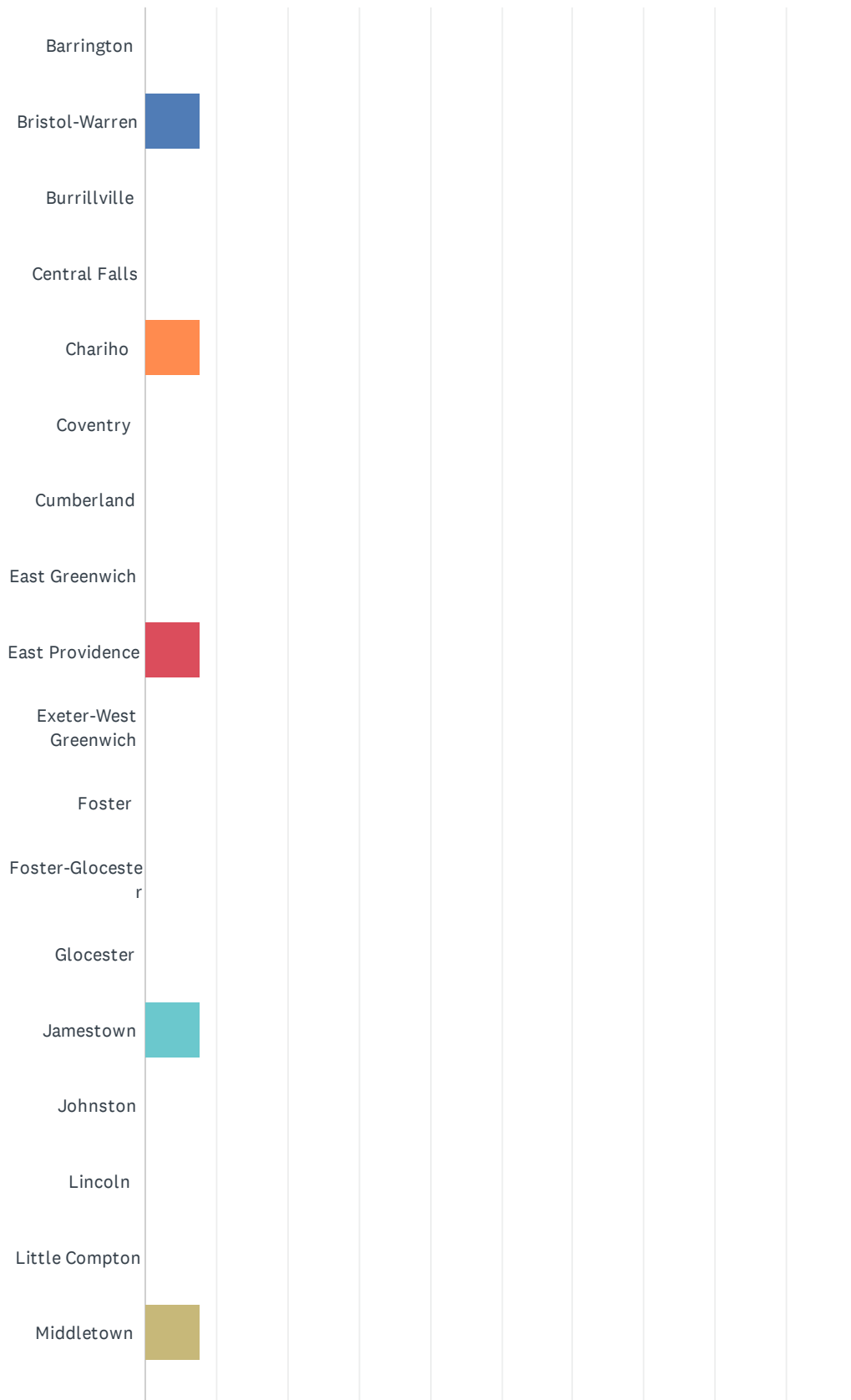
Q4 Please share any additional comments you have in the box below.

