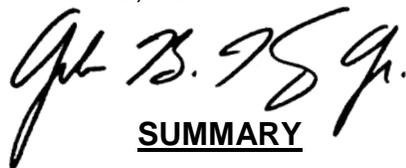




TO: Full Board
FROM: Ken Slentz 
SUBJECT: Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Assessment Design and Development Update

DATE: March 9, 2012

AUTHORIZATION(S): 
SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

Update on the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC).

Reason(s) for Consideration

Review of Policy.

Proposed Handling

This issue will come before the full board for discussion at the March 2012 meeting.

Background Information

In January 2010, the Regents endorsed the participation of New York State in the 24-state Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). PARCC is a consortium of states that worked together on a joint proposal to USDE to seek Race to the Top funding for the development of a K-12 assessment system aligned to the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics.

In June 2010, PARCC submitted a \$170 million proposal to USDE, and in September 2010 PARCC was awarded these funds, as well as a Supplemental Grant for \$15.8 million. Achieve, Inc. is the managing partner for PARCC, the state of Florida is the fiscal agent, and New York serves as one of 18 governing states. The PARCC assessments are scheduled to be operational in 2014-15.

The proposed PARCC assessment system was comprised of four “through-course” assessments administered throughout the school year via computer, each with rich performance tasks and technology-enhanced items.

Update

At the April 2011 meeting, the PARCC Governing Board¹ requested recommendations for revisions to the PARCC design to address recurring concerns about cost and unintentional consequences on curriculum and instruction. The Leadership Team recommended design changes to the Governing Board at their June 2011 meeting that addressed these concerns and are described below. An amendment was submitted to the USDE and approved in January, 2012.

Current PARCC Design

Component 1 (Optional): Early Assessments designed to provide teachers with information that can serve as an early indicator of student status relative to the Common Core State Standards. It may be possible to design this component to also include information about whether students who did not achieve proficiency in their previous grade have made progress towards or have attained proficiency on those standards in their current grade.

Component 2 (Optional): Mid-Year Performance-based Assessments that will provide instructionally-useful feedback to teachers and students and help prepare them for the innovative assessment tasks they will see on the performance-based Component 3. This assessment will be consistent with the original PARCC design but will not count towards a student’s summative score initially. Over time, states may consider including results of the mid-year assessments in summative scores. PARCC will also provide teachers with an online score training tool so they can score their students’ assessments and use the results to evaluate and improve their understanding of performance expectations in the Common Core.

Component 3 (Required, counts toward summative score): Rich Performance-Based Assessments in grades 3-8 and high school administered as close to the end of year as possible. Priorities in ELA/literacy will include focusing on writing effectively when analyzing text; in mathematics, priorities will include focusing on application of concepts, skills and understandings. This assessment will be comprised primarily of performance tasks and will be scored in time to be incorporated into the end-of-year summative score for each student.

Component 4 (Required, counts toward summative score): Innovative, computer-based machine-scorable items focusing on reading and comprehending complex texts in ELA/literacy, and the full range of standards in mathematics.

¹ The PARCC Governing Board is comprised of the 18 Chief state school officers from the governing states.

Component 5 (Recommended Required Assessment of Listening/Speaking): This component was initially conceived as a required, non-summative through-course assessment, delivered after the third through-course assessment in ELA/literacy. In the original design, students were to make a presentation based on their work for the third through-course assessment, which would be scored using a common rubric. To increase its feasibility and decrease the impact on classrooms, PARCC is considering an alternative approach that would permit the assessment to be administered at any time of the year.

The Governing Board has indicated that these design changes are an improvement on PARCC's original design and are consistent with PARCC states' goals of:

- Ensuring cost-effectiveness, feasibility and sustainability over time for states, districts and schools
- Assessing the full range of the CCSS, including standards that are difficult to measure—and currently not measured on most state assessments
- Measuring the full range of achievement for students, including for high- and low-performing students
- Measuring student growth over the full academic year or course
- Incorporating innovative approaches throughout the system
- Determining whether individual students are college- and career-ready, or “on track”
- Providing data during the academic year to inform instruction, interventions and professional development activities
- Being accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English language learners

Current PARCC Activities

The first year of the grant (September 2010 – September 2011) was primarily dedicated to capacity-building, design, and planning. Since the beginning of the second year of the grant, PARCC has focused on building capacity for, writing and/or issuing numerous procurements required for the technology infrastructure, assessment development, and educator support materials. A detailed inventory of the procurements required to execute the PARCC grant are listed here: <http://www.parcconline.org/Procurement>. A brief overview of procurements in progress will be provided at the Board meeting.