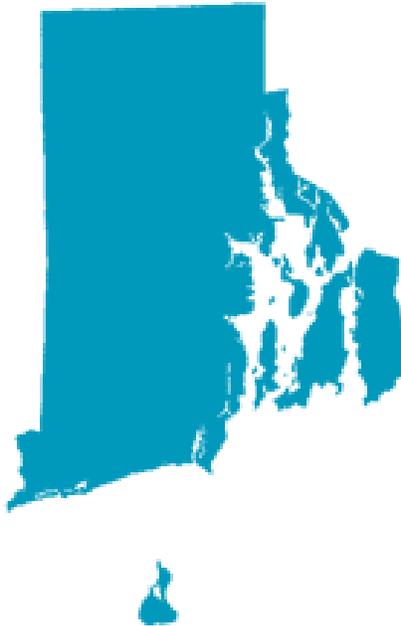




# Rhode Island Alternate Assessment (RIAA)

*2013-2014 Guidance on Eligibility for the RIAA*

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/>



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# Introduction

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This document is intended to help guide Individualized Education Program (IEP) team members determine whether the Rhode Island Alternate Assessment (RIAA) or the New England Common Assessment (NECAP) is the most appropriate assessment for an individual student. In addition, this document provides important information about the design, content, and administration of the RIAA.

This document is to be used along with other IEP guidance to ensure decisions regarding the RIAA and student eligibility are made appropriately and in compliance with the IEP process.

IEP teams must consider a student's individual characteristics when determining whether a student with a disability should participate in the general assessment (NECAP) with or without accommodations, or in the RIAA. This document outlines two important steps that an IEP team should take to arrive at a decision regarding the most appropriate assessment for a student. These two steps are:

1. Review student records, data, and other important information across multiple school years and instructional settings (e.g., school, home, community), and
2. Determine whether, based on the evidence collected, the student fits all of the criteria for participating in the RIAA as outlined in this document.

## **Description of the Rhode Island Alternate Assessment (RIAA)**

Participation in the Rhode Island Assessment Program is an important means of ensuring that each student has the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills addressed in the Grade Level and Grade Span Expectations (GLEs and GSEs) (or the Common Core State Standards [CCSS] for those districts that have made the transition) for reading, writing, mathematics, and science. The majority of students with disabilities will participate in the general education curriculum, and participate in the subject area assessments in the NECAP. However, a small number of students with significant cognitive disabilities cannot participate in the NECAP assessments even with accommodations and require an alternative method of assessment in order to demonstrate their performance within in the general education curriculum. The RIAA is based on the Alternate Assessment Grade Span Expectations (AAGSEs), which are an extension of the academic standards that make up the Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) and the Grade Span Expectations (GSEs).

The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) of 2004 is the federal special education law that requires that students with disabilities be involved in the general education curriculum with supplementary aides and supports when necessary. This law further requires that students with disabilities be included in all general and district-wide assessment programs with appropriate accommodations or alternate assessments when necessary, as determined by their individualized education program (IEP) team. In addition, the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), Title I requires that all students participate in state assessments in reading, mathematics, and science and that their performance results be reported. This legislation supports Rhode Island's Article 31.

High-quality assessments provide information upon which to base ongoing development of curriculum and instruction that is responsive to individual student needs. The RIAA design consists of an assessment that utilizes Structured Performance Tasks (SPTs), which promote integrated academic and life opportunities for students. Capturing evidence of student learning is the core of the RIAA. Teachers

collect data and student work to assess the student's progress, accuracy, and independence. The collected evidence provides documentation that ensures a connection between GSEs and GLEs, Rhode Island AAGSEs, and instruction.

#### The Design and Structure of **the** RIAA

The RIAA assesses content in reading, mathematics, writing, and science. The scope of standards assessed on the RIAA is much narrower than on the NECAP assessments in order to accommodate the unique needs of the students who participate in the RIAA. Within each content area, two strands are assessed; one is required and the other is the teacher's choice after careful consideration of the student's needs and goals. After teachers select the AAGSEs, an assessment activity is designed. This task provides the context for assessing the standard. This design allows for content, instruction, and assessment to be successfully linked and provides a framework for evaluating what students know and can do in reading, mathematics, writing, and science.

Science follows the same structure except that the science investigation is the focus. From the science investigation, teachers assess students' science content knowledge (Knowledge Entry) as well as their ability to conduct aspects of the investigation (Inquiry Entry).

Diagrams of the RIAA structure for reading, mathematics, writing, and science are on the following pages. For more information on how teachers administer the RIAA in their classrooms, please read the *RIAA Administration Manual & Resource Guide* given to teachers during the fall training sessions or discuss plans directly with teachers implementing the RIAA.

#### **The Testing Cycle**

The RIAA is a year-long assessment beginning in October and concluding in May. This long testing window is further divided into three smaller sections, called Collection Periods. It is useful to think of each Collection Period as a NECAP-like testing window during which all assessing is taking place for all required content areas: reading, writing, mathematics, and science. Each Collection Period contributes to the score of the student. Missing collection periods lower the student's score.

The assessment information that the teachers gather during each Collection Period is entered into the secure online tool, ProFile. After each Collection Period closes, ProFile locks, preventing further entries or edits by teachers. Administrators are able to view assessment information for each student in their building, district, and/or outplacement school in a read only format.

## Important Dates

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Below are some important dates to keep in mind for planning and administration purposes. For more information on RIAA test administration procedures and policies, please see the *2013-2014 Test Administration Manual for District & School Administrators*.

### **Student Found Eligible before January 6, 2014**

If a student is found eligible to take the RIAA at any time before January 6, 2014 must be registered by their teacher and submit a datafolio at the end of the school year.

### **Student Found Eligible after January 6, 2014**

If a student is found eligible to take the RIAA after January 6, 2014, that student will not be able to participate in the RIAA for the 2013–14 school year and should not submit a datafolio.

## Step 1: Understanding the Eligibility Criteria for the RIAA

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There are three eligibility criteria that students must meet in order to be eligible for the RIAA. The form IEP teams should use is on the next page. They are:

1. **Student has a disability, or disabilities, that significantly impacts cognitive function and adaptive behavior.** Review of student records and other evidence indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.
2. **The student's instruction is aligned to the RI Alternate Assessment Grade Span Expectations (AAGSEs), including academic skills and short-term objectives/benchmarks.** Goals and instruction for this student is linked to the enrolled grade-level AAGSEs and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student. If standards have not yet been determined for this student, read the two sets of standards, the AAGSEs and the GLEs/GSEs, and discuss them to determine which set would be most appropriate for the student.
  1. **NOTE: For districts that have completed the transition to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS),** the student's academic skills should be aligned to the appropriate CCSS and the short-term objectives/benchmarks should be aligned to the Core Content Connectors (CCCs). IEP Teams should refer to the CCCs and their corresponding Common Core standards to determine if they seem most instructionally suitable for the student.
3. **The student is unable to apply academic skills in home, school, and community without intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction in multiple settings.** This criterion actually covers the three aspects of learning:
  1. *What the student needs in order to learn.* In other words, the student **requires** extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and supports from teachers and other professionals.
  2. *The types of materials required in order for the student to learn.* Materials are significantly modified, customized, and adapted in order to facilitate understanding.
  3. *How the student demonstrates their learning.* His or her need for substantial supports to achieve gains in the grade-and-age-appropriate curriculum requires substantially adapted materials and customized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate, and transfer skills across multiple settings.

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

Updated June, 2013. This form should be completed, signed, attached to the IEP, and placed in the student's file.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

State-Assigned Student ID (SASID): 1000-\_\_\_\_\_ IEP Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participation Criteria	Documentation Description <i>(must be provided for each criteria or attach Documentation of Evidence Worksheet)</i>	Decision*
1. Student has a disability that significantly impacts cognitive function and adaptive behavior.		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
2. The student's instruction is aligned to the RI Alternate Assessment Grade Span Expectations, including academic skills and short-term objectives/benchmarks.		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
3. The student is unable to apply academic skills in home, school, and community without intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction in multiple settings.		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

*\*If any of the criteria decisions are "no", the student cannot participate in the RIAA. Instruction and curriculum for this student should be aligned to the GLEs/GSEs (or CCSS/CCCs) appropriate for their grade level and they should participate in the NECAP assessments required for their grade level with appropriate accommodations.*

**Additional Factors:** The list below contains other factors that should **not** be used in on their own to make a decision about a student's eligibility status for the RIAA. Descriptions of each are on the following pages.

1. the student has a cognitive or specific learning disability, visual or auditory disabilities, or emotional-behavioral disabilities.
2. that the student's instructional reading or general performance level is below grade level.
3. that the student is also considered an English Language Learner (ELL).

**IEP Team Assurance:** The IEP team has thoroughly discussed the evidence gathered to determine eligibility for the RIAA. No one factor was used to make the determination (Additional Factors 1-3 above). The IEP team has informed the parent(s) of the implications of their child's participation in the RIAA, namely that:

1. Their child's achievement will be measured based on alternate academic achievement standards;
2. Beginning with the 2014 graduating class, the RIAA cannot be used to meet the state assessment requirement for receiving a diploma since the RIAA is based on alternate grade level and grade span expectations (L-6-3.3; Guidance for 2011 Secondary Regulations, p. 16). Additional guidance regarding graduation requirements for students taking the RIAA can be found here: <http://www.ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/RIPublicSchools/DiplomaSystem.aspx>. District regulations and guidance should also be available through the district office.
3. They have been informed of any other implications, including any effects of local policies on the student's education resulting from taking an alternate assessment based on alternate academic standards.
4. The IEP team *does/does not (circle one)* find this student eligible to participate in the RIAA.

Name of LEA Representative (print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of LEA Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

## Step 2: Gathering Evidence

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Using multiple pieces of evidence to inform this decision is important for two reasons: 1) it prevents decision-making that is based primarily on one type of evidence (e.g., IQ score or disability category) and 2) it provides a complete picture of the student's abilities and knowledge in both academic and social settings. Below is a short list of possible evidence that IEP teams should gather before deciding if the student meets the Participation Criteria for the RIAA. It is important to remember that no one piece of evidence should be used to make this decision and no one person should be the one making the decision.

