

Parent Guide to the PARCC Score Release

Later this fall families will receive score reports about their child's performance on the new statewide assessment, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). The reports will provide teachers and families with key information about each student's performance and areas for student growth. In preparation of receiving your child's scores on the new statewide assessment, let's recognize what the PARCC results do and do not mean:

- ***The results are one measure of how your child performs in math and English Language Arts.*** It helps teachers and school leaders understand how they can support your child to reach their full potential. One test and one score will not capture the fullness of your child's potential or the breadth of abilities.
- ***This is a new test with new expectations.*** The results look different than previous state assessments. Lower results do not mean your child is learning less or is less capable. It means the state assessments are measuring student performance in a different way, which is something we have never done before – and benchmarking student progress against what universities and employers tell us graduates really need to know and be able to do.
- ***This is a learning year – for all of us.*** Your child took a state assessment last spring that reflects the new state standards, which require higher levels of performance. These first assessment results provide parents and teachers with a starting point. We are committed to use the assessment results as a starting point. Moreover, moving to a new assessment system will take time to make all of the necessary adjustments in order to learn how to use the results well.
- ***This is a no-stakes year.*** The initial PARCC results will be used to guide our improvement efforts, but will not play a role in how our educators or schools are measured.
- ***This change is long overdue and necessary.*** Most would agree that Illinois' previous assessment system was flawed. Expectations on elementary assessments did not line up with expectations on high school assessments. Teachers and parents could not see how students progressed over time. The previous assessments did not adequately explore higher-level skills. Results were not available in time to inform instruction for the current year and results were not comparable across states. With or without new learning standards, we needed a change. This new assessment system is an important and necessary step in the right direction.