



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Bill Reinhard, 410-767-0486

MARYLAND'S STATE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM TO BE STREAMLINED

PARCC to be Shorter, Use Single Testing Window

BALTIMORE (May 21, 2015) – Maryland students in grades 3-8 and high school will spend less time taking State assessments next year as a result of changes approved unanimously by the multi-state consortium governing the tests.

The Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) yesterday voted to consolidate the PARCC assessment's two testing windows into one and cut total test time by about 90 minutes overall beginning in the 2015-16 school year. The changes were made in response to feedback from parents, students, and educators during the first year of testing and a careful review of test design.

“Next year's PARCC tests will take less time away from lessons, and cause less disruption to school schedules, while still keeping students on track for college and careers,” said State Superintendent of Schools Lillian M. Lowery. “These changes will help us focus on what's most important—ensuring that students are learning to think critically and master the skills they will need to graduate, ready for success.”

The revisions to PARCC will:

- Combine the two English language arts and two math testing window to one 30-day window near the end of the semester or the school year.
- Reduce the number of test units that students will take from 8 or 9, depending upon the grade level, to 7 or 6.
- Cut the testing time for students by about 90 minutes overall depending on content and grade level.

The first full year of PARCC implementation in Maryland has gone smoothly for the most part, with more than 1.3 million tests administered and completed. The new assessments, aligned to Maryland's College and Career Ready Standards, replaced the Maryland School Assessment tests this year. Additional details on the changes to the PARCC test is available here: <link to national release>.

###