

PARCC Facts: What You Should Know

PARCC Basics

- **PARCC is an annual assessment in English Language Arts and in math** for students in grades 3-11. New Mexico students have taken annual assessments in these subjects for decades (e.g., SBA, CTB Terra Nova, etc).
- While PARCC is new this year, **it is not an additional test. PARCC replaces the SBA** in English Language Arts and in math.

Why We Test

- **Annual assessments are important for our students and schools.** These tests are the most accurate and impartial way to see how our kids are progressing.
- Annual assessments are an important tool that **help educators identify and support a student's specific learning needs**, and **provides parents with information about whether their children are progressing academically as they should.**

Why New Mexico is Transitioning to PARCC

- **PARCC is a better exam** – PARCC aligns with the Common Core State Standards that our educators have been teaching in our classrooms since the standards were adopted in New Mexico in 2010; this assessment directly measures what our students have been learning in the classroom throughout the year.
- **PARCC focuses on problem solving and critical thinking** – PARCC was developed by more than 2,000 educators and experts from all over the country, including New Mexico. It is a more relevant test as it requires our students to show that they can think critically and apply what they've learned to solve problems.
- **PARCC is more interactive and engaging** – PARCC advances our students into the 21st century world of using modern technology and creates a much more interactive and engaging format for taking a test, as opposed to the old fill-in-the-bubble tests that only asked kids to regurgitate memorized facts.

Time Spent Testing

- **PARCC reduces testing time** – With PARCC, state required testing time is reduced by 2.5 hours across all grades.
- **PARCC testing time is less than 2% of all classroom time** – Total time on the test varies between 6.5 and 10.5 hours according to a student's grade level. A student spends more time in football practice in one week than he/she will spend taking PARCC.
- Some districts may choose to use additional assessments that are not required by the state. If a student is taking other assessments that are not on the list of state required assessments, this is at the direction of the teacher, principal, or district leadership.

Expectations for PARCC Participation

- **Federal and state law require that all eligible students take the annual assessments.** The statutes do not offer the right of refusal.
 - Federal law requires that schools in all fifty states give an annual assessment: ESEA; HR1, Title1, Part A, Subpart 1, Section 1111, (b), 3, C <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg2.html>
 - State statute: Section 22-2C-4 NMSA 1978
<http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/GradDocs/requirement/NMSA%2022-2C-4.pdf>
- If high school students do not participate in PARCC, there is the potential that it could jeopardize their ability to obtain a high school diploma. While there are alternate ways to demonstrate competency that can permit students to qualify for graduation, students must first exhaust their opportunities to pass the SBA or PARCC before these alternate ways can be considered.