
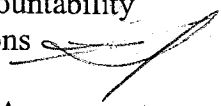


State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
Shepard Building  
255 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Peter McWalters  
Commissioner

May 1, 2006

To: Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, Special Education Directors, and Principals

From: Mary Ann Snider,  Director, Office of Assessment and Accountability  
Kenneth G. Swanson, Director, Office of Special Populations 

Re: Final Version of Participation Criteria for the RI Alternate Assessment

Attached you will find a copy of the *final version* of the Participation Criteria for the Rhode Island Alternate Assessment. Please distribute immediately to administrators, teachers and IEP teams so they use this criteria as they meet to consider a student's participation in the Alternate Assessment.

The Participation Criteria has been under review for the past year. Many groups, including the RI Alternate Assessment Advisory Committee and the Special Education Directors, have provided their input during the review process. Changes reflect clarifications in language from the previous version and acknowledge the fact that IEP teams make ongoing decisions about students.

This revision sets a deadline of September 15<sup>th</sup> of a current school year for IEP teams to make decisions regarding participation in the Alternate Assessment. This date was selected because it coincides with other reporting requirements for the state assessments.

If you or your teachers have questions about these criteria, please contact Cynthia Corbridge, Office of Assessment and Accountability. Cynthia can be reached by email at [Cynthia.Corbridge@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Cynthia.Corbridge@ride.ri.gov) or by telephone at 222-8497.

cc: Barrie Grossi, IEP Network  
RI Alternate Assessment Educators  
Pat DeToro, Measured Progress

Telephone (401)222-4600      Fax (401)222-6178      TTY 800-745-5555      Voice 800-745-6575

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## Criteria for Participation in the Rhode Island Alternate Assessment System (RIAA)

Revised April 2006

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **DOB** \_\_\_\_\_ **IEP DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

The IEP (Individualized Education Plan) team, including the parents /guardians, determines on an individual basis how a child with an IEP participates in state assessment. This determination should be made at every *annual* IEP review. For some children, this determination is that the student will participate in the state assessment with or without accommodations.

If the team determines that the general assessment, i.e., New England Common Assessment Program, may not be the most appropriate means of assessment for a particular child, the team must discuss the participation criteria for alternate assessment. Only those students who meet *all* the criteria and factors may participate in RIAA. If the team cannot answer 'yes' to all the criteria and factors, they must determine what accommodations are necessary for the student to participate in the state assessment. The team may refer to the NECAP accommodations manual for further information in this area. IEP teams must document assessment decisions on the IEP form. If a student will not be participating in the state general assessment but in the alternate assessment, the reason(s) why must be stated on the IEP form.

IEP teams are encouraged to continue making ongoing decisions about students; however, the participation criteria review deadline for the RI Alternate Assessment is September 15th of that school year. This assures that the student participates in the state assessment in the most appropriate manner. Students who meet the participation criteria for alternate assessment will be assessed in grades 2-8 and 10. Students should not be assigned a grade that is more than two years below or above the typical grade of their chronological peers, or be assigned a grade, which is outside of the grade range of students in the school that he or she is being instructed. IEP teams should refer to the district's retention/promotion policies when making grade changes. In addition, the team must assure that the grade designation matches with the school's official assessment roster used for testing purposes. It should be noted that 'Current Grade' on the IEP front page is the grade of the student at the time of the IEP meeting and should be considered a reference when determining assessment participation for students. For example, if a student's IEP team meeting is held in May and the student is a fifth grader at the time of the meeting, that grade designation is written on the front of the IEP. The student advances to the sixth grade the following academic year unless the student is retained by a district's retention policy.

To verify that a child should participate in RIAA, the IEP team must review all important information about the child over the years and in a variety of settings (i.e.: home, school, community), and determine and document that the child meets the following criteria and team decision making factors.

### PARTICIPATION CRITERIA

YES	CRITERIA	NO	DOCUMENTATION must be provided for each criteria
	Student has a disability that significantly impacts cognitive function and adaptive behavior.		
	The student's instruction is aligned to the RI Alternate Grade Span Expectations, includes 1 ( <b>Pat purposes the word academic</b> ) skills, and includes short-term objectives/ benchmarks.		
	The student is unable to apply academic skills in home, school and community without intensive, frequent and individualized instruction in multiple settings.		

### TEAM DECISIONS

YES	FACTORS	NO
	The decision to administer the RIAA is <i>not</i> based solely on the fact that the student has an IEP.	
	The decision to administer the RIAA is <i>not</i> based solely on the fact that the student's instructional reading level is below grade level expectations.	
	The decision to administer the RIAA is <i>not</i> based solely on the fact that the student is not expected to perform well on state assessment.	
	The decision to administer the RIAA is <i>not</i> based on the fact that the student is expected to experience distress under testing conditions.	
	The decision to administer the RIAA is <i>not</i> based on the fact that the student has excessive or extended absences.	
	The decision to administer the RIAA is <i>not</i> based on the fact that the student has a visual or auditory disability, emotional-behavioral disabilities, specific learning disabilities, or social, cultural, economic or language differences.	