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*Superintendent
of Schools*

Pamela Bylsma
*Assistant Superintendent
for Academics*

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Domenico Maniscalco
*Chief Human
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Officer*

Administration

B. Academics

1. PARCC Testing Update

TO: Board of Education
FROM: Dr. Bruce Law
Superintendent of Schools
DATE: February 5, 2015
RE: PARCC Testing Update

The Illinois State Board of Education has made major changes to mandated testing, and those changes are going into effect this year. Assistant Superintendent Pam Bylsma has prepared a report that describes the tests we are now required to give.

Suggested Motion: *Review the Report*

Recommended Action: *Informational*



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TO: Dr. Bruce Law, Superintendent
FROM: Pam Bylsma
Assistant Superintendent for Academics
DATE: February 2, 2015
RE: State-Mandated Assessment Update

The purpose of this memo is to describe the new assessments that will be administered across Illinois this year and how District 86 is preparing for these testing events. Public schools in Illinois are required to assess students as part of their educational accountability as mandated by the Illinois State Board of Education. The new assessments, created by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), replace the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) given to students in grades 3-8 and the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) given to students in grade 11. The PARCC assessments will measure student proficiency against the new, more rigorous learning standards for English language arts and mathematics, which were adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education in 2010.

This spring, students enrolled in high school courses that teach Algebra I and English Language Arts I (ELA) concepts will be assessed on their mastery of the Common Core State Standards, which are embedded in the New Illinois Learning Standards. Students, mostly freshmen, who are enrolled in the related Algebra I and English I courses, will take both Performance-Based Assessments (PBA) in March as well as the End-of-Year (EOY) Assessments in May. The state mandates that we give PBA assessments after 75 percent of the school year is completed and the EOY assessments after students have completed 90 percent of the school year. In ELA, students will experience 5.75 hours in the testing environment as they take three PBA unit tests and two EOY unit tests. For Algebra I, students will experience 5.3 hours in the testing environment for two unit tests for both the PBA and the EOY assessments. The chart from ISBE that follows will clarify the time allotted for each individual unit test and the estimated time students are expected to use per assessment.

PARCC GOALS

According to ISBE, PARCC differs from the former assessment systems in the following ways:

- The PARCC system aligns college and career readiness expectations from kindergarten through grade 12 for the first time in Illinois. (Our previous state tests did not and there was a longstanding disconnect in statewide results, with generally higher scores on the ISAT than the PSAE.)
- The assessments measure whether or not students have the academic knowledge and skills necessary to succeed after high school. The information can be used to address issues early on, reducing the percentage of students who have to take costly and time-consuming remedial classes in college.
- Students must analyze information and explain their answers.
- The PARCC assessment takes advantage of technology to include questions and other tasks that correspond to the type of work that students will encounter in their classrooms on a regular basis and after high school. These assessments help to encourage schools to use technology as a day-to-day tool to enhance learning.
- At the high school level, these are “end of course” tests versus grade level tests.

STUDENT KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL PROFICIENCY

The English Language Arts (ELA) I PARCC assessments will measure student proficiency in these areas:

- Reading and analyzing complex text;
- Drawing local inferences from multiple sources, including non-fiction, fiction, charts, tables, and pictures;
- Citing specific textual evidence when drawing conclusions; and

- Producing clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose and audience.

The Algebra I PARCC assessments will measure student proficiency in these areas:

- Solving the major content and additional and supporting content of Algebra I;
- Expressing course-level appropriate mathematical reasoning by constructing viable arguments, critiquing the reasoning of others and attending to precision when making mathematical statements;
- Solving real-world problems with a degree of difficulty appropriate to the course, engaging in the modeling process, and where helpful making sense of problems and persevering to solve them;
- Reasoning abstractly and quantitatively; and
- Using appropriate tools strategically.

OPTIONAL CHANGE IN TESTERS

Originally, all high schools were required to administer PBA and EOY assessments in Algebra II or Integrated Math III and ELA III. All juniors would have been impacted by one or more of these assessments. Juniors were already scheduled to take the state-funded ACT+Writing exam during the school day on March 3, which is an official ACT assessment that will be recorded on student transcripts and can be used for college admission and scholarship opportunities. Due to these facts, area administrators became concerned with the loss of instruction time for juniors, especially those who also take one or more Advanced Placement tests. In December, State Superintendent Chris Koch responded to these concerns and allowed high schools the option of testing their younger students. District 86 selected this option and, as noted above, will be administering the Algebra I and ELA I assessments to our freshmen instead.