Answered: 6 Skipped: 7

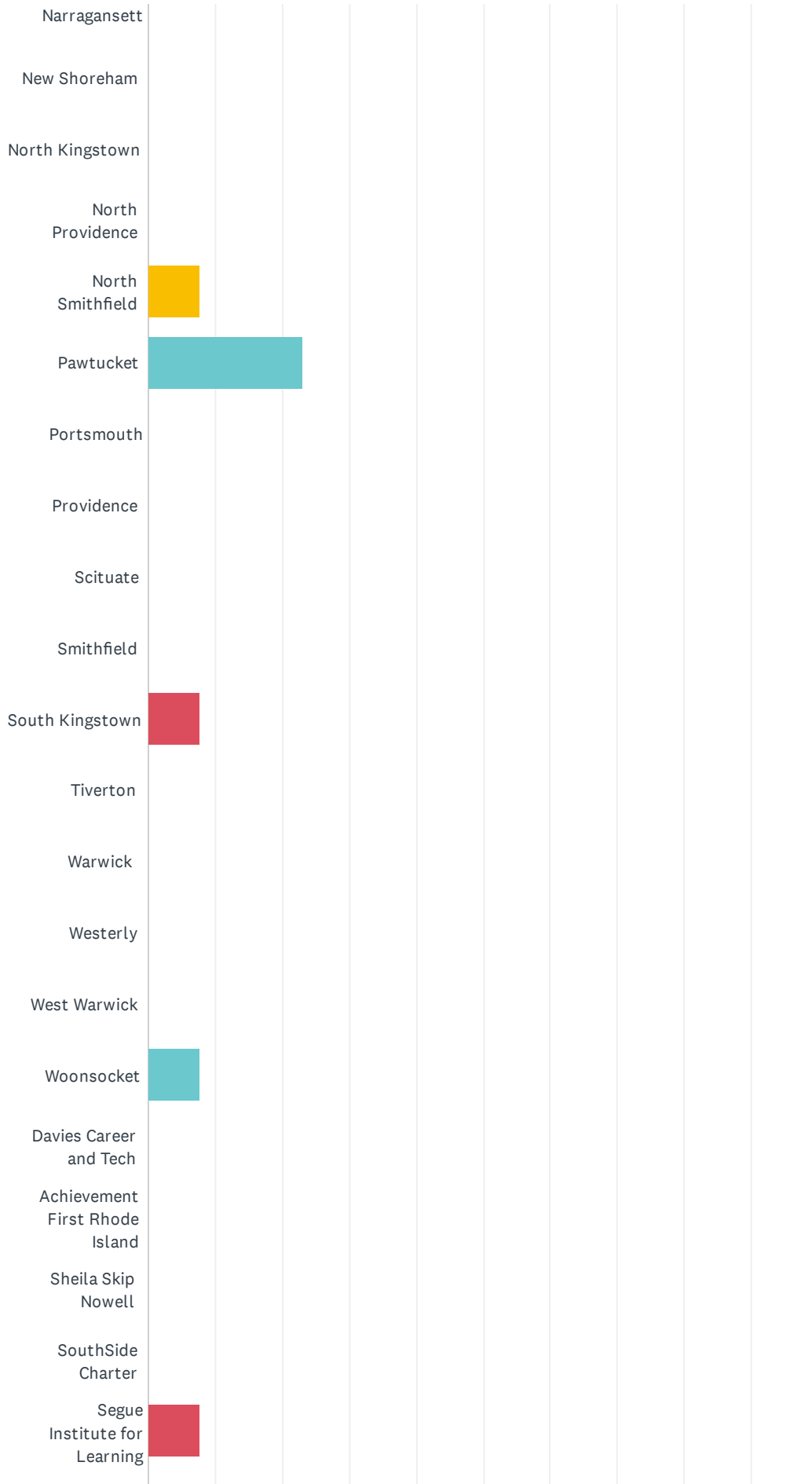
Please see the **Responses to Public Comment** document for comments submitted and RIDE's responses.

Q1 Please select your district from the drop-down box.

