

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: HOW DOES COMMON CORE AFFECT ASSESSMENT?

HOW DOES THE COMMON CORE SYSTEM AFFECT TESTING?

By 2015, the New Mexico Standards Based Assessment (SBA) delivered in grades 3-11 will be developed and administered by PARCC—in other words, New Mexico students will be taking the same proficiency and accountability exams as students in 23 other states. These tests will be delivered and taken on-line. Starting in academic year 2012-2013, New Mexico will steadily raise the level of rigor for what students are expected to have learned in a given grade year until, by 2015, teachers and students have fully transitioned to the PARCC assessments.

WHAT IS THE PARCC ASSESSMENT?

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is developing new assessments in grades 3-11 that are aligned with the Common Core State Standards. PARCC is a consortium of 24 states working together to develop an assessment system aligned to the Common Core State Standards. New Mexico is a Governing State, or leader, in the PARCC consortium. The new assessments will be anchored in college and career readiness, provide comparability across states, and be able to assess and measure higher-order skills such as critical thinking, communications, and problem solving that are essential to the new learning standards.

WHAT, SPECIFICALLY, ARE THE TESTING STANDARDS TO WHICH TEACHERS WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS?

In 2012 the SBA will test students at the current New Mexico standards. In 2013 the NM SBA will include current standards and there will be a grade 3 Bridge Assessment that aligns with the CCSS. In 2014 there will be a Bridge Assessment for all tested grades that looks and feels more like the PARCC assessment. In 2015 New Mexico will deliver the PARCC assessment.

HOW WILL PARCC ASSESSMENT RESULTS BE USED?

Performance results provide information for various stakeholders, including to:

- Determine whether students are on track toward being college- and career-ready
- Assess the full range of the Common Core Standards, including standards that are difficult to measure
- Measure student proficiency, including for high and low performing students
- Provide data during the academic year to inform instruction, interventions and professional development
- Provide data for accountability, including measures of growth or improvement in student proficiency

HOW DOES COMMON CORE AFFECT ASSESSMENT? CONT.

WHAT KINDS OF PD WILL PREPARE TEACHERS FOR THE NEW ASSESSMENTS?

PARCC assessments don't just cover new material; they are a wholly different kind of test that requires students to *demonstrate* what they know through constructed response answers, projects and other means. To effectively test their students throughout the year and prepare them for this new testing environment, teachers will require "assessment literacy" training that introduces them to contemporary, evidence-based assessment design principles and helps them better understand how to construct rigorous evaluations of student progress. Examples of training that teachers will receive include:

- Overall PARCC Assessment structure
- Assessment types and purposes
- Accountability awareness
- Analysis of student work
- Data analysis and data-driven decision-making

HOW WILL THE SHIFT FROM THE CURRENT SBA TO THE PARCC ASSESSMENTS AFFECT SCHOOL GRADING?

The overall framework will remain the same but NMPED will have to calculate new cut scores.

WILL THE GRADE 11 PARCC ASSESSMENT SERVE AS THE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION TEST?

Yes, the state's graduation assessment requirements will apply to the PARCC test.

WHAT ARE THE TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PARCC ASSESSMENT?

By late spring of 2012, PARCC expects to provide its states a technology readiness tool to assist them in determining the capacity of their schools to meet the technology requirements for PARCC assessments and to identify gaps. The tool also records state progress in addressing those gaps.

WHAT ACCOMMODATIONS WILL BE MADE FOR DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS?

A consortium-wide working group is advising PARCC states on issues of accessibility, accommodation, and fairness, and to ensure the test design remains true to its assessment goals while offering appropriate accommodations. There will be PARCC-wide policies, described in a *Partnership Accommodations Manual* adopted by member states, for identifying eligible students, selecting acceptable accommodations and administering accommodations. PARCC member states' IEP teams will receive information and training so that accommodations guidelines are applied uniformly.

HOW DOES COMMON CORE AFFECT ASSESSMENT? CONT.

HOW WILL CURRENT STATE TEST FUNDING BE TRANSFERRED TO THE PARCC ASSESSMENTS?

The PED is not presently receiving any state funding for test development, and is paying for changes to the current SBA from an annual federal grant. It is anticipated that federal funding will continue for next generation assessments, but no announcements have been made. Districts receive funds in the State Equalization Grant to pay for production costs for tests (manufacture, distribution, collection, scoring) and to report test results. It is anticipated that this funding will continue. The cost of the PARCC assessment is now unknown, and we will reconsider funding needs as new information is made available.