We selected this option for other reasons as well. This is the first year of official PARCC testing, which will be administered online. Large scale computer-based testing presents both logistic and technological challenges that make testing the smallest group possible a desirable option. Switching from the older to the younger testers resulted in 427 fewer students being tested at Central alone, a reduction of almost 30 percent. Additionally, it should be the case that data from these course-based tests will be useful to evaluate our programs. The curriculum for Algebra I and ELA I may require further revision in terms of alignment with the standards. Such enhancements will benefit the next set of students who will enroll in these courses and who will take PARCC assessments next year. Furthermore, teachers of the next courses in the math and English sequence can be responsive to any identified learning gaps of the students who took this year's tests and provide interventions to these students, most of whom will be sophomores.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

Previous to PARCC, taking the PSAE was a graduation requirement that was noted on students' transcripts. While specific guidance is forthcoming as to how the PARCC will be used as a graduation requirement, the state Superintendent and ISBE's Director of Assessment have stated that student participation in state-mandated testing is an expectation. During the transition from PSAE to PARCC, students will be allowed to graduate even if they fit the scenario of not taking the PSAE and not being in the group of students who were in courses tested by PARCC. Additionally, the ISBE issued a letter to districts to be used in response to parents who inquire about "opting" their children out of testing. The letter states, "Students may not opt out of the PARCC assessment. Federal law -- specifically, the Elementary Education and Secondary Education Act (also known as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001) -- requires states (including Illinois) receiving Title I funds to provide for the participation in the state's academic assessment of all designated students. See Section 1111(b)(3)(c)(ix)(I) of that law. A district that allows students to opt out of the state's required test would directly violate both federal and state law."

COMMUNICATION PLAN

Both Principals will be sending out an email at the end of this week to inform parents and guardians about the upcoming PARCC testing plan. As the dates of actual testing near, the parents/guardians of each specific group of testers will receive an individual email to remind them of the administration dates and logistics, which are included after this memo. Communication regarding PARCC testing outreach will include websites where families can locate additional information and find practice tests, should they wish to try them, such as the following:

- About the PARCC assessment in general: <http://www.parcconline.org/high-school>
- About the state-testing mandate: <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/assessment/parcc.htm>
- About the New Illinois Learning Standards/Common Core State Standards: http://www.isbe.net/common_core/pdf/guide/parent_guide_info.pdf

FUTURE PARCC ASSESSMENTS

At this point, it is unclear what the state will mandate for next year's PARCC testing plan. The road that districts have traveled during last year's testing pilot and this year's preparations has been somewhat bumpy, making it impossible to predict what lies ahead. ISBE's vision is to provide course-based tests to students in grades 9, 10, and 11 in the areas of English and math and beyond. Which students we will test next year and in what curricular areas remain to be seen. Regardless, we are committed to following all PARCC developments closely in order to best prepare our students and staff to fulfill the state mandates and we will update the Board of Education as the state makes decisions.

In conclusion, the new testing plan will hold districts accountable for providing their students with more rigorous curriculum that is designed to expose students to authentic learning challenges, to develop their critical thinking and communication skills and to help them see connections between curricular disciplines. The instructional program of District 86 is well positioned for this transformation in how we assess our students, for we have enhanced our curriculum and instructional practices over the past several years to reflect this revised set of learning standards.

We look forward to discussing with the Board of Education the new testing requirements and program.

PARCC UNIT TIMES

Use the charts below for scheduling. The majority of students will complete each unit in the Estimated Time on Task. However, schools must plan for the full unit time so that all students have the opportunity complete the test.

Unit Testing Time is the amount of time any student who needs it must be provided to complete the unit. It is the amount of testing time schools must schedule for each unit.

Estimated Time on Task is the approximate amount of time, based on data from the field test, in which the majority of students may complete a unit. It is provided for informational purposes only.

UNIT TIMES

		PBA Unit 1	PBA Unit 2	PBA Unit 3	EOY Unit 1	EOY Unit 2
ELA I, II, III	Unit Time	75	90	60	60	60
	<i>Est. Time on Task</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>40</i>
ALGEBRA I GEOMETRY INTEGRATED MATH I, II	Unit Time	90	75		80	75
	<i>Est. Time on Task</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>50</i>		<i>60</i>	<i>50</i>

HINSDALE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

TENTATIVE PLAN FOR SPRING 2015 PARCC TESTING

All testing will occur in 10 of Hinsdale Centrals' computer labs, two of which are in the library. The library will be closed during all five testing days, but it will be open during the make-up day.

Monday, March 9 through Thursday, March 12: PBA ELA (Wednesday, March 11 is a late start with no testing)

(All students enrolled in English 1, English 1 H, and ES English)

- Monday, March 9th: Students in English 1 (half of 424, or 212) and ES English 1 (15) will test during periods 1 - 6, return to class/lunch 7th.
- Tuesday, March 10th: English 1 (half of 424, or 212) and English 1 Honors (half of 296, or 148) will test periods 1 - 6, return to class/lunch 7th.
- Wednesday, March 11th: English 1 Honors (half of 296, or 148) will test periods 1-6, return to class/lunch 7th.

Central will hire proctors for testing.

Friday, March 13: PBA Math

(All students enrolled in Algebra 1 or Algebra 1 G)

- Friday March, 13th—Algebra 1 (241) and Algebra 1 General (50), will test over the course of 1 day. 1/2 of students (146) will test periods 1-4, return to class/lunch starting with 5th period on Friday; 1/2 of students (145) will test periods 6-10 and will eat lunch 5th period on Friday.
- Central will hire proctors for testing.

**PBA make-ups will be from 3/16--3/19*

Monday, May 18th through Tuesday, May 19th: EOY ELA

(All students enrolled in English 3, AP Language & Composition, Expository Writing/American Literature, US Literature & Composition, and ES English 3)

- Monday, May 18th periods 1-4: Students in English 1 (half of 424, or 212) and ES English 1 (15) will test during periods 1 - 4, return to class/lunch 5th; and students with 504 and Special Ed. accommodations (?) will test periods 1 - 4, return to class/lunch 5th, unless they require extra time.
- Monday, May 18th periods 6-10: English 1 (half of 424, or 212) and English 1 Honors (half of 296, or 148) will test periods 6 - 10.
- Tuesday, May 19th periods 1-4: English 1 Honors (half of 296, or 148) will test periods 1-4, return to class/lunch 5th.

Central will hire proctors for testing.

Thursday May 21: EOY Math

(All students enrolled in Algebra 1 or Algebra 1 G)

- Thursday, May 21st--Algebra 1 (241) and Algebra 1 General (50), will test over the course of 1 day. 1/2 of students (146) will test periods 1-4, return to class/lunch starting with 5th period on Wednesday; 1/2 of students (145) will test periods 6-10 and will eat lunch 5th period on Wednesday.

Central will hire proctors for testing.

**EOY Make-ups will be in the afternoon of 5/22*

HINSDALE SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL

TENTATIVE PLAN FOR SPRING 2015 PARCC TESTING

All testing will occur in eight Hinsdale South computer labs, six of which are in the library. The library will be closed during all five testing days.

Thursday, March 12 and Friday, March 13: PBA ELA

(All students enrolled in English 1 and English 1 Honors)

- Thursday, March 12: Students with last names A-La test periods 1 - 6, return to class/lunch 7th.
 - Friday, March 13: Students with last names Le-Z test periods 1 - 6, return to class/lunch 7th.
- Test will be proctored by library staff, English teachers, and counseling staff.*

Monday, March 16: PBA Math

(All students enrolled in Algebra 1, Algebra 1 Block, and Algebra 1 Part 2)

- Students with last names A-La test periods 1 – 4, return to class/lunch starting with 5th.
 - Students with last names Le-Z attend class/lunch periods 1 – 5, and test periods 6 – 10.
- Test will be proctored by library staff, math teachers, and counseling staff.*

Monday, May 18: EOY ELA

(All students enrolled in English 1 and English 1 Honors)

- Students with last names A-La test periods 1 – 4, return to class/lunch starting with 5th.
 - Students with last names Le-Z attend class/lunch periods 1 – 5, and test periods 6 – 10.
- Test will be proctored by library staff, English teachers, and counseling staff.*

Tuesday, May 19: EOY Math

(All students enrolled in Algebra 1, Algebra 1 Block, and Algebra 1 Part 2)

- Students with last names A-La test periods 1 – 4, return to class/lunch starting with 5th.
 - Students with last names Le-Z attend class/lunch periods 1 – 5, and test periods 6 – 10.
- Test will be proctored by library staff, Math teachers, and counseling staff.*