

**R.I. DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION**

Shepard Building

255 Westminster Street

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**RIDE**Rhode Island  
Department  
of Education

To: LEA Superintendent

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

CC: LEA Special Education Director

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: LEA 1****TIER in 2025: 1**

Percent of Students Tested	2023	2024*	2025
DLM Math	2.5 %	2.1 %	1.2%
Number of students tested DLM Math	28	22	13
DLM ELA	2.5 %	2.5 %	1.2%
Number of students tested DLM ELA	28	22	13
DLM Science	3.4 %	2.0 %	0.2 %
Number of students tested DLM Science	16	9	1

**\*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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:alternate.assessment@ride.ri.gov).