



Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

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Dear Parents,

Thank you for your steadfast support of Maryland public schools. I am proud of our accomplishments this year, and grateful for your assistance and dedication. I am writing to provide important updates about the new PARCC state assessments.

PARCC is the statewide test designed to help us keep our students on track to learn what they need to know to graduate from high school ready for college and careers. Students in grades 3-8 and high school took PARCC for the first time this spring in key subject areas, including English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics, depending on grade.

Let's start with some good news:

- Next year's PARCC tests will be shorter by about 90 minutes overall. It will take less time away from lessons and the tests will be given during one 30-day window, instead of the two test administrations given this school year.

Here's what you can expect in the coming months:

- Before winter break, a detailed report on PARCC results will be sent home to offer an in-depth look at how your child is progressing toward meeting the standards for English/Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics.
- You will have a picture of your child's progress toward grade-level specific skills, such as reading comprehension and mathematical problem-solving. The report also will reflect whether your child needs additional instructional support to catch up or if they are ready move ahead.
- Additional information will be available to help put the PARCC results in context – including flyers, fact sheets, videos and back-to-school meetings.

Please note that your child's performance on the new PARCC state assessments may be lower than you expect. This is not necessarily a cause for concern.

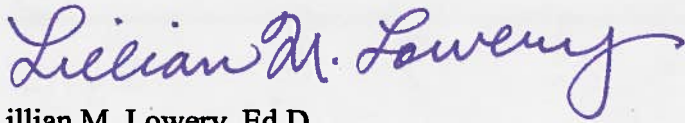
Historically, student scores on every new state test begin relatively low, which is due in part to our commitment to raising academic standards. Students tend to do better over time and we expect PARCC results to follow that pattern. This new, more challenging test reflects the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards implemented statewide two years ago.

(more)

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Finally, while PARCC is an important measure of how well students are learning, it is not the only tool that tells how well children are doing in school. Your child's school, and local PTA or PTO, can share additional information about PARCC when the new school year begins. PARCC resources also can be found online at www.marylandpublicschools.org. Thank you for supporting our schools and the students we serve.

Sincerely,



Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D.
Maryland State Superintendent of Schools