



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dr. Tom W. Kimbrell
Commissioner

August 22, 2013

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Dear Superintendent or Charter School Director:

Arkansas is a member of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) that is a consortium of states developing innovative assessments, aligned to the Common Core State Standards, in English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics for students in grades 3-11. The PARCC Field Tests will be administered in the spring of 2014 to more than one million students across all PARCC states.

This letter is to let you know that one or more schools in your district have been selected to participate in the PARCC Field Tests next spring. Pearson will begin communicating via email directly with the District Test Coordinator of record during the first week of September.

The purpose of the PARCC Field Tests is to evaluate the quality of items and tasks developed this past year with input from local educators from PARCC member states. Educators across Arkansas have been involved in reviewing PARCC tasks and items and providing feedback on the PARCC assessment decision points. Data from the field tests will help determine which of the items will appear on PARCC's first operational assessments in 2014-2015.

A random and representative sample of schools in each PARCC member state has been selected to administer field tests. A sample of classrooms within selected schools will be asked to participate in either the English Language Arts/Literacy or the Mathematics field test. Most students will take only one component, the Performance Based Assessment (PBA) or the End-of-Year (EOY) assessment, within a given content area.

Approximately 42,500 Arkansas students have been selected to participate in the PARCC Field Tests that will be offered in both paper and computer-based versions. The notification letter from Pearson will identify the schools in your district that were randomly selected for the field tests and, for each school, the grade level(s), content area(s), test component(s) and test administration mode (paper or computer) for which they have been selected.

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Superintendent or Charter School Director
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The PARCC Field Test administration windows in **Arkansas** will be as follows:

Grades	PARCC Field Test	Arkansas Window Dates
3-8	Performance Based Assessment (PBA)	March 31 - April 18, 2014
3-8	Performance Based Assessment (PBA) and End-of-Year (EOY)	March 31 - April 11, 2014 and May 5- June 6, 2014
3-8	End-of-Year (EOY)	May 5 - June 6, 2014
9-11	Performance Based Assessment (PBA)	March 31 - April 11, 2014
9-11	Performance Based Assessment (PBA) and End-of-Year (EOY)	March 31 - April 11, 2014 and May 5 – June 6, 2014
9-11	End-of-Year (EOY)	May 5 - June 6, 2014

The email notification letter that your District Test Coordinator will receive from Pearson will provide more detailed specifics and will require a confirmation response within two weeks of receipt. It is important to note that a random sample of schools/students participating in the field tests is necessary in order to generate data needed to evaluate the items and tasks. It is of the utmost importance that district leaders make every effort to confirm the participation of all selected schools in their districts. If a selected school or district chooses to decline participation, it is important that the district responds promptly so that another school or district can be selected as a replacement.

Since not all districts and schools will be included in the field tests, PARCC intends to provide all schools with computer-based practice tests next spring at the same time as field testing begins. The practice tests will be similar in content to the field tests and will allow all schools to become familiar with administering computer-based assessments as well as item types that will be included on the operational assessments in 2014-2015.

Your participation in the field tests is critical to developing high quality items and tasks and ensuring that PARCC administration protocols are clear and efficient. I ask your support in helping Arkansas transition from our current state assessments to PARCC. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Please contact me if you have additional questions.

Best Regards,



Melody Morgan
Director of Student Assessment