

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ASSESSMENTS

Question	Response
With all the formative and interim assessment going on, why is PARCC necessary?	Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act requires districts to implement high quality, yearly academic assessments that include, at a minimum, assessments in mathematics, reading or language arts, and science. The primary purpose of a summative assessment (which PARCC is a summative assessment) is to measure outcomes (at classroom, school, LEA, or state level). This assessment can be used for accountability, school improvement planning, evaluation, and research.
How much time is devoted to assessments?	Please see Frequently Asked Questions on Board Docs.
How much money is spent on assessments?	Previously, we used several assessments such as NWEA, Aims-web and PALS as interim assessments. Some of these assessments took an absorbent amount of time to administer as they were given individually to students three times a year. To streamline the process we decided to use the STAR assessment as the only interim assessment K-12. The instructional reports set a clear instructional pathway for all students (those who need remediation as well as those who need a challenge). STAR Assessments K-12 (\$28,352.12) is used as a screener and for progress monitoring of student learning and curriculum review.
Why interim assessments?	In implementing RTI, a school district may use interim assessments for progress monitoring, which may be administered at more frequent intervals, depending upon the intensity of the instruction or intervention. Interim assessments are also used to set the goals for a Personal Literacy Plan or a Personal Math Plan.
Will RIDE ask for student feedback regarding the assessment? Will educators be asked about the PARCC assessment?	Yes, there will be an end of the test survey for students and test administrators to provide feedback about the assessment. (RIDE response)
How will the PARCC assessment affect grades?	At this time, the PARCC Assessment, like the NECAP, will not affect grades at the school level. However, the score on the PARCC Assessment will be one measure

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	<p>used to make determination of support classes and recommendations for course selection, particularly honors courses.</p>
<p>Does opting out of the testing negatively impact the school /teacher/funding?</p>	<p>By accepting Title I federal funds, each school in the district must maintain a minimum of 95% participation of students enrolled in the school/courses, as well as 95% of economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and English learners. Participation of lower than 95% will compromise our federal funding.</p> <p>By losing Title I funds we will need to reduce staff, discontinue the two title programs and supplies for parent involvement at our elementary schools. In addition, we would need to scale back our district Community Family Engagement Program.</p>
<p>What's to stop a high school student from bombing the first PARCC and then showing progress on the second? How will the district ensure that the test is taken seriously?</p>	<p>Students will be made aware of the importance of this assessment. Students will need to achieve a proficiency that shows mastery of the standards in ELA grade 9 and 10 , Algebra 1 and Geometry.</p>
<p>Is STAR really useful/necessary at the high school level?</p>	<p>To begin, the STAR assessment is a tool that can effectively be used for differentiation within a content area classroom (both English and Math courses). In addition, it provides an instructional report for each student that can be used for either remediation, a proficient pathway, and for students who need a challenge. In addition, this assessment is used to provide targeted interventions, monitor the progress of the interventions and ultimately assist the student with achieving the CCSS.</p>
<p>How will it be teased out when PARCC is scored as to how students did with content and how their lack of technological skills impeded their progress?</p>	<p>The PARCC results will not separate the technological skills and content, but items were reviewed and scored based on the field-test data. For example, when writing was scored, educators looked at both the computer and paper based responses to determine consistent proficiency criteria. (RIDE response)</p>
<p>Who is grading the PARCC tests and their credentials?</p>	<p>Professional scorers are hired who have at least a 4 year college degree. All scorers are trained and go through a rigorous process to qualify as a scorer. (RIDE response)</p>

