

District of Columbia  
Office of the State Superintendent of Education



Office of Data, Assessment, and Research

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September 5, 2014

Dear DC Local Education Agency Leaders,

With the transition to the PARCC exams in the 2014-2015 school year, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) has determined the following summative assessments in mathematics and English language arts will be required and used for accountability for DC high schools under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA):

- English Language Arts / Literacy II; **and**
- Geometry **or** Integrated Mathematics II

These assessments will replace the tenth grade DC CAS reading, math and composition as the math and ELA assessments required for high school students in previous years. Students should take the required high school PARCC exams as they are appropriate to your schools' curricula and course progression. Students with significant cognitive disabilities who are eligible for the alternate assessment will take the new assessment based on alternate achievement standards, the NCSC, as their exam for reading and math in the eleventh grade. *Please also note that while administration of these assessments will be required in school year 2014-15, it is OSSE's intention that no negative accountability consequences for schools or LEAs will result from these new assessments in the 2014-15 school year.*

OSSE chose required high school tests from among the PARCC high school exams, which include three ELA/literacy assessments and two tracks of course-based assessments in mathematics: algebra I, algebra II and geometry *or* integrated math I, II and III. Non-required high school tests will be made available to schools that choose to administer them, but will not be used for accountability.

OSSE solicited school feedback on high school assessment policy in multiple conference calls, stakeholder meetings, an online feedback form and individual conversations with school leaders and education stakeholders over the past months. While preferences were as diverse as our schools, all this feedback was taken into strong consideration.

The considerations which led to this choice included:

- Providing flexibility to align timing of tests to school curricula and course progression;
- Not creating an equity conflict with students taking the alternate assessment, which is only available once in high school; and
- Not creating an unnecessary testing burden for students in upper grades preparing for graduation.

Business rules to implement the PARCC on a course based model in high schools will be proposed in the coming weeks and reviewed by the PARCC high school working group. Education stakeholders who are interested in joining the working group on high school assessment business rules should email [OSSE.assessment@dc.gov](mailto:OSSE.assessment@dc.gov). We sincerely appreciate your thoughtful feedback and your partnership, and look forward to continuing our work together.

Sincerely,

Jessica Mellen Enos  
Director of Assessment and Accountability