

Supporting the Transition to New State Assessments

PARCC-Developed English Language Arts and Mathematics Assessments

Colorado's vision of *all* students becoming educated and productive citizens capable of succeeding in a globally competitive world relies on a comprehensive and continually improving educational system. In this system, good instruction and assessment cannot occur in isolation of one another. Each informs the other, and they become the checks and balances that drive measurable student growth and achievement.

Overview of PARCC-Developed Assessments

Colorado's state assessments are changing in order to accurately assess student mastery of the updated Colorado Academic Standards. With the standards being more focused, coherent and rigorous, assessments must adapt to align with the standards. Colorado's new assessment system is called the Colorado Measures of Academic Success. It incorporates new science and social studies assessments developed by Colorado and new English language arts and mathematics assessments developed by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC).

Colorado is a governing member of PARCC, a multi-state assessment consortium developing high-quality student assessments linked to the new, more rigorous English language arts and mathematics standards.

The new PARCC-developed online assessments for English language arts and mathematics will be ready for the 2014-15 school year. These new assessments will replace the Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) assessments in reading, writing and math.

The new English language arts and math assessments will have two components:

- A **performance-based assessment** component administered after approximately 75 percent of the school year
- An **end-of-year assessment** component administered after approximately 90 percent of the school year

More Details on the Assessments

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Performance-based assessments:

At each grade level, these assessments will include three tasks:

- A research simulation
- A literary analysis
- A narrative task

For each task, students will be asked to read one or more texts, answer several short comprehension and vocabulary questions and write an essay that requires them to draw evidence from the text(s).

End-of-year assessments:

At each grade level, these assessments will include four to five texts, both literary and informational (including social science/historical, scientific and technical texts at grades 6-11).

A number of short-answer comprehension and vocabulary questions will also be associated with each text.

MATHEMATICS

Performance-based assessments:

At each grade level, these assessments will include both short- and extended-response questions focused on conceptual knowledge and skills, and the mathematical practices of reasoning and modeling.

End-of-year assessments:

These assessments will primarily be comprised of short-answer questions focused on conceptual knowledge, skills and understandings.

Assessment Development

Colorado is working closely with other PARCC states to develop the items and tasks for both the performance-based and end-of-year assessments. Colorado educators, postsecondary faculty and community members from across the 22 PARCC states are conducting rigorous reviews of every item and passage being developed for the English language arts and mathematics assessments to ensure all test items are of the highest quality, aligned to the Common Core State Standards and fair for all student populations.

Field Testing and Practice Tests

Field tests reflecting both the performance-based and end-of-year assessment components are expected to be administered to more than one million students across PARCC states in the spring of 2014. Field testing will be at least one full grade level per school with multiple grade levels requested in some instances. PARCC worked with Education Testing Service (ETS) to draw sample Colorado schools for the field tests.

In spring 2014, PARCC will also provide access to a practice test. The PARCC Practice Test will include technology-enhanced items and will be delivered using the same technology platform that will be used for field testing, allowing students and educators in all PARCC states to become more familiar with the types of items that will appear on the PARCC assessments.

Assessment Sessions and Administration Timeframes

Once operational, the new state assessments in English language arts and mathematics will be administered in a total of nine sessions at each grade level:

Performance Based Assessment (five sessions)	End-of-Year Assessment (four sessions)
Three sessions for English language arts	Two sessions for English language arts
Two sessions for mathematics	Two sessions for mathematics

Districts will have a window of approximately four weeks to administer each component of the assessment. This time allows districts maximum flexibility to administer the assessment given their local technology capacity and schedules. Further guidance will be released after field testing.

Where can I learn more?

- CDE Assessment website (PARCC-specific): www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/newassess-parcc
- CDE Standards website: www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction
- Additional CDE fact sheets: www.cde.state.co.us/Communications

The Colorado Department of Education

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