



Illinois State Board of Education

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PARCC Test Design and Administration Changes **Consolidates testing windows; reduces time for testing** *May 2015*

This spring the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment was successfully administered for the first time to five million students in 11 states and the District of Columbia, including 1.4 million in Illinois. Not only will this administration provide valuable information on student achievement to parents, teachers, and schools, but it has already provided the PARCC consortium with significant insight into how these assessments can best support student success in school and beyond.

The PARCC governing board, made up of state education commissioners and superintendents, asked states, districts, and teachers for their feedback on how to improve the PARCC assessment. The governing board listened and agreed to make important changes to the assessment that will be implemented in the 2015-16 school year. On May 20, the PARCC governing board voted:

- Consolidate the two testing windows for English language arts and math, formerly the Performance-Based Assessment and the End-of-Year exam, into one.
 - The single testing window will simplify administration of the test for states and schools that expressed concerns about the challenge of scheduling two testing windows.
 - The test window will be 30 days and will extend from when roughly 75 percent of the school year is complete to the 90 percent mark. Most schools will complete testing in one to two weeks during that window.
- Reduce the number of test units from eight or nine, depending on grade level, to six or seven.
- Reduce testing time for most students by 90 minutes.
 - Test time is reduced for most students by 60 minutes for the math portion and 30 minutes for English language arts (ELA). (Each year a limited number of students will participate in an additional embedded ELA field-test unit.)

Importantly, these changes preserve the quality of the assessment, which will continue to test the full range of standards, and the reliability of the results. The assessment will continue to allow all students to show what they can do and produce the kind of information our districts and teachers need to support our students. With this change, the goal will still be to return results to schools, teachers, and parents as close to the end of the school year as possible.

The development of the PARCC assessment is a collaborative process among participating states, with significant input from local educators, school leaders, and higher education faculty. The decisions made by the governing board validate this thoughtful process as they work to refine the assessment so it will best serve students and meet the needs of schools.