

Rhode Island Accountability Update, September 2020

School Report Cards and the Accountability System are an essential part of keeping school leaders, district leaders, parents, and the community informed on the progress of student outcomes in their schools. COVID-19 has provided many challenges to K-12 education. One is the disruption to how we assess student progress to measure school-level goals and promote continuous improvement.

RIDE developed the following FAQ to provide clarity to K-12 education stakeholders on School Report Cards and School Accountability for the 2020-21 school year. We anticipate that this document will continue to be updated throughout the fall as schools reopen and we receive additional clarity on requirements from the United States Department of Education (US ED). As such, each version of this document will include a version number and the date from the most recent revision.

Will we have accountability results in Fall 2020?

The US Department of Education waived statewide assessments and school accountability (US ED) for all states for the 2019-20 school year. 2019-20 results would have been reported in Fall 2020. While accountability is waived, RIDE will still publish results for measures where we have data, such as graduation, the Diploma Plus measures, and English Language Proficiency.

What are Rhode Island's plans for 2020-21 school accountability?

While school accountability is waived for the 2019-20 school year, the US Department of Education (US ED) is not expected to waive state assessments or school accountability for 2020-21. As such, states do not currently have the option to waive school accountability for the 2020-21 school year, which is scheduled for release in Fall 2021.

The accountability system is a vital tool to support conversations on equity in our schools and for continuous growth and improvement. Since the effects of COVID-19 will likely vary by community, we must measure how schools are doing now so that we can best support them and the children they are serving during this time. Therefore, RIDE plans to release 2020-21 accountability data next fall.

What data are available for 2020-21 school accountability?

Missing 2020 state assessment data, shifts in data collection related to distance learning, and COVID-19 more broadly affect not only Fall 2020 accountability results, but also Fall 2021. The following is a summary of data available for Fall 2021—which depending on the measure and student subgroup, may be based on up to three years of data—and notes on RIDE's intentions for each measure. This is a draft to provide you our initial thinking, which could change as the situation with COVID-19 develops or upon analyzing the data for each measure and as we receive additional guidance from the US ED. Additionally, some of the actions below would require approval from US ED.

Key			
	We expect complete data for this measure and plan to include it in school accountability.		We plan to report data for this measure, but not include it in accountability.
	We intend to include this measure in school accountability, but will need to analyze its validity once the data are available.		We will not have data for this measure.

Measure	Are there data for this year?			Notes
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	
Achievement				<p>The Achievement and Exceeds Expectations measures are typically based on the current and prior years of data. However, since the 2020 RICAS, SAT, and DLM assessments were canceled, we do not have a previous year of data. RIDE is considering the following options for the Achievement and Exceeds Expectations measures and seeks school and district input on this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include only 2021 data in 2021 Accountability • Combine 2021 and 2019 data in 2021 Accountability <p>We believe these options are allowed under our current state plan and we will work with the US ED to identify the options available.</p>
Growth				<p>Rhode Island may be able to calculate student growth percentiles (SGPs) using the RICAS assessment from Spring 2019 to Spring 2021 for grades 5-8. High school growth would be from 8th grade RICAS in 2019 to 10th grade PSAT in 2021. However, we will need to test the results to see whether it is appropriate to use these data for accountability purposes.</p>
English Language Proficiency				<p>RIDE expects that the ACCESS assessment will run as planned this year and that we will be able to keep this measure consistent with previous years. However, once we have the results, we will analyze the data to look for possible COVID-19-related shifts in participation and/or performance. A large shift in participation might impact comparable n-size. A shift in performance could mean adjusting cut scores for the measure.</p>

Graduation				This measure operates on a one-year lag, e.g. accountability data released in 2021 are for the class of 2020. RIDE does not expect to make changes to the Graduation measure.
Diploma Plus				These measures operate on a one-year lag, e.g. accountability data released in 2021 are for the class of 2020. RIDE does not expect to make changes to the Diploma Plus measures.
Student Absenteeism				If approved by US ED, Rhode Island will not use 2020-21 student or teacher absenteeism for accountability purposes. Attendance and absenteeism data will, however, still be measured and reported outside of the accountability system, including to analyze the impact of COVID-19.
Teacher Absenteeism				
Suspension				RIDE is analyzing the suspension measure. One possible approach is to count both in-school and out-of-school suspensions, given that most schools did not assign out-of-school suspensions during virtual learning. We would then also reset the cut scores for this measure to meaningfully differentiate schools.
Exceeds Expectations				This will match the Achievement decision above.

Additional considerations for the chart above

Removing measures from School Accountability means also adjusting the Star Chart, which is used to determine a school’s star rating. For example, removing the absenteeism measures means we would need to adjust the ‘School Quality and Student Success’ column, where these two measures are located. This means that schools that perform better on these measures compared to suspension and exceeds expectations in math and ELA now have more weight on the other three measures. RIDE will study the impact of any changes to this column on school and district star ratings, and attempt to minimize any negative effects of removing these two measures.

What is the timeline for data collection and decisions on specific measures?

Summer 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final data collections for available 2020 measures • Analyze 2019-20 absenteeism and suspension data for impact of COVID-19
Fall 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish 2020 data for available measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ English Language Proficiency ○ Graduation ○ Diploma Plus ○ Student Absenteeism ○ Teacher Absenteeism ○ Suspension • No star ratings; results will be published for public transparency, but not used for accountability purposes and clearly labeled as such
Winter 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCESS 2.0 administration
Spring 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RICAS, PSAT/SAT, and DLM administration
Summer 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final data collections for most measures • Study the impact of COVID-19 on all measures, especially achievement, growth, and English language proficiency; measures may need to be adjusted due to impact of COVID-19
Fall 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish 2021 accountability data

From now through Fall 2021, updates in the public health crisis may lead to changes in 2021 accountability. Decision points on individual measures will align with the timeline above.