The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)
Western Academic Leadership Forum (WALF)
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The Education Landscape
The Education Landscape

- At a once in a lifetime moment in education reform
- Nearly every state in the nation is working to improve academic standards and assessments
- Overarching goal: to ensure students graduate with the knowledge and skills most demanded by college and careers

The PARCC Vision:

*College and Career Readiness*
ADP Research Documents an Expectations Gap

What students are typically expected to know at the end of high school, as defined by state standards, required curriculum and assessments ≠ The knowledge and skills demanded by postsecondary and employers for successful first-year students and new employees.

RESULT
In many states, students can earn a high school diploma without the skills necessary for success in college and careers.

The College- and Career-Ready Policy Agenda

Align high school standards with the demands of college and careers.

Require students to take a college- and career-ready curriculum to earn a high school diploma.

Build college-and career-ready measures into statewide high school assessment systems.

Develop reporting and accountability systems that promote college and career readiness for all.
Defining College and Career Readiness

- **College** includes any education beyond high school leading to a postsecondary credential
- **Careers** of interest provide a family-sustaining wage and pathways to advancement....and typically require education or training beyond high school
- **College-ready** means prepared to enter and succeed in entry-level credit-bearing courses without remediation
- Research conducted by ADP and independently by ACT found preparation for college or workforce training programs required comparable levels of skills in reading and mathematics

Common Core Initiative
Mission Statement

The Common Core State Standards –

- Provide a **consistent, clear** understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them.
- Designed to be robust and **relevant to the real world**, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers.
- With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to **compete successfully** in the global economy.

*Source: The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)*
Next-Generation Common Assessment Systems:

- Measure students’ mastery of Common Core State Standards
- Provide a common measure of college and career readiness
- Include a range of item types that allow for the assessment of higher-order skills
- Leverage new technologies in assessment and reporting to get actionable student data to educators and parents in real time
- Mitigate challenges associated with student mobility by ensuring students will have the same expectations wherever they live
- Provide early warning signal about college readiness
- Enable adjustments to senior-year to prepare for college-level courses
- Earn an exemption from placement tests
- Avoid remediation which costs time and money
Race to the Top Assessment Program Competition

- $350 million of Race to the Top Fund set aside for awards to consortia of states to design and develop common K-12 assessment systems aligned to common, college- and career-ready standards
- The competition asked consortia to design assessment systems that meet the dual needs of accountability and instructional improvement
- In September 2010, the U.S. Department of Education awarded grants to:
  - Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)
  - Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)
- The winning consortia have four years to develop assessments systems, and states participating in either consortium will administer new assessments statewide by 2014-2015

About PARCC

- PARCC is an alliance of 25 states working together to develop a common set of K-12 assessments in English and math anchored in what it takes to be ready for college and careers
- PARCC is state-led and a subset of PARCC states make up its Governing Board
- State-based collaboration is the hallmark of PARCC, and collectively these states educate more than 31 million students — nearly 63% of K-12 students attending American public schools
PARCC States

PARCC Governing Board States

**14 Governing Board States**
- Governing States will pilot and field test the assessment system components during the 2011–12, 2012–13 and 2013–14 school years, and administer the new assessment system during the 2014-15 school year
- Governing States will use the results from the PARCC assessments in their state accountability systems
- The chief state school officers of the Governing States serve on the PARCC Governing Board and make decisions on behalf of the Partnership on major policies and operational procedures

- Arizona
- Arkansas
- District of Columbia
- Florida (Fiscal Agent)
- Georgia
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- Massachusetts (Board Chair)
- New York
- Oklahoma
- Rhode Island
- Tennessee
PARCC Participating States

• Alabama
• California
• Colorado
• Delaware
• Kentucky
• Mississippi
• New Jersey
• North Dakota
• Ohio
• Pennsylvania
• South Carolina

11 Participating States

• Participating States provide staff to serve on PARCC’s design committees, working groups, and other task forces established by the Governing Board to conduct the work necessary to design and develop PARCC’s proposed assessment system

• By 2014–15, any state that remains in PARCC must commit to statewide implementation and administration of the Partnership’s assessment system

• Any PARCC Participating State prepared to make the commitments and take on the responsibilities of a Governing State can become one

PARCC Project Management Partner

• PARCC selected Achieve as its Project Management Partner to play a key role in coordinating the work of the Partnership based on Achieve’s deep experience:
  – Developing educational standards, including the Common Core State Standards;
  – Leading multi-state assessment development efforts anchored in college- and career-ready goals; and
  – Convening a cross-section of state leaders around common issues and challenges