**Gathering Evidence.** *Sources of evidence and data the IEP Team can use to determine whether the RIAA is appropriate for an individual student include:*

- Curriculum, instructional, and classroom evidence:
  - Examples instructional objectives and materials
  - Work samples and data on progress from both school and community-based instruction
  - Classroom work samples and data
  - Observations of teachers
- Assessment data and evidence:
  - Past RIAA assessment activities to compare with classroom work
  - district-wide alternate assessments
  - reading assessments
  - any other academic achievement tests
  - language assessments like ACCESS for ELLs or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs
  - Results of the initial or most recent evaluations of the student
  - Observations by teachers and other service providers
  - Observations by family members or guardians
- IEP information including:
  - Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, goals, and short-term objectives or post-school outcomes from the IEP.
  - Considerations for students with specific communication needs or modes (from multiple data sources)
  - Considerations for students who may be learning English as a second or other language (i.e., English language learners).

**Factors or evidence that should be used in combination with other factors or evidence.** Decisions made using only one of the following types of evidence is not the best decision and may impact the student's educational experience significantly. Using these types of evidence in combination with other information can provide a more complete picture of the student's abilities and understanding.

- **Disability category (or categories).** There is no disability category that is able to predict 100% of a student's cognitive potential. Disability categories alone are not sufficient evidence to determine eligibility for the RIAA.
- **Cognitive ability of the student.** While most students being considered for eligibility for the RIAA will have an IQ test administered to them and while these tests do provide important information about the student, IQ scores alone do not qualify a student for the RIAA and should not be the sole basis for making a decision.

- **Reading (or performing) below grade level.** There can be many causes and contributing factors as to why a student may be reading below grade level. A student's cognitive ability is not always the root cause of low reading levels.
- **English Language Learner (ELL) status.** It is important to understand that a student's ability and their knowledge of English are not connected to each other. How well a student understands and speaks English has an impact on his/her ability to learn; however it does not indicate a learning disability. Alternative methods of finding out what a student knows and can do may have to be investigated depending on the student's English proficiency level. Please contact your district ESL Director for options.

**The following evidence and other factors should *not* be used to inform a participation decision for the RIAA.** The following factors are not appropriate to inform a participation decision because they do not add to the IEP Team's understanding of what the student knows and can do. While some of the factors listed below do make it difficult for a student come to school ready to engage and learn, these issues should be addressed with the appropriate staff experience and expertise.

- **Poor attendance or extended absences, for any reason.** Some students have medical conditions that prevent them from attending school regularly enough to receive instruction. While this is recognized as a factor that inhibits a child's exposure to educational experiences and meaningful instruction on a regular basis, it is not evidence of a child's ability, or potential, to learn and must be addressed through the appropriate school resources.
- **Poor performance on the NECAP.** Many students receiving special education services can and do participate on the NECAP assessments with accommodations and other supports. Poor performance on NECAP is not an appropriate determinant for a student to participate in the RIAA. To consider accommodations and supports available on the NECAP assessments, please refer to the Accommodations Manual:  
<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/Assessment/NECAPAssessment/NECAPTestAdministrationMaterials.aspx>.
- **Impact of the student's test scores on the accountability score of the school and/or district.** How well or poorly a student may or may not do on any state assessment should not be used as a deciding factor in determining which assessment is appropriate for a student.
- **Location of special education services in more restrictive settings.** The setting in which where a student receives his/her education is not a factor in determining cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior. Districts routinely take advantage of staff with expertise with the challenges of a specific disability, behavior, or mental health issue, either within the school district or in another setting. Regardless of where a student accesses specialized care or services, meaningful academic instruction should always be given to the student. Because of this requirement, the educational placement of a student is not to be used as factor indicating their cognitive potential.
- **Amount of time receiving special education services.** Students receive special education services in a variety of ways and in varying degrees of intensity. It is more meaningful to consider the type and intensity of the structures and supports the student requires in order to participate academically and socially in their school than it is to consider the amount of time a student requires special education services.
- **Amount of services a student receives.** This is similar to above; however, many students receive a variety of related services that address their physical, behavioral, or other challenges beyond their cognitive ability.
- **Behavior issues, including test anxiety.** Behavior challenges can make learning difficult for some students and should be treated appropriately and professionally when appropriate and necessary. Behavior issues are not always indicators of significant cognitive disabilities; however

some disabilities have behavioral indicators. Behavior challenges should not be considered when deciding if a student meeting the criteria for the RIAA as they are not indicators of cognitive ability.

- **Administrator decision.** Under no circumstances is it appropriate for a school, district, or program administrator to unilaterally make an eligibility decision without the full cooperation and consensus of the IEP team, of which the parents or guardians are equal participants, or without following all standard procedures regarding the educational decision-making for a student.

