



PARCC Calculator Policy for Calculator Sections of the Mathematics Assessments

Originally Released July 2012, Updated October 2014¹

Allowable Calculators

- Grades 3-5: No calculators allowed, except for students with an approved calculator accommodation (see below)
- Grades 6-7: Four-function with square root and percentage functions
- Grade 8: Scientific calculators
- High school: Graphing calculators (with functionalities consistent with TI -84 or similar models)

Additionally, schools must adhere to the following additional guidance regarding calculators:

- No calculators with Computer Algebra System (CAS) features are allowed.
- No tablet, laptop (or PDA), or phone-based calculators are allowed during PARCC assessments.
- Students are not allowed to share calculators within a testing session.
- Test administrators must confirm that memory on all calculators has been cleared before and after the testing sessions.
- Calculators with “QWERTY” keyboards are **not** permitted.
- If schools or districts permit students to bring their own hand-held calculators for PARCC assessment purposes, test administrators must confirm that the calculators meet PARCC requirements as defined above.

Calculator Accommodations:

For students who meet the guidelines in the *PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual* for a calculation device, this accommodation allows a calculation device to be used on non-calculator section of any PARCC mathematics assessment. Four-function with square root and percentage functions are allowable for grades 3-5. Please refer to the allowable calculator list for other grade levels.

If a student needs a calculator as part of an accommodation in the non-calculator section, the student will need a hand-held calculator because an online calculator will not be available. If a student needs a specific calculator (e.g., large key, talking), the student can also bring his or her own, provided it is specified in his or her approved IEP or 504 Plan.

¹ Calculator specifications were released July 2012. One addition was made July 2014 to allow four function calculators with square root AND percentage functions. Additional guidance on allowable calculators for accommodations for grades was included September 2014. Additional clarification was added to the FAQs October 2014.



Frequently Asked Questions about PARCC's Calculator Policy

1. Can students use hand-held calculators for computer-based assessments?

Yes. For 2014-2015, students may use hand-held calculators on computer-based Mathematics PARCC assessments on sections where a calculator is allowable (grades 6 through high school), if they prefer. All hand-held calculators must meet PARCC requirements as defined in PARCC's Calculator Policy.

It is recommended that schools identify which students prefer to use a hand-held calculator prior to administration to ensure that a sufficient number of calculators is available. Hand-held calculators are required for paper-based testing. Test administrators are responsible for ensuring hand-held calculators meet specifications, including ensuring the memory is cleared before and after administration.

2. Can students use their own calculators on PARCC assessments?

Yes. However, test administrators must confirm that the calculators meet PARCC requirements as defined in PARCC's Calculator Policy.

3. Can students use calculators on PARCC assessments that are allowable for higher or lower grade level assessments?

No. In order to provide comparability across schools in the consortium, students must only use calculators that are allowable for their grade/course assessment. PARCC assessment items were developed with PARCC's Calculator Policy in mind. Allowing for the use of a calculator that is designated for a lower or higher grade level assessment may unfairly disadvantage or advantage students and is, therefore, not allowed.

4. If a student takes an Algebra I course where a graphing calculator is used, but the student is taking a grade 8 PARCC assessment where a scientific calculator is used, which calculator should they use?

Calculator usage is assessment specific, regardless of the student's grade level (e.g., a student who takes the assessment for a specific grade or course must use the calculator required by PARCC's Calculator Policy for that assessment). In this example, the student should use a scientific calculator, since the student is taking the grade 8 PARCC assessment. A student taking the Algebra I assessment would use the graphing calculator for this assessment regardless of the student's grade level. Schools should ensure students have ample opportunity to practice with the allowable calculator for their PARCC grade/course assessment.



5. *Does my school have to buy new calculators?*

Maybe. All schools participating in computer-based PARCC assessments will be provided an online calculator through the computer-based delivery platform. If a student chooses to use a hand-held calculator, he or she may either bring their own calculator or the school may provide the calculator. For paper-based assessments, all students in grades 6 and higher must have a hand-held calculator for the calculator portion of the assessment. Either schools must ensure they have a sufficient number of the appropriate calculators available or allow students to bring their own. All calculators must meet PARCC requirements defined in PARCC's Calculator Policy.