• Achieve is a bipartisan, non-profit organization that helps states raise academic standards, improve assessments, and strengthen accountability to prepare all young people for postsecondary education, work, and citizenship

• Achieve’s Board consists of Democratic governors, Republican governors and business leaders
PARCC’s Goals

- Build a pathway to college and career readiness
  - Aligned to college- and career-ready, common core standards
  - Signal students about college readiness
- Construct assessments that enable cross-state comparisons
  - Grounded in research; internationally benchmarked; anchored in college readiness
- Create better assessments
  - Mix of short answer with longer open responses
- Make better use of technology in assessments
  - Real-time snapshots of student’s knowledge
  - Provide opportunity for teachers and students to make adjustments
- Match investments in testing with investments in teaching
  - Support good teaching
  - Provide early signals
Goal: Create Better Assessments

Key Components:

- Three “through-course” components distributed throughout the year in ELA and mathematics, grades 3-11
- One Speaking/Listening assessment administered after students complete the third through-course component in ELA; required but not part of summative score (could be used for course grades)
- One end-of-year assessment

Source: Graphic adapted from a representation prepared by the Center for K-12 Assessment & Performance Management (www.k12center.org)

PARCC’s Key Stakeholders

Teachers, School Leaders, District Administrators, and State Officials
- Stakeholders will regularly and quickly have a wider variety of useful performance data

Parents, Students, and the Public
- PARCC’s assessments will, for the first time, give information about student performance relative to children in other states and against achievement standards anchored in college- and career-ready knowledge and skills

Higher Education
- Assessments will identify whether students are ready for and prepared to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing postsecondary courses by the time they graduate from high school
Higher Education Engagement

Higher Education: Key PARCC Partner

- 200 postsecondary systems and institutions across all 25 PARCC states
  - Representing nearly 1,000 campuses – committed as partners.
- Role of Higher Education:
  - Partner with K-12 to develop college-ready high school assessments in English and mathematics acceptable to all PARCC colleges and universities
  - Guide long-term strategy to engage all colleges and universities in PARCC states
  - Lay groundwork for implementation of college-ready high school assessments as valid placement instruments for credit-bearing courses
- PARCC college-ready assessments will help students –
  - To enter colleges better prepared
  - To persist in and complete degree and certificate programs
Expected Outcomes of Higher Education Involvement

- Better alignment of high school curricula with first-year college courses
- Development of “bridge courses” and exploration of dual enrollment policies
- Targeted college readiness supports to help students make the transition
- Alignment of exit standards in high school with placement expectations of postsecondary systems
- Engagement of higher education and faculty from mathematics, English, composition, and other relevant disciplines on the use of college-ready assessments as an indicator of students’ readiness

Higher Education Engagement Process
### Advisory Committee on College Readiness

- System and institution chancellors/presidents from partnership states
- Representatives from education associations, HSI, and HBCU
- Policy guidance
- Decision role
  - Design parameters
  - Core competencies in ELA and mathematics in the CCSS
  - College ready cut scores – robust, research-based process to set college-ready achievement levels

### Higher Education Leadership Team

- Consists of representatives from all PARCC states;
- Helps shape PARCC’s strategy for working with postsecondary education systems, institutions, academic administrators, and faculty in addition to K-12 to ensure the successful
- Participates in the development and implementation of college-ready assessments . . .
  - That determine when a student is ready for placement into credit-bearing coursework
  - That provides the information to educators to explore proper interventions for students who are not yet deemed college-ready
Higher Education Workgroups

- College Readiness Intervention
  - To identify appropriate intervention programs to assist students and teachers
- Communications
  - To create effective communications and outreach materials
- Governance
  - To identify higher education's decision-making role in the development of college ready assessments and cut scores aligned with the needs of K-12 education
- Grants
  - To assist states to seek funding to support the engagement activities
- Postsecondary Education Alignment Scan
  - To identify state policy changes that can promote alignment with CCSS and PARCC initiative
- Regional Meetings
  - To engage higher education leadership cadres and additional state stakeholders

Action Agenda for Higher Education

Collaboration between K-12 and Higher Education

- Alignment of key policies for college readiness
- Development of K-12 assessments and alignment with college placement policies
- Development and alignment of curricula and instructional materials
- Teacher preparation and in-service professional development
- Avenues for collaboration
  - P-20 councils
  - SHEEOs and K-12 Education Officers (Chief State School Officers)
  - Statewide groups in academic disciplines: K-12 and HE faculty

