

# **Introduction to PARCC: The next generation assessment**

January 2014

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF  
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY  
**EDUCATION**



# AGENDA

1. PARCC defined
2. Why field testing PARCC makes sense for Massachusetts
3. Previewing PARCC
4. MCAS to PARCC transition plan
5. This year's field test (plans, exemptions, accountability)
6. Technology readiness
7. Engagement with educators and the public
8. Graduation requirements



# What Is PARCC?

## The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers

1. Made up of 18 states (plus Washington, DC and US Virgin Islands); Massachusetts has a leading role
2. Developing common, high quality **English language arts and Literacy (ELA)** and **mathematics tests** for **grades 3–11**
  - a) **Linked to what students need to know for college and careers**
  - b) **Computer-based**
3. Includes two summative assessment components, for use starting in the 2014-15 school year:
  - a) **Performance-Based Assessment (PBA)**
  - b) **End-of-Year Assessment (EOY)**



# PARCC in Massachusetts

## 2010 Memorandum of Agreement

- ★ Governor Patrick, Secretary Reville, and Commissioner Chester signed a memorandum of agreement committing to adopt PARCC assessments "*...provided they are at least as comprehensive and rigorous as our current MCAS assessments, if not more so.*"
- ★ The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will make this determination



# What's In It for Our Children?

*Why would our state, with such high achieving students and the best assessments in the nation, consider changing to PARCC?*

1. The purpose of the next generation PARCC assessments is different than the purpose of MCAS
  - a) MCAS gauges student proficiency within K-12
  - b) PARCC will assess whether students are *on track for college and career*.
2. Whether we adopt PARCC or not, we need next generation assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards which have been incorporated into the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks
3. MCAS is entering its 17<sup>th</sup> year. We won't stay in first place by standing still



# What's in it for Our Children?

4. MCAS assesses writing in three grades: 4, 7 and 10. PARCC will assess writing in *every grade*, 3-11 with students assessed on three kinds of writing:
  - a) Literary Analysis
  - b) Narrative Writing
  - c) Research

PARCC students will be writing in response to reading or writing to a source, skills that are very important in college and in an increasing number of jobs.

In mathematics, students will receive credit for their work and have access to graphing, measuring, and problem solving tools.



# What's In It for Our Children?

5. PARCC will provide both a formative and summative *system of assessments* that enables educators to gather information about student progress and needs throughout the school year.
6. Massachusetts continues to play key leadership and “hands on” roles in the design and development of the PARCC assessments. All indications to date are that PARCC will be a robust assessment system.



# What's In It for Our Children?

7. The PARCC consortium received \$186M to design a new assessment system. PARCC provides quality *and* economies of scale: **PARCC will cost MA less per student to administer.**
8. PARCC states benefit from a deeper well of content and assessment expertise, plus greater leverage with publishers and testing companies.





# What's In It for Our Children?

9. Students benefit from better supported transitions as they move across state lines. This feature is especially important for military families.
10. Opportunity to closely partner with higher education institutions and the business community around what future students and future employees need to know.
  - a) Commitment from public institutions of higher education to honor PARCC scores for placement decisions



# PARCC

## Previewing the new Assessment



# PARCC: A More Comprehensive Assessment *System!*

- ★ PARCC will include:
  - ★ Diagnostic and Midyear Assessments (both optional)
  - ★ Performance based assessments
  - ★ Summative assessments
  - ★ Technology-enhanced items
  - ★ Timely data that will support teachers to meet the needs of their current students



# PARCC Assessment Design: English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics, Grades 3-11

BEGINNING OF YEAR

END OF YEAR

## 2 Optional Assessments/Flexible Administration

### Diagnostic 2-8 / K-1 Formative Assessments

- Early indicator of student knowledge and skills to inform instruction, supports, and PD
- Non-summative

### Mid-Year Assessment

- Performance-based
- Emphasis on hard-to-measure standards
- Potentially summative

### Performance-Based Assessment (PBA)

- Extended tasks
- Applications of concepts and skills
- Required

### End-of-Year Assessment (EOY)

- Innovative, computer-based items
- Required

**Speaking & Listening** *(required non-summative assessment)*

# Five Performance Levels

---

Level 1 Did not demonstrate partial command

Level 2 Partial Command

Level 3 Moderate Command

Level 4 Strong Command

Level 5 Distinguished Command

---

Level 4 (Strong Command) is pitched to a level of rigor currently described by NAEP's Proficient level (solid command of the content) and is the proposed level for earning a college-ready determination.



# How PARCC will Assess Grade 7 Analytic Writing *(sample released item)*

You have read three texts describing Amelia Earhart. All three include the claim that Earhart was a brave, courageous person.

- “Biography of Amelia Earhart”
- “Earhart’s Final Resting Place Found”
- “Amelia Earhart’s Life and Disappearance”

Consider the argument each author uses to demonstrate Earhart’s bravery.

Write an essay that analyzes the strength of the arguments about Earhart’s bravery in at least two of the texts. Remember to use textual evidence to support your ideas.



# PARCC will Assess Key Shifts in Mathematics Standards

1. Focuses on fewer standards per grade:
  - a) each standard addressed more deeply
  - b) coherent progression across grades
2. Conceptual understanding of topics is foundational.
3. Students are expected to apply and extend their knowledge to real-life modeling and problem solving.
4. At the high school level, PARCC will be an end of course test.



**PARCC**

**MCAS to PARCC  
Transition Plan**





# Statutory Responsibilities of the Board of Elementary & Secondary Education

- Set state standards for:
  - student academic performance
  - standards for high school graduation
- Adopt system for assessing:
  - student performance
  - school and district performance

(M.G.L. c. 69, s. 1D; M.G.L. c. 69, s. 1I)



# Two-year “Test Drive” Putting PARCC to the Test!

1. We will use the results of the field test to evaluate the rigor of PARCC items in Fall 2014
2. We, and many other organizations, are conducting independent reviews to evaluate PARCC’s readiness to deliver a quality assessment
3. We will analyze the results of 2014/15 test results and the summer 2015 standard setting to inform the Board’s decision to adopt PARCC in Fall 2015



# MCAS to PARCC Transition Plan

## 2013-2014 School Year

November 19, 2013	Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted on plan for two-year “test drive” of the PARCC assessment. <b>They did not vote to adopt PARCC</b>
Spring 2014	PARCC field test administered in randomly selected Massachusetts schools/classrooms



# MCAS to PARCC Transition Plan

## 2014-2015 School Year

Early fall 2014	Analysis of PARCC field-test data
Late fall 2014	Board receives update on PARCC field test and operational test that includes an assessment of whether PARCC is on track to truly measure college and career readiness
Winter/spring 2014–2015	Massachusetts schools administer first operational PARCC or MCAS assessments in grades 3-8; all grade 10 students will continue to take MCAS in order to qualify for the Competency Determination



# MCAS to PARCC Transition Plan

## 2015-2016 School Year

Summer/early fall 2015 Standard-setting for PARCC tests; analysis of operational data

Late fall 2015 **Board of Elementary and Secondary Education votes on whether or not to adopt PARCC**

Spring 2016 Administration of PARCC operational tests for grades 3-8; grade 10 students will continue to take MCAS to qualify for the Competency Determination



# The PARCC Decision

- 1. Rigor:** ESE will use the results of the field test to evaluate the rigor of PARCC items in Fall 2014
- 2. Quality:** ESE and other organizations are conducting comprehensive, independent reviews to evaluate PARCC's readiness to deliver a quality assessment
- 3. Opportunity:** ESE will evaluate PARCC's capacity to assess standards and measure skills and abilities we do not currently assess with MCAS



**PARCC**

**Field Test  
2013-2014**



# Why Are We Doing a Field Test in Spring 2014?

1. The test itself is being tested. **No student, school or district PARCC results will be reported. MCAS will continue to be reported.**
2. Spring 2014 is *the only PARCC field test* and the one chance Massachusetts students will have to influence which items make it on to the final PARCC assessments.
3. The primary purposes of the PARCC Field Test are to:
  - a) Examine the quality of the PBA and EOY items so that PARCC can build assessment forms for the 2014-15 school year (speaking and listening will not be part of the field test);
  - b) Pilot assessment administration procedures; and
  - c) Give schools and districts the opportunity to experience the administration of PARCC assessments.





# PARCC Field Test Sample

- ★ Public schools and classrooms have been randomly selected to participate in Spring 2014 field testing
  - ★ Most participating students will take one field test in one content area this spring
  - ★ Some students will take the field test on a computer, others on paper
  - ★ Students taking MCAS-Alt, and those who require Braille, ASL, or other unavailable accommodations, will **not** participate in field test
  - ★ ELL students in their first year in the U.S. may take the PARCC ELA test at the principal's discretion. As in the past, they must take a mathematics test (either MCAS, or if they were selected, PARCC)



# PARCC Field Test Sample

1. National Sample Size:
  - a) Over **1.2 million** students are needed to participate in the Field Test to evaluate the quality of items for PARCC's operational assessments in 2014-2015
  
2. Massachusetts Sample:
  - a) Approximately 350 districts
  - b) Over 1,100 schools
  - c) Roughly 75,000 students in grades 3–11
  - d) Nearly 700 schools will administer computer-based tests, and close to 400 schools will administer paper and pencil tests



# MCAS Exemption for Students Taking the PARCC PBA

1. In order to avoid a requirement that students must be “double-tested,” the Commissioner has offered school districts the option to exempt classes that participate in the PARCC Performance Based Assessment (PBA) Field Test from the 2014 MCAS testing requirement in the same subject
2. We have also taken steps to minimize the chances that a school’s achievement scores will be disadvantaged because it participated in the field test



# Maintaining Trends for Accountability

**Goal:** Maintain trends as we move from MCAS to PARCC while minimizing chances that schools are disadvantaged by field test participation

## Current Plan:

1. Issue accountability determinations for all schools with sufficient data
2. For districts that choose to exempt students from grade 3-8 MCAS tests because they are participating in PBA component of field test in same subject area:
  - a) Calculate annual PPI *including* field-tested grades.
  - b) Calculate annual PPI *excluding* field-tested grades.
  - c) **Districts will receive the higher of the two performance measures**



**PARCC**

**Accommodations**

**and**

**Accessibility**





# PARCC: Accessibility Features and Accommodations

- ★ Many accommodations on MCAS will soon be built into computer-based PARCC tests and will be available to **all students** as “accessibility features.”
  - ★ Use of keyboard, audio amplification, highlighter, magnification, spell checker, text-to-speech (Math), and many others
- ★ Other accommodations will be available only to **students with disabilities** and **English language learners**.
- ★ Most Massachusetts accommodations have been adopted by PARCC, including Nonstandard Accommodations.
- ★ Regional training is planned, and video tutorials are being developed, for use prior to the field test.



# PARCC Field Test: Accessibility and Accommodations

- ★ The following test administration procedures are available to **any student**, at the discretion of principal:
  - ★ Small group, frequent breaks, separate setting, specified area or seating, adaptive/specialized equipment, furniture, or lighting
- ★ Review PARCC accessibility features and accommodations at [parconline.org/parcc-accessibility-features-and-accommodations-manual](http://parconline.org/parcc-accessibility-features-and-accommodations-manual)



# PARCC Field Test:

## Accessibility and Accommodations

### ★ PARCC accommodations for **students with disabilities** include:

- ★ Read-aloud for ELA Literacy and Math, scribe for Writing, calculator for Math non-calculator session, spell-checker, and word prediction, *with some conditions*

### ★ **PARCC accommodations do not include:**

- ★ Individualized graphic organizers, checklists, and individualized math reference sheets

### ★ Accommodations available to **ELLs** include:

- ★ Extended time, scribing Math assessments, word-to-word bilingual dictionary, repeat/clarify directions in English or native language





