



Partnership for Assessment of  
Readiness for College and Careers

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## **PARCC Charts Pathway to College and Career Readiness Through K-12 and Higher Education Vote**

**Washington, D.C. – Nov. 2, 2012** – In unprecedented collaboration between K-12 and higher education, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Governing Board and the PARCC Advisory Committee on College Readiness (ACCR) on October 25 during a joint teleconference voted unanimously to adopt a College- and Career-Ready Determination (CCRD) policy and Policy-Level Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs). Agreement on a CCRD policy and the PLDs in mathematics and English language arts/literacy is a significant milestone in the development of the next generation assessments. States within the PARCC consortium now have established a common benchmark to define the academic preparation necessary for college and career readiness.

The CCRD policy defines the level of academic preparation in English language arts/literacy and mathematics needed for students to be successful in entry-level, credit-bearing courses in two- and four-year public institutions of higher education. These institutions include technical colleges and other institutions that award degrees or credentials aligned to entry requirements of middle- or high-skilled jobs.

The adoption of the CCRD also signals that the PARCC assessments will have meaning for students as they progress through high school and beyond. Students who achieve at the CCR level on the high school assessments will be able to enter directly into certain entry-level, credit-bearing courses in those subject areas without having to take placement tests.

The policy specifically states:

- Students who earn a CCRD by performing at level 4 in ELA/literacy and enroll in College English Composition, Literature, and technical courses requiring college-level reading and writing have approximately a 0.75 probability of earning college credit by attaining at least a grade of C or its equivalent in those courses.

- Students who earn a CCRD by performing at level 4 in mathematics and enroll in College Algebra, Introductory College Statistics, and technical courses requiring an equivalent level of mathematics have approximately a 0.75 probability of earning college credit by attaining at least a grade of C or its equivalent in those courses.

The CCRD policy recognizes that while academic preparation is an essential part of students' readiness for college and careers, it does not encompass the full range of knowledge, skills, and characteristics that students need for ultimate success, such as persistence, motivation, time management, employability skills, and technical skills. The CCRDs, therefore, serve as one piece of a larger set of strategies states may deploy to support students as a part of a broader agenda to increase college completion rates and career success.

The PLDs include two components: a policy claim, which describes the educational implications for students at a particular performance level; and general content claims, which describe the academic knowledge and skills students performing at a given performance level are able to demonstrate, regardless of grade level. PARCC has adopted five performance levels that classify student performance into categories that describe the knowledge, skills, and practices students in the category typically are able to demonstrate.

Five levels were selected for several reasons:

- PARCC assessments will include a sufficient number of score points to support the accurate classification of student performance into five levels;
- Five levels will help provide better information across the full range of student performance, particularly for low-performing and high-performing students;
- Five levels will help schools better target assistance to students at all levels;
- Five levels will provide states with options for using performance levels with greater precision in various accountability mechanisms and decisions; and
- Five levels will provide increased opportunities for students, schools, and districts to demonstrate growth.

PARCC will establish a systematic standard-setting process to identify the threshold scores, also known as cut scores, which will be followed by a standard-setting event after the first administration of PARCC in summer 2015. The event will result in identification of the threshold scores for all five performance levels and make use of multiple sources of information including the judgments of K-12 and higher education professionals serving on standard-setting panels, as well as relevant data about how students participating in PARCC assessments perform on other achievement measures.

On July 12, 2012, the PARCC Governing Board and the Governing State representatives of the Advisory Committee on College Readiness (ACCR) approved draft PLDs and a draft CCRD policy for public comment. After reviewing

the initial round of public comments, PARCC decided to open a second comment period in September 2012 to get specific feedback on issues related to career readiness. Nearly 800 individuals provided comments on the PLDs and CCRD policy, and their comments were carefully reviewed by PARCC to inform subsequent revisions to the document.

To view the CCRD policy and PLDs, frequently asked questions, a summary of the feedback to the drafts and how the feedback was incorporated, please visit the PARCC Assessment Policies (<http://www.parcconline.org/parcc-assessment-policies>) page on the PARCC website.

To learn more about PARCC, visit [www.parcconline.org](http://www.parcconline.org) or follow the consortium on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/PARCCPlace> or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/PARCC>.

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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 over 700 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](http://www.parcconline.org).*

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