

Frequently Asked Questions about the PARCC Field Test

Updated March 30, 2014

This document contains Frequently Asked Questions about the PARCC Field Test Administration. Questions fall into the following categories:

- [General Questions about the PARCC Field Test](#)
- [Requirements for Participating in the PARCC Field Test](#)
- [Timing and Scheduling for the PARCC Field Test](#)
- [Preparing for the PARCC Field Test](#)
- [Technology Questions about the PARCC Field Test](#)
- [Security Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Mathematics Tools for the PARCC Assessments](#)
- [Questions about Computer-Based Administration](#)
- [Questions about Paper-Based Administration](#)
- [Accessibility Features and Accommodations for the PARCC Field Test](#)
- [Training for the PARCC Field Test](#)
- [Preparing for Operational Assessments in 2014-2015](#)

General Questions about the PARCC Field Test

1. What is the purpose of the PARCC Field Test?

The primary purposes of the PARCC Field Test are to:

- ✓ Examine the quality of items so that PARCC can build assessment forms for the 2014-15 school year;
- ✓ Pilot assessment administration procedures; and
- ✓ Give schools and districts the opportunity to experience the administration of PARCC assessments.

2. How many students are participating in the PARCC Field Test?

Across all PARCC states, over one million students will participate in the Field Test.

3. How will my school be informed if it has been selected to participate in the PARCC Field Test?

Schools will be notified by their districts/LEAs. Pearson, PARCC's Field Test contractor, sent letters (via email) to districts/LEAs notifying them if schools in their district were selected to participate in the PARCC Field Test. The final list of participating schools was completed in December 2013.

4. Will the PARCC Field Test include paper-based tests?

Yes. While the goal is that all students will take PARCC assessments on a computer in the future, PARCC intends to offer paper-based versions of its assessments in the near term and will continue to offer paper-based tests as an accommodation. Accordingly, some schools will be selected to field test computer-based assessments, and others will administer paper-based assessments.

5. Why are some students only taking one component (Performance-Based Assessment OR End-of-Year Assessment), while other students are taking both components (both Performance-Based Assessment AND End-of-Year Assessment)?

The majority of students will take only one half of the assessment in one content area. This design was chosen to minimize the testing burden on schools and students, while still allowing PARCC to collect data needed to accomplish the purposes of the Field Test.

6. May I talk to the press or my colleagues about my experience in the Field Test?

Yes. But any discussion must be at a general level. The PARCC Field Test is a secure testing event – only students being tested may view the assessment. In order to protect the security of the items, you may not discuss specific PARCC items. Members of the media and other visitors are not permitted to interfere with students or observe testing in a school. You should also check your school/district media policy.

7. Will PARCC be gathering and using data from students and Test Administrators on the administration of the Field Test? How will this information be used?

Yes. PARCC is conducting a study that is analyzing the effectiveness and clarity of training materials and instructions to students. An important component of this study is the feedback from students and Test Administrators through surveys that students and Test Administrators will complete after administration. PARCC will analyze this information over the summer to improve administration policies and procedures for the operational administration in 2014-2015.

8. Will there be different forms of the test (e.g., multiple versions of grade 4 mathematics Performance Based Assessment) for the purposes of increasing security within the testing room?

Yes. There are different forms for each grade, component, and content area. All forms follow the same PARCC blueprint and all sessions are administered in the same order. The majority of classrooms will have multiple forms of the Field Test within any given classroom, although students in a small number of classrooms will be administered the same form.

Requirements for Participating in the PARCC Field Test

1. May a school change the grades, content areas, testing modes (e.g., computer-based, paper-based) for which it was selected?

No. Schools were selected to participate in a particular grade, content area, and mode for the Field Test. In order to collect representative data, schools will not be able to change the tested grades, content areas, or testing modes for the Field Test.

2. My recruitment letter says “number of classes.” How is this defined?

In this instance, a class is defined as a “classroom.”

3. How does my school select a classroom (not applicable for Colorado or Mississippi)?

It is important that classrooms are randomly selected. Please see PARCC’s [classroom selection guidance](#) for more information.

4. *My school was selected for the computer-based assessment. How do I know if my school has the technology capacity to administer the Field Test?*

Please see [PARCC's Field Test Technology Requirements](#) for test-taking devices and bandwidth. Schools should refer to the *Technology Readiness Quick Start Checklist* on that page to determine if they have the technical capacity to administer the PARCC assessments for the Field Test.

5. *Who can be a Test Administrator or Proctor for the Field Test?*

Information about who can serve as the Test Administrator or Proctor can be found in [Section 1.5 of the Test Coordinator Manual](#).

6. *Can substitute teachers serve as Test Administrators?*

Yes. However, they must be a certified educator and must be trained to administer the PARCC Field Test.

7. *My school does not have a sufficient number of headphones to administer the Field Test. What options does my school have?*

For PARCC assessments, headphones are defined as personal audio transmission devices that include both over the ear and in-ear audio devices that are commonly referenced as headphones, earphones, or ear buds. Headphones are only required for the English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA/L) Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) testing sessions, not the ELA/L End-of-Year and mathematics testing sessions (except for students who need them for accessibility/accommodations purposes). Schools have several options for ensuring that they have a sufficient number of headphones. First, schools can instruct students to bring their own headphones. Second, schools can divide classes into smaller test administration groups. For example, if a school is selected for one classroom, it can divide the classroom in half and test the students in two different groups. Third, schools could purchase additional inexpensive device-compatible headphones.

8. *Are microphones required for the PARCC Field Test?*

No. Microphones are not needed for the PARCC Field Test, unless they are needed by a student for accommodations purposes.

9. *My school was selected for a high school sample and my school runs on a block schedule. Should I include students who took the course in fall 2013 in the Field Test sample?*

No. Schools should only include students who are taking the course in spring 2014. Schools should not include students who took the course in fall 2013.

10. *My school missed the student registration process deadline (i.e., the Student Data Upload deadline). What do I do?*

Please contact your state assessment office for more information and instructions.

Timing and Scheduling for the PARCC Field Test

1. *What are the test administration windows for the Field Test?*

The Field Testing windows are as follows:

- Performance-Based Assessment (PBA): March 24–April 11, 2014
- End-of-Year (EOY): May 5–June 6, 2014

Several states have minor adjustments in their testing window, due to special circumstances in their state. Districts in these states were notified of this difference in their recruitment letters.