# What About Time on Testing?

MCAS	PARCC
Each session has a <b>recommended</b> duration	Each session has a <b>designated</b> duration
However, all sessions are untimed and students may use as much time as they like.	All students may use up to 50% additional time beyond the designated duration.
Most schools give students until the end of the school day.	<u>Students with disabilities will receive the extended time accommodation as stipulated in their 504s and IEPs. ELLs are also eligible.</u>



# What About Time on Testing?

- ★ There are more testing sessions for PARCC; each student will participate in performance-based *and* end-of-year assessments.
- ★ PBAs at every grade level, which include extended writing and problem solving tasks, account for these additional sessions.
- ★ Because PARCC tests are timed, the overall time devoted to state testing (about 1.5% of the school year) will be less in most schools than it has been for MCAS.
- ★ The field tests will enable PARCC to determine whether the estimated time for each session is appropriate or needs to be adjusted.



**PARCC**

**Technology Readiness**



# Technology Questions

1. Will districts be able to access the test across multiple technology platforms?
  - a) PARCC has adopted minimum requirements that are close to being “device agnostic”  
([www.parcconline.org/field-test-technology](http://www.parcconline.org/field-test-technology))
  
2. How long will there be a paper/pencil option?
  - a) At least through 2015-2016 and likely beyond



# Technology Readiness Supports

PARCC will provide:

- a) Training: regional workshops & on-demand modules
- b) Site Readiness: planning tools, district visits, and infrastructure trials
- c) Customer Support: call center and online resources



# Technology Readiness Supports

## Bandwidth and Infrastructure

- a) FCC is committed to expanded e-rate infrastructure options
- b) ESE working with state policy leaders to secure a bond for infrastructure; the bond bill for \$38M that passed the House includes a matching requirement

## Districts Purchasing Technology Devices

- a) Federal e-Rate and state bond funding **do not pay for devices.**
- b) MA is negotiating with vendors that signed on to a multi-state (LTI) procurement to make devices more affordable
- c) Discussions are ongoing regarding MSBA support for device purchasing





## Final Thoughts



# Graduation Requirement

## ★ Class of 2018:

- ★ Grade 10 students through the **class of 2018** will take MCAS (for competency determination)

## ★ MCAS Science testing continues

- ★ Science will still be a requirement for the competency determination





# What Are Teachers Saying about CCSS?



*Teachers praise new standards for classroom learning*

National online survey of 20,000 K-12 teachers by Scholastic found:

- 77% of math and/or ELA teachers said the standards will have a “positive” or “very positive” impact
- 12% said the impact would be “neither positive or negative”
- 10% “don't know enough to say”
- 1% said the impact would be negative



# What Are Massachusetts Educators saying About the Common Core?

At the ESE Curriculum & Instruction Summit in November 2013, participants were asked to respond to the following statement:

“The curriculum frameworks will have a positive impact on student achievement in my school or district.”

Results: Of 391 respondents, 94.9% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement



# What Are Massachusetts Teachers Saying about PARCC?

In the spring/early summer of 2013, Teach Plus and the MTA surveyed almost 3,000 teachers asking their opinion on the Common Core. In a subsequent publication, Teach Plus noted the following:

*Once teachers feel more prepared for the PARCC assessments through their exposure to test exemplars, we support the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's recommended timeline for the rollout of the new exams over the next three school years.*

*We are excited about this grand opportunity to move towards a high-quality, more meaningful assessment which clearly aligns to the new Common Core State Standards, and which will guide teachers' instruction for years to come.*



# For More Information

- ★ For more information regarding PARCC and the 2014 Field Test, please visit the PARCC website at <http://www.parcconline.org/field-test>
- ★ If you have questions regarding state policies, please contact Student Assessment Services at [parcc@doe.mass.edu](mailto:parcc@doe.mass.edu)
- ★ If you are participating in the PARCC Field Test, and have questions regarding the administration, please contact Pearson's PARCC Support Center: 1-888-493-9888 (open Monday through Friday, 6:00am to 8:00pm CST) or [PARCC@support.pearson.com](mailto:PARCC@support.pearson.com)

