Family Guide to Understanding RICAS

RI Comprehensive Assessment System – Spring 2026

Office of Instruction, Assessment, & Curriculum

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RIDE Rhode Island Department of Education

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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.

ELA



Read passages and respond to questions about what was read



Write short and essay answers in response to reading

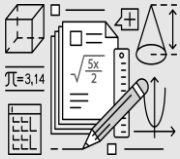


Students encounter both literary (e.g., fiction) and informational (e.g., nonfiction) texts

Mathematics



Interact with scenarios, math problems, and questions



Demonstrate understanding of math concepts and apply math skills



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

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Item and question types

Item types include multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, "technology enhanced" questions like drag-and-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 ELA Practice Test or Mathematics Practice Test online through the RICAS Resource Center.

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 (https://www3.ride.ri.gov/ADP).
- 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.

Educator Access to Inform Instruction

- Educators receive access to the results of the students they teach.
- Only accessible through a confidential, secure login system.
- Educators analyze student results to help them better support the students– whether that means refining their instructional practices or adjusting curricular decisions.

Student Results for Families

- Paper ISRs:
  - The family of each student receives their student's RICAS results in the form of the individual student score report (ISR).
  - ISRs are provided to families from the student's school district.
  - 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.
- RICAS Family Portal:
  - The RICAS Family Portal provides families with online access to a student's individual performance data on the RICAS tests enables them to track assessment results from year to year. First time users can log into https://ricasfamilyportal.emetric.net and enter their child's state student ID and birthdate and proceed to create a username and password. Once successfully logged in, families can navigate to the students' test history, test results, item level information and helpful resources.

More Information about ISRs

RIDE has created a guide and videos to help families understand the individual student score report (ISR) they receive, which is posted on the RIDE Results webpage 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 2026 RICAS Individual Student Report

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Name:	**District:**
SASID:	**School:**
Date of Birth:	**Grade:**

This report provides your child's results from the 2026 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 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 helped guide critical work to improve outcomes for students. We hope understanding your child's comprehension of ELA and mathematics knowledge and skills will empower you as you advocate for your child. You know your child best. For more information on how to understand the results, visit www.RIDE.ri.gov/Assessment-Results.

For each subject, the report shows:

- Your child's score between 440 and 560 and their achievement level
- How your child performed in reading and mathematics based on the test reporting categories
- A growth score that shows how your child performed compared to other students who scored similarly

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 Results

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 habit of setting up designated times for homework, reading, mealtimes, family conversations, bedtime, and leaving for school each day.

What do I do next?
After reviewing this report, it is critical that you attend family-teacher conferences and discuss with your child's teachers your questions and concerns. Don't be afraid to speak up. Children whose families stress the value of education are more likely to find it important, as well.

How 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 see you read, and encourage your child to read fo
- 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 y

Start a conversation. Ask questions. Talk to your child about what they're learning, and show a that excite them. Remember, you are also your child's teacher, and you play an important rol success.

Building Brighter Futures

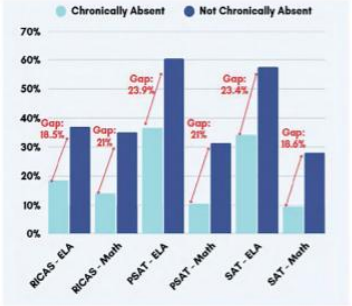
ATTENDANCE MATTERS COOL SCHOOLS

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 defnes 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:

2025 Percent Proficient: Chronically Absent Students vs. Not Chronically Absent Students



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.

Chronic absenteeism is linked to increased suspensions, teen substance use, as well as poor health as adults.

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.

The back page of the student's ISR provides performance data related to attendance and information on the importance of children being in school every day.

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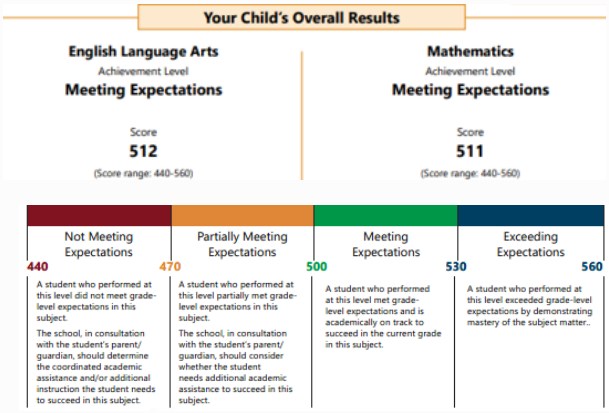
www.ride.ri.gov | www.attendancemattersri.org

ENGLISH RICAS 3–8

What do these assessment terms mean?