2. How many test sessions will be administered in the Field Test and how long will each session be?

The number of test sessions for each PARCC assessment component in each subject area is as follows:

PARCC Component	Number of ELA/Literacy Test Sessions	Number of Mathematics Test Sessions
Students Selected for Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) Only	3	2
Students Selected for End-of-Year (EOY) Only	2	2
Students selected for Both PBA and EOY	5	4

The administration times for the Field Test include the estimated times that the typical student will take to complete the test component (Estimated Time on Task) **plus** a set amount of additional time for students who need it to complete the session. These times vary by grade level/course, content area, and assessment component.

3. Where can I find information about PARCC’s timing and scheduling policies?

Information about PARCC’s testing times and scheduling guidance can be found in [Section 1.6 of the Test Coordinator Manuals](#).

4. Will the PARCC Field Test be timed?

Yes. PARCC tests are timed, although students will have a set amount of additional time to use if needed. Please see more information about PARCC’s timing policies in [Section 1.6 of the Test Coordinator Manuals](#).

5. Is each test timed on each student’s computer or by the Test Administrator?

Test Administrators are responsible for timing students to ensure that all students follow PARCC timing policies (see [Sections 1.6.5 and 1.6.6 of the Test Coordinator Manual](#) for specific testing times). The computer-based delivery platform will not “lock” a student out when time is complete. PARCC will collect timing data for computer-based Field Tests.

6. Do all students in a grade need to test on the same day?

Information about scheduling test sessions can be found in [Section 1.6.1 of the Test Coordinator Manual](#):

- For PBT administration, all students within a grade/subject must take designated test sessions on the same day. Test sessions must be administered in order.
- For CBT administration, schools with multiple classrooms testing in the same grade must be scheduled together as closely as possible. Test sessions must be administered in order.

7. What do I do about students who are absent on the day(s) scheduled for the Field Test? Should they make it up on a different day?

Yes. Students who are absent on testing day may make up their testing session as long as they do so within the testing window. Schools or districts/LEAs should schedule make-up sessions as needed.

8. What is the recommended time for scheduling testing sessions?

PARCC recommends that schools schedule two hour blocks for each session of the Field Test (or two and a half hour blocks for the literature analysis and research simulation task in English Language Arts/Literacy Performance-Based Assessments for grades 4-11). These blocks should allow sufficient time to complete the required administration activities, such as those listed below, as well as for students to complete the test session with the additional time allotted, as needed.

Computer-Based Administration	Paper-Based Administration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading instructions to students • Responding to student questions • Conducting any additional end of session activities (e.g., closing testing sessions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading instructions to students • Responding to student questions • Distributing materials to students • Collecting materials

9. Is there a particular time during the testing window in which I must schedule the field tests?

Unless additional guidance was provided by states to districts, schools may test at any time during the testing window. Schools (or districts/LEAs) should schedule make-up sessions as needed.

10. Can a school schedule multiple test sessions in one day?

Yes, multiple sessions can be given in one day, if desired by the school. However, it is strongly suggested that schools not schedule two sessions in one time block. Each testing session must be completed within the same day and schools must schedule according to "Total Administration Time," so that students who need the additional time are able to use it. It is not recommended that a school schedule more than two sessions in one day for students (applicable to ELA PBA only, which is 3 sessions) and schools may want to spread out testing sessions across multiple days.

11. Can a school test two different grade levels and/or content areas on the same day?

Yes. If schools are selected to participate in multiple grade levels/courses and/or content areas, schools may determine when each particular grade level/course and content area is administered. For example, if grade 5 is scheduled to give the ELA PBA and grade 4 is scheduled to give the Math PBA, both assessments can be assessed on the same day. However, they should not be administered in the same room at the same time.

12. Can a school schedule two different classrooms in the same room at the same time?

It is not recommended that schools schedule two different classrooms in the same room at the same time if the classrooms are different grade levels/content areas due to different testing times and different scripts for testing sessions that will be used by Test Administrators.

13. Do schools need to administer all sessions within a component in one day (e.g., all ELA sessions for Grade 5 PBA)?

No. LEAs/schools should schedule test sessions as they see appropriate, so long as each individual testing session is completed within one school day.

14. If all students have completed testing at the end of initial Session Time, can the test session end?

Yes. According to Test Administrator discretion, if ALL students have completed testing at the end of initial Session Time, the Test Administrator may end the test session.

15. During computer-based testing, students who have completed a session but have not yet received instructions from the Test Administrator for exiting the test could be automatically logged-out if they are inactive and the device goes into sleep mode or a screensaver becomes active. If a student completes his/her test prior to the end of the initial Session Time, can the Test Administrator log the student out of the test session for CBT or collect the student's test materials for PBT?

Yes. To avoid log-in errors for CBT, the Test Administrator can give the student instructions on exiting the testing system (TestNav) prior to the end of the initial Session Time. It is **important that students exit, not submit**, unless they have completed all sessions for the test being taken. For students to continue testing after exiting, the Test Administrator will need to **resume** students in PearsonAccess before students can log-in to the test again and begin the next testing session. All instructions for correctly ending and resuming a computer-based test session can be found in the scripts of the [Test Administrator Manual for Computer-Based Testing](#).

For both CBT and PBT, the Test Administrator can collect the student's test materials. After a student's secure test materials have been collected, the student may follow the state-specific policy ([Appendix E of either Test Administrator Manual](#) for instructions on what to do after the test and a list of allowable materials) during the remainder of the Session Time. The Test Administrator can end the test session after all students' secure test materials have been collected.

16. If all students complete testing in the middle of Additional Time Allowed – can the test session end?

Possibly. If all students have completed testing after initial Session Time, Test Administrators should follow their state or local policy located in [Appendix G \(computer-based manual\) or Appendix H \(paper-based manual\) of the Test Coordinator Manual](#), but may use their discretion on whether to end the test session. However, Test Administrators must offer Additional Time Allowed to all students and must not encourage students to finish early. Schools must schedule testing sessions according to Total Field Test Administration Time (Session Time plus Additional Time Allowed), since it will be unknown going into a testing session how many students may need additional time.

Preparing for the PARCC Field Test

1. Will sample test items be provided prior to the Field Test that students can practice answering?

Yes. PARCC released [sample task prototypes in August 2012 and sample items in August 2013](#). The new sample items were first presented in PDF format to emphasize a focus on the content of the items, allowing students to gain familiarity with different item types. In January 2014, the items were re-released on the technology platform as [computer-based sample items](#).