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<p>Why is the first grade to be tested third grade?</p>	<p>The Elementary and Secondary Education Act requires all schools that receive Title I funds to administer a state assessment every year in grades 3-8 for reading/language arts and mathematics. In addition, a state assessment must be administered at a minimum of once at the high school level.</p>
<p>Will the PARCC be used as a graduation requirement in 2017 or will we just consider participation in PARCC assessments as the requirement?</p> <p>How will the PARCC assessment affect grades going forward starting in 2015?</p>	<p>This is not decided at the district level. As stated in the Commissioner's Legal Advisory Opinion (2-25-15), RI General Law allows the reintroduction of the State assessment as a graduation requirement for the class of 2017.</p> <p>Just like NECAP, the PARCC assessment does not affect grades acquired at the present grade or course level.</p>
<p>We've discussed the importance of setting the tone to lessen the stress over the test that is not vetted - How do you advise we set the tone?</p>	<p>It is important for our students to know there will be some easy questions, just right questions and some difficult questions on this assessment. We should tell them to try their best and not worry about getting everyone right. This assessment is more about perseverance and the willingness to try again.</p>
<p>What immediate benefits will my elementary student get from the test?</p> <p>Why should my child take the test? How can the process/outcomes/insights gained improve my child's self-esteem as much as it informs curriculum and instruction design?</p>	<p>The items you'll find on PARCC state tests mirror the kind of great instruction and relevant tasks assigned to children in classrooms every day in Rhode Island. PARCC tests ask students to think critically, analyze information, and explain their answers. Writing is expected in every grade level (previously, we included a writing assessment in three grade levels only).</p> <p>In addition, the PARCC tests serve as an "educational GPS system" for parents and teachers to assess where a student is and to help find the best route to get them ready for the next academic material.</p> <p>It is important to note, the revised version of the SAT is aligned to the CCSS and the format is similar to PARCC. The more experience our students have participating in an assessment that is aligned to the standards and is formatted in a similar manner, the likelihood of them performing well on the SAT in the future.</p>
<p>Will the PARCC results be used for teacher evaluation?</p>	<p>Currently, the results are planned to be used to calculate growth scores for educators which would include three years of test results (baseline plus one year</p>

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	<p>growth for two consecutive years). Growth is calculated year to year, so it will take until the 2016-2017 administration to have two years of growth scores to be included in teacher evaluation. (RIDE response)</p>
<p>How will the results of PARCC be shared at the district, school, and student level? Will students learn where they stand as they did for NECAP and by when?</p>	<p>Rhode Island will develop student, school, and district level PARCC reports similar to NECAP. Although, PARCC reports will provide some different information. (RIDE response)</p>
<p>Will there be breaks for a child that is clearly struggling with the testing format?</p>	<p>The following accommodations can be considered for all students depending upon whether this is something a student receives all the time during testing conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing in a small group • Allowing frequent supervised breaks. • Taking the assessment at a different time of day. • Testing in a separate or alternate location. • Testing in a specific area or seating arrangement. • Using adaptive and specialized equipment or furniture. (PARCC Administration Manual)
<p>In the future, what is the timeline for the PARCC results after this year's benchmark-year is over?</p>	<p>The PARCC results are scheduled to be reported before the end of the school year (June) after the benchmark year. (RIDE response)</p>
<p>Does PARCC address decoding as a skill for reading?</p>	<p>PARCC does not directly assess decoding. Although, it is part of the Reading CCSS and is indirectly assessed as part of the ELA assessment. (RIDE response)</p>
<p>Before High School, what is the district doing to challenge kids that are exceeding the benchmarks and expectations?</p>	<p>The district has implemented the Columbia University's Reading and Writing Workshop K-8. This personalized program enables students to read material at a higher readability level than their current grade as well as exposes students to different genres of texts. Students see the integration of reading and writing as they are asked to respond to what they read through expository, argumentative and narrative writing about topics of their choice.</p> <p>In math, all of our units contain enrichment activities that stretch students thinking in order to complete.</p>

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	<p>We provide different pathways for learning mathematics at the middle school such as: students in seventh grade needing a challenge complete seventh grade CCSS in half year and half of eighth grade during their grade seven year of enrollment. Students who are highly proficient in math take Algebra I in eighth grade as opposed to the CCSS eighth grade math.</p> <p>In science at the middle school, students are presented with engineering challenges. They are given the opportunity to solve a problem through designing concrete solutions.</p>
<p>What grades/scores will be reported on the college transcript? (9, 10, 11? Just 11?)</p> <p>Will students receive the PARCC "College and Career Ready" distinction on the transcript when/if they achieve that designation?</p>	<p>We will not have scores or achievement levels available during the current school year. The earliest PARCC results on transcripts will be in 2017. The regulations just say state assessment results. (RIDE response)</p>