Benefits to Higher Education

Failure to Meet English and Math Proficiency

- Students **cannot enroll** in many required college classes until they meet the requirement;
- They must **spend time taking remedial** English and math classes during their freshman year until they meet the requirement;
- They will **graduate later** because they get no degree credit for these remedial classes;
- They may have to pay **additional charges** for these classes; and
- If they do not demonstrate proficiency by the end of the freshman year, they will be **disenrolled**.
Benefits to Higher Education of Common Standards and Assessments

- **Improved preparation** of incoming students – from all states
- **Better information** about the preparation of incoming students
- **Reduced remediation** rates
- **Increased degree** attainment rates
- Clear guidance for teacher preparation programs regarding content and skills teacher at each grade must be prepared to teach
- **Increased academic rigor** in entry-level, credit-bearing college courses
PARCC States: College Readiness Benchmarks

- Placement tests vary from state-to-state:
  - ACT
  - SAT
  - ACCUPLACER
  - COMPASS
  - High school GPAs

Source: Responses collected from PARCC states; January 2011

PARCC States: College Readiness Benchmarks

- College Ready/remediation scores vary –
  - By states
  - By higher education systems within a state
  - By college/universities within a system
- No single definition of college readiness/remediation
- Most PARCC states do not track the number of students that are remediated; that task is left up to individual institutions and systems, with varying degrees of reporting
  - Range from 20% to 60% at 4-year colleges and universities, but percent is function of definition of remediation

PARCC

SAT/ACT College Ready Benchmarks v. PARCC States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>SAT</th>
<th>COM PASS</th>
<th>PARCC STATES ACT</th>
<th>PARCC STATES SAT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Median</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRITICAL READING (SAT)/ENGLISH (ACT)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>500 (50%)</td>
<td>77 17 21 19</td>
<td>400 600 450/500</td>
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<tr>
<td>MATH (SAT)/COLLEGE ALGEBRA (ACT)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>500 (54%)</td>
<td>52 16 22 19</td>
<td>400 600 460/500</td>
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</tbody>
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Source: SAT: The College Board, Wayne Camara, Vice President Research and Development.
ACT: Issues in College Readiness, 2010
PARCC: Parcc State responses to Remediation Policies, HE 01-11, January 6, 2011

PARCC States: College Readiness Benchmarks

- Most PARCC states meet and require minimum benchmarks for college-readiness
- The definition of “first-year, credit-bearing course” varies from state-to-state:
  - Especially within mathematics courses
  - Most PARCC states use college algebra as an entry-level course
  - Some individual state institutions and systems offer intermediate algebra as an option
PARCC States: College Readiness Benchmarks

College Ready definitions vary -
- Some PARCC states have passed legislation to ensure academic content that aligns with rigorous college and career ready standards (Kentucky’s Senate Bill 1)
- One state created a new placement test for its community college system that aligns with CCSS and college ready standards and was vetted with K-12 and higher education faculty (Florida)

Community colleges are most often charged with remediating and preparing students for success within four-year institutions and systems -
- Due to the open access nature of community college systems, those that have articulation agreements with four-year institutions and systems are responsible for the majority of remediation that takes place on college campuses
- In one PARCC community college system, students are placed into 5 different levels of mathematics classes, ranging from pre-intermediate algebra to calculus

Source: Data collected from PARCC states; January 2011

The Challenge Ahead

- Identifying a set of core competencies in English and mathematics reflected in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) that signal that a student is on-track to be college-ready
- Setting a college ready cut score acceptable to all colleges and universities within and across states
- Agreeing on college-readiness standards
- Communicating clear placement standards to high school teachers
- Helping students use their senior year more effectively to prepare academically for college.
- Aligning definition of college readiness between two consortia.
Why Is Commitment to College and Career Readiness So Critical?

- A high school diploma is no longer enough:
  - 83% of the nation’s jobs require some postsecondary education or training.
- Currently, far too many students drop out or graduate from high school without the knowledge and skills required for success, closing doors and limiting their post-high school options and opportunities.
- The best way to prepare students for life after high school is to align K-12 and postsecondary expectations.
- All students deserve a world-class education that prepares them for college, careers and life.

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Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers

http://www.fdoe.org/parcc/
www.achieve.org/PARCC