

# Setting a New Baseline: New Test, New Scores



The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) tests were administered for the first time in spring 2015. These tests aligned with new and more rigorous state standards in English language arts and math and measure what students should know and be able to do for college and careers or for the next phase of instruction in earlier grades.

## Why We Should Be Prepared for PARCC Performance to Be Different from NECAP:

- The PARCC tests are simply different than the NECAP tests.** PARCC tests measure how students are performing against our new Common Core State Standards whereas NECAP tests measured student performance against our previous Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) and Grade Span Expectations (GSEs). In addition, PARCC tests will use a different scale for score reports and have five performance levels rather than NECAP's four levels. For these reasons, we aren't able to compare PARCC and NECAP test results.
- PARCC tests will set a new baseline.** Keep in mind that this was our first year administering these tests, so we will be establishing a new baseline or starting point. Going forward, we can use these baselines to see whether our state, our schools, and our students are making progress.
- Over time, PARCC scores will improve.** While teachers have been gearing up for our new standards for almost four years, we know that it takes time to have curriculum and instruction aligned to standards firmly in place. Students will also need time to transition to these new learning expectations. Therefore, scores are expected to improve as teachers and students acquire the skills and knowledge to teach and learn our state standards at higher levels with each passing year.
- Getting ready for next steps.** Score reports and released items will provide us with tools and information to better align curriculum, identify gaps in curriculum or for individual students and calibrate our expectations for how well students should demonstrate their learning on local measures. PARCC provides resources that will support our efforts to improve students' performance. With this information, students, parents and teachers can start working in partnership to ensure that kids are fully prepared for success.

## Why PARCC Results are Important:

- PARCC assessments benefit Rhode Island's students, parents, and schools.** Because PARCC assessments are aligned with the our current learning standards, results provide parents and the community with valuable information about student and school progress and provide school leaders with information about whether classroom instruction is preparing students for college and careers. The results also inform students about where they may need to improve in their learning. In short, participation in PARCC enables Rhode Islanders to see whether we are doing everything we can to help students succeed.

## PARCC Additional Resources:

PARCC Information, Tools, and Tutorials: <http://www.parcconline.org/resources>

Educator Resources: <http://www.parcconline.org/resources/educator-resources>

Parent Resources: <http://www.parcconline.org/resources/parent-resources>