

Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

Frequently Asked Questions

1 What are the PARCC assessments?

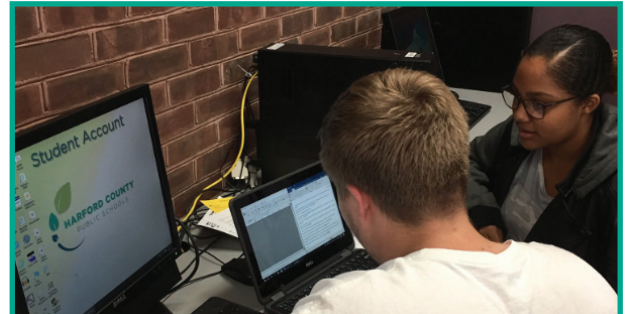
The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments were created by a consortium of participating states. Most states voluntarily adopted new, more rigorous academic standards in 2010 and 2011 and teachers have been using them in their daily instruction. As a result, states needed high-quality assessments aligned to those standards that would test students of all academic levels on what they are learning.

2 Why should my child take the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC)?

The assessments are designed to mirror instructional shifts within the classroom. Over time, the PARCC assessments will measure the growth your child is making towards being college and/or career ready. Teachers and parents will acquire a sense of how well students are learning the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards (MDCCRS).

3 How has Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) prepared students for PARCC experience?

HCPS curricula has been reviewed and is currently aligned with the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards (MDCCRS).



4 When will PARCC scores be available for parents/guardians?

For the fall block assessment administration, Individual Student Reports (ISRs) are expected to be available in the late winter/spring. For the spring assessment administration, ISRs are expected to be available in the fall.

5 What will PARCC score reports look like?

Parents and guardians have access to resources explaining and describing the Individual Score Reports.

Video for Understanding the Score Report

Brief video explaining the information on the report:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=67G12fhSXmA>.

Sample Reports

English/Language Arts/Literacy and mathematics sample reports:

<http://understandthescore.org/score-report-guide>.

Each student will receive a scale score from 650 to 850 and a performance level of 1 to 5.

Please note the following performance level descriptions.

- Level 1: Did not yet meet expectations
- Level 2: Partially met expectations
- Level 3: Approached expectations
- Level 4: Met expectations
- Level 5: Exceeded expectations

6 How will the results be used by my child's school?

Teachers and parents will get a sense of how well students are learning the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards, as well as identifying students who may need additional instructional support.



7 Can PARCC scores be compared to previous Maryland State Assessments (MSA) or High School Assessments (HSA) scores?

No. This is a very different kind of assessment that asks students to analyze information and think critically. It includes additional item types that are more rigorous and does not rely solely on multiple choice items. The academic bar is being raised and asking more of our students, so we should expect to see scores improve over time as students increasingly master new skills and knowledge.

8 Which PARCC assessments are administered?

Students in grades 3 through 8 will participate in the summative assessments administered in the spring for English/Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics. Students completing Algebra I or Geometry at the middle school level will participate in the corresponding PARCC assessment.

At the high school level, students enrolled in English II and Algebra I will participate in the corresponding assessments for graduation assessment requirements. Please visit the [HCPS Student Education Planning Guide](#) and select the “Need to Know” section to view *Maryland Graduation State Assessment Requirements*.

By the end of grade 11, all students must take an English assessment and mathematics assessment to determine the student’s readiness for college or career. Please visit the [HCPS Student Education Planning Guide](#) and select the “Need to Know” section to view the *College and Career Ready Designation*.

9 When will the PARCC assessments be administered during the school year?

HCPS provides a 30-day window in which schools will determine the specific testing dates within that window. Please see the [Assessment Calendar](#) for all testing windows. Your child’s school will provide specific testing dates closer to the opening of the school system testing window.



10 What are the graduation assessment requirements for my child?

Graduation assessment requirements are now revised to reflect the implementation of the PARCC assessments. Please see the [HCPS Student Education Planning Guide](#) and select the “Need to Know” section to view *Maryland Graduation State Assessment Requirements*.

11 What testing supports are available for students that have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504 Plan, or English Learner (EL) Plan?

School staff is required to provide accommodations that are designated in a child's academic plan. Parents who have any questions or concerns about specific accommodations should contact their child's case manager at their school. For additional information regarding available accommodations on the PARCC assessments, please see the [Maryland Assessment, Accessibility and Accommodations Policy Manual](#).



12 Can my child opt out of the PARCC assessments?

No. The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) states parents may not pick and choose the components of the public education program. COMAR and the Education Article of the Maryland Code contain no provisions for students "opting out" of statewide assessments. The Maryland State Department of Education is aware of no legal right to do so. The Maryland State Board of Education recently expressed its opinion as to the legality of a county board policy that prohibited parents from opting children out of specific classes in *Yasmeen W. v. Howard County Board of Education*, MSBE Op. No. 13-56 (2013). The State Board quoted with approval the following language of the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in *Blau v. Fort Thomas Public School District*, 401 F.3d 381, 395-96 (6th Cir. 2005).

The critical point is this: While parents may have a fundamental right to decide whether to send their child to a public school, they do not have a fundamental right generally to direct how a public school teaches their child. Whether it is the school curriculum, the hours of the school day, school discipline, the timing and content of examinations, the individuals hired to teach at the school, the extracurricular activities offered at the school or, as here, a dress code, these issues of public education are generally 'committed to the control of state and local authorities.'

On April 15, 2016, the office of the Attorney General released a [Declaratory Ruling](#) regarding this matter. This ruling confirms that parents/guardians may not opt out of state required assessments.

For additional information and PARCC resources, visit:

PARCC Website: www.parcc-assessment.org

Maryland State Department of Education: <https://marylandpublicschools.org>

HCPS Student Education Planning Guide: www.hcps.org/SEPG

Understand the Score: www.understandthescore.org



Information accurate as of September 2018
Subject to change per Maryland State Department of Education

www.hcps.org



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