



PARCC FAQ

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OVERVIEW

What is PARCC?

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is a computer based assessment of Mathematics and English Language Arts/Literacy Skills that measure whether students are on track to be successful in college and their careers and if students are meeting the new common core standards. The PARCC is designed to replace the NJASK in grades 3-8 in Language Arts and Mathematics and the HSPA in grade 11. The PARCC will be administered to students beginning in the spring of 2015.

Will the PARCC be used for academic placement for the 2015-2016 school year?

No. The 2015 PARCC will have no academic consequences for students. It will be used as baseline data only, and will not be used for academic placement. Academic placement regulations detail multiple measures which provide the data needed to appropriately place students without the need for state standardized test results.

Do I have the option for my child to opt-out of the PARCC?

The district is obligated by state regulations to administer the PARCC to all students. SOMSD recognizes that some families have concerns about their children participating in PARCC, and that some families may refuse to allow their child/children to be tested. This year, the state has left it up to local school districts to decide how to handle those situations in which parents choose to have their children refuse to take the standardized assessment. If you are planning to refuse to allow your son or daughter to take the assessment, please note the following:

- There will be no negative consequences or disciplinary action for any student who is not taking the assessment.
- Please send an email or a letter to the building principal as soon as possible indicating that you are refusing to have your child take the PARCC.
- Please do not keep your child home from school. We are required to follow all attendance rules and regulations.
- If you choose to not have your child take the PARCC, one letter will suffice for a refusal of the Performance Based Assessment in March, including make-up testing.
- Non-PARCC taking students should bring a book to keep them occupied during the hours of testing. They will remain in the classroom with the other students who are being tested. We cannot provide a separate space for non-testing students due to lack of personnel and space.

When will the PARCC be administered?

The PARCC is composed of 2 parts, the Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) or long answer questions and the End-of-Year (EOY) component or short answer questions. Beginning March 2, 2015, the Performance-Based Assessment portion of the PARCC will be administered to all students in grades 3 through 11. Beginning April 27, 2015, the End-of-Year portion of the PARCC will be administered to all students in grades 3 through 11.

ENSURING STUDENTS ARE PREPARED FOR PARCC**How are the schools preparing our students academically?**

All curricula are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, and the instructional sequence has been reorganized to address the most crucial PARCC content before testing begins in March. PARCC testing mirrors the kind of high quality work students are already doing in our classrooms throughout the year.

Are there sample PARCC available?

PARCC released online tutorials that demonstrate how to navigate the test. These tutorials and sample assessments are accessible at this web address: <http://practice.parcc.testnav.com/#>.

What are schools doing to help students master the technological skills required by the PARCC?

A new keyboarding program for students in grades 2-5 called Learning.com was introduced this year. It is designed to help our students improve in keyboarding using EasyTech Keyboarding skills, with a focus on basic finger placement and posture. Keyboarding practice is crucial as we prepare our students for the 21st century skill of touch typing. Students in grades 3-5 are already being given time during library/media to engage with the program. In grade 2 the program will be introduced in the late winter.

What can families do to help prepare students for the PARCC?

Learning.com is also available for students to use online from home or from the library or any other site which provides internet access. A user name and password will be provided to every child in the district from grades 2-5. Middle School students will also have access to Learning.com outside of school hours, for practice to improve their touch typing skills.

USE OF PARCC DATA**Is passing the PARCC a requirement for graduation?**

No. School counselors can certify that a student in the classes of 2016, 2017, and 2018 met the state proficiency requirements in many ways. For instance, a student may demonstrate proficiency via an SAT or ACT score in addition to the NJDOE's long standing portfolio appeal process. However, if a student does pass a PARCC in English Language Arts or Mathematics, the school may use those scores as a demonstration of proficiency. The state will be providing additional guidance to schools on how to determine proficiencies on substitute assessments and the PARCC. It is anticipated that passing the PARCC will become a graduation requirement for the class of 2019.

