

Frequently Asked Questions for Parents (1/4)

<p>1. What is PARCC?</p>	<p>The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is a group of states working together to develop a set of assessments (aligned to Common Core standards) that measure whether students are on track to be successful in college and their careers. These high quality, computer-based K–12 assessments in Mathematics and English Language Arts/Literacy give teachers, schools, students, and parents better information whether students are on track in their learning and for success after high school, and tools to help teachers customize learning to meet student needs. The PARCC assessments will be ready for states to administer during the 2014-15 school year.</p>
<p>2. Is the Common Core the same in every state?</p>	<p>No. States can customize 15 percent of the standards. Massachusetts added more than 20 math standards, as well as pre-kindergarten and ELA standards.</p> <p>Source: http://www.doe.mass.edu/parcc/10Questions.pdf</p>
<p>3. Who is taking PARCC this year?</p>	<p>All students in Grades 3-8, 9, and 11. Students in 10th grade will continue to take the MCAS for graduation purposes (until the class of 2018). Students required to take the Science test will continue to take MCAS Science. Students with disabilities who take the Alternative form of MCAS will continue to take the MCAS Alt.</p>
<p>4. What does PARCC look like?</p>	<p>PARCC is a computer-based test with a paper/pencil option for districts. It includes 2 parts in English/language arts and 2 parts in math. The first part (Performance Based Assessment – PBA) focuses on writing and analytical skills, and is primarily hand-scored by people. The second part (End of Year Assessment – EOY), which is computer-scored, targets reading and math comprehension.</p> <p>Combined, the 2 parts provide an important assessment of your child’s knowledge, skills, and ability to think critically.</p> <p>Source: http://www.doe.mass.edu/parcc/WhosTakingPARCC.pdf</p>

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<p>5. What does each part of PARCC look like (PBA vs. EOY)?</p>	<p>The ELA PBA includes a literature analysis, research, and narrative session. For each task, students will be asked to read one or more texts, answer several short comprehension and vocabulary questions, and write an essay that requires them to draw evidence from the text(s).</p> <p>The ELA/Literacy EOY involves reading 4-5 texts, both literary and informational, and answering a number of short-answer comprehension and vocabulary questions associated with each text. The EOY will focus on only two areas: reading comprehension and vocabulary. The EOY does not include a writing prompt.</p> <p>The Math PBA will ask students to solve problems involving the key 3 knowledge and skills for their grade level, as identified by the Common Core State Standards. In addition, students must express mathematical reasoning, construct a mathematical argument, and apply concepts to solve real-world problems.</p> <p>The Math EOYs will be comprised primarily of short-answer questions focused on conceptual knowledge, skills, and understandings.</p> <p>You can find sample computer- and paper-based tests, in both ELA and Math at www.parcconline.org/computer-based-samples.</p>
<p>6. If it's a "test drive," does it count?</p>	<p>Yes. The 2014-2015 PARCC results will be official. Just as with MCAS, students will receive performance results. Parents and teachers will receive reports, and teachers can use that information to help pinpoint students' strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>Source: http://www.doe.mass.edu/parcc/WhosTakingPARCC.pdf</p>
<p>7. Will retakes be allowed on PARCC?</p>	<p>PARCC states will have access to retests once per year for grades 3-8 ELA/literacy and mathematics. For the high-school end-of-course assessment, states can retake up to 3 times.</p>
<p>8. When will the tests take place?</p>	<p>As of September 2014: The tentative schedule is as follows:</p> <p>PBA (computer) March 16-April 10 PBA (paper) March 23-April 3 EOY (computer) May 4-29 EOY (paper) May 11-22</p> <p>Note: Schools have the discretion of when to administer PARCC within the above time frame</p>



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<p>9. How long is each session supposed to last?</p>	<p>PARCConline.org has provided great information on how long the tests should be administered for - by grade, subject, and test type (PBA vs. EOY). Please see http://parcconline.org/update-session-times for details of each session.</p>
<p>10. Which BPS schools will partake in PARCC?</p>	<p>All BPS schools with students in Grades 3-8, 9, and 11.</p>
<p>11. Why did BPS recommend switching to PARCC (from MCAS)?</p>	<p>Our efforts to eliminate achievement gaps are strengthened when we accurately measure academic performance in ways that are connected to what our students are actually learning. We believe the PARCC assessment is a better tool than MCAS for this purpose. The Massachusetts state assessment, MCAS, is 17 years old and was never intended to be a predictor of college readiness – PARCC is. While DESE is still evaluating whether to replace MCAS with PARCC, it is clear that Massachusetts will soon adopt a next-generation assessment that is aligned with Common Core standards and online learning.</p>
<p>12. How can I help my student(s) prepare?</p>	<p>It is recommended that students and parents familiarize themselves with the MA Curriculum Frameworks, which have been refreshed in 2011 to embed the Common Core Standards. Please see this link for more information: http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/commoncore/</p> <p>The National PTA has also developed a Parents' Guide to Student Success in response to the new common set of learning standards. Please see this link for more information: http://www.pta.org/parents/content.cfm?ItemNumber=2583</p> <p>In addition, it is recommended that students are exposed and utilizing technology as frequently as possible – whether at home, school, or their local library. Lastly, it is recommended that parents and students explore PARCConline.org and to take practice questions and tests. Please see the following links for practice resources: http://www.parcconline.org/practice-tests and http://parcconline.org/samples/item-task-prototypes</p>
<p>13. How will we compare MCAS and PARCC?</p>	<p>The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will be using "Equipercntile Linking to translate the results between PARCC and MCAS. Please see this link for more information http://www.doe.mass.edu/parcc/CompareResults.pdfhttp://www.doe.mass.edu/parcc/CompareResults.pdf</p>

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<p>14. My student has learning disabilities. What accommodation (s) will be provided to him/her?</p>	<p>Please see this link from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education which lists PARCC accommodations (with MCAS for comparison) - http://www.doe.mass.edu/parcc/Accessibility-Accommodations.pdf.</p> <p>In general, PARCC will meet or exceed the MCAS' current accessibility and accommodation tools.</p>
<p>15. When will we see the results?</p>	<p>Fall of 2015</p>
<p>16. Why is technology highly encouraged now?</p>	<p>Technology is encouraged to prepare students for college and career success in the 21st century. It will be difficult succeed in the 21st century if we do not blend technology into the classrooms now.</p>
<p>17. What do the schools think about this?</p>	<p>At the 2014 August Leadership Institute, school leaders in each Network were asked to weigh-in on the recommendation to transition to PARCC. Overall, 95% of schools agreed with the decision to administer PARCC in 2015.</p>
<p>18. What was the purpose of the 2013-2014 PARCC field test?</p>	<p>This field test helped to ensure that the assessment was valid, reliable, and fair. It also gave schools the chance to check their readiness in advance of the operational test in 2014-15.</p>
<p>19. Where else can I get more information on PARCC and MA Curriculum Frameworks?</p>	<p>Please see the following resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. http://bostonpublicschools.org/parcc (BPS PARCC/Common Core Site) 2. http://www.doe.mass.edu/parcc/ (MA Dept. of Education PARCC Site) 3. http://www.doe.mass.edu/parcc/10Questions.pdf (MA DOE FAQs) 4. http://www.doe.mass.edu/parcc/CommTool/10things.pdf (MA DOE FAQs for Parents) 5. http://parconline.org/ (National PARCC Site) 6. http://parconline.org/for-parents (National PARCC Site dedicated to Parents) 7. http://www.corestandards.org/ (Common Core Standards Site)