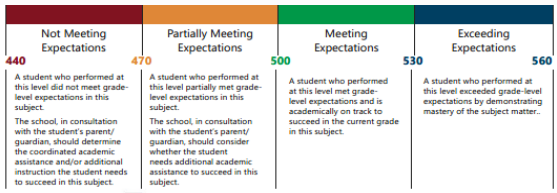
Student Scale Score

- 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.



Achievement Level

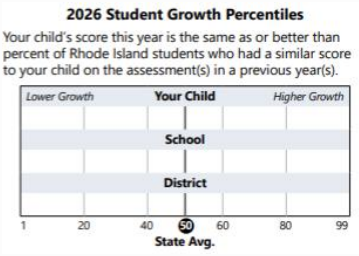
- RICAS uses four performance levels to describe how well students meet the expectations for their grade level: *Not Meeting Expectations*, *Partially Meeting Expectations*, *Meeting Expectations*, and *Exceeding Expectations*.
- Meeting Expectations means that students are able to demonstrate grade level expectations; while Exceeding Expectations means that students are showing mastery of the grade level expectations in that content area.





Student Growth Percentile (SGP)

- 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*.



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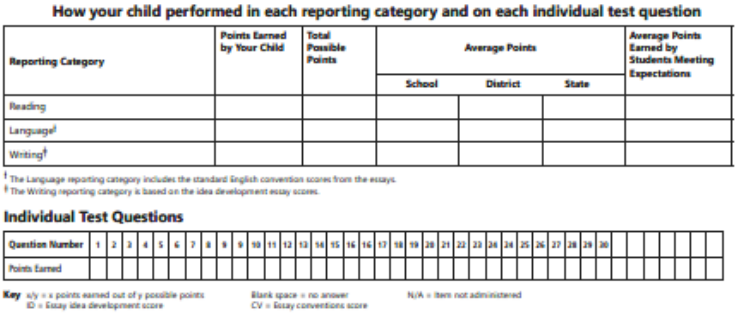
How are reporting categories helpful?

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

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.



How your child performed in each reporting category and on each individual test question

Reporting Category	Points Earned by Your Child	Total Possible Points	Average Points			Average Points Earned by Students Meeting Expectations
			School	District	State	
Reading						
Language[†]						
Writing[‡]						

[†] The Language reporting category includes the standard English convention scores from the essays.
[‡] The Writing reporting category is based on the idea development essay scores.

Individual Test Questions

Question Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30							
Points Earned																																					

Key x/y = x points earned out of y possible points; ID = Essay idea development score; Blank space = no answer; CV = Essay conventions score; N/A = Item not administered

How do I know how students did on a particular test question or item?

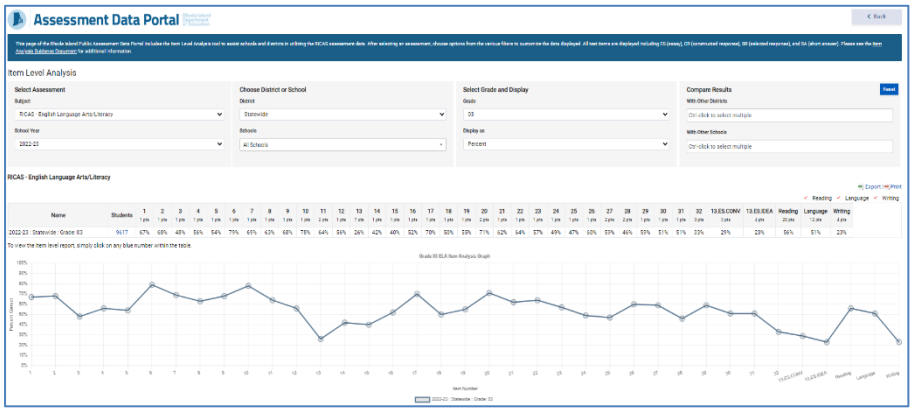
- Each item has a total number of points possible for a student to earn.
- The points possible are based on item complexity: items such as essays or items with multiple parts have more points possible because there are more elements (knowledge, skills) that a student is asked to demonstrate.
- On items 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 RICAS Resource Center.
Paper-based testing released items can be found at http://www.ride.ri.gov/Released-Items.