## Step 3: Documenting the Decision

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### If Decision is Yes

If the IEP team determines that the student is eligible for the RIAA, they must document their decision using the *Participation Criteria for the Rhode Island Alternate Assessment Form* and include it with the IEP; an IEP team LEA representative must sign the completed form, a copy must be attached to the IEP and placed in the student's file. This must be completed each year at the time of the IEP annual review.

*This must be done regardless of grade level.* For example, grade 9 students do not take the RIAA but the *Participation Criteria for the RIAA Form* should be completed and kept with the student's IEP. Please read the *Administration Manual* for information on registering students and completing the assessment.

### If Decision is No

If the IEP team finds that the student is ineligible for the RIAA, or if the parent/guardian of the student refuses to have the student participate in the RIAA, then three things must happen:

1. The student must participate in the NECAP assessments with appropriate accommodations as determined by the IEP team.
2. The student's instruction must be aligned to the GLEs/GSEs via the general education curriculum. Without access to the general education curriculum, students will not be able to be able to learn the academic skills and knowledge assessed on the NECAP assessments.
3. Record of the decision must be recorded on the Participation Criteria form for the RIAA, attached to the IEP and placed in the student's file.

NOTE: If the parent or guardian of the student disagrees with the IEP team decision regarding eligibility for the RIAA, they have the right to request mediation or initiate a due process hearing as described within the procedural safeguards by visiting the Rhode Island Department of Education webpage "When Schools and Families Disagree" at the address below or by contacting the Rhode Island Department of Education Call Center at 401-222.8999.

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/SpecialEducation/WhenSchoolsandFamiliesDoNotAgree.aspx>

## Other Factors Concerning Eligibility

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### Grade Designation

Students who are eligible for the RIAA are assessed in the same grade that their same-aged peers are being assessed. The IEP team should use the district's policy regarding retention/advancement in conjunction with the students' identified needs to determine grade designation. Students should not be

assigned to a grade that is more than two years below typical grade peers, by chronological age, or to a grade that is outside the grade range of the school they are attending.

### **Retaining a student**

If a student is retained, they must participate in any assessments required for their current grade. For example, if a student was retained in grade 5 for two years, that student must participate in the reading and mathematics assessments for the second time.

**NOTE:** If a student is in a grade level for more than one year, careful consideration should be given to ensure the student is not more than two years below typical grade peers, by chronological age, or is not designated in a grade that is outside the grade range of the school in which he/she is being instructed.

### **Grade advancement**

If a student's grade designation changes from grade 6 to grade 8, then they must participate in any assessments for grade 8. Grades that are "missed" do not need to be assessed. In this example, any assessments in grade 7 that are missed would not be taken; only those required for grade 8.

### **Graduation**

The Board of Regents (now called the State Board of Education) established minimum requirements for receiving a diploma to begin with the graduating class of 2014. These requirements include an academic achievement measure from the state assessments that are based on grade span expectations. Parents must know that the RIAA does not meet this requirement because it is based on alternate academic achievement standards. While their child will not receive a high school diploma, the student is eligible for participation in graduation ceremonies just like any other student. It is important to remember that, as always, the paramount goal of the IEP, the alternate achievement standards, and the RIAA is to promote the highest and most appropriate academic education for a child, at the most appropriate instructional level, in order to ensure as much learning and acquisition of academic skills as possible.

Additional information and guidance is forthcoming regarding how the RIAA results may be incorporated into such graduation decisions and what credentials a student participating in RIAA may earn. When such guidance becomes available, it will be widely distributed and available on the RIDE website. If you have more questions about graduation and options for students taking the RIAA, please visit the RIDE website at: <http://www.ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/RIPublicSchools/DiplomaSystem.aspx>.

## Student Examples

Several student examples are provided here to show how evidence may be used to determine whether or not the three criteria are met.

### Student Example A

Student A is 13 years old and uses an augmentative communication device with voice and print output to take part in classroom discussions and activities, as well as to participate in assessments. His primary disability diagnosis is autism.

**READING:** He reads using large print version of text and can answer some basic comprehension questions at grade level but has trouble with drawing conclusions or making inferences after reading. He prefers to be read to, rather than to read on his own. He can read simplified text.

**WRITING:** This student can write simple stories with a beginning, middle, and his use of details is limited; fast/slow, light/dark, tall/short, loud/soft, etc. Because of his visual impairments, it takes him much longer than his classmates to complete writing assignments and this causes him to become frustrated at times.

**MATHEMATICS:** He requires a calculator for all math calculations and can get the correct answer by following formulaic directions; however, he requires being reminded often about some basic numeracy concepts such as multiplication and division.

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:** He is very adept at using a computer and/or iPad to download videos and to play games and music. He has severe anxiety and requires extensive coaching, prompting, and breaks. Any testing requires several days to complete and due to severe Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), many times testing cannot be completed. Because of this, test results may not reflect this student's true knowledge and abilities.

