

## Back-to-School 2016-17 Webinar for School Administrators with State Superintendent Smith (Aug. 17, 2016) Frequently Asked Questions

### Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), Dynamic Learning Maps-Alternate Assessment (DLM-AA), and Illinois Science Assessment (ISA)

**Q: April 28, 2017, is the latest date shown in the [stated testing window](#) for PARCC, DLM-AA, and ISA. Is that the last test date or the last date to start the 30-day window?**

**A:** This date is intended to be the time by which all testing should be concluded. We recognize that some schools/districts may have extended breaks during March and April that would not allow for a full 30-day window. A school or district in that situation should reach out to us to determine an appropriate schedule under which they may complete testing.

**Q: Why has there been a delay in distributing PARCC results?**

**A:** Preliminary state averages were released at the Aug. 25, 2016, State Board meeting, and districts should now have access to individual student results. We will not release district/schoolwide PARCC final results or finalized state-level data until all districts have completed data corrections on their student and score files. Finalized statewide, district-, and school-level data will be posted on the [Illinois Report Card](#) at the end of October, which has been the practice in years past (notwithstanding 2015). We will continue to advocate for accelerating the timelines under which districts receive preliminary data for use in instructional decision-making.

**Q: What is the future of the PARCC assessment at the elementary level?**

**A:** Illinois will continue to administer the PARCC assessment for students in grades 3-8. ISBE has great confidence in the high quality of the PARCC exam, its alignment with the Illinois Learning Standards, and its ability to serve as an informative statewide assessment.

**Q: What should administrators tell families when they express concern that the PARCC exam has a limited lifespan in Illinois?**

**A:** ISBE is committed to our current PARCC administration contract through June 2018. ISBE seeks to continue administering high-quality, educator-developed items while maintaining comparability between states.

### SAT

**Q: Why did ISBE replace the PARCC assessment with the SAT for high school students?**

**A:** We believe that every junior should have access to a college entrance exam. This promotes equity and access and provides every student with greater opportunities in higher education. Stakeholders have overwhelmingly emphasized the need for equitable access to a college entrance exam for all students. They also stressed that the amount of testing time and the number of assessments administered to students need to be reduced. The SAT will eliminate redundancy and maximize the value of students' testing time.

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**Q: Is the SAT aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards? How can elementary districts map key indicators found in the Illinois Learning Standards to the SAT?**

**A:** Yes, the SAT is aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards and will continue to empower educators to measure college and career readiness. The best preparation is instruction aligned to the state standards. The test is not intended to narrow the curriculum or to suggest the prioritization of one standard over another.

**Q: Is the SAT required or optional for juniors?**

**A:** All high school juniors in Illinois are required to take the SAT starting in school year 2016-17. It will be provided at no cost to students.

**Q: Will all high school students be required to attend school the day the SAT is administered, or just juniors who are taking the exam?**

**A:** Districts have options on how to decide which students attend school on SAT testing day. The Illinois School Code allows districts to “bank” time to accommodate testing procedures, thereby allowing other students to attend only a portion or none of the day. Individual districts can decide whether to use this flexibility. For more information, see [Section 2-3.64a-5](#) of the School Code regarding the SAT as a required state assessment and [Section 18-8.05 \(F\)\(i\)](#) of the School Code regarding compilation of average daily attendance.

### **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**

**Q: What are key differences between ESSA and No Child Left Behind (NCLB)?**

**A:** ESSA replaces the rigid, prescriptive approach of NCLB with a federal-state partnership and guidelines that give the state more authority to make decisions and to choose standards, assessments, goals, and means of accountability. The “big acronyms” have been eliminated; annual yearly progress (AYP), highly qualified teacher (HQT) designation, and supplemental education services (SES) are no more. There are new limitations on secretarial authority, especially regarding state plans and waivers. ESSA also consolidates or eliminates a number of smaller grant programs. Finally, it allows for more creative funding solutions to meet students’ diverse needs.

**Q: When will ESSA go into effect?**

**A:** Old waivers expired and changes to grant programs began to go into effect during the 2015-16 school year. As of July 1, 2016, the new law is effective for noncompetitive formula grants at the federal level. New competitive grants go into effect in October. The new state accountability system and related interventions are still in development and will take effect in school year 2017-18.

### **Funding**

**Q: Will districts be receiving outstanding categorical grant payments from fiscal year 2016?**

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**A:** Yes, school districts will receive the outstanding categorical grant payments from FY 2016. FY 2016 categorical grant payment vouchers have been processed by ISBE and are now being processed by the Illinois Office of the Comptroller.

### **Illinois Report Card**

**Q: How is the high school graduation rate that is listed in IWAS and on the Illinois Report Card calculated?**

**A:** Please consult "[High School Graduation Rate](#)" or go to the [Illinois Report Card](#), find your school or district, click on "Academic Progress," and then "Graduation Rate."

**Q: Will data from the Comprehensive School Climate Inventory be included on the Illinois Report Card?**

**A:** Yes, we will be including results from approved alternate climate surveys beginning in October 2016.

**Q: Will early college credit be reported on the Illinois Report Card this year?**

**A:** Yes, we will share results from Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/Dual Credit on the Illinois Report Card in October 2016.

**Q: We understood that only the overall percentage of "proficient" and "excellent" teachers would be reported on the Illinois Report Card. Are we to understand that there will be two different numbers reported - the overall number of proficient and the overall number of excellent? The numbers won't be combined?**

**A:** Data from teacher evaluation pilot testing (a total of 182 districts participated) will not be reported on the Illinois Report Card in 2016.

### **Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS)**

**Q: Are districts required to implement the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) in its entirety during the 2016-17 school year?**

**A:** No, schools will be required to implement KIDS in school year 2017-18. Trainings for teachers and administrators will continue to be available in-person and online.

**Q: Have the 14 KIDS indicators been finalized?**

**A:** Fourteen key readiness measures have been identified by the KIDS Advisory Committee and have been recommended to ISBE for adoption. Information regarding the proposed changes will be disseminated via the Superintendent's Weekly Message and the [KIDS](#) website.

### **Data**

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**Q: Why is it necessary to report individual teacher evaluation data in the Employment Information System (EIS) when the statute requires submitting a summary of district evaluation data?**

**A:** Rather than rely on districts to aggregate teacher data in variable ways, we aggregate from individual results with an assurance that the process happens in a uniform manner for all teachers across Illinois. EIS also feeds the Education Licensure Information System for teacher licensure and renewal; we cannot renew licenses in the aggregate. EIS is a restricted-access system and only people with a legitimate need to know have login rights.

### **5Essentials**

**Q: What is the timeline for the 5Essentials Survey?**

**A:** The survey will be administered from Nov. 16, 2016, through Jan. 16, 2017.