# Family Guide to Understanding RICAS

*RI Comprehensive Assessment System – Spring 2024* 

Office of Instruction, Assessment, & Curriculum

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# What is RICAS?

RICAS is an annual assessment taken by Rhode Island students in grades 3-8 in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. It is the same assessment as the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) for ELA and mathematics.

Students demonstrate critical thinking abilities and application of knowledge in both English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, including (for ELA) their ability to make connections between reading and writing.

Student performance on the assessment gives a signal of student readiness for the next grade level based on the content standards for their current grade level.

# What is the test like?

Students take two sessions each of ELA and mathematics. All sessions are untimed, so students can take the time they need to work productively.





Read passages and respond to questions about what was read



Write short and essay answers in response to reading



Students encounter both literary (e.g., fiction) and informational (e.g., nonfiction) texts



Interact with scenarios, math problems, and questions

**Mathematics** 



Demonstrate understanding of math concepts and apply math skills



Use math tools (e.g., calculators, equation editor, gridded response)



### Item and question types

Item types include multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, "technology enhanced" questions like dragand-drop, and written responses/essays. While RICAS is designed to be given on a computer, there is a paper version available for students with accommodations.

Students can gain experience with item types found on the test through the online or paper practice tests for their grade level. Practice tests also allow students with accommodations to become familiar with text-to-speech and other tools. You can access the <u>ELA Practice Test</u> or <u>Mathematics Practice Test</u> online through the <u>RICAS Resource Center</u>.



Mathematics

# Why are RICAS results important?

RICAS gives teachers, students, and families information about student progress, school performance, and how to improve teaching and learning. The performance standards for RICAS signal students' readiness for the next grade level.

## When and how are RICAS results reported?

RICAS results are reported in the fall of the same calendar year the assessment took place. State-, district-, and school-level results are made available to the public: data that are released in aggregate form (groups) make it possible to see how schools, districts, and the state are doing while keeping individual student results confidential. Student-level information is only accessible by certain educators and an individual student's family.

Public Aggregate Results

- Posted on the Rhode Island Assessment Data Portal (<u>https://www3.ride.ri.gov/ADP</u>).
- School, district, and state levels in aggregate form: reporting averages for groups of students protects student confidentiality.
- Families, community members, and educators can review this data.
- Review how schools are doing, including comparing between schools within and across districts.



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Educator Access to Inform Instruction	<ul> <li>Educators receive access to the results of the students they teach.</li> <li>Only accessible through a confidential, secure login system.</li> <li>Educators analyze student results to help them better support the students- whether that means refining their instructional practices or adjusting curricular decisions.</li> </ul>
Student Results for Families	<ul> <li>The family of each student receives their student's RICAS results in the form of the individual student score report (ISR).</li> <li>ISRs are provided to families from the student's school district.</li> <li>Districts also retain a PDF copy of the student's ISR and can securely transfer that to a student's family or use it to re-print the ISR if a duplicate is needed.</li> </ul>

### More Information about ISRs

RIDE has created a guide to help families understand the individual student score report (ISR) they receive, which is posted on the <u>RIDE website</u> under RICAS.

The ISR has been translated into multiple languages to support access by families whose primary language may not be English. ISRs include the following information, explained in more detail in the guide:

- general information about this year's administration
- student scale score and achievement level for ELA and mathematics
- student past performance on previous RICAS administrations (if applicable)
- achievement comparison with the school/district/state
- student growth percentile (SGP; see next page) and average growth for the school, district, and state
- reporting category points earned and student performance on individual test questions



#### Spring 2024 RICAS Individual Student Report



For each subject, the report shows:

Your child's score between 440 and 560 and their achievement

Name SASID: Date of Birth:

This report provides your child's results from the 2024 Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS) tests in English Language Arts (reading and writing) and mathematics

Information from the RICAS, in combination with other academic and social measures, will Information from the NLCAS, in combination with other academic and social measures, will help educators assess grade level placement, design specialized instruction, set learning goals, and monitor progress. These tests will allow schools, districts, and RIDE to identify where we need to take action to improve teaching and learning. Every student deserves an equal chance to demonstrate what they understand, and RIDE extends its gratitude to our school staff and students who administer and show what they know during the RICAS tests each year.