Participation Criteria	Description of Documentation and Evidence <i>(write specific evidence here)</i>	Sources of Evidence [check if used]
<p>1. The student has a disability that significantly impacts cognitive function and adaptive behavior.</p> <p>YES <input type="radio"/></p> <p>NO <input checked="" type="radio"/></p>	<p>He can answer some basic comprehension questions at grade level but has trouble with drawing conclusions or making inferences after reading. He prefers to be read to, rather than to read on his own. He can read simplified text.</p> <p>This student can write simple stories with a beginning, middle, and his use of details is limited; fast/slow, light/dark, tall/short, loud/soft, etc.</p> <p>He requires a calculator for all math calculations and can get the correct answer by following formulaic directions</p> <p>Due to severe OCD, many times testing cannot be completed. Test results may not reflect this student's true knowledge and abilities.</p> <p>He is very adept at using a computer and/or iPad to download videos and to play games and</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of Individual Cognitive Ability Test</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of individual and group administered achievement tests</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results of informal assessments</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results of individual reading assessments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of district-wide alternate assessments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of language assessments including English language learner (ELL) language assessments if applicable</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</p>

<p>2. The student's instruction is aligned to the RI Alternate Grade Span Expectations, including academic skills and short-term objectives/benchmarks.</p> <p>YES <input type="radio"/></p> <p>NO <input checked="" type="radio"/></p>	<p>He can answer some basic comprehension questions at grade level but has trouble with drawing conclusions or making inferences after reading.</p> <p>He requires a calculator for all math calculations and can get the correct answer by following formulaic directions; however, he requires being reminded often about some basic numeracy concepts such as multiplication and division.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives and materials including work samples</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals and short-term objectives from the IEP</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Data from scientific research-based interventions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Progress monitoring data</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</p>
<p>3. The student is unable to apply academic skills in home, school, and community without intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction in multiple settings.</p> <p>YES <input type="radio"/></p> <p>NO <input checked="" type="radio"/></p>	<p>He can get the correct answer by following formulaic directions and requires being reminded often about some basic numeracy concepts such as multiplication and division.</p> <p>He requires extensive coaching, prompting, and breaks.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives, and materials including work samples from both school and community based instruction</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher collected data and checklists</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals, and objectives, and post school outcomes from the IEP and the Transition Plan for students age 12 and older</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</p>

**Student Example B**

Student B is 9 years old. Her primary disability diagnosis is autism. She speaks using two- and three-word phrases after modeling answers. Most of her speech consists of “yes/no” answers. She does not use an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) device but is involved in a program to develop conversational speech skills and is showing some improvement. IQ test result score is 60.

**READING:** Student A is able to identify familiar pictures and picture symbols and has emerging sight word vocabulary of about 25 words. She can read somewhat independently, as long as the texts are at the Kindergarten or pre-K level, include pictures and picture symbols, and she has intensive support from her teacher. Student A can understand texts closer to her grade level (not on grade level) with supports such as picture symbols and having the text read aloud by an aide or teacher and are about subjects she enjoys; animals, especially baby animals. She enjoys books that have tactile supports embedded in the text. She will only read if her teacher provides intensive supports like prompting, cueing, refocusing, in a one-on-one environment and with frequent breaks.

**WRITING:** She can independently write her first and last name and can copy text but in most cases when she copies text, it is not clear if she understands what she is writing. She can write S-V sentences using word cards with picture symbols. She does not enjoy writing.

**MATHEMATICS:** Student A can count same-color blocks up to ten. She does not understand simple subtraction or addition; she must re-count the blocks to arrive at an answer. “More/less” is a difficult concept when using numerals but she can tell which group of things is more or less than another group of the same things.

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:** On a computer, she can click and drag using a mouse, but only when provided a model and a clear objective (like playing a simple game). Student A has difficulty with understanding when activities change from a set schedule; has difficulty sharing with other students in the class sometimes but not always. She understands sequences of events but not the idea that something is scheduled to happen at 2:00, for example.

RIAA Participation Criteria	Documentation ( <i>must be provided for each criteria</i> )	Sources of Evidence [check if used]
<p>1. The student has a disability that significantly impacts cognitive function and adaptive behavior.</p> <p>● Yes ○ No</p>	<p><i>She speaks using two- and three-word phrases after modeling answers.</i></p> <p><i>She can independently write her first and last name and can copy text but in most cases when she copies text, it is not clear if she understands what she is writing.</i></p> <p><i>Student A can count same-color blocks up to ten. She does not understand simple subtraction or addition; she must re-count the blocks to arrive at an answer. “More/less” is a difficult concept when using numerals.</i></p> <p><i>She has difficulty with</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of Individual Cognitive Ability Test</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of individual and group administered achievement tests</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results of informal assessments</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results of individual reading assessments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of district-wide alternate assessments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of language assessments including English language learner (ELL) language assessments if applicable</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</p>

