

BRIEF

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ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARCC SUMMARY

New Mexico raised its academic standards beginning in school year 2012-13. These standards were adopted with the intention to ensure that our students graduate with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful in today's world.

The Public Education Department adopted the PARCC as the measure for these new academic standards. PARCC is a new more challenging assessment that replaced the SBA, our former state achievement test. PARCC tests math in both English and Spanish and tests English Language Arts. PARCC is designed to test more complex skills like critical-thinking, persuasive writing, and problem solving. These skills were not measured on our previous state tests. This is the first statewide test in New Mexico to measure how well our students are learning these higher standards.

PARCC was administered for the first time in the spring of 2015 to students in grades 3-11. The test was designed to be a computer-based assessment administered in two separate components. In March our students took the Performance Based Assessment (PBA) that measured student's ability to construct a response to a question rather than select a right answer. The PBA also measured students' writing skills, and their ability to solve complex and novel problems. On the PBA students were often asked in math to explain their answers. The second computer-based component was identified as the End-of Year and administered in April. The EOY had multiple choice items but also presented students with technology enhanced items. These new-style items presented students with items such as allowing more than one right answer to be selected, ordering events to align to a reading passage, or graphing an equation.

PARCC scores for individual students will be presented two ways: in a scaled score and a performance level. The scaled score is a score that denotes students' correct answers represented on a standardized scale. The scaled score ranges are established by PARCC for each content

area reported. PARCC has five performance levels with 1 representing a student with the greatest need and 5 showing a student who demonstrated advanced performance. PARCC considers a student who scores a 4 or 5 to be “on track to be college and career ready.” In New Mexico qualifying for graduation includes a performance level of 3, 4, or 5 on PARCC.

Even though the SBA also provided scaled scores and performance levels, it is important that these scores not be compared. Several differences between PARCC and SBA make it inappropriate to compare scores from these two tests. These two tests were aligned to different learning standards or targets for all grade levels. These two tests have dramatically different formats and item types. Students respond differently to different types of items. Research shows that the format of a test may have a strong influence on scores. Finally, performance levels are established differently for these two tests.

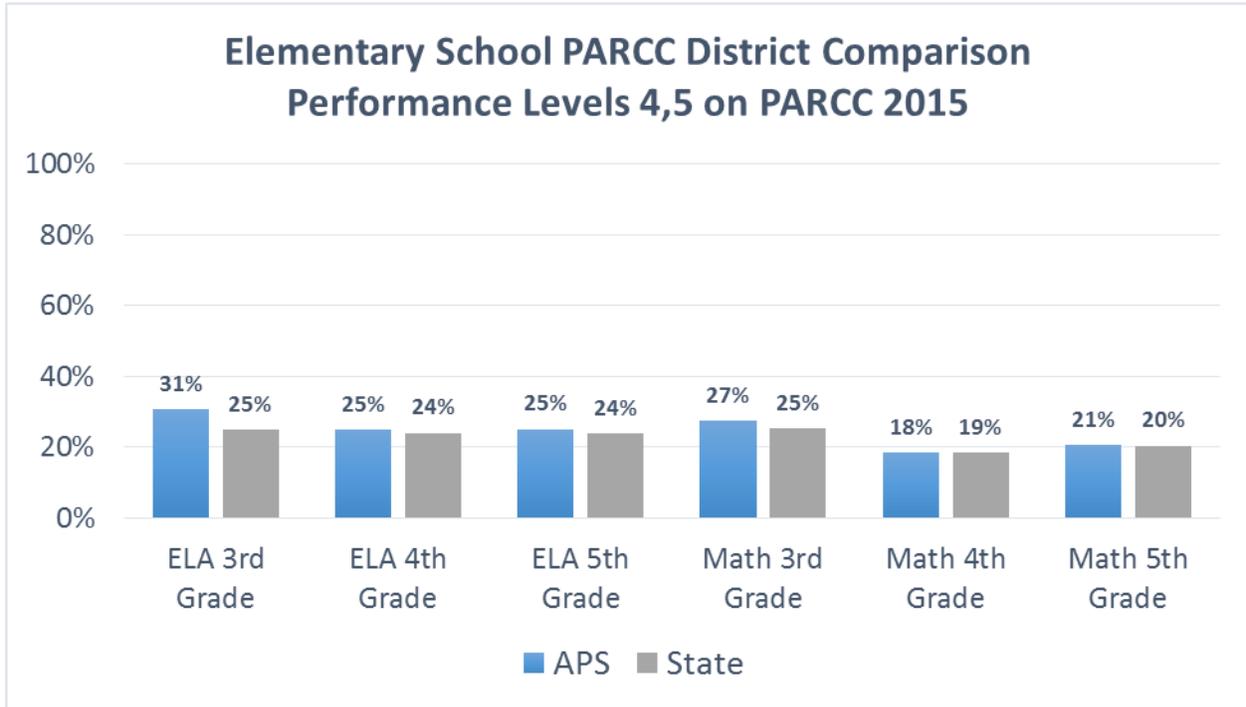
Scores on PARCC will look different than those on the former SBA and in some instances will show that fewer students meet these higher standards at performance levels of 4 and 5. This does not mean our students are learning less or falling behind. It just means that the expectations are higher and our new state test, PARCC, is aligned to those higher expectations. These first year scores are a new baseline from which to progress. We will use this new baseline to measure our progress in meeting these standards in the future.

It is important to remember that PARCC scores are just one measure of our students’, our schools’ and our district’s performance on the new state standards. PARCC results are a critical measure that should be considered ***along with*** in-class performance, district assessments, report card grades and other teacher measures of student learning.

PARCC results for elementary school students are included in this brief. Parent reports will be available at a later date and distributed to schools for release to parents.

A performance level on PARCC of 4 or higher indicates College and Career Readiness. The PARCC consortium expects that students, who earn a 4 or higher in elementary school, are on track to be college and career ready. The consortium defines college and career readiness as a

student who is able to enter directly into college after completing their secondary education and succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing courses and relevant technical courses at two- and four-year public institutions of higher education. Below is a graph of the percentage of APS's elementary school students who achieved a 4 or 5 on PARCC 2015 by grade level as compared to the state.



NMPED has established that a performance level of 3 or higher on PARCC as passing. Below is a graph which displays the percentage of elementary school students with performance levels of 3, 4, or 5 by grade level as compared to the state.