We thank you for your participation in these tests, which help guide critical work t outcomes for students. We hope understanding your child's comprehension of EL mathematics knowledge and skills will empower you as you advocate for your chil your child best. For more information on how to understand the results, visit www.RIDE.ri.gov/Assessment-Results.

ol staff and ear. to improve A and Id. You know	<ul> <li>How your child performed in reading and mathematics based on the test reporting categories</li> <li>A growth score that abrows how your child performed compared to other students who scored similarly</li> </ul>
ts	
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The front page of the student's ISR provides the context and purpose for administering this test along with the student's overall results.

#### Your Child's Overall Resul

District:

School:

Grade:

English Language Arts	Mathematics
Achievement Level	Achievement Level
Score	Score
(Score range: 440–560)	(Score range: 440–560)
Growth Percentile	Growth Percentile
Details on page 2	Details on page 3

Did you know that establishing family routines can help your child succeed? Make a babit of setting up designated times for homework reading meatimes family conve

ations, bedtime, and leaving for school each day. What do I do next?

we refer to the second of the second se

#### How can I support my child's education?

fow can I support my child's education? School attendance matters, every single day. Missing just two days of school a month means your student is chronically absent, so make it a priority to get your child to school on time daily. Establish daily reading routines, let your child se you read, and encourage your child to read for fun all year long. Get involved and stay connected to your child's school, however and whenever you can. Share your voice! Help improve your child's school by participating in SurveyWorks every year.

The back page of the student's

related to attendance and

day.

Start a conversation. Ask questions. Talk to your child about what they're learning, and show an interest in the subjects that excite them. Remember, you are also your child's teacher, and you play an important role in setting your child up for success.

## **Building Brighter Futures**

## ATTENDANCE

As the academic year progresses, we want to extend our gratitude for your continued support and involvement in your child's education. We believe that every child deserves access to a high-quality education that prepares them for a bright future. From real-world, relevant courses to unique and engaging out-of-school learning opportunities, Rhode Island is working to ensure all students are equipped with what they need to thrive during their educational journey and graduate prepared for college and career. Please remember that being present is essential for students to learn. Rhode Island defines chronic absenteeism as the percentage of students who miss 10% or more of school days during the year (or two days per month).

18 days makes your child chronically absent. 10 days puts your child at risk.

How many days of instruction has your child missed?

Significant performance gaps exist for students who are chronically absent, as seen in the data below:

2023 Percent Proficient: Chronically Absent Students vs. Not Chronically Absent Students

Chronically Absent 📃 Not Chronically Absent 70.0% 60.0% 50.0% 40.0% 30.0% 20.0% 10.09 0.0% HCAS ELA PSAT-EU PSAT Moth SATEL

#### Why does it matter?

Children who are chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade are less likely to read on grade level by the third grade.

Chronic absenteeism is the single strongest predictor of dropping out before graduation.

Students who drop out of school are less likely to succeed in a career. In fact, a high school graduate makes, on average, over a lifetime, \$1 million more than a student who dropped out.







85% of students who drop out

of high school were chronically absent. This can be predicted as early as third grade, based on their early elementary school attendance.

www.ride.ri.gov | www.attendancemattersri.org



RIDE Rhode Island

# What do these assessment terms mean?

#### **Student Scale Score**

- A student receives a scale score between 440 and 560 based on their performance on the test.
- The score indicates how well the student meets the expectations for their grade level, and corresponds to a particular performance level.



Not Meeting

Expectations

Name: SASID: Partially Meeting

Expectation

Your Child's Achi

Meeting

Expectations

Meeting Expectations

**English Language Arts** 

Achievement Level: Mee Your Child's Score: 508 Exceeding

Expectations

#### **Achievement Level**

• RICAS uses four performance levels to describe how well students meet the expectations for their grade level:

Not Meeting Expectations, Partially Meeting Expectations, Meeting Expectations, and Exceeding Expectations.

 Meeting Expectations means that students are able to demonstrate grade level expectations; while Exceeding Expectations means that students are showing mastery of the grade level expectations in that content area.