	<i>understanding when activities change from a set schedule. She understands sequences of events but not the idea that something is scheduled to happen at 2:00.</i>	
2 The student's instruction is aligned to the RI Alternate Assessment Grade Span Expectations, including academic skills and short-term objectives/benchmarks. ● Yes ○ No	<i>She is 9 years old and can read somewhat independently, as long as the texts are at the Kindergarten or pre-K level, include pictures and picture symbols, and she has intensive support from her teacher.</i>  <i>She can understand texts closer to her grade level (not on grade level) with supports such as picture symbols and having the text read aloud by an aide or teacher and are about subjects she enjoys; animals, especially baby animals</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives and materials including work samples <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals and objectives from the IEP <input type="checkbox"/> Data from scientific research-based interventions <input type="checkbox"/> Progress monitoring data <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
3. The student is unable to apply academic skills in home, school, and community without intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction in multiple settings. ● Yes ○ No	<i>She can read somewhat independently, as long as the texts are at the Kindergarten or pre-K level, include pictures and picture symbols, and she has intensive support from her teacher.</i>  <i>She can understand texts closer to her grade level (not on grade level) with supports such as picture symbols and having the text read aloud by an aide or teacher and are about subjects she enjoys; animals, especially baby animals.</i>  <i>She will only read if her teacher provides intensive supports like prompting, cueing, refocusing, in a one-on-one environment and with frequent breaks.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives, and materials including work samples from both school and community based instruction <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher collected data and checklists <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals, and objectives, and post school outcomes from the IEP and the Transition Plan for students age 12 and older <input type="checkbox"/> Other:

### Student Example C

Student C is 17 years old and in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. His primary diagnosis is autism and he has some vision impairment that requires some adapted materials. He is in a self-contained classroom. He can vocalize but does not use words; he is essentially non-verbal. He has a new AAC device that both the student and the staff are learning. His fine motor skills are poor; however he enjoys finger painting along with other art projects. He enjoys music as well. So far, things seem to be improving in the area of communication for this student. The lack of a consistent mode of communication has made it difficult to determine his cognitive functioning. However, learning his new AAC device has provided motivation as he is learning that people will respond to him. In addition, he has a health condition that has led to many absences. Even though he is learning how to communicate with his new device, it is clear that his content knowledge and basic skills are far below his typical peers and instruction will remain at a remedial level for the foreseeable future; because of this the GLEs/CCSS are far beyond his current ability.

**READING:** He can understand and recognize most of the pictures in his AAC device. He enjoys being read to (especially picture books about trucks, cars, and other automotive equipment and dogs). He takes a long time to look at the pictures. If you ask him to identify a type of car or a part on a car (e.g. tire, wheel, door, tractor, etc.) he can point to it accurately. During times when a movie is played in the classroom, he can order the events of the movie if they are in pictures. He can tell you if an event did not take place in the movie. He can mimic parts of the dialogue even though most of it is unintelligible; he mimics the sounds and inflection of people talking but cannot form the words.

**WRITING:** He does recognize his name and uses a name stamp that includes his entire first name and a separate stamp with his last name. His teacher has begun to use individual letter stamps to help him learn how to recognize the individual letters of his name. He can order events very well and reorder the events to produce a different ending/answer an open-ended question.

**MATHEMATICS:** Unknown at this time. His teacher has noticed that he understands when things are supposed to happen during his day (arriving at school, lunch, breaks, etc.) but it is not clear if he is reading the clock on the wall or if he is recognizing a pattern to his school day. Numbers are programmed in to his AAC device but have not been introduced; however, he did request that the teacher read three books to him one day and he used the number “3” on his AAC device. He is not interested in math.

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:** It is clear that he can understand the pictures displayed on his AAC device. There are no words matched with the pictures.

RIAA Participation Criteria	Description of Documentation and Evidence <i>(write specific evidence here)</i>	Sources of Evidence [check if used]
<p>1. Student has a disability that significantly impacts cognitive function and adaptive behavior.</p> <p>● Yes ○ No</p>	<p><i>So much is unknown about this student’s true ability. However, given his reaction to his new AAC device and other observations, it is clear that while he may have some kind of cognitive disability, the extent is not known. His disabilities however, do impact his adaptive behavior significantly and his level of learning is far below that of his typical peers. As the year progresses more formal and informal assessments will be given.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of Individual Cognitive Ability Test</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results of Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of individual and group administered achievement tests</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results of informal assessments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of individual reading assessments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of district-wide alternate assessments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of language assessments including English language learner (ELL) language assessments if applicable</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</p>
<p>2. The student’s instruction is aligned to the RI Alternate Assessment Grade Span Expectations, including academic skills and short-term objectives/benchmarks</p> <p>● Yes ○ No</p>	<p><i>Yes. While it is largely unknown what this student knows and can do, it is clear that he is far below his typical peers. He can understand basic concepts of more/less (snacks), basic pictures both on his AAC device and in picture books. He can point out the correct picture when you ask “where is the tire, truck, door, dog, etc.” after you read the book aloud.</i></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives and materials including work samples</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals and objectives from the IEP</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Data from scientific research-based interventions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Progress monitoring data</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</p>

<p>3. The student is unable to apply academic skills in home, school, and community without intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction in multiple settings.</p> <p> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes  <input type="radio"/> No </p>	<p><i>Materials are adapted because of his vision impairment. Because of his lack of communication and largely nonverbal status, much was done for this student. His student work samples are largely classroom observation.</i></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives, and materials including work samples from both school and community based instruction</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teacher collected data and checklists</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals, and objectives, and post school outcomes from the IEP and the Transition Plan for students age 12 and older</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results of Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</p>
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# Documentation of Evidence Worksheet

This worksheet is designed to help IEP Teams match evidence to the specific criteria in order to help make decisions. It is not a required part of the decision-making process. To meet the criteria for the RIAA, the student must meet all eligibility criteria descriptors.

