

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT  
FOR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

TO: Dr. Mike Riggle  
FROM: Dr. Rosanne Williamson  
RE: 2014-2015 State Assessment Changes  
DATE: August 20, 2014

**Critical Question: Why are required Illinois assessments changing and how do they differ from the previously required grade 11 Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE)?**

With the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), Illinois has retired many of its old required tests. New assessments differ from the old, paper multiple-choice format and will be administered online through student Chromebooks.

**New Required Assessments - PARCC:**

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) developed the new assessments in English and mathematics to measure whether students are on track to be successful in college and careers.

**Two PARCC Summative Assessment Components:**

- Students enrolled in their third year of English and/or Algebra II are required to take the assessments regardless of grade level.
- **Performance-Based Assessment (PBA)** administered after approximately 75% of the school year. The English PBA will focus on writing effectively when analyzing text. The mathematics PBA will focus on expressing mathematical reasoning and modeling real-world problems.
- **End-of-Year Assessment (EOY)** administered after approximately 90% of the school year. The English EOY will focus on reading comprehension. The math EOY will ask students to demonstrate further conceptual understanding.

**PARCC Assessment Timeline:**

- PBA – March 16 – April 10, 2015
- EOY – May 4 – May 29, 2015
- Assessments will be given over multiple days in the testing windows
- Total test time is 905 – 935 minutes compared to the 380 minute PSAE

**Optional Assessment – ACT Plus Writing:**

- High schools still may offer a state-funded ACT Plus Writing test to juniors
- The district will offer the state-funded ACT Plus Writing assessment on March 3, 2015
- This provides students with an ACT score which can be used in the college application process

**Other Assessments – PLAN & EXPLORE:**

- ACT no longer offers PLAN or EXPLORE assessments that were aligned to the ACT
- The administration is considering offering a “retired” EXPLORE assessment to all freshmen to continue to measure student academic progress from EXPLORE to ACT