



# Rhode Island's PARCC Assessment: A Short Guide for Parents and Guardians

In July 2010, Rhode Island voluntarily adopted new, college and career-ready academic standards called the **Common Core State Standards** in an effort to better prepare students for the next steps in their education and in life.

In order to meet the new standards, school districts have determined their own curriculum and teachers are providing daily instruction to ensure that students can demonstrate the knowledge and skills specified in the standards. Accurate, fair, and transparent assessments aligned to these standards tell us whether students are learning. **PARCC assessments** will also help us determine whether our students are on track to be successful in college and careers after graduation.

## What is PARCC?

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is a **group of states** that have worked together to develop high quality tests in English language arts and mathematics for grades 3-8 and high school.

Rhode Island joined the PARCC consortium as a Governing Member in spring 2010. Since then, educators in elementary, middle, and high schools and colleges and universities across the state have contributed thousands of hours to develop the PARCC assessment and ensure that it accurately measures the knowledge and skills laid out in the Common Core State Standards.

## What are PARCC assessments?

PARCC assessments are tests developed by educators to allow students to show what they know and can do. The assessments provide information to help students improve their skills and gain knowledge to succeed in school and life. These carefully designed tests effectively measure achievement across all levels and inform teachers and parents about whether students are on track to be successful in college and careers after graduation.

## Why PARCC?

PARCC assessments are aligned to the Common Core State Standards and measure students' knowledge and skills, like critical thinking and problem-solving, in the core content areas of English-language arts and mathematics. Rather than lending themselves to "test prep," these assessments do a better job of measuring what happens in the classrooms of effective teachers. In addition:

- ✓ PARCC provides **high-quality assessments** that serve students of all achievement levels – advanced, average, and struggling – by identifying where they have areas of need, as well as where they are excelling.
- ✓ PARCC assessments are **well aligned** with what students are expected to know and be able to do at each grade level.
- ✓ PARCC assessments will provide parents, teachers, and schools with valuable information about student and school progress and provide teachers with information they need to improve teaching and learning.

### *Overview of the PARCC Assessment*

PARCC assessments are available for grades 3 through 8 and high school and cover **English language arts/literacy and mathematics** (including Algebra I and Geometry assessments for students enrolled in those courses

PARCC assessments are designed to measure **critical thinking and problem-solving skills.**

Rhode Island educators-along with educators from all of the PARCC states-have spent **thousands of hours** over the past four years to develop high-quality items on the assessments.