The District of Columbia public and public charter schools are switching to the Partnership for Assessments of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test for school year 2014-15. This new test replaces the DC Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS) exam in math, reading, and writing. The new test will be challenging, provide helpful measures of student growth, and is one of the ways that the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE) will work to ensure that every student graduates from high school ready for college or a career.

Frequently Asked Questions about PARCC

1 What is PARCC?

PARCC is an interactive, computer-based test that is in line with the Common Core State Standards. This test will measure student learning in reading, writing, and mathematics for students in grades 3-8 and at least once in high school.

2 How is PARCC different from the DC CAS?

- PARCC is based on Common Core State Standards (DC CAS was not).
- Students use technology (e.g., desktop computers, laptops, and/or tablets) to take the PARCC test.
- Students read text and solve problems based on classroom instruction.
- Students are asked to explain mathematical thinking beyond choosing the correct answer.
- Students are asked to read complex passages and identify facts that can be used to make an argument.

3 What are the benefits of PARCC?

- Families will have clear information about student progress.
- Teachers will have access to timely data to guide learning and instruction.

4 How will the PARCC test be given?

PARCC is divided into two parts:

1. Performance Based Assessment (PBA) - Measures writing, research skills, and the student's ability to solve multi-step math problems. **Test Date:** Early Spring.
2. End of Year (EOY) Assessment - Measures reading comprehension and math concepts and skills through multiple choice and short answer questions. **Test Date:** Late Spring.

5 What accessibility features does PARCC offer?

The PARCC test provides students with tools to help them do their best and provides access for students with an IEP (Individualized Education Program) or 504 plan as well as English Language Learners (ELL) through a range of accommodations.

6 During the PARCC test, students can:

- Use a highlighter tool to shade text on the screen;
- Have test directions read aloud and repeated as needed;
- Enlarge texts and pictures;
- Use a spell checker;
- Use a pop-up glossary;
- Write notes on an on-screen notepad;
- Flag items they want to come back to later; and
- Cross out answers for multiple choice items.

7 Learn more about the Common Core State Standards by:

- Talking to your child's teachers about what he/she is learning and how you can support those efforts at home.
- Asking your child's teachers how they are preparing for the new assessments and how they are helping your child get ready.
- Talking to your child about the accessibility features they already use in the classroom and on tests.

DC's New Assessments Timeline:

2014-2015
- PARCC replaces the DC CAS for Reading, Math and Composition
- A new science exam aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards replaces the DC CAS for Science
- A new health exam replaces the DC CAS for Health
- National Center State Collaborative (NCSC) will replace the DC CAS-Alternate for students with significant cognitive disabilities while the Alternate Science assessment will remain a portfolio based assessment for the 2014-15 school year.

2015-2016
- Assessment Services Supporting ELs through Technology Systems (ASSETS) will replace Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State (ACCESS) as DC's assessment of English Language Proficiency