



Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

200 West Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • 410-767-0100 • 410-333-6442 TTY/TDD • MarylandPublicSchools.org

TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D. *Lillian M. Lowery*
DATE: May 19, 2015
SUBJECT: Update on State Tests

PURPOSE:

To provide an update of the administration of the PARCC assessments (2014-2015) and to discuss the performance level setting process. Along with the updates of the current assessment program, the purpose will also include information needed for a discussion around future assessment programs after the 2014-2015 administration.

PARCC Administration Update (2014-2015):

Public schools in Maryland administered the PARCC state assessments for the first time during the 2014-2015 school year. Performance-based (PBA) and End-of-Year assessments (EOY) were administered in English Language Arts and mathematics in grades 3-8 and in high school in Algebra I, English 10 and Algebra II in March-April, 2015 (PBA) concluding in May-June, 2015 (EOY). Because this was the first year of administration of the new PARCC state assessments, performance level setting needs to occur prior to reporting scores. This process began in April, 2015 and will conclude in August, 2015. Score reports will be distributed to schools and parents during the fall, 2015.

Over 730,000 PARCC tests were administered online within 23 local school districts which represents approximately 76% of the total tests administered either online or using paper. Local districts will have until 2017 to use the paper/pencil assessments at which time all assessments (with the exception of those needed for accommodation proposes) must be administered online. There were very few issues related to online administration of the assessments in 2014-2015 during both windows (PBA and EOY). The increases in testing times along with the addition of a testing window are the two major issues that districts and school staff reported. The PARCC consortium, as a group, is discussing ways to mitigate these concerns prior to next test administration in 2015-2016.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Performance-level Setting:

- A pre-policy meeting was held in April, 2015 to begin the performance-level setting process. There were staff members from both K-12 and higher education representing all the PARCC states in attendance at this meeting. Dr. Mary Kay Finan represented the Maryland State Board of Education.
- Performance level setting will occur in July-August, 2015 in Denver, Colorado. Over 30 teachers, administrators, district level staff and college faculty will represent Maryland. Ms. Linda Eberhart, a member of the State Board will serve on the middle school team.
- Performance-level meetings: July 27-31- High School; August 17-21- Middle School; August 24-28- Elementary School (Denver, Colorado)
- Final decisions on performance-levels will need approval of the State Board.
- Performance-level setting for high school graduation assessments for students in Maryland will occur during the fall-winter, 2015 with State Board approval in spring, 2016.

Future PARCC assessment plan:

- The Governing Board of the consortium will make final decisions around the reduction of testing times by June, 2015.
- Recommendations around additional tests in high school (English 9, English 11, and Geometry) will be made to the State Board in June, 2015.

ACTION:

For information and discussion, no action required.

LML:hrj