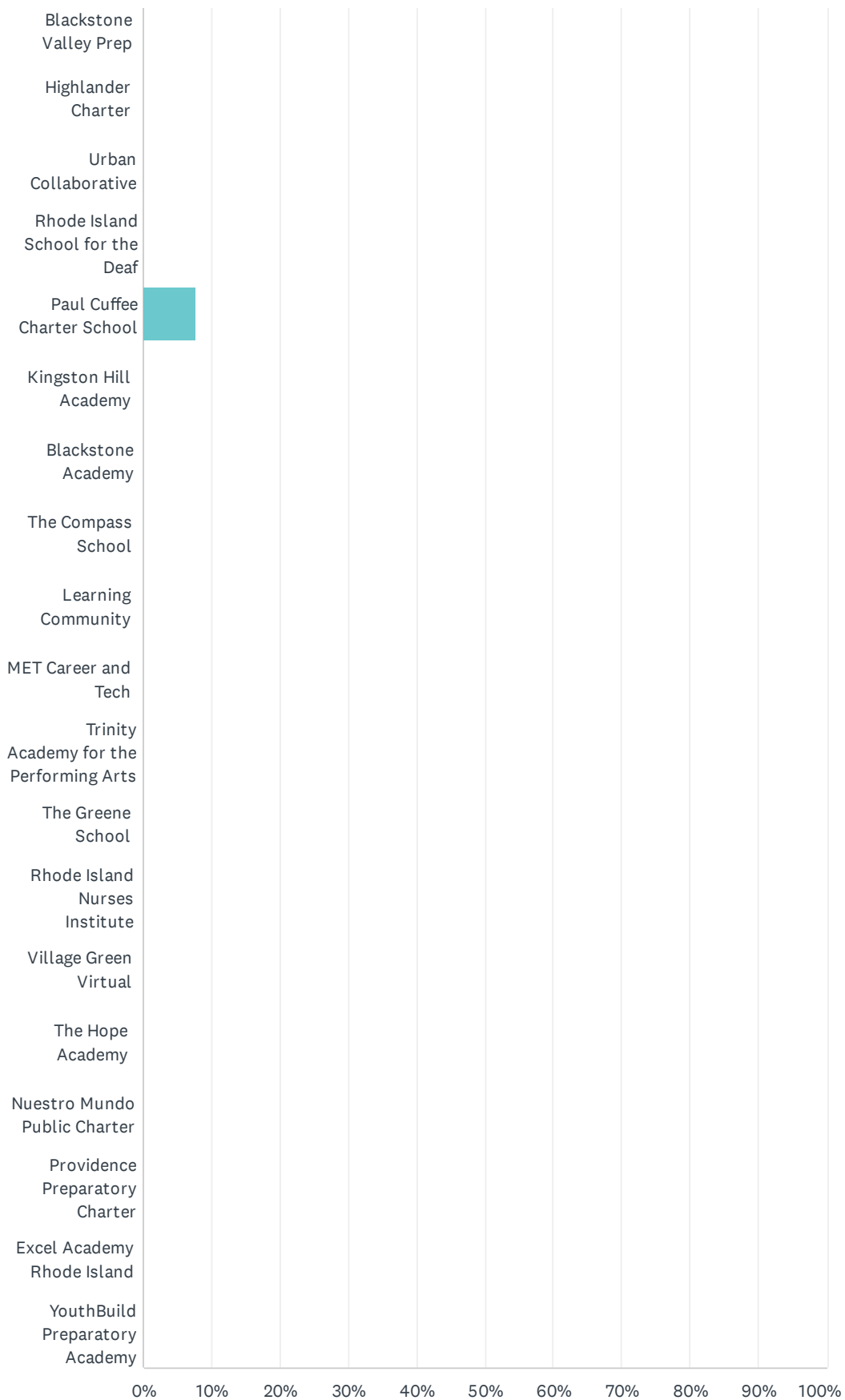
Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



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Copy of Alternate Assessments: One Percent Waiver Feedback Form 2025-26

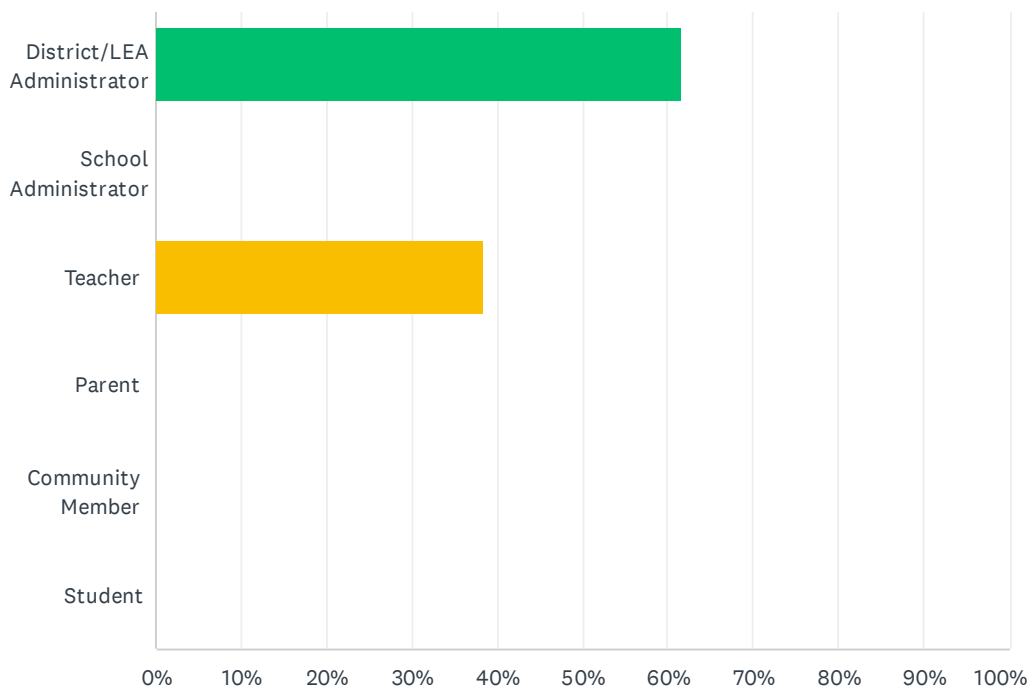
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Barrington	0.00%	0
Bristol-Warren	7.69%	1
Burrillville	0.00%	0
Central Falls	0.00%	0
Chariho	7.69%	1
Coventry	0.00%	0
Cumberland	0.00%	0
East Greenwich	0.00%	0
East Providence	7.69%	1
Exeter-West Greenwich	0.00%	0
Foster	0.00%	0
Foster-Glocester	0.00%	0
Glocester	0.00%	0
Jamestown	7.69%	1
Johnston	0.00%	0
Lincoln	0.00%	0
Little Compton	0.00%	0
Middletown	7.69%	1
Narragansett	0.00%	0
New Shoreham	0.00%	0
North Kingstown	0.00%	0
North Providence	0.00%	0
North Smithfield	7.69%	1
Pawtucket	23.08%	3
Portsmouth	0.00%	0
Providence	0.00%	0
Scituate	0.00%	0
Smithfield	0.00%	0
South Kingstown	7.69%	1
Tiverton	0.00%	0
Warwick	0.00%	0
Westerly	0.00%	0