Eligibility Criteria	Description of Documentation and Evidence <i>(write specific evidence here)</i>	Sources of Evidence [check if used]
<p><b>1.</b> Student has a disability that significantly impacts cognitive function and adaptive behavior.</p> <p>YES <input type="radio"/> NO <input type="radio"/></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of Individual Cognitive Ability Test</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of individual and group administered achievement tests</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of informal assessments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of individual reading assessments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of district-wide alternate assessments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of language assessments including English language learner (ELL) language assessments if applicable</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b> The student's instruction is aligned to the RI Alternate Assessment Grade Span Expectations, including academic skills and short-term objectives and/or benchmarks.*</p> <p>YES <input type="radio"/> NO <input type="radio"/></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives and materials including work samples.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals and objectives from the IEP.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Data from scientific research-based interventions.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Progress monitoring data</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b> The student is unable to apply academic skills in home, school, and community without intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction in multiple settings.</p> <p>YES <input type="radio"/> NO <input type="radio"/></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives, and materials including work samples from both school and community based instruction.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher collected data and checklists</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals, and objectives, and post school outcomes from the IEP.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transition Plan for students age 12 and older.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:</li> </ul>

# Participation Criteria for the Rhode Island Alternate Assessment Form

Updated June, 2013. This form should be completed, signed, attached to the IEP, and placed in the student's file.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

State-Assigned Student ID (SASID): 1000-\_\_\_\_\_ IEP Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participation Criteria	Documentation Description <i>(must be provided for each criteria or attach Documentation of Evidence Worksheet)</i>	Decision*
4. Student has a disability that significantly impacts cognitive function and adaptive behavior.		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
5. The student's instruction is aligned to the RI Alternate Assessment Grade Span Expectations, including academic skills and short-term objectives/benchmarks.		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
6. The student is unable to apply academic skills in home, school, and community without intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction in multiple settings.		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

*\*If any of the criteria decisions are "no", the student cannot participate in the RIAA. Instruction and curriculum for this student should be aligned to the GLEs/GSEs (or CCSS/CCCs) appropriate for their grade level and they should participate in the NECAP assessments required for their grade level with appropriate accommodations.*

**Additional Factors:** The list below contains other factors that should **not** be used in on their own to make a decision about a student's eligibility status for the RIAA. Descriptions of each are on the following pages.

4. the student has a cognitive or specific learning disability, visual or auditory disabilities, or emotional-behavioral disabilities.
5. that the student's instructional reading or general performance level is below grade level.
6. that the student is also considered an English Language Learner (ELL).

**IEP Team Assurance:** The IEP team has thoroughly discussed the evidence gathered to determine eligibility for the RIAA. No one factor was used to make the determination (Additional Factors 1-3 above). The IEP team has informed the parent(s) of the implications of their child's participation in the RIAA, namely that:

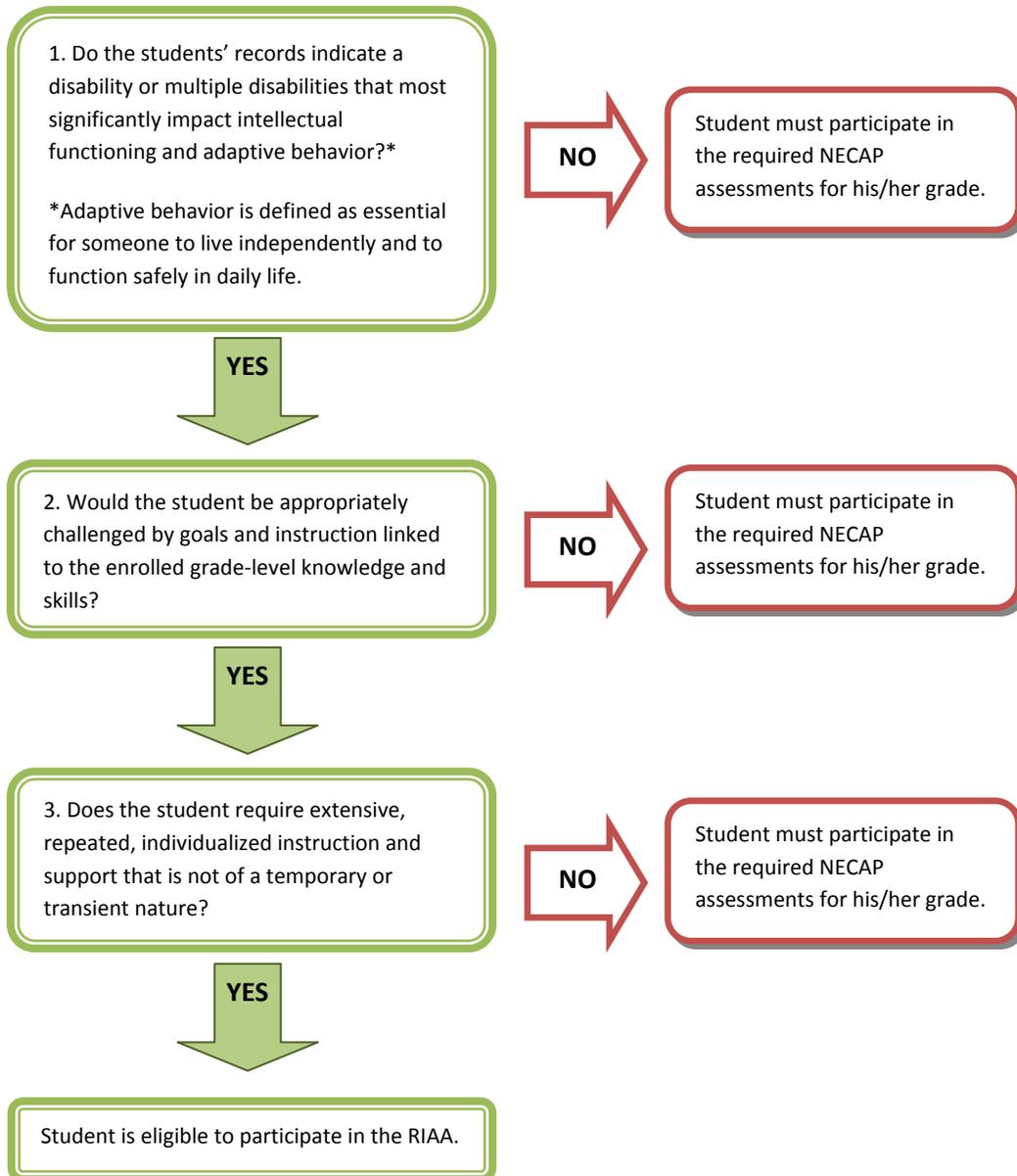
5. Their child's achievement will be measured based on alternate academic achievement standards;
6. Beginning with the 2014 graduating class, the RIAA cannot be used to meet the state assessment requirement for receiving a diploma since the RIAA is based on alternate grade level and grade span expectations (L-6-3.3; Guidance for 2011 Secondary Regulations, p. 16). Additional guidance regarding graduation requirements for students taking the RIAA can be found here: <http://www.ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/RIPublicSchools/DiplomaSystem.aspx>. District regulations and guidance should also be available through the district office.
7. They have been informed of any other implications, including any effects of local policies on the student's education resulting from taking an alternate assessment based on alternate academic standards.
8. The IEP team *does/does not (circle one)* find this student eligible to participate in the RIAA.

Name of LEA Representative (print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of LEA Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

## Decision Chart for Determining Eligibility for the RIAA

(To be used after evidence is collected and discussed by the IEP Team)



## Glossary

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**AAC:** Augmentative and alternative communication (e.g., speech generating devices such as text-to-speech communication aids, picture or symbol boards, etc.)

**Accommodation:** A change in materials or procedures that provide access during instruction and assessment. Accommodations do not change what is being taught or measured. Assessment accommodations are intended to produce valid results that indicate what a student knows and can do.

**Adaptive behavior:** Behavior defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.

**Common Core State Standards (CCSS):** The CCSS are a set of content standards for English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics that define what students are expected to learn at each grade in order to leave school ready for college or careers. The CCSS were developed by teachers, school administrators, and experts, with support from the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers.

**Core Content Connector (CCC):** A CCC is a representation of the essential “core” content of a standard in the CCSS. Each CCC was identified by examining hypothesized learning progressions aligned with the CCSS to determine the critical content for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

**Extensive direct individualized instruction:** Concentrated instruction designed for and directed toward an individual student. This type of instruction is needed by students with significant cognitive disabilities to acquire knowledge and skills in content. Students with significant cognitive disabilities are likely to need this extensively to apply knowledge and skills in multiple contexts.

**English Language Learner (ELL):** An ELL is a student who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual’s level of English language proficiency. An ELL’s difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be a barrier to learning in classrooms instructed in English and to performance on assessments presented in English.

**Learning progression:** A learning progression is a description of the way that student learning of skills may develop and build over time.

**Modification:** A change in materials or procedures that may provide access during instruction and assessment, but that also changes the learning expectations in instruction and what an assessment measures. Modifications during instruction may be appropriate on a temporary basis for scaffolding the student’s understanding and skills. Assessment modifications result in invalid measures of a student’s knowledge and skills and thus should be avoided.

**Pervasive:** Present across academic content areas and across multiple settings (including school, home, and community).

**Substantial supports:** Substantial supports include support from the teachers and others (e.g., aide) and various material supports within the student’s environment. Examples of substantial supports in

instruction include adapting text, using manipulatives and other concrete objects, and extensive scaffolding of content to support learning.

**Substantially adapted materials:** Substantially adapted materials include various classroom and other materials that have been altered in appearance and content from the materials that peers without disabilities use for instruction or assessment.