



COLORADO
Department of
Higher Education

FAQ: PARCC-developed English Language Arts and Mathematics Assessments

Who is developing and reviewing the new CMAS PARCC-developed English language arts and mathematics assessments?

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is a multi-state consortia developing assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards. Colorado is a governing member of the PARCC consortia which allows Colorado Department of Education staff, along with staff from the Colorado Department of Higher Education and Colorado educators, to collaborate with individuals from across the U.S. to develop common assessments for English language arts and mathematics.

Hundreds of K-12 and postsecondary educators, content specialists and assessment experts from across the PARCC states are participating in thorough review of all items, including about 20 educators from Colorado. Their priority is to evaluate whether the items are closely aligned to the standards, are of high quality and are rigorous, fair and unbiased.

What grades will be assessed?

- 3rd -8th grade: Mathematics and English language arts
- 9-11th grade: English language arts
- There are three high school assessments in the two math sequences:
 - Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II
 - Integrated/International I, Integrated/International II and Integrated/International III

**8th graders taking Algebra I (or Integrated I) will be able to take the Algebra I assessment*

When will the new English language arts and mathematics assessments be given?

In the spring of 2015 (2014-15 school year), the new English language arts and mathematics assessments will be administered. Assessments in each content area will be administered in two components: a performance-based assessment administered after approximately 75 percent of the school year and an end-of-year assessment administered after approximately 90 percent of the school year.

Will the PARCC-developed English language arts and mathematics tests be given on a computer?

Yes, these tests will be computer-based, except for a small group of students with special needs.

Will students be able to practice before actually taking the English language art and mathematics assessments?

Sample items and tasks for mathematics and English language arts, along with a range of supplementary materials and additional resources, are available at: www.parcconline.org/samples/item-task-prototypes.

In late spring 2014, PARCC will provide access to a practice test for all interested schools. 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. [More information about PARCC task prototypes and sample items can be found here.](#)

Are the PARCC-developed English language arts and mathematics assessments being field tested?

In spring 2014, the PARCC field test will be administered to over one million students across the PARCC states. The PARCC field test will give students and local educators the opportunity to experience the administration of PARCC assessments. The field test will be conducted in a random selection of schools across PARCC states. The sample of students in the selected schools will represent the demographics of each state and of PARCC as a whole. PARCC worked with Education Testing Service (ETS) to draw a sample of Colorado schools for the field test, and districts with sampled schools were notified of their final selections in December 2013. More than a hundred Colorado districts are participating in the field test. While the field test assessments are designed to mirror those that will be used in the first PARCC administration in 2014-2015, most students participating in the field test will only take one component of the whole assessment in one content area in order to minimize testing burden on individual students and schools. For more information on PARCC field testing (including administration windows), [click here](#).

How quickly will assessment data be returned to districts?

PARCC results will be delayed the first year due to the need for standard-setting. Results are expected to be returned around September or October.

How much time will it take students to complete the entire PARCC assessment?

The updated English language arts and mathematics assessments replace TCAP tests; they are not additional assessments (with the exception of the 11th grade assessments which were not part of the TCAP assessments). Testing time will be

refined based on timing data collected from the field test. Current time estimates for typical students on all components of the English language arts and mathematics assessments are currently expected to be about (note that these times are largely comparable to current TCAP testing times):

- 8 hours annually in 3rd grade
- Just over 9 hours in grades 4-5
- A little less than 9 ½ hours in middle school
- A little more than 9 ½ hours in high school

These times refer to on-task time, or the time it will take the typical student to complete the PARCC summative tests in both content areas. Once field testing is completed, test timing will be re-evaluated to determine time-on-task for the operational assessment. While it is anticipated that most students will complete the assessments within these estimated times, schools will be asked to schedule a limited amount of additional time to ensure that students who work at slower rates can complete the assessments. Schools also will continue to make special accommodations for children with disabilities who have specific requirements regarding test administration.

Learn more at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/factsheetsandfaqs#PARCC>

(Source: Colorado Department of Education)

###