WILL THERE BE SHORT CYCLE ASSESSMENTS IN 2012-2013 ALIGNED TO THE CCSS FOR GRADE 3?

A request for funding short-cycle assessments in grades 4 through 10 in school year 2012-2013 was submitted to the Legislature. If funded, the PED will conduct a request for information, asking testing companies to submit evidence that their assessment meets its requirements for technical quality. That process is planned for summer 2012. After it is completed, the PED will publish a list of approved short-cycle assessments as guidance to school districts.

WILL THE PARCC FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS REPLACE SHORT CYCLE ASSESSMENTS IN 2014-2015?

PARCC does not require participating states (such as NM) to adopt its two formative assessments. According to their current timeline, it does not appear that PARCC will have their formative assessments completed until after 2014-2015. Once the PARCC formative assessments are completed, NMPED will decide whether or not to require districts to use these assessments in place of their short cycle assessments.

WILL THE "BRIDGE ASSESSMENTS" IN 2013 AND 2014 BE ALIGNED TO BOTH THE CCSS AND THE CURRENT NEW MEXICO STATE STANDARDS?

The 2013 SBA for grade 3 will be bridged to the CCSS using tasks now in the state's test-item bank as well as newly developed items to be field tested in 2013. These dually aligned items will shift the emphasis from New Mexico standards to the CCSS. All other tested grades (4-8, 10 & 11) will take the regular SBA based on New Mexico state standards in 2013. In 2014, all tested grades (3-8, 10 & 11) will take the SBA Bridge Assessment, which will be dually aligned to the CCSS and the New Mexico state standards.

HOW DOES COMMON CORE AFFECT ASSESSMENT? CONT.

THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS ALLOW PARTICIPATING STATES TO ADOPT AN ADDITIONAL 15% OF THEIR OWN STANDARDS THAT ARE CULTURALLY FOCUSED. WILL THE 15% ADDITIONAL ELA STANDARDS BE ASSESSED BY THE PARCC ASSESSMENTS?

The 15% additional ELA standards will not be assessed at the state level through the PARCC assessments; however, implementing these standards is required and progress may be monitored at the district and/or school level. According to state ruling NMAC 6.29.13, this set of standards shall be utilized in conjunction with the Common Core State Standards. Teaching and learning within a cultural setting serves to support the following CCSS expectations:

- Build a foundation for college and career readiness, students need to learn to use writing as a way of offering and supporting opinions, demonstrating understanding of the subjects they are studying, and conveying real and imagined experiences and events.
- Identify real-life connections between words and their use.
- Students in K–5 apply the Reading standards to a range of text types selected from a broad range of cultures and periods including children’s adventure stories, folktales, legends, fables, fantasy, realistic fiction, and myth.
- Students in grades 6–12 apply the Reading standards a range of text types selected from a broad range of cultures and periods including the subgenres of adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, myths, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories, parodies, satire, and graphic novels.

WILL ALL OF THE PARCC ASSESSMENTS BE COMPUTER BASED?

The PARCC assessment system includes two summative assessments, and both will be given near the end of a school year. The Performance Based Assessment (PBA) will be a mix of constructed response items, performance assessment tasks, computer enhanced, and computer scored items. Some PBA items might be given in a paper and pencil format. The End of Year Assessment (EOY) will be given on a computer. The EOY in English Language Arts/Literacy will focus on reading comprehension, and the Math EOY will use innovative item types to measure advanced problem solving skills. PARCC assessments are given on computers to measure a deeper understanding of content and speed feedback on performance to schools.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE PARCC PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND THE END-OF-YEAR ASSESSMENT?

The PARCC assessment will include performance assessment items or tasks that go beyond choosing answers on multiple-choice questions to demonstrate deep understanding and advanced problem solving skills through simulations, mock experiments, and other innovative types of items.

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WILL THE PARCC ASSESSMENTS BE COMPUTER ADAPTIVE TESTS?

The PARCC assessments will not be computer adaptive tests, at least not in the near future. Computer adaptive tests deliver questions that are tailored to student ability to shorten testing time.

WHERE CAN I FIND THE LATEST INFORMATION ABOUT PARCC?

The PARCC website, www.parcconline.org, contains the latest updates on partnership activities and progress.