Do students in the middle school who are taking Algebra I or Geometry have to take the Algebra I or Geometry PARCC?

Yes. If a student is enrolled in Algebra I or Geometry, while in middle school, he/she will be administered the PARCC Algebra I or Geometry assessment in lieu of the grade level math PARCC.

Will the Performance Based Assessment (PBA) and the End-of-Year (EOY) Assessment be scored separately?

No, students will receive a single score report that brings together the student's performance on both the Performance Based Assessment (PBA) and the End-of-Year (EOY) Assessment sessions.

Is a student who does not pass the PARCC required to retake the assessment?

No. A student is not required to retake an assessment or retake the course based on their PARCC scores.

TEST ADMINISTRATION AND SCHEDULE

What weeks will the PARCC be administered for each grade?

Grade:	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
March 2-6			✓			✓			✓
March 9-13		✓			✓			✓	
March 16-20	✓			✓			✓		
March 23-27	Make-Up Exams for All Grades								

Please note: The schedule for the second round of PARCC testing will be determined after we complete the first cycle.

How long is the PARCC?

The Performance-Based Assessment portion of the PARCC requires 5 sessions (2 Math, 3 Language Arts) and the End-of-Year portion of the PARCC requires 3 or 4 exam sessions (2 Math, 1 or 2 Language Arts). The chart below compares overall testing times between the NJASK and the PARCC per year.

Total Days of Testing Per Student by Grade Level per year		
Grade Level	PARCC	NJASK / HSPA
3	8 days (approx. 65 minutes a day)	4 days (111 minutes per day)
4*	8 days (approx. 67 minutes a day)	4 days (111 minutes per day)
5	8 days (approx. 67 minutes a day)	4 days (113 minutes per day)
6	9 days (approx. 72 minutes a day)	4 days (129 minutes per day)
7	9 days (approx. 72 minutes a day)	4 days (129 minutes per day)
8*	9 days (approx. 72 minutes a day)	4 days (129 minutes per day)
9	9 days (approx. 74 minutes a day)	0 days
10	9 days (approx. 74 minutes a day)	0 days

11	9 days (approx. 75 minutes a day)	3 days (123 minutes per day)
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*excludes Science. Science will still be administered as a paper and pencil test.

Will a student be scheduled for more than one test session per day?

No. Although multiple sessions will be given in one day, a student will participate in only one test session per day. Each testing session must be completed within the same day and schools must schedule according to "Total Administration Time," so that students who need the additional time are able to use it.

When will the 2015 PARCC scores be available to school districts?

Student score reports will be available toward the end of September/early October 2015.

Are accommodations available for students?

Yes. The [PARCC Field Test Accessibility Features And Accommodations Overview](#) provides a helpful summary of the accommodations available. The [PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual](#) on the PARCC website provides guidance to districts and decision-making teams to ensure that the PARCC provide valid results for all participating students.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Is our District PARCC ready?

The South Orange and Maplewood School District meets and exceeds all recommendations provided by PARCC and the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). All school districts were required to provide a detailed listing of the network infrastructure and computer devices that would be used to administer the PARCC. Reports were made available rating each school's readiness on a scale of 0 through 9, where 0 represents no PARCC technology readiness and 9 represents that all recommendations were met or exceeded. SOMSD and all individual schools received a score of 9 in all categories.

What technology equipment will my child use for the PARCC?

Each student will use a Chrome book when taking the PARCC. A headset and mouse will also be available. Each building has at least 1 Chrome book for every 2 students in grades 3-11. The Chrome books may be used for instruction and PARCC training throughout the year. However, Chrome books will not be available for instruction during test administration periods.

Does our District have the appropriate Internet and Wi-Fi Connectivity?

Yes.

- The internet circuit was upgraded from a 100 mbps connection to a 1000 mbps connection.
- The firewall was upgraded to handle the extra traffic
- The main switch was upgraded to handle the extra traffic