#### Student Growth Percentile (SGP)

RIDE Rhode Island Department of Education

- On a scale of 1 (least growth) to 99 (most growth), the SGP describes a student's learning over time compared with their academic peers (other Rhode Island students in the same grade who had similar scores on previous state level tests).
- For example, if a student has an SGP of 80, we can say that student showed more growth between state assessments than 80 percent of their academic peers.

#### 2024 Student Growth Percentiles

Your child's score this year is the same as or better than percent of Rhode Island students who had a similar score to your child on the assessment(s) in a previous year(s).





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# How are reporting categories helpful?

Each content area has reporting categories that correspond to the content domains (topics) of our state's content standards: the <u>RI Core Standards for ELA/Literacy</u> and <u>RI Core Standards for Mathematics</u>.

For example, ELA has 3 reporting categories: Reading, Language, and Writing. Mathematics has 4-5 reporting categories that vary by grade level, but may include domains like Number & Operations, Measurement & Data, and Geometry.

Students received points per item out of the total for each category for their grade level.

Educators and families can see how well a student performed in those areas in the reporting category and item-level information section of a student's ISR.

Reporting Category							ints Earned Your Child	Total Possible Points				Average Points											Average Points Earned by Students Meeting Expectations																
																		Sch	ool				Dis	tric	t			Sta	te			e sta							
Reading														Γ					Γ					Т					Τ										
Language <sup>‡</sup>														Γ										T					T										
Writing <sup>†</sup>														Γ					Γ					Т					Т										
			Calle(	ory i	nd ud	es ti	10 LL									e fina	en t		113)	κ.																			
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The Writing re	portin al Te	9 ĉi						8	9	9 1	ent	11	_	_	_	15	16	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	22	24	24	в	ж	n	28	29	30					Π	Т

# How can I know how students did on a particular test questions or items?

- Each item has a total number of points possible for a student to earn.
- The points possible are based on item complexity: items such as essays or items with multiple parts have more points possible because there are more elements (knowledge, skills) that a student is asked to demonstrate.
- On items with multiple points, students can earn partial credit based on performance (e.g., raw score 2 on a 3-point item).

Every year, RIDE releases some of the items from the test for public viewing and use. Computer-based released items may be found on the <u>RICAS Resource Center</u> or in the <u>RICAS Digital</u> <u>Item Library</u>.

Paper-based testing released items can be found at <u>http://www.ride.ri.gov/Released-Items</u>.





# How can RICAS results be used?

RICAS is a valid and reliable measure of student performance and can help us understand how our schools are doing in preparing our students with the skills and knowledge they will need to be successful in postsecondary education and careers.

The aggregate results displayed on the <u>Assessment</u> <u>Data Portal</u> and in the <u>Item</u> <u>Analysis Tool</u> provide an indicator of each school's or district's performance. This can support discussions about where the school or district is doing well and where there is a need for improvement.

When reviewing the student's ISR, look closely at where the student's score falls within the achievement levels. If the child's score is not close to Meeting Expectations, talk with the child's teacher for that content area

(ELA or mathematics) about how



40	Not Meeting 4	70 Partially Meeting 5	00 Meeting 5	30 Exceeding 50
	Expectations	Expectations 5	Expectations 5	Expectations 50
did no in this The so the st should acade instru	dent who performed at this level ot meet grade-level expectations is subject. chool, in consultation with udent's parent/guardian, d determine the coordinated whic assistance and/or additional ction the student needs to ed in this subject.	A student who performed at this level partially met grade-level expectations in this subject. The school, in consultation with the student's parent/guardian, should consider whether the student needs additional academic assistance to succeed in this subject.	A student who performed at this level met grade-level expectations and is academically on track to succeed in the current grade in this subject.	A student who performed at this level exceeded grade-level expectations by demonstrating mastery of the subject matter.

scores your child would receive if he or she took the test multiple times.

you can work together to help them catch up.

Item-level information can be used – in conjunction with released items, item descriptions, and other materials – to see where a student is succeeding and where they may need added support to enhance specific content area skills needed to master grade-level standards.

Assessment reporting is a different calculation than school and district accountability, though accountability does include measures based on students' proficiency in ELA and mathematics on Rhode Island's state assessments. For more information, please go to <u>www.ride.ri.gov/Accountability</u>.



