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Analysis of 2014-2015 PARCC results¹

The 2014-2015 school year marked the second year that the Common Core State Standards were fully implemented in Rhode Island. It also marked the first year that students took aligned math and ELA assessments through the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Rhode Island joined ten other states and the District of Columbia in administering PARCC. Here are the big takeaways from our results.

A new baseline

This year's PARCC scores provide a new baseline against which future scores will be compared. We expect scores to rise as students and teachers become accustomed to the new assessments and as Common Core-aligned instruction continues to improve.

Rhode Islanders now have another indicator of students' college and career readiness

The Common Core standards and PARCC assessments are more rigorous than Rhode Island's past standards and assessments. As a result, administrators, teachers, parents, citizens and, most importantly, students are now receiving a more rigorously measured picture of students' readiness for college and careers.

Proficiency rates show that Rhode Island has significant work ahead of it

The truth unveiled by our new assessments is that few students are currently prepared for college and careers. This is one more indicator of the significant work left to do to ensure all Rhode Island students receive a high-quality education.

In math:

- Only one-quarter of test takers across all grades met or exceeded PARCC expectations (i.e., scored proficient or above).
- In most grades, the percentage of students exceeding PARCC expectations was very low – around 1-2%.
- However, 3rd graders did better, on average, than students in other grades.
- 8th grade students who took the 8th grade PARCC exam (rather than Algebra I or Geometry) fared especially poorly; roughly one-third of these students scored at the lowest level (level 1).

In English language arts/literacy:

¹ "Assessment Results," Rhode Island Department of Education, accessed November 17, 2015, <http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/Assessment/AssessmentResults.aspx>.

- A higher percentage of students met or exceeded PARCC expectations in English language arts/literacy than in math (35.8 percent vs. 24.8 percent).
- High school students tended to fare slightly worse than students in lower grades; for example, 23.5% of 9th graders and 31.5% of 10th graders scored at the lowest level (level 1), higher than any other grades.

Proficiency gaps persist

Despite the new assessment, an old pattern emerged. There are large proficiency gaps between black and Hispanic students and their white and Asian peers, and between low-income and non-low-income students.

In math:

- The percentage of Black and Hispanic students meeting or exceeding expectations is approximately 22 percentage points behind white students.
- The percentage of low-income students meeting or exceeding expectations is 25 percentage points behind non-low-income students.

In English language arts/literacy:

- The percentage of Black and Hispanic students meeting or exceeding expectations is approximately 25 percentage points behind white students.
- The percentage of low-income students meeting or exceeding expectations is 29 percentage points behind non-low-income students.

Data tables

Key

Level 1: Did not yet meet expectations

Level 2: Partially met expectations

Level 3: Approached expectations

Level 4: Met expectations (proficient)

Level 5: Exceeded expectations (proficient)

Mathematics: percentage of students scoring at each PARCC level, 2014-2015 school year

	% Level 1	% Level 2	% Level 3	% Level 4	% Level 5
All grades	17.0	29.1	29.1	22.8	2.0
3 rd grade	14.1	21.6	28.0	31.2	5.2
4 th grade	13.7	28.5	31.0	25.4	1.5
5 th grade	15.3	27.2	30.8	24.2	2.4
6 th grade	15.7	27.8	30.6	24.1	1.8
7 th grade	12.0	28.4	34.2	23.4	2.0
8 th grade ²	32.7	30.7	24.8	11.8	0.1
Algebra I	19.3	30.4	24.8	24.3	1.2
Geometry	18.4	41.5	26.4	12.7	1.0

English language arts/literacy: percentage of students scoring at each PARCC level, 2014-2015 school year

² Only 74% of 8th grade test-takers took the 8th grade math assessment. The remainder took the Algebra I assessment or the Geometry assessment.

	% Level 1	% Level 2	% Level 3	% Level 4	% Level 5
All grades	18.2	19.9	26.1	30.2	5.7
3 rd grade	19.7	19.9	22.9	33.9	3.5
4 th grade	13.0	19.5	29.9	31.5	6.1
5 th grade	12.3	20.9	29.1	35.4	2.2
6 th grade	13.7	21.1	30.5	30.7	4.1
7 th grade	16.8	18.3	26.6	28.7	9.6
8 th grade	19.1	20.0	25.8	29.4	5.7
9 th grade	23.5	20.9	22.8	26.1	6.6
10 th grade	31.5	17.7	19.3	22.5	8.9

Mathematics: percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on PARCC (scoring at level 4 or level 5), all grades, by subgroup, 2014-2015 school year

	% Levels 4 & 5
All students	24.8
American Indian	10.3
Asian	36.2
Black	10.6
Hispanic	10.7
White	32.7
Pacific Islander	14.6
Two or more races	21.2
Low-income	12.0
Non-low-income	37.0
Limited English proficiency	6.0
Limited English proficiency – monitored	13.4
Non-limited English proficiency	26.6
IEP (students with disabilities)	4.2
Non-IEP	28.4

Mathematics: gaps between student subgroups in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on PARCC (scoring at level 4 or level 5), all grades, 2014-2015 school year

	Size of gap (in percentage points)
White/Black gap	22.1
White/Hispanic gap	22.0
Low-income/non-low income gap	25.0

English language arts/literacy: percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on PARCC (scoring at level 4 or level 5), all grades, by subgroup, 2014-2015 school year

	% Levels 4 & 5
All students	35.8
American Indian	19.8
Asian	44.9
Black	19.6
Hispanic	19.2
White	44.6
Pacific Islander	23.3

Two or more races	31.3
Low-income	20.5
Non-low-income	49.6
Limited English proficiency	7.3
Limited English proficiency – monitored	19.7
Non-limited English proficiency	38.0
IEP (students with disabilities)	6.0
Non-IEP	40.9

English language arts/literacy: gaps between student subgroups in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on PARCC (scoring at level 4 or level 5), all grades, 2014-2015 school year

	Size of gap (in percentage points)
White/Black gap	25.0
White/Hispanic gap	25.4
Low-income/non-low-income gap	29.1