

Pleasantdale School District 107

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In spring of 2015, the PARCC assessment was administered for the first time. This assessment meets the requirement of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and replaces the ISAT as the statewide assessment for third through eighth grade students in Illinois. Last spring, students were assessed during two testing windows: a Performance Based assessment in March and an End of Year assessment in May. The scores from these two testing windows were combined to form a summative Mathematics score and a summative English Language Arts score for each tested student.

The PARCC assessment was developed by a consortium of states. Through a level of questioning that requires critical thinking and application, PARCC was designed to meet the more rigorous Common Core State Standards. Unlike the paper-based ISAT, the computer-based PARCC assessment requires students to show their work and explain their reasoning in order to justify their answers. Rather than the multiple choice questions of the past, students are now faced with a plethora of question types. For English Language Arts, students are tasked with citing evidence from text passages and from video clips that are embedded into the assessment. Math has moved beyond computation into the element of “equation editor” use which is a tool that allows students to click on numbers and mathematical symbols in order to type an equation and show strategies they use in solving multi-step, multi-operation real world problems.

Looking forward, as a result of feedback, PARCC will be administered in one testing window during the spring of 2016. Additionally, the number of testing sessions as well as the overall number of minutes were also decreased for the upcoming administration. In the grand scheme of things, PARCC is one type of assessment that fits into a larger “balanced assessment” framework. This, in addition to the other assessment types, helps us to provide differentiated instruction to individuals as well as identify both strengths and gaps within the curriculum and instructional practices.

Scores from the spring 2015 PARCC administration have been released. Looking forward, we will use these results to find new ways to analyze and use data, incorporate the instructional shifts of the Common Core, and challenge students in ways that are appropriate to their needs.

In order to meet these new, more challenging expectations, we must continue to create paths that have not yet been travelled. Teaching and learning have a different look and are offering more exciting opportunities than ever before. With experience, our students will become more “test savvy” while great instruction becomes the best “test prep” that exists.

Main takeaways:

- PARCC replaced ISAT
- greater expectations and different test format
- scores created new benchmarks and have now been released
- plan moving forward to continue making progress to reach new expectations

Mission

Ensure that each student is a passionate learner empowered with the Academic and social skills to responsibly choose and excel in life pursuits.