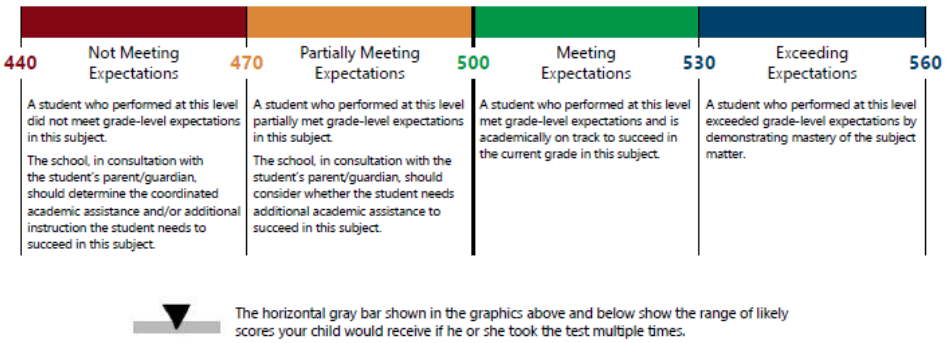
How can RICAS results be used?

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 post-secondary education and careers.

The aggregate results displayed on the Assessment Data Portal and in the Item Analysis Tool 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 you can work together to help them catch up.



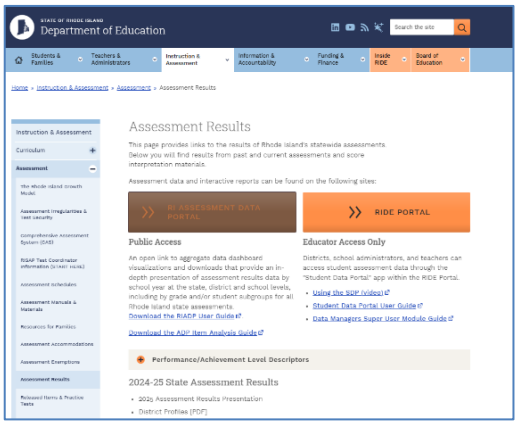
The horizontal gray bar shown in the graphics above and below show the range of likely scores your child would receive if he or she took the test multiple times.

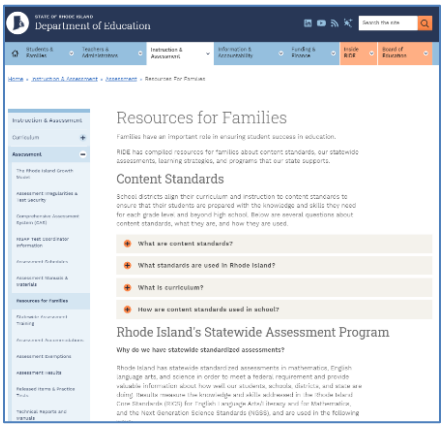
Item-level information can be used in conjunction with released items, item descriptions, and other materials – to see where a student is succeeding and where they may need added support to enhance specific content area skills needed to master grade-level standards.

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 www.ride.ri.gov/Accountability.

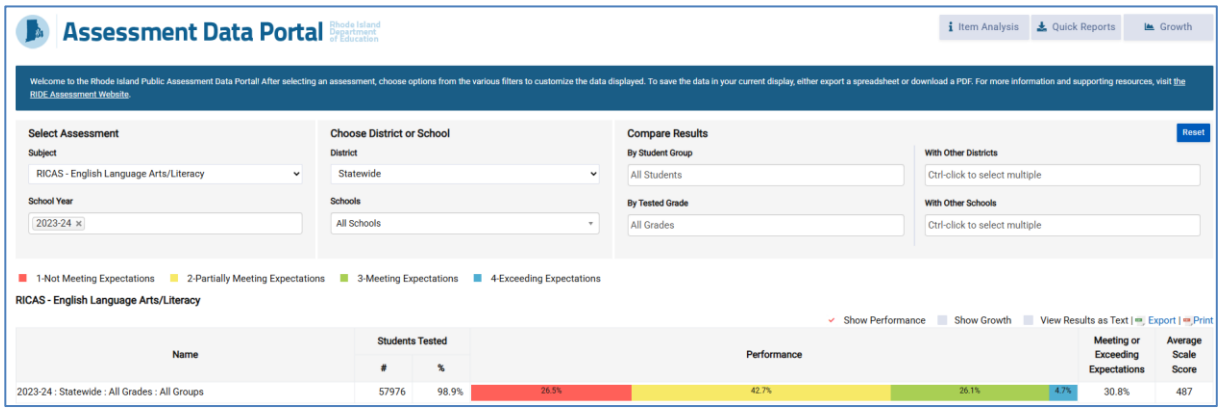
Where can I learn more about RICAS results?

Visit RIDE's Assessment Resources for Families page at www.ride.ri.gov/Families. 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.





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



The RICAS Resource Center provides access to released items and practice tests on their student resources page at https://ricas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/ .

