



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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PARCC Releases Initial Set of Test Items and Task Prototypes

Online, searchable Model Content Frameworks also released.

Washington, D.C. – August 20, 2012 – The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), a 23-state consortium working together to create next generation assessments, today released its first set of item and task prototypes for both English language arts/literacy and mathematics. The prototypes are illustrative of how the critical content and skills found in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) may be measured by the PARCC assessments set to be administered for the first time in 2014-2015. The prototype items are early samples or models that may be helpful in building the actual assessment items. They also give educators and the public an early look at what next generation assessment items may look like.

"The prototypes are a first step in demonstrating what is possible with new assessment technology that captures students' application of knowledge and skills that are essential to success in the 21st century," said Massachusetts Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Mitchell Chester, chair of the PARCC Governing Board. "The prototypes are illustrative of the next-generation PARCC assessment system that reflects the Common Core State Standards."

The primary purpose of sharing item and task prototypes is to provide information and to support educators as they transition to the CCSS and the PARCC assessments. The dynamic, online prototypes presented on the PARCC website demonstrate that core shifts at the heart of the CCSS are also integrated into the design of PARCC's technology-based assessments.

Additional prototypes and rubrics will be added over the next two years to paint a more complete picture of the PARCC assessment design in each content area and grade level.

Though not a focus in the first round of prototype work, PARCC will ensure accessible test administration as well as accessible assessment design through its commitment to use the principles of Universal Design and embed supports that will increase access to the greatest number of students taking the assessments.

"PARCC assessments are being designed to promote quality instruction aligned to the Common Core State Standards." said Laura Slover, senior vice president of Achieve, which serves as the project

management partner for PARCC. "They are designed to be work worth doing rather than a distraction from good work."

Educators will also find more than just the prototypes on the PARCC website. Every item and task prototype is annotated with information about the standard being measured, the type of assessment on which it would appear, and a link to the revised PARCC Model Content Frameworks.

The PARCC Leadership Team directed the development and review of this collaborative effort through Achieve and contracts with: Student Achievement Partners, which includes CCSS writers; PARCC's item development contractors, ETS and Pearson; the University of Pittsburgh's Institute for Learning; and the University of Texas at Austin's Dana Center, which produced five math items linked to the PARCC website. Illustrative Mathematics and Bill McCallum of the University of Arizona also provided support to the development of the math prototypes.

In addition to the release of item and task prototypes, PARCC is also releasing updated versions of the Model Content Frameworks for ELA/Literacy and Mathematics. PARCC held a public comment period in June 2012 asking educators and other stakeholders to provide suggestions on areas in the frameworks that needed additional specificity or clarity. The Model Content Frameworks for Mathematics now include a revised high school section that provides assessment guidance for Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II and Mathematics I, Math II, Math III.

The funding for making the prototypes accessible on the PARCC website, as well as support for developing the prototypes, was made possible by a grant to Achieve from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

In order to make the Model Content Frameworks more accessible and user friendly, with the support of the GE Foundation, PARCC developed a searchable online version of the Model Content Frameworks, which includes a search browser, an online glossary, and direct references back to the standards.

To view the item and task prototypes and the Model Content Frameworks, visit www.parcconline.org.

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About PARCC

PARCC is an alliance of states working together to develop common assessments serving nearly 25 million students. PARCC's work is funded through a four-year, \$185 million dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Partners include about 200 higher education institutions and systems representing hundreds of campuses across the country that will help develop the high school component of the new assessment – and then put it to good use as an indicator of student readiness. PARCC is led by its member states and managed by Achieve, a nonprofit group with a 15-year track record of working with states to improve student achievement by aligning K-12 education policies with the expectations of employers and the postsecondary community. PARCC's ultimate goal is to make sure all students graduate from high school college- and career-ready. For more information, visit www.parcconline.org. Follow the consortium on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/PARCCPlace>

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