



RIDE FAST FