Alternate Assessment LEA Support Plan

2025-2026

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

RIDE Rhode Island Department of Education

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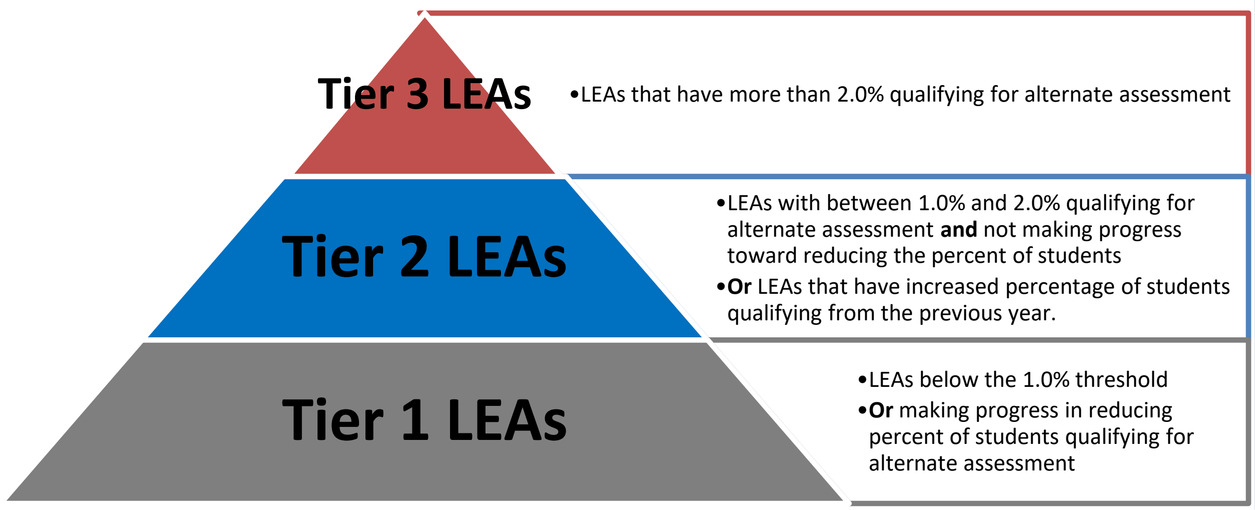
Introduction

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

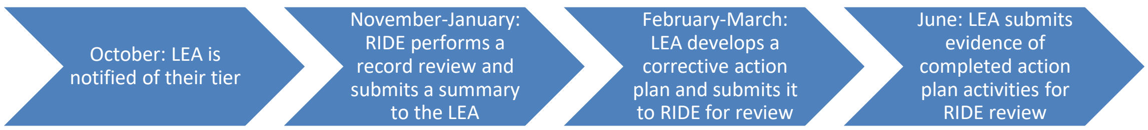
*Content of the training may change depending on the needs of the LEAs at any given time

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 (PLAFFP) 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

Are all the eligibility tools completed and attached to the current IEP?

- **No**
  - The LEA must provide the completed forms and meeting minutes to demonstrate that eligibility was discussed. TA will be provided in this area and subsequent verification provided from LEA to RIDE.
- **Yes**
  - Was the proper process for eligibility followed? (FSIQ, justification as needed, meeting minutes, etc)
    - **No**
      - TA is provided to improve the LEAs eligibility process- a root cause analysis and subsequent verification provided from the LEA to RIDE.
    - **Yes**
      - Are the programming, instruction, supports, and placement options for differently abled students adequate to support their learning needs?
        - **No**
          - LEA completes a root cause analysis to identify areas of improvement, reasonable TA is provided and subsequent verification is provided from the LEA to RIDE.
        - **Yes**
          - RIDE provides the LEA with a written summary verifying that they are compliant with the eligibility process and with supporting students.

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