



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for PARCC Field Test and High School Assessment for 2013-2014

General Questions and Answers related to the U. S. Department of Education “field test waiver flexibility”

1. What does it mean to “participate in the field test” for purposes of the field text flexibility?

The U. S. Department of Education recognizes that there are multiple ways to test new assessment items. For purposes of the field test flexibility, a school “participates in the field test” if at least one full classroom or course section, within the school that is field tested, takes the full form (i.e. all items and components of the form of the field test) in one subject area during the 2013-2014 school year.

2. What does it mean for “one full classroom or course section” to participate in the field test?

At the elementary and middle school level, one full classroom means that a classroom comprised of all students in a specific teacher’s classroom (i.e, Mrs. Jones’ third grade class) takes the full form of the field test (performance-based and end of year). At the high school level, one full course section participates in the field test if all the students in one period, during which a particular course is taught by a specific teacher, take the full form (performance-based and end of year) of an assessment in one content area.

3. As part of the field test flexibility, is a student who takes the full form of the field test in only one subject area, for example, mathematics, REQUIRED to take the current state assessment (MSA) in the other subject areas (reading and science)?

YES. For example, a student who takes the full form (performance based and end of year PARCC) in mathematics must still take the current reading/language arts and science assessments. Additionally, all students, not participating in the

PARCC field test, must continue to participate in the current state assessments MSA reading, mathematics and science.

4. Will the U. S. Department of Education consider a request from MSDE to waive the 95% participation rate requirement as part of the field test flexibility?

NO. As required by federal law, LEAs must ensure that in each school at least 95% of all students and 95% of each subgroup of students participate in either the current state assessment or the field test for each subject.

General Questions and answers related to Maryland regulations on state assessment:

5. Can students and parents “opt out” of the field test?

NO. Please see the attachment regarding requests to opt out of state testing.

6. What is the length of the field test?

	ELA/Literacy PBA			ELA/Literacy EOY	
	Literary Analysis	Research	Narrative	Session 1	Session 2
Grade 3	2 hours	2 hours	1 ½ hours	2 hours	2 hours
Grade 4-11	2 ½ hours	2 ½ hours	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
Time includes estimated time on task, additional time for all students, and time to read instructions, distribute and collect materials. Times for field testing may be revised for the operational administration.					
	Mathematics PBA		Mathematics EOY		
	Session 1	Session 2	Session 1	Session 2	
All Grades	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours	

7. What is the testing window for the field test?

The PARCC Performance Based Assessment (PBA) testing window will be March 24 thru April 11, 2014; the End-of-Year Assessment (EOY) testing window will be May 5 thru June 6, 2014.

8. Will there be training available for school test coordinators and field test teachers on the new testing platform?

Yes. The PARCC field test will be administered on the Pearson Test Nav 8.0 platform; this will be a new release of the software Maryland currently uses for its online testing programs. PARCC and the field test administration vendor, Pearson will be releasing ePATs (electronic practice assessment tools) for students and teachers to use prior to the field test. This is the same practice Maryland currently utilizes for its online state assessments. ePATs are web-based practice tests that simulate the TestNav 8.0 test environment . They are designed to simulate many of the features and test item formats used in a live test session. Unlike a live test session, however, ePATs provide the user with a summary of item scores that can be saved and printed. ePATs are only sample tests and do not include all the content that will be included in the PARCC field tests.

9. If the US Department of Education approves MSDEs waiver request, what are the accountability measures for schools participating in the field test as well as for schools not participating in the field test?

Schools Participating in the Field Test

The school level accountability will have the same reporting requirements utilizing the 2013-2014 assessment results for each school for the content that was not field tested. In an elementary or middle school where one classroom is field tested for PARCC in ELA/Literacy and the remaining students would test in the state assessment for reading, the mathematics state assessment would be administered to all students. This means in the previous example, School Progress and the School Progress Index will be calculated and published on mdreportcard.org for the mathematics content, there would be no measurement, calculation or publication for achievement results for reading. For schools that field test both contents (reading and mathematics) there would be no requirement to calculate and publish the 2013-2014 School

Progress or School Progress Index results for reading and mathematics. The School level Strand assignment derived from the 2012-2013 school year's data will be maintained for the 2013-2014 school year. There will be no new strand assignments derived from the 2013-2014 school year data. Participation rate for field test students and the students taking the state assessments must be published and measured against the 95% participation rate requirement for both reading and mathematics.

Schools not participating in the field test- will be measured using the School Progress and the School Progress Index with newly assigned Strands based on the 2013-2014 school year's data.

10. If a student is enrolled in 8th grade algebra I, what tests will he/she be required to take during the field testing year?

Current ESEA requirements under NCLB are still in effect during the field testing. In the scenario described above the student is required to take the MSA assessment for 8th grade and the algebra/data analysis assessment required for Maryland high school graduation. Maryland is not field-testing PARCC Algebra I. For eighth grade students taking Algebra I this year, it is recommended these students are not selected for field-testing of grade 8 PARCC.

11. If a student in 6th grade gifted and talented mathematics is studying grade 7 standards, which PARCC assessment will he/she be told to take- grade 6 or grade 7? Is the testing based on the student's actual grade level or course of study?

Current NCLB regulations require students to test in their grade level; in this case the student would take the 6th grade mathematics assessment.

General Questions and answers related to High School Assessments and field testing:

12. What field tests will be administered in Maryland at the high school level?

Geometry and Algebra II will be the field tests for mathematics and English I (English 9), and English III (English 11) will be the ELA/literacy field test

assessments. Maryland will not be participating in the PARCC Algebra I or PARCC English II (English 10) field tests. This is due to students in grade 9 participating in the HSA algebra/data analysis assessment and students in grade 10 participating in the HSA English II (English 10) assessments for their Maryland high school diploma.

13. Will students still be required to take the high school assessments?

Yes. The current high school assessments in algebra/data analysis, English II (English 10), biology and government are still required for a Maryland high school diploma. The Maryland State Board of Education is considering whether the PARCC Algebra I and PARCC ELA/Literacy II assessments will replace the current HSAs in those content areas. Additional communication will be provided when the State Board makes a decision regarding which assessments will be required for a Maryland high school diploma.

14. What will the status be of current 8th graders who take the high school assessment in Algebra/Data Analysis during the 2013-2014 school year?

Students, including 7th and 8th grade students, who take the HSA algebra/data analysis assessment during the 2013-14 school year and pass the assessment will have met their assessment graduation requirement for mathematics. If the student does not meet the passing score for HSA algebra/data analysis in the 2013-14 school year, the student can re-take the HSA algebra/data analysis assessment in the subsequent school year, or after failing the assessment twice can participate in the Bridge plan.

15. What is the status of the Government high school assessment during the 2013-2014 school year and beyond?

Beginning with the 2013-14 school year, government is again required for students to pass and/or reach a combined score option to receive a Maryland high school diploma.

16. Will there be opportunities for students to re-take the high school assessments (2013-2014) and PARCC high school assessments (2014-2015)?

There are no changes to the HSA administrations in the 2013-14 school year. During the 2014-15 school year for the PARCC assessments, re-takes will not be provided. Standard setting for the PARCC assessments will take place in the

summer of 2015. Once the cut scores are determined re-take opportunities will be available in the 2015-16 school year for PARCC assessments.

17. Will there be a Bridge program for the PARCC high school assessments?

Yes, Bridge projects will be made available for those assessments that will be required for a Maryland high school diploma.