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West Warwick	0.00%	0
Woonsocket	7.69%	1
Davies Career and Tech	0.00%	0
Achievement First Rhode Island	0.00%	0
Sheila Skip Nowell	0.00%	0
SouthSide Charter	0.00%	0
Segue Institute for Learning	7.69%	1
Blackstone Valley Prep	0.00%	0
Highlander Charter	0.00%	0
Urban Collaborative	0.00%	0
Rhode Island School for the Deaf	0.00%	0
Paul Cuffee Charter School	7.69%	1
Kingston Hill Academy	0.00%	0
Blackstone Academy	0.00%	0
The Compass School	0.00%	0
Learning Community	0.00%	0
MET Career and Tech	0.00%	0
Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts	0.00%	0
The Greene School	0.00%	0
Rhode Island Nurses Institute	0.00%	0
Village Green Virtual	0.00%	0
The Hope Academy	0.00%	0
Nuestro Mundo Public Charter	0.00%	0
Providence Preparatory Charter	0.00%	0
Excel Academy Rhode Island	0.00%	0
YouthBuild Preparatory Academy	0.00%	0
TOTAL		13

Q2 Title or role:

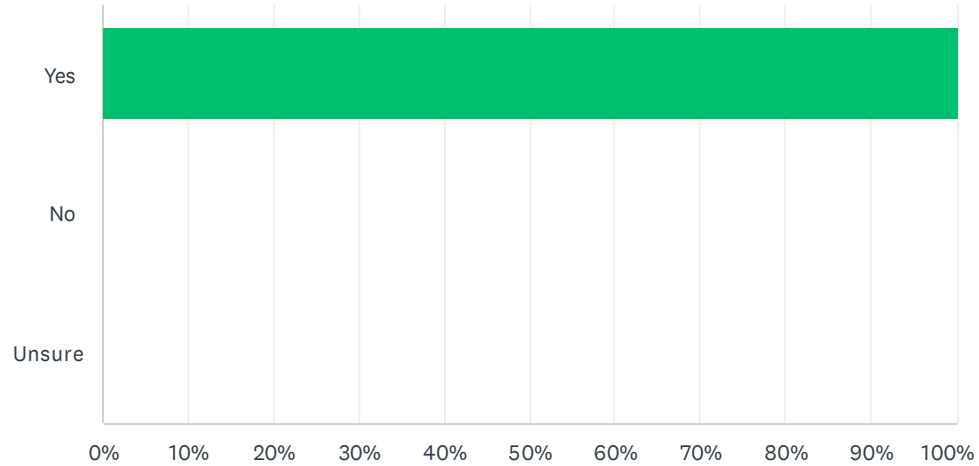
Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
District/LEA Administrator	61.54%	8
School Administrator	0.00%	0
Teacher	38.46%	5
Parent	0.00%	0
Community Member	0.00%	0
Student	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 13		

Q3 Do you agree with the waiver and the plan and timeline (posted at www.ride.ri.gov/onepercent) that Rhode Island is seeking for exceeding the one percent threshold for the DLM alternate assessments?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	13
No	0.00%	0
Unsure	0.00%	0
TOTAL		13

Q4 Please share any additional comments you have in the box below.

Answered: 6 Skipped: 7

Please see the **Responses to Public Comment** document for comments submitted and RIDE's responses.