



Illinois State Board of Education

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Fact Sheet: PARCC Field Testing

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Division of Public Information, Illinois State Board of Education

This spring 2014, Illinois will join other states in the consortium of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) in administering the PARCC field test to students. The PARCC field test will allow participating schools to gain familiarity with the testing process, both online and on paper, as PARCC develops the final assessments to be used during the 2014-15 school year. The field test will not generate student-level scores. These high-quality assessments are aligned to Illinois' new learning standards in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics and will require higher-level thinking and analysis from students.

PARCC estimates that more than one million students across the country will take part in field testing, and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) believes that tens of thousands of Illinois students, including high school students, will participate. Approximately 680 districts and 1,900 schools have agreed to participate in field testing in March and May of this year.

Across the state, field testing will vary. Participating students will take the Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) or the End-of-Year Assessment (EOY), or both, in one content area, either ELA or math. A "full test" for field testing is defined as both the PBA and the EOY in a given content area, ELA or math. To minimize the testing burden on schools, the majority of students participating in field testing will take only one component, the PBA or the EOY of the assessment, in one of the two content areas. Others will take the PARCC field test in one subject and the Illinois Standard Achievement Test (ISAT) in another. Still others will take one "half" of the PARCC in one subject and the ISAT in both ELA and math. Students in non-field test schools will take the entire ISAT. All Illinois students will take the ISAT in at least one subject, ELA or math. All fourth and seventh graders will take the science portion of the ISAT during the spring 2014 administration. Additionally, eleventh graders will take the PSAE in 2014 as they have in the past.

The ultimate goal is that all Illinois schools will eventually administer the PARCC online. ISBE recognizes, however, that not all schools currently have this capacity. Therefore, some schools will field test the PARCC through paper-based assessments. The State Board's FY15 budget recommendation includes a \$450 million capital request to support districts as they improve their technology infrastructure.

The PARCC will differ from the ISAT in a few key ways. First, the PARCC should reflect classroom lessons and experiences. Students will no longer "fill in the bubble" of a multiple choice exam but will instead have to analyze information and provide thoughtful answers. Second, the PARCC is designed to provide timely results and inform instruction. Students – and their teachers – will no longer have to wait until they are in the next grade to learn their scores and see where they require additional help and attention. Third, the PARCC has five performance levels, which will better help schools to target assistance to students. Finally, the PARCC is fully aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards, which set college and career readiness expectations at every grade level.

