Understanding the RICAS Assessment

Updated: October 2019

What is the RICAS?

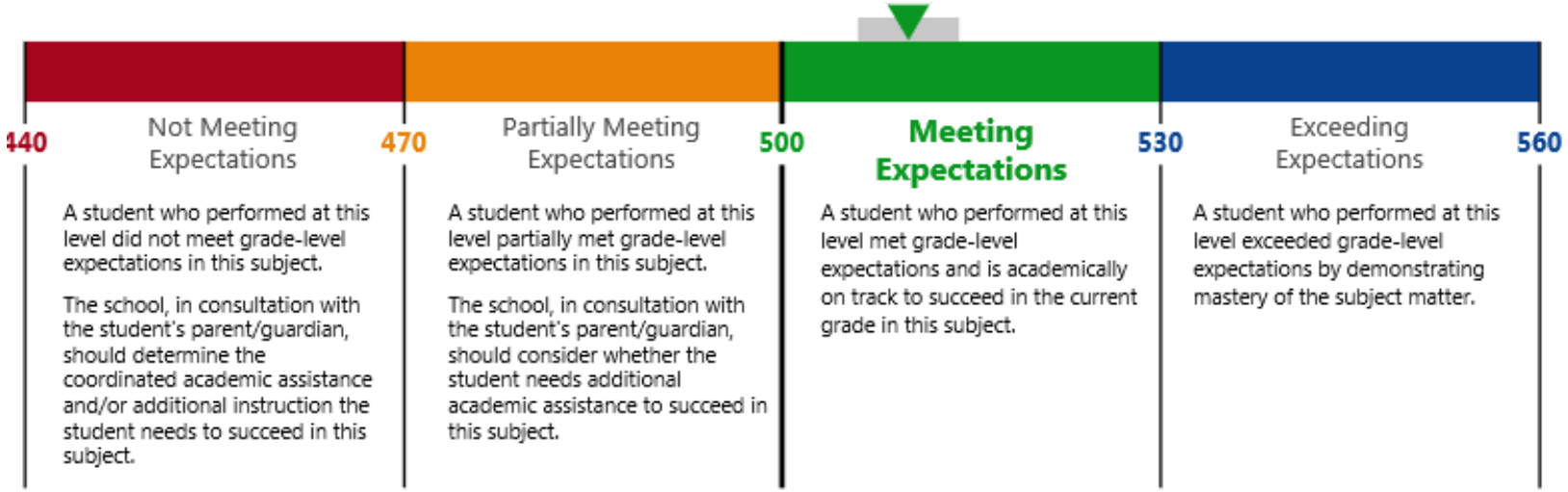
- RICAS is the Rhode Island version of the Massachusetts MCAS for grades 3-8 in **English language arts (ELA) and math assessment**
  - Focuses on students' **critical thinking abilities, application of knowledge,** and ability to make **connections between reading and writing**
  - Gives a **signal of student readiness** for the next grade level
  - Took place in **Spring 2018 and Spring 2019**
- What is the test like?
  - Students take **two sessions each** of ELA and math
  - Designed to be given on a **computer**, paper available for students with accommodations
  - **Item types** include multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, "technology enhanced" questions like drag-and-drop, and written responses/essays

Score Release

- RICAS scores released in October 2019 to districts, schools, and families
- Grade 3-8 students receive scores for English language arts and mathematics
- Grade 4-8 students also receive a growth score for English language arts and mathematics
- Families will receive a paper student report from their school

What do the scores look like?

- Student's score
  - A student receives a scale score between 440 and 560
  - RICAS uses four performance levels that describe how well student(s) 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
  - A triangle marks where the student's score falls on the chart, with a gray bar showing the range of scores a student could receive if they took the test multiple times (see *example* below)



What do the scores look like?