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#### Where can I learn more about RICAS results?

Visit RIDE's Resources for Families page at <u>www.ride.ri.gov/Families</u>. This page provides answers to frequently asked questions about content standards, curriculum, and RI's statewide assessments. It also includes resources about student growth percentiles, the RICAS ISRs translated into multiple languages, and the RICAS ISR Guide for Families.

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🕼 Students S 🔹 Inscho Families 🔹 Admin	ns 5. vetraction 6. vetraction 6. Accountability	<ul> <li>Funding 6.</li> <li>Inside a Board of Education</li> </ul>	Ω <sup>Buderes A</sup> > <sup>bea</sup> de	alters & a lastraction & a Monagon & Accountability	<ul> <li>Funding to a tracker or thracker or threaders or threade</li></ul>
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Assessment -	Below you will find results from past and current as interpretation materials.		Assourcet 🗕	RIDE has compiled resources for families about cont assessments, learning strategies, and programs that	
the shade island shouth reads.	Assessment data and interactive reports can be fau	nd on the following sites.	The Phode Island Growth Waster	Content Standards	
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BRAN Sed Sections	Public Access	Educator Access Only	HEAVY THEE Experimentor	What are content standards?	
information	An open link to aggregate data dashboard visualizations and downloads that provide an in-	Districts, school administrators, and teachers can access student assessment data through the	downsored following	What standards are used in Rhode Island	ę
Assessment Manuals S.	depth presentation of assessment results data by school year at the state, district and school levels, including by grade and/or student subgroups for all	"Student Date Portal" app within the HDE Portal. • <u>SDP Teacher Lavel Access</u> d	Assessment Managelic A.	What is curriculum?	
Passaroas for Earribas	Rhode Island state assessments. Download the RIADP User Guide df.	<ul> <li><u>SDP District &amp; School Level Access</u> d<sup>2</sup></li> <li>Student Data Portal Uner Guide d<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	measures for Families	🛞 How are content standards used in school	itz.
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Journant Assessment Assessment	Performance/Achievement Level Descrip	tors.	Assessment to emotions	Why do we have statewide standardized assessment	nts?
Assessment Comptons	-		ABBERTOTE COLUMN	Rhode Island has statewide standard zed assessmen	
Assessment issuits	2023-24 State Assessment	Results	Released its na & Practice	language arts, and science in order to meet a federal valuable information about how wall our students, so	chuola, districta, and state are
rolassed risks a visition 1983	<ul> <li>2021-24 State Assessment Results Release Call ordership contains the dates, links, and other info results and individual student reports (1646) for</li> </ul>	creation for the release of state	Truis Technical Reports and Venually	doing therabe measure the knowledge and akile add Core Standards (ICCS) for Treflek Language Artal lie and the North Generation Science Standards (NGSS).	easy and for Mathematics,

RIDE's Assessment Results page includes links to the Assessment Data Portal, as well as supporting materials for current and past assessment results (<u>www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment-Results</u>). The Assessment Data Portal (<u>https://www3.ride.ri.gov/ADP</u>) displays school and district performance for all state assessments.

Select Assessment	Choose District or School		Compare Results			Re				
Subject	District		By Student Group	With Other Districts						
RICAS - English Language Arts/Literacy	Statewide	~	All Students	Ctri-click to select m	ultiple					
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2022-23 ×	All Schools	٠	All Grades	Ctrl-click to select me	Ctrl-click to select multiple					
1-Not Meeting Expectations 2-Partially Mee AS - English Language Arts/Literacy	ting Expectations S-Meeting E	xpectations 📕 4-1	Exceeding Expectations							
			<ul> <li>Show Performance</li> </ul>	Show Growth View Re						
Name	Students Tested		Performance		Meeting or Exceeding	Avera				

The RICAS Resource Center provides access to released items and practice tests on their student resources page at <u>http://ricas.pearsonsupport.com/student/</u>.

## RIDE RICAS Resource Center • Hame • ParamonAccess<sup>1001</sup> • Pacht Schop • Pacht Adams • Traverse



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ms vari events i precise ensus, as well as standard reference sheets for Mathematics, and approved EL blic organizers and reference sheets for students with disabilities.

