

PARCC Field-test

To: USD 116 Board of Education

From: Jean Korder, Director of Curriculum and Assessment

Date: October 15, 2013

Urbana School District is asked to participate in the field-testing of the PARCC summative assessments that will become the State's assessment of student progress toward college and career readiness in the spring of 2015.

The field-test is scheduled for spring of 2014, and information from the field-test will inform the PARCC consortium in developing policies and procedures for the 2015 administration, the quality of assessment items, and provide initial information regarding levels of student performance.

The schools selected for field-testing were randomly selected to provide PARCC with an actionable sample from all participating states, roughly 15%. Schools in our district that have been selected for the field-test include Urbana High School, Urbana Middle School, Leal Elementary School, Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School, Prairie Elementary School, and Thomas Paine Elementary School. In six instances, classrooms will be asked to field-test in one of two content areas -- English/Language Arts or Mathematics -- and one of the two possible assessments -- the performance-based assessment or the end-of-the-year assessment. Thomas Paine is asked to field-test English Language Arts for both assessment types.

In a recent study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, the PARCC system received the highest rating for the quality of the assessment items and for alignment with the Common Core Standards. Participation in the field-testing will provide USD 116 with first-hand knowledge of the PARCC assessments and a voice in the development of policies and procedures associated with the administration of the assessment in 2015. Our students' performance will contribute to the determination of the initial performance determination for college and career readiness.

The Illinois State Board of Education intends to apply for a waiver of state testing for participating classrooms in the specific subjects they will be piloting. We recommend that our participation in the PARCC pilot be contingent upon receiving such a waiver for field-tested subjects in participating classrooms.

It is our hope that you will fully support our students and teachers as they participate in the field-testing.