2. Is it a requirement to administer the sample items and tutorial?

Yes. If a school is administering the computer-based Field Test, it is required that the participating students have an opportunity to [complete the tutorial and practice with sample items](#) prior to administration. This is important for students to have an opportunity to learn and practice with the tools and functionalities of the computer-based tests. If a school is administering the paper-based tests, it is highly recommended that students be provided a chance to practice with PARCC items.

3. Should schools read the tutorial aloud to students or allow students to complete this on their own?

This is at local discretion. The tutorial is not automatically read aloud to students by the computer, so schools may feel it is appropriate to walk students through the tutorial and read aloud the information.

4. Are there paper-based sample tests?

The sample items that PARCC has released are applicable to both paper-based and computer-based administration, though some of the technology-enabled items will not appear on paper-based test forms. Sample items are available on both the [technology-based platform](#) as well as in [PDF form](#). The PARCC Field Test tutorial is only available for computer-based testing because the purpose of the tutorial to allow students to become familiar with the tools and functionalities of the computer-based testing platform.

Technology Questions about the PARCC Field Test

1. Are there tools to help schools and districts evaluate their technology capacity in preparation for the online assessment?

Yes. PARCC has a number of technology-specific supports, including:

	Description
Field Test Technology Specifications	Document that includes a detailed list of devices students can use to participate in the Field Test, bandwidth specifications for the Computer-Based Field Test, Proctor Caching requirements, a chart summarizing the Accessibility Features and Accommodations enabled for the Computer-Based Field Test and additional technology guidance for the field test Link: www.parcconline.org/field-test-technology
PARCC – Smarter Balanced Technology Readiness Tool	Online computer device inventory and gap analysis tool. School accounts are established through state and district points of contact or State Readiness Coordinators. Link: http://techreadiness.org
PARCC Capacity Planning Tool	Spreadsheet based tool to help schools model testing capacity and “what if” scenario planning. Link: https://www.parcconline.org/sites/parcc/files/PARCCCapacityPlanningTool_2-27-14.xlsx
PearsonAccess User Guide	This guide provides information on how to navigate through PearsonAccess. Link: http://PARCC.Pearson.com/Manuals

Frequently Asked Questions about the PARCC Field Test

Hardware and Software Requirements for TestNav 8 and Proctor Caching	<p>These guidelines list the minimum hardware and software system requirements needed for running PearsonAccess in order to manage testing sessions.</p> <p>Link: http://www.pearsononlinetesting.com/TestNav/8/index.html</p>
TestNav 8 User Guide	<p>This guide provides information needed to run TestNav 8 and a list of error codes students or staff may encounter while administering the test.</p> <p>Link: http://PARCC.Pearson.com/TechInformation</p>
Proctor Caching User Guide	<p>This guide describes the importance of Proctor Caching and information on how to install and monitor Proctor Caching.</p> <p>Link: http://PARCC.Pearson.com/ProctorCaching</p>
Key Local Considerations Guide	<p>This supplement to the Technology Readiness Tool addresses some of the considerations and/or local decisions that district and school staff may need to include in their transition planning or in their determinations of technology readiness for PARCC assessments.</p> <p>Link: http://techreadiness.org/u/TRT_Key_Local_Considerations.pdf</p>
Systems Check Tool	<p>An auto-detecting systems configuration tool that provides a “final” check of individual systems. The tool will launch TestNav 8 for authoritative confirmation of device and bandwidth readiness and will provide additional scenario-modeling of network variables.</p> <p>System Check Tool and Training Materials: http://practice.parcc.testnav.com</p>
TestNav Common Error Codes	<p>This document lists the most common error codes for TestNav and provides directions on how to address them. This list also appears in the TestNav 8 User Guide. Both of these documents can be found at: http://parcc.pearson.com/Techinformation</p>
PARCC Technology Troubleshooting FAQs	<p>This document contains Frequently Asked Questions to help districts and schools troubleshoot issues regarding technology set up for the PARCC Field Test and can be found at http://parcc.pearson.com/Techinformation. Topics include network configurations, proctor caching, java software requirements, browser configurations, TestNav 8 and PearsonAccess.</p>
Infrastructure Trials	<p>This website will show you information on Technology Specifications, Test Manual and User Guides, Set Up Tools and Field Test Training Modules: http://www.parcconline.org/field-test-technology</p> <p>Schools should refer to the Full Technology Specifications for 2014 PARCC Field Test Participation.</p> <p>Key components of this document include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed list of devices students can use to participate in the Field Test • Bandwidth specifications required to support computer-based testing for the Field Test • Information about setting up proctor caching as a low-bandwidth option • A full list of accommodations available during the PARCC Field Test • Proctor Caching Requirements • iPad and Chromebook specifications and set up directions*

	<p>*This PDF includes information about the iPad specifications and minimum screen size. iPad minis are NOT supported (screen size requirement on page 4), and the documentation is included in the link above.</p>
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2. What is Proctor Caching and what will the Test Administrators need to do for that, if anything, on test day?

Proctor Caching has nothing to do with “administering/proctoring” an assessment. [Proctor Caching](#) is Pearson-supplied software that is used in conjunction with TestNav to reduce bandwidth requirements and accelerate the delivery of test content. It allows you to save test content to your local network BEFORE testing and reduces the burden on your ISP by eliminating redundant requests for test content. Cached test content is encrypted and stored locally. The Proctor Caching software is available on the non-secure support pages within PARCC PearsonAccess and will be set up well before testing. The application is free and does not require secure login access to download. The Proctor Caching software and guide is currently available at: <http://parcc.pearson.com/ProctorCaching>.

3. Is there a low-bandwidth option for PARCC Field Test?

Yes. There is a low-bandwidth option for administering the PARCC Field Test. Proctor Caching is a secure option that will enable schools and districts to deliver interactive computer-based tests even in very limited Internet bandwidth conditions. For the PARCC Spring 2014 Field Test, schools using the caching option should plan on bandwidth capacity equivalent to 5 kbps per simultaneous test-taker to implement Proctor Caching. Please see more information about Proctor Caching at: www.parcconline.org/field-test-technology.

