



Parent FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

What is PARCC?

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is a group of states working together to develop high-quality assessments that give teachers, students and parents information they can use to improve instruction and meet the needs of individual students. The PARCC assessments are well aligned with what students are expected to know and be able to do at each grade level and they serve students who are academically advanced, on grade level, and struggling by identifying where they have areas of need, as well as where they are excelling.

What subjects and grades are tested on the PARCC assessments?

Rhode Island administers the PARCC assessments in grades 3-10 in ELA/Literacy and grades 3-8 in Mathematics. Algebra I and Geometry assessments are available for middle or high school students enrolled in those courses.

What types of accommodations are allowed for students with disabilities?

There are several ways in which PARCC is made accessible for student with disabilities. First, PARCC uses universal design principles that guide the construction of the assessments and test questions in ways that make them easily understood for all students. Second, because PARCC is a computer-based test, we have many more options for which accommodations to offer. These accommodations can now incorporate assistive technology devices and include embedded American Sign Language videos and closed captioning for students with hearing impairments. Third, PARCC allows accessibility features (similar to universal design components) that support instructional strategies like highlighting important evidence in reading passages, providing glossaries of words, and allowing the mathematics assessments to be read aloud if a student has difficulty reading. Having accommodations or using accessibility features does not impact a student's score in any way.

Why are the PARCC results important?

PARCC assessments benefit students, parents, schools, and states because they provide us with information that helps us document student progress toward our learning goals in English language arts and math. We all want the best possible education for all of our children. Analyzing the results of state assessments can help us meet this goal. Results provide parents with valuable information about their student's and school's progress and provide school leaders with information that contributes to their understanding about whether classroom instruction is lining up with what students need to know. Results also provide teachers with information they need to improve teaching and learning. Participation in high-quality annual assessments enables all of us to see whether schools and districts are doing all they can to help students succeed.

Parents and students deserve to know to what extent schools are meeting students' needs and where schools need to improve.

When will PARCC results be sent to parents?

PARCC's goal is to have results returned close to the end of the school year (June/July timeframe) each year. Because this is the first year of administration, the performance-level setting process must take place prior to the release of PARCC results. As a result, parents should expect to receive student reports this fall.

Who is scoring the PARCC assessment and what are their credentials?

PARCC states partner with our testing company, Pearson, which recruits and trains qualified scorers at the national and local levels. Applicants complete a rigorous and selective evaluation, hiring and training process to qualify as PARCC scorers. Accuracy and consistency of scoring is monitored throughout the scoring process. Only applicants who have a Bachelor's degree or higher in mathematics, English, education or a related field may be hired to score PARCC assessments. Not all scorers are teachers, but most have previous teaching experience and half are *current* K-12 teachers.

Can we compare PARCC results with NECAP results?

PARCC was a new assessment for the 2014-15 school year and we recognize that student achievement may differ between PARCC and NECAP. We will not measure PARCC results against the results of NECAP because they are different tests that measure different standards. NECAP measured the old Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) and Grade Span Expectations (GSEs) whereas PARCC measures progress toward college and career readiness using our new Common Core State Standards. Your child's performance on PARCC assessments in 2015 will set a new baseline or starting point. Going forward, we can use these baselines to see whether our state as a whole, our schools, and our students are making progress towards our state standards.

Will PARCC results affect my child's grades?

The scores and achievement levels students attain on the 2015 PARCC assessments will set a baseline, or starting point, that will be used to measure progress going forward. In future years, schools and districts may decide to use PARCC results as a component in determining students' grades. For example, schools could choose to use PARCC results from the Algebra I or Geometry assessments as their end-of-course assessment. The use of PARCC results is a decision that schools, districts, or school committees will make at the local level.

Will schools or school districts use PARCC as a graduation requirement?

RIDE will not use PARCC assessments as a statewide component of our Diploma System until the Class of 2020, although local school districts may decide to use PARCC assessments as a graduation requirement beginning with the Class of 2017.