- Achievement comparison (see *example* below)
  - If the student took RICAS last year, that score is listed
  - Average scores show how the student, their school, and their district compare with the state average
  - Scores are color coded to match the achievement level for quick reference

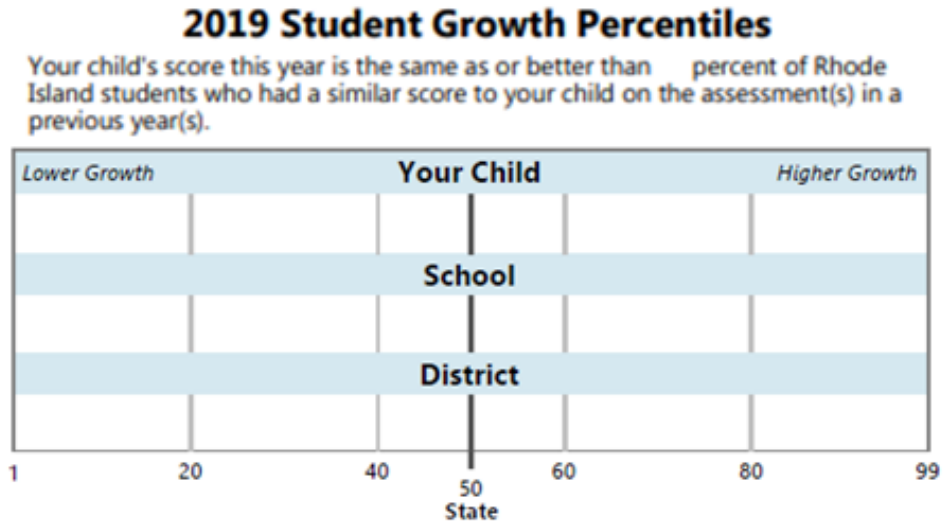
Achievement

How your child performed compared to students in their school, district, and state.

Your Child's		Year	Average Score		
Grade	Score		School	District	State
4	**509**	**2019**	**502**	**498**	**493**
3	**513**	**2018**			

What do the scores look like?

- Student growth percentiles (SGP) compared to average growth at the school, district, and state



On a scale of 1 (low growth) to 99 (high growth), the SGP describes your child'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).

What are Reporting Categories and Item Level Information?

- Each content area has multiple reporting categories. This chart shows how many points the student received out of the total for each category, as well as the average statewide for students who performed close to a proficient score.
- This display also shows how many points the student earned on each question on the test.
- This 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 additional support to enhance specific content area skills needed to master grade-level standards.

ELA –

three reporting categories for all grades

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	19	25	16.6	16.4	15.3	18.4
Language†	8	11	6.4	5.8	5.3	6.2
Writing ‡	3	8	3.0	2.5	2.2	2.4

† The Language reporting category includes the standard English convention scores.
‡ The Writing reporting category is based on the idea development scores.

Individual Test Questions

Question Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 CV	8 ID	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16 CV	16 ID	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Points Earned	1/1	1/1	1/1	2/2	0/1	1/1	2/2	2/3	2/4	0/1	1/1	1/1	2/2	1/1	1/1	2/2	1/3	1/4	1/1	0/1	1/1	0/1	1/2	2/2	1/1	2/3

Key x/y = x points earned out of y points possible Blank space = no answer
ID = Essay idea development score CV = Essay conventions score

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Math –

4-5 reporting categories, varies by grade

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	
Operations & Algebraic Thinking	8	11	7.0	6.9	6.4	8.3
Number & Operations in Base Ten	7	11	6.3	6.0	5.7	7.1
Number & Operations-Fractions	12	16	9.4	8.8	8.4	10.6
Measurement & Data	7	10	4.9	4.5	4.3	5.2
Geometry	4	6	3.3	2.9	3.1	3.9

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	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
Points Earned	1/1	0/1	2/4	1/1	1/1	4/4	1/1	1/1	2/2	1/1	0/1	1/1	1/1	0/1	0/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	0/1	0/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	0/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	2/4	1/1	0/1	2/4	1/1	1/1	1/2	1/1	0/1

Key x/y = x points earned out of y points possible Blank space = no answer

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Why are these scores 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.
- **Look closely at where your child's score falls** within the Partially Meeting Expectations category. If it isn't close to Meeting Expectations, talk with your child's teacher that content area (ELA or math) about how you can work together to help your child catch up.
- A **student growth percentile** (SGP) allows us to measure the progress your child is making in school in some key subject areas. Along with other indicators such as test scores and course grades, SGPs provide information about your child's performance – where your child is now as well as the progress your child is making over time.

Where can I find more information?

- www.ride.ri.gov/Families for FAQs about:
  - content standards and curriculum
  - Rhode Island's Statewide Assessments
- www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment-Families for resources:
  - the Family Guide to Student Growth Percentiles
  - RICAS Individual Student Reports translated into multiple languages
  - the RICAS 2019 Individual Student Reports Guide for Families