4. How do we ensure every computer meets technology specifications?

The PARCC [SystemCheck](#) Tool for TestNav was designed to help district and school technology personnel begin to assess their overall technology readiness for computer-based testing. This tool includes two tabs, the first addresses computer readiness and the second looks at network infrastructure readiness. The functions of each tab are detailed below.

- The "Check Your System" tab - Includes tools to validate whether system requirements are met on each testing workstations and to verify whether TestNav can display and run on the workstation.
- The "Testing Capacity" tab - Includes bandwidth testing for Internet and Proctor Caching connections and provides volume estimates for capacity planning.

The PARCC Infrastructure Trial was designed to be a “dress rehearsal” exercise where LEAs will simulate their full testing environment before the operational test administration. The Infrastructure Trial will be performed using a full size Infrastructure Trial test form and “dummy” student information at the training site to simulate a full testing load at the site and will be released January 17, 2014.

- Detailed device and bandwidth requirements can be found [here](#).

5. Will external, physical keyboards be needed for students taking the assessment on a tablet?

Yes. Due to the onscreen space occupied by a tablet’s virtual keyboard, PARCC assessments will require external keyboards for test takers using tablets so as not to limit or obscure the view of test item content and related functionalities when text input is required. Research studies will be conducted to yield data on students’ use of virtual versus external keyboards. PARCC will refine this guidance as needed based on these results.

6. *When can test sessions be created?*

For the Performance-Based Assessment (PBA), test sessions can be created beginning February 24. For the End-of-Year Assessment (EOY) test sessions can be created beginning April 7. For more information about how to create Test Sessions, please view the Computer-Based Testing Test Administration Training Module located at www.parcc.pearson.com/support or review the *PearsonAccess User Guide*.

7. *How much bandwidth is required to also keep the school functioning normally while students are testing?*

PARCC recognizes that school networks must support a wide range of services and technology-rich educational offerings both during and outside of PARCC assessment windows. In response to these realities, PARCC posted updated bandwidth recommendations to the PARCC online website in September 2013 as part of the Version 3.0 release of the PARCC Assessment Technology Guidelines. These recommendations include three bandwidth levels that PARCC will communicate wherever possible:

- Minimum for Assessment with Caching: 5 kilobits per second per student
- Minimum for Assessment Without Caching: 50 kilobits per second per student
- Recommended for Instruction Plus Assessment: 100 kilobits per second per student, or faster

To ensure that instruction can continue during the assessment, PARCC recommends that schools run the [SystemCheck](#) during the school's peak usage times as well as during the anticipated testing window.

The **100 Kbs bandwidth level recommended for instruction plus assessment** models the recommended bandwidth guidance of the State Educational Technology Directors Association in its May 2012 publication *The Broadband Imperative: Recommendations to Address K-12 Education Infrastructure Needs* (<http://www.setda.org>). These higher bandwidth recommendations ensure schools have the adequate bandwidth needed to support instruction, assessment, professional development, and administrative processes.

8. *Does the minimum bandwidth consider the worst case scenario for how much bandwidth could be required?*

The minimum bandwidth requirements account for the maximum level of connectivity needed to administer next generation PARCC assessment items using Proctor Caching that include complex student interactions, extended constructed responses, and embedded multimedia – although some individual sessions of the Math and English Language Arts/Literacy assessments may require less than the published minimum bandwidth.

9. *Will the assessment technology platform need to be updated if computer software (e.g., iOS or Windows) has an update?*

Since the assessment technology platform does not require local installation, there is no action needed from schools or districts to keep the platform up to date. PARCC will constantly monitor upcoming releases of operating systems and browsers and administer testing to update the platform as needed. After setting up Proctor Caching and conducting the Infrastructure Trial, schools and districts should NOT upgrade browsers, operating systems or Java without first checking to see if the NEWEST version will support TestNav.

10. How do we download the software needed for the assessment onto every computer?

The PARCC assessment does not require the local installation of any software other than Java to administer the PARCC assessment. All devices must meet PARCC's [detailed device and browser requirements](#). There are a few optional applications that may be needed on a case-by-case basis as detailed below.

- If using the recommended Proctor Caching solution, schools/districts will need to download the Proctor Caching software, which is free and does not require secure login access to download. The Proctor Caching software and guide can be found here: <http://parcc.pearson.com/ProctorCaching>.
- If using Apple iPads for testing, schools/districts will need to download the free iPad TestNav app that will be available from the App Store in late February 2014. Additional details including how to secure iPads will be available in the Emerging Devices Training Module.
- If using Chromebooks for testing, schools/districts will need to download the free Chromebook TestNav app available by the end of February 2014. Additional details including how to secure Chromebooks will be available in the Emerging Devices Training Module.

11. Does the Technology Coordinator need to download and check every computer individually?

No. But if a Technology Coordinator would like to check all devices in a school, then they will have to use the [System Check](#) at each individual workstation. However, it is not mandatory. If you have a set of labs within a school or across a district with devices that are configured using the same operating system, browser and network, you may choose to test a sample of devices that will be used for testing to determine whether they meet the technology requirements. However, this should be determined based on district or state guidance.

12. What are the troubleshooting guidelines for technology breaks?

[The TestNav 8 User Guide](#) includes a list of screens and error codes so that Test Administrators can learn how to solve problems and reduce the reliance on both IT staff and the Pearson Support Center. Information about the protocol for handling severe weather or safety threats can be found in [Section 2.13 in the Test Coordinator Manual](#). The same protocol can be used for any classroom or school interruptions in the event of Internet loss.

Security Policies and Procedures

1. Can anyone view PARCC items during the PARCC Field Test?

No. The PARCC Field Test is a secure testing event. Items may not be viewed by anyone other than the students who are participating in the Field Test (unless a student has a read-aloud accommodation).

2. What constitutes a testing irregularity?

This information can be found in [Section 2.4 of the Test Coordinator Manual](#).

3. What should I do if I think a testing breach or testing irregularity has occurred?

This information can be found in [Section 2.5 of the Test Coordinator Manual](#). You should immediately contact your School Test Coordinator if you think a testing irregularity or testing breach has occurred.

You must immediately contact your LEA Test Coordinator or State Assessment Office, in accordance with your state policy as found in the [Appendix G \(computer-based manual\)](#) or [Appendix H \(paper-based manual\) of the Test Coordinator Manual](#). Schools must also file a written report using the Test Breach/Testing Irregularity Form in Appendix B of the Test Coordinator Manual within two school days.

4. What does my school do if I have a student who became ill and his or her test materials have become contaminated?

This information can be found in [Section 4.1.3 of the Paper-Based Test Coordinator Manual](#).

5. Do Test Administrator Manuals need to be collected by School Test Coordinators after each test session?

It is recommended, but not required, that School Test Coordinators collect Test Administrator Manuals after administration so they can be maintained in one location.

6. Will auditing of the test rooms be allowed?

For the Field Test, information on authorized visitors can be found in [Section 2.7 of the Test Coordinator Manual](#). Visitors, including parents/guardians, school board members, researchers, reporters, non-testing students, and school staff not authorized to serve as Test Administrators or Proctors are prohibited from entering the testing environment. Visits by state assessment office monitors, LEA monitors, and PARCC, Inc. observers are allowed based on state-specific policy, as long as these individuals do not disturb the testing process. Information about state-by-state policies can be found in the [Appendix G \(computer-based manual\)](#) or [Appendix H \(paper-based manual\) of the Test Coordinator Manual](#).

7. Should Test Administrators encourage students to review their answers?

The test administration scripts that are part of the Test Administrator Manual include a scripted reminder to students to check their work and make sure they have answered all of the questions. Test Administrators should follow the script and not encourage students *on an individual basis* to review answers.

8. The training materials indicate that students must be separated by a reasonable distance. How is reasonable distance defined?

Seating arrangements should prevent student collaboration, but School Test Coordinators and Test Administrators may use their professional judgment when setting up the testing room.

Mathematics Tools for the PARCC Assessments

1. Where can I find PARCC's calculator policy?

PARCC's calculator policy can be found in [Section 2.9 of the Test Coordinator Manual](#).

2. Will online calculators be provided on computer-based assessments?

Yes. Grade appropriate calculators are provided through PARCC's online platform. Students may practice with the online calculator through the PARCC Sample Items and Tutorial found at www.parcconline.org/computer-based-samples. (Note: The graphing calculator is not available on the tutorial.)

3. Can students use hand-held calculators for computer-based assessments?

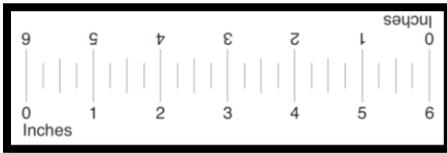
Yes. In accordance with PARCC’s calculator policy found in [Section 2.9 of the Test Coordinator Manual](#), students may use hand-held calculators for the PARCC Field Test, if they prefer. However, schools must collect information about how many students wish to do so prior to administration, so schools can be prepared to have the correct number of hand-held calculators available during administration. Hand-held calculators are required for paper-based testing. All hand-held calculators must meet the additional guidance as specified in [Section 2.9 of the Test Coordinator Manual](#). Test Administrators are responsible for ensuring hand-held calculators meet specifications and ensuring the memory is clear before and after administration.

4. Can schools or students provide their own rulers and protractors?

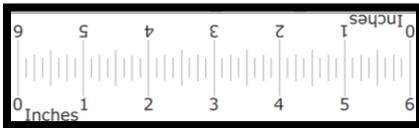
No. For paper-based administration, rulers and protractors will be provided in the materials shipment and schools must distribute these as part of the testing materials. For the computer-based administration, rulers and protractors will be available through the online platform.

5. What are the specifications for the rulers and protractors that will be provided on the PARCC assessments?

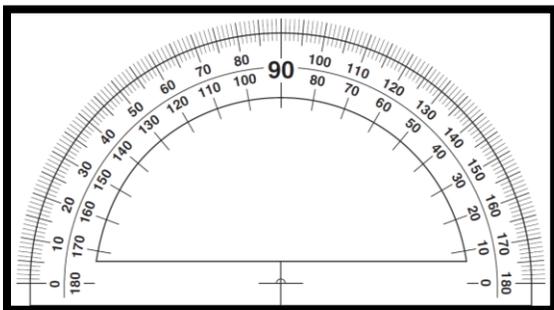
Here is a screen shot of the Grade 3 ruler that will be provided on the PARCC assessments:



Here is a screen shot of the Grades 4 through high school ruler that will be provided on the PARCC assessments:



Here is a screen shot of the protractor that will be provided on the PARCC assessments:



6. If schools do not have geometry tools that are listed in the Test Administration Manuals, do they need to purchase them?

No. For both computer-based and paper-based administration, the Test Administration Manuals list tracing paper, reflection tools, straight edge and compass as allowable tools for 8th grade, Geometry, and Integrated Mathematics assessments. These are meant as allowable tools for students who use

them in daily instruction who may find them useful during administration. Though schools are allowed to provide them as useable materials, schools are not required to purchase these tools for the purposes of PARCC assessments. Schools may also allow students to use their own geometry tools if they are first provided to the school prior to test administration to ensure there is no writing of any kind on them.

7. *Are the geometry tools listed as allowable materials available on the computer-based delivery platform?*

No. The geometry tools (tracing paper, reflection tools, straight edge, and compass) are allowable as hand-held tools, but are not provided on the computer-based delivery platform. Students may find them useful when working out problems on scratch paper.

Questions about Computer-Based Administration

1. *What happens if the power or Internet go out during the test?*

Information about the protocol for handling severe weather or safety threats can be found in [Section 2.13 in the Test Coordinator Manual](#). The same protocol can be used for any classroom or school interruptions in the event of Internet loss.

2. *When will my school receive paper copies of the Test Coordinator Manual and the Test Administrators Manuals? How many will my school receive?*

Schools that are participating in the [computer-based administration](#) will receive one copy of the Test Coordinator Manual per school and one Test Administrator Manual for every classroom. Test Administration Manuals will be shipped along with other paper-based materials (week of March 17, 2014 for the PBA; week of April 21, 2014 for the EOY).

3. *When are seal codes available?*

Seal codes may be printed by the School Test Coordinator as soon as the test session is created.

Questions about Paper-Based Administration

1. *The Test Coordinator Manuals state that student ID labels should be applied after administration, but my state currently applies them before testing. Do I need to follow this guideline in the manual, or should I follow my state's current practice?*

For this particular procedure, you should follow your state's current practice. For other policies, unless otherwise instructed by your state, you should follow the procedures as outlined in the [Test Coordinator Manual](#).

2. *How soon before administration may I open the shrink wrap packages of materials?*

The Test Coordinator Manual states that shrink-wrapped packages should be opened the day of administration. However, your state practice may differ from this protocol, and you should follow your state's current practice. Contact your state assessment office if you have any questions.

3. *Will my students use test booklets or answer documents?*

Grade 3 students will record answers through a test booklet. Grades 4 through high school will use a test booklet but record answers in a separate answer document.

4. When will my school receive paper-based materials?

Materials for the paper-based administration of the PBA will be shipped the week of March 17, 2014 for the PBA. Materials for the paper-based administration of the EOY will be shipped the week of April 21, 2014. Materials may be shipped directly to your school or through your district, as defined in your state's policy located in [Appendix H of the Test Coordinator Manual for Paper-Based Testing](#).

5. When will my school receive paper copies of the Test Coordinator Manual and the Test Administrators Manuals? How many will my school receive?

Schools that are participating in the paper-based administration will receive one copy of the Test Coordinator Manual per school and one Test Administrator Manual for every 20 students. Test Administration Manuals will be shipped along with other paper-based materials (week of March 17, 2014 for the PBA; week of April 21, 2014 for the EOY).

6. Does my school or district need to order materials?

If your district or school uploaded a Student Data Upload (SDU) file by the PARCC SDU deadline (January 28 for PBA and February 28 for EOY), then materials will be automatically ordered and no further action is required. If a school or district submitted a SDU file after the PARCC SDU deadline, then the district will have to manually order materials through PearsonAccess. Districts will be notified by Pearson via email of any schools that missed this deadline on March 12, 2014. Note that no pre-printed student ID labels will be provided if a school missed the SDU deadline.

7. What do I do if I have contaminated materials?

Follow the protocol outlined in [Section 4.1.3 of the Test Coordinator Manual for Paper-Based Testing](#).

8. How does my school schedule a pick-up for test materials?

All details regarding pick-up of paper-based materials can be found in [Section 4.2.10 of the Test Coordinator Manual for Paper-Based Testing](#). If your state policy, located in [Appendix G \(computer-based manual\)](#) or [Appendix H \(paper-based manual\) of the Test Coordinator Manual](#), states that materials ship to and through your district, you must return materials to your district and the district may call to schedule a pick-up through UPS. If your state policy states that materials ship to and through your school, the School Test Coordinator must call UPS to schedule a pick-up. Pick-ups can be scheduled at any time after testing but must occur no later than one week after the testing window ends.

Accessibility Features and Accommodations for the PARCC Field Test

1. Will students with disabilities and English learners be included in the Field Test?

Yes. The PARCC Field Test sample will represent the student population in each state and across PARCC. Therefore, students with disabilities and English learners will participate in the PARCC Field Test, with the exception of students designated to take their state's alternate assessment, students who require certain accommodations that are not available for the Field Test, and first-year ELL students who may participate in ELA at local discretion based on non-regulatory guidance from U.S. Department of Education.

2. Where can I find more information about PARCC's accessibility features and accommodations policies?

The [PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual](#) is available on PARCC Online. This website also contains implementation guidance.

3. What is the difference between accessibility features and accommodations?

Accessibility features are tools or preferences that are either built into the assessment system or provided externally by Test Administrators and are available to all students. Some accessibility features, however, must be identified during the Student Data Upload process prior to administration in order to ensure that feature is enabled for the student during administration. Accommodations are adjustments to the test setting, test format, or test administration procedures that provide equitable access for students with disabilities, students who are English learners, and students with disabilities who are also English learners. Accommodations and other supports that are available for students with disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities only if they are listed in a student's IEP, 504 Plan, or an EL plan (if required by a PARCC member state). Accessibility features and accommodations are listed in the [PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual](#).

4. If a student needs a text-to-speech accommodation, how do I note this and what I do to receive to help me administer this accommodation?

If a student needs a text-to-speech accommodation, this must be noted in the student's record as part of the Student Data Upload file. For the grades for which a text-to-speech feature is available for computer-based testing (ELA/L: Grades 5, 8, and 11; Mathematics: Grades 4, 7, and Algebra I), this feature will be provided through the online platform. To hear text-to-speech, students can click item-by-item to have the item read aloud. For all other grades and for all paper-based tests, schools must use a human reader. For paper-based tests, schools will receive a "read-aloud" kit, which includes two test booklets (one for the student and one for the Test Administrator) and one answer document. Human readers must follow the protocol outlined in [Appendix B of the PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual](#) (also available in the Appendix of the Test Coordinator Manuals).

5. For the computer-based text-to-speech/read-aloud accessibility features/accommodations that require a human reader, will the Test Administration read from the computer screen or a paper test form?

When a test session is created for the "Read Aloud," test tickets for the Test Administrator ("Proctor Authorization Ticket") are enabled, and it allows the Test Administrator to log into the test from their own computer and read to the student from their own computer. In addition, a Test Administrator may sit next to the student and read the test over their shoulder, if appropriate for the student. Human readers must follow the protocol outlined in [Appendix B of the PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual](#) (also available in the Appendix of the Test Coordinator Manuals). Note that text-to-speech/read-aloud for mathematics is available to all students, while the text-to-speech/read-aloud is available for ELA only as an accommodation for student with disabilities who have this documented in their IEP or 504 plan.

6. My student has a text-to-speech/read-aloud accessibility feature/accommodation. Do we need to make additional preparations within the computer-based environment?

Yes. All students receiving a text-to-speech/read-aloud accommodation or accessibility feature through the computer-based platform must be placed in a separate virtual test session within PearsonAccess. If they are receiving a text-to-speech accommodation/accessibility feature, build the virtual test session as

follows: select “No” under *Read Aloud by Text Examiner* (no human reader) and “Text-to-Speech” under *Form Group Type*. This ensures the student’s form has the text-to-speech feature enabled.

The screenshot shows the 'Test Session Details' form with the following settings:

- Session Name: sara test 2
- School: PARCC SAMPLE SCHOOL (XX-ZZ3258-3258)
- Test to be Administered: Algebra I
- Read Aloud by Test Examiner: No
- Default Form Group Type: Text-to-Speech (selected from a dropdown menu that also includes 'Main' and 'Background/Font Colors')

At the bottom, there are radio buttons for 'View By: Classes' (selected) and 'Students'.

Students receiving a human reader accommodation/accessibility feature on the computer-based test should be in another separate virtual test session within PearsonAccess. The virtual test session is built as follows: select “Yes” under *Read Aloud by Text Examiner*, and “Read-Aloud” under *Form Group Type*. You’ll see that you cannot select “Yes” for *Read Aloud by Text Examiner* AND “Text-to-Speech” as the *Form Group Type*; it is one or the other. Note that no additional steps need to be taken in PearsonAccess for paper-based read-aloud accommodations/accessibility features other than marking the accommodation in the SDU file.

The screenshot shows the 'Test Session Details' form with the following settings:

- Session Name: sara test 2
- School: PARCC SAMPLE SCHOOL (XX-ZZ3258-3258)
- Test to be Administered: Algebra I
- Read Aloud by Test Examiner: Yes
- Default Form Group Type: Read-Aloud (selected from a dropdown menu that also includes 'Select a Form Group Type' and 'Main')

7. I have a student with a particular accommodation that I do not see listed in the PARCC Student Data Upload file. What do I do?

Not all accommodations are listed in the Student Data Upload file, including many of that are now considered accessibility features for all students rather than only for students with disabilities and English learners. You may want to review the list of available accessibility features and accommodations in the [PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual](#). In addition, your state may have added accommodations under another field within the PARCC Student Data Upload file; if schools have additional questions, they should contact their state assessment office. If after reviewing the list of available accessibility features and accommodations and contacting your state does not address the availability of the accommodation in question, schools may also apply for a unique accommodation using the PARCC Unique Accommodation Form, located in [Appendix F of the PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual](#) (also available in the Appendix of the Test Coordinator Manuals).

8. My state typically asks me to record accommodations after the test. Do I need to do this for the PARCC Field Test?

No. For the PARCC Field Test, accommodations information will not be captured after the testing event. Schools should keep this information on file.

9. Are visual aids/organizers allowed for students?

For computer-based tests, some accessibility features are available that are comparable to visual aids/organizers used for paper-based testing. For computer-based testing, examples of some comparable visual aids/organizers include: Answer Masking, Background/Font Color (Color Contrast), Flag Items for Review, General Masking, Line Reader Tool, and Highlighter Tool. For paper-based tests, visual aids/organizers that are equivalent to these tools are also permitted (e.g., colored overlays, pointer, or a masking device). However, individualized graphic organizers, reference sheets, checklists, etc. are not permitted on any PARCC tests. Please also note that highlighters should not be used on any response documents, as they may interfere with the scanning and scoring of those documents. Students may use highlighters only in the test booklets for grades 4 through high school.

10. Which word-to-word dictionaries are allowed on the PARCC assessments and for whom?

Word-to-word dictionaries are allowed only as an accommodation for English learners. A list of bilingual word-to-word dictionaries authorized for use on PARCC assessments is available at:

http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testadmin/lep_bilingual_dictionary.pdf. All dictionaries must be published word-to-word dictionaries with no phrases or definitions. Electronic translators are not permitted, unless a print copy is unavailable, in which case a unique accommodations request must be made. A formal approval process/list of word-to-word dictionaries for PARCC will be created in time for the operational test administration in spring 2015.

11. Do students with accommodations need to be tested in a separate group?

It is recommended to test students with the extended time accommodation in a separate setting to minimize distractions for all students, and to schedule these students for testing in the morning so their testing time can be extended until the end of the school day, if needed. The human read-aloud accommodation must always be administered in a separate setting (either one-on-one or in a small group).

12. What are the administration and technical protocols for a scribe accommodation?

Students should be tested in a separate setting using a human scribe or an external assistive devices of speech-to-text device. Please refer to [Appendix C: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation](#) in the *PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual* for more details about administrative protocols.

Training for the PARCC Field Test

1. What training is available to schools to prepare for the Field Test?

The following training modules (recorded training webinars) will be available at PARCC's Training Management System at: www.parcc.pearson.com/tms

Frequently Asked Questions about the PARCC Field Test

Name of Resource	Purpose/Description of Resource	LEA/ District Test Coordinator	School Test Coordinator	Technology Coordinator	Test Administrator
SystemCheck Tool Training Module	This module contains information about using the SystemCheck tool to review device and network readiness. It provides information about the content and usage of the 2 available tools and examples of error messages and successful completion of device check and network capacity check.			x	
SDU Upload Overview	This module provides step-by-step instructions for states, districts and schools to load students into PearsonAccess using the PARCC Student Data Upload file layout.	x	x	x	
Setting Up an Infrastructure Trial/Dress Rehearsal Training Module	This module provides a description of an Infrastructure Trial and provides information on the steps to prepare for an Infrastructure Trial using the PARCC Training Center.	x	x	x	
Technical Setup Training Module	This module is designed to describe each of the technology components used in computer-based testing. Configuration and hardware requirements are included as well as common best practices for successfully testing online. Users will be provided with information to access separate training modules for SystemCheck, Emerging Technologies, and Setting Up an Infrastructure Trial to avoid redundancy in training.	x	x	x	
How to Install Proctor Cache for PCs	This module demonstrates quick start install steps to install Proctor Cache software for a PC.			x	
How to Install Proctor Cache for Macs	This module demonstrates quick start install steps to install Proctor Cache software on a Mac.			x	
Configure TestNav and Proctor Caching	This module demonstrates how to configure TestNav and Proctor Caching machines. It will also demonstrate how to select a Proctor Caching machine when creating test sessions.			x	
How to Proctor Cache a Test Session	This module demonstrates a step by step process on how to Proctor Cache a test session.			x	
Test Administration for Computer-Based Testing Training Module	This module covers the tasks and activities for test administration staff using PearsonAccess. Information is provided managing user accounts, student data, and test management. Viewers will also receive information for creating and managing online sessions during the field test administration.	x	x	x	x
Test Administration for Paper-Based Testing Training Module	This module covers the tasks and activities for test administration staff using PearsonAccess. Information is provided managing user accounts, student data, and test management.	x	x	x	x

Frequently Asked Questions about the PARCC Field Test

Name of Resource	Purpose/Description of Resource	LEA/ District Test Coordinator	School Test Coordinator	Technology Coordinator	Test Administrator
Emerging Technologies and Security with Computer-Based Testing	This module will cover special considerations with iPads and virtualization solutions. New technologies present additional security challenges and these issues will be discussed as well as general security concerns specific to computer-based testing such as active test monitoring, securing authorization tickets, and computer lab physical configuration.	x	x	x	
Accessibility Features and Accommodations with Computer-Based Testing Training Module	This module will be designed to provide information about available accessibility features and accommodations for computer-based testing. The module will reference the Draft Accommodations manual and Full Specifications document available on the PARCC website. This module will also cover the steps to assign an accommodated form to a student in the Create Sessions process within PearsonAccess.	x	x	x	x
Preparing for the PARCC Field Test: Training for Test Coordinators	This module will provide an overview of information covered in the Test Coordinator Manual, such as roles and responsibilities of Test Coordinators and tasks to complete before, during, and after administration of the PARCC Field Test.	x	x		
Preparing for the PARCC Field Test: Training for Test Administrators – Volume 1: Computer-Based Testing	This module is intended for Test Administrators administering the PARCC Field Test using <i>computer-based testing</i> . The module will provide an overview of information covered in the <i>Test Administration Manual For Computer-Based Testing</i> , such as roles and responsibilities of Test Administrators, schedule and testing times, and tasks to complete before, during, and after administration of the PARCC Field Test.				x
Preparing for the PARCC Field Test: Training for Test Administrators – Volume 2: Paper-Based Testing	This module is intended for Test Administrators administering the PARCC Field Test using <i>paper-based testing</i> . The module will provide an overview of information covered in the <i>Test Administration Manual For Paper-Based Testing</i> , such as roles and responsibilities of Test Administrators, schedule and testing times, and tasks to complete before, during, and after administration of the PARCC Field Test.				x
PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Policies and Administration (coming soon!)	This module will provide an overview of the <i>PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual</i> and review administration procedures of accessibility features and accommodations.	x	x		x

Your state may hold additional training opportunities, such as regional training workshops for District Test Coordinators and webinars for district and school staff. Please contact your state field test contact for more information.

2. How can my district access training materials to help train school personnel for the PARCC Field Test?

For the field test, districts have access to the materials provided for the training modules are available online here: <http://parcc.pearson.com/tms>

Preparing for the Operational Assessments in 2014-2015

1. My school was not selected for the PARCC Field Test. How can I help my school prepare for the operational assessment in 2014-2015?

Since not all districts and schools will be included in the Field Tests, PARCC will provide all schools with practice tests in spring 2014. The practice tests will be similar in content to the Field Tests and allow all schools to become familiar with administering computer-based assessments and with the item types, interactive item functionalities, and computer-delivered accessibility features and accommodations that will be included on the operational assessments in 2014-2015.

PARCC also intends to provide districts and schools with other supports to assist them in getting ready for the operational assessments in 2014-2015, in particular support to build capacity to administer the assessments on computers. Already available on the PARCC website are *Technology Guidelines for PARCC Assessments* and a *Capacity Planning Tool* (<http://www.parcconline.org/technology>). These resources will assist you in decisions about purchasing devices and determining whether schools have sufficient devices and bandwidth available to administer computer-based assessments within the PARCC testing windows. Later this fall, PARCC will provide schools with a range of tools to assist schools in evaluating their technology readiness, which will allow schools to further evaluate their readiness to administer tests online. PARCC also released additional Assessment Administration Guidance (www.parcconline.org/assessment-administration-guidance), which contains more information about administration of PARCC in the operational year (2014-2015).

In addition, PARCC released sample items on a computer-based platform as well as a tutorial to review the tools and functionalities that a student will experience on a computer-based test. Schools and districts can find that information here: www.parcconline.org/computer-based-samples

2. Will the testing windows for the first PARCC operational assessment in 2014-2015 be similar to the administration windows for the PARCC Field Test?

Each PARCC state is determining the testing window for their state. If you have any questions about your state's testing window, please contact your state's assessment office.

3. Will the PARCC policies on administration and security be the same for the operational year in 2014-2015?

Possibly. PARCC will analyze data gathered from the PARCC Field Test, including feedback from students and Test Administrators, and use this information to improve its administration policies and procedures.

4. *Will all of the computer-delivered accessibility features and accommodations that will be available for the operational assessments be provided during the Field Test?*

During the PARCC Field Test administration, some accessibility features and accommodations will not be available due to ongoing research that is required to ensure that all accessibility features and accommodations provide a valid reflection of what students know and can do. In addition, some specific accessibility features and accommodations may not be available on specific devices such as Android and Linux devices. For a summary of what accessibility features and accommodations will be available during the Field Test, please see the [PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual](#).

5. *Are the technology requirements for the Field Test identical to the requirements for the Operational Assessment in 2014-2015?*

No. Because the PARCC assessment is still undergoing field testing, research studies, and technical development, there are features and functionalities of the test delivery platform that are not yet ready to be compatible with all computer operating systems. PARCC is still planning to fully support the range of operating systems, devices, and accommodations features described in the complete PARCC Technology Guidelines for the first operational assessment in 2014-15. While Android and Linux operating systems as well as some accessibility features are not yet supported for the Field Test, PARCC plans for them to be included for the 2014-2015 school year.

6. *Do these Full Technical Guidelines for the PARCC 2014 Field Test represent the final list of requirements for PARCC assessments in the 2014-2015 school year?*

No. The specifications provided in the Full Technical Guidelines for the PARCC 2014 Field Test does not yet constitute the full list of technical requirements that will be necessary to administer PARCC online assessments in the 2014-2015 school year. PARCC will use the technology readiness surveys and assessment design processes currently underway, as well as the results of future field trials to shape the full and final list of requirements, including guidance on bandwidth, thin client implementations, and test system security.

7. *Can PARCC identify which specific brands and models of computers will be eligible for use with the assessments in the 2014-2015 school year?*

No. Given the large number of devices and models currently in the marketplace and the volume of new devices and operating system upgrades that will be released by manufacturers between now and 2014-2015, PARCC cannot validate individual products.

8. *Will smaller tablets, e-readers, or smartphones be compatible with PARCC online assessments in the 2014-2015 school year?*

No. Due to the display demands of computer-based assessments, adequate screen space is critical for assessment items to display properly and for students to have the ability to select, drag, highlight, view multiple media, and construct written content as part of more complex next generation item types. As a result, smaller tablets (screen size less than 9.5"), e-readers, and smart phones will not be supported and will not be compatible with PARCC assessments for 2014-2015.