

Top 5 Things You Need to Know about Testing in High School

This school year, Maryland implemented new, higher standards for student learning in all schools across the State. The Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards are based on the Common Core State Standards, which have been adopted by Maryland and more than 40 other states, and provide students with the relevant, real world knowledge and skills needed for success beyond high school. In order to measure student mastery of the new standards, next year Maryland will implement new statewide tests – the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments. The PARCC assessments will include Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, English 9, English 10 and English 11.

#1 Maryland's High School Assessment (HSA) in English 10 and Algebra/Data Analysis will continue to be given through the 2013-2014 school year.

Next year (school year 2014-2015), the English 10 and Algebra/Data Analysis HSAs will be replaced by the PARCC English 10 and PARCC Algebra I assessments. There will be no change to the HSAs for Government and Biology – students will continue to take the Government and Biology HSAs as part of their graduation requirements.

#2 This spring, a small number of students in nearly every high school will take the field test of Maryland's new Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments in English 9, English 11, Geometry, and Algebra II.

Next year, Maryland will fully implement the new PARCC assessments statewide, which are aligned to the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards. The field test is an opportunity to "test the test" – to see how well the test works, determine the quality of questions, and make any necessary adjustments before it is given to all students in school year 2014-2015.

#3 Parents will not receive individual scores on their student's performance on the PARCC field test.

Field tests are not formal tests. Student responses will be used to evaluate the quality of the test questions and will not be scored or reported. However, parents will continue to receive the reports on the HSAs that their student takes. Results are mailed to the local school system six weeks after the test is taken. The local school system then sends the individual student results to the parent/guardian.

#4 Next year (school year 2014-15) all Maryland high school students will take the PARCC assessments in English 9, 10, and 11; Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II, if they are enrolled in those courses.

The PARCC assessments will measure the essential content, critical thinking and problem solving skills that students need to be successful in college and careers. Students will take the assessments that align to the specific courses in which they are enrolled. The computer-based tests will provide accurate and timely information about what individual students are learning and whether they are on track or need extra help.

#5 Students in grade 8 or above who take and do not pass the Algebra I/Data Analysis HSA during the 2013-2014 school year will retake the HSA in Algebra I/Data Analysis assessment and not move to the PARCC Algebra assessment in the 2014-2015 school year.

These students will be eligible to take the HSA-aligned Algebra I Bridge Plan for Academic Validation if they meet the Bridge Plan eligibility criteria.

If you have additional questions about HSA or PARCC

testing, ask your teacher, principal, or high school counselor.

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