

# 2015-2016 PARCC AND MCAS FAQ FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND EDUCATORS



## Will Massachusetts use PARCC or MCAS in spring 2016?

To evaluate PARCC's quality, rigor, and efficacy, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education planned a two-year "test drive" of the assessment. This fall, the Board will vote on whether to use PARCC for grades 3-8 English language arts and math assessments in spring 2016. The 10th grade MCAS will continue to be a graduation requirement through at least the class of 2019 (freshmen who start in fall 2015), and MCAS science and MCAS Alt tests will continue regardless of the Board's decision. The current assessment schedule is at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/news/news.aspx?id=15687>.

## How will spring 2015 PARCC scores affect school and district accountability determinations?

Schools administering PARCC will have their 2015 accountability and assistance level held harmless, meaning the level (1-5) will stay the same or improve from 2014 but cannot decline. Schools administering MCAS will continue to be classified into a level using the state's school and district accountability system. For more information, see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/parcc/CommTool/2015PARCCorMCAS.pdf>.



## How will spring 2015 PARCC scores affect evaluations of teachers and administrators?

Only a few educators will have Student Impact Ratings that include SGPs based on the spring 2015 PARCC assessment. However, in districts that chose to administer PARCC in the spring 2015, and have begun to collect measures to determine Student Impact Ratings, educators are essentially held harmless. Here are the details:

If an educator's students' SGP scores based on 2015 PARCC results are lower than the educator's students' SGPs based on 2014 spring MCAS, then the 2014 SGP scores will be used as a basis for the educator's student impact rating. This proviso only applies to districts that began collecting evidence for an educator's student impact rating during the 2014-15 school year, and among those, only those districts that used PARCC in spring 2015. For more information, see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/news/news.aspx?id=11379>. For more information about the use of SGP in educator evaluation, see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/ddm/GrowthPercentiles.pdf>.



## When will we receive our district's spring 2015 PARCC and MCAS scores?

MCAS scores will be released in late September or early October, while district-level PARCC scores will not be available until November or December. PARCC scores arrive later this year because of the technical aspects involved with administering a test for the first time.

Students' achievement may appear lower in some grades on PARCC than on MCAS, because PARCC is designed to be a more rigorous test.

## How do we prepare students for PARCC?

First and foremost, strong teaching and learning will best prepare students for success. For the past five years, educators have been realigning their curriculum to the updated [Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks](#), developed to increase college and career readiness.



MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF  
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[www.doe.mass.edu/parcc](http://www.doe.mass.edu/parcc)

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## What if my district is not technologically ready for PARCC?

A paper version of the test is available for spring 2016. Students and teachers need computers and broadband access for 21st century teaching and learning, and the state continues to help districts apply for federal E-rate money and to work to offer state grants for technology.

## What will happen to the 10th grade MCAS graduation requirement?

Regardless of what the state Board decides this fall, the 10th grade MCAS will remain a graduation requirement through the class of 2019. If PARCC is adopted, the Board will set a new graduation requirement, for the class of 2020 and beyond, informed by educators from across the state.

## Would students spend more time taking PARCC than they did MCAS?

It depends on the grade level. While students in some grades will spend slightly more time on PARCC, overall, students will spend less time than the untimed MCAS test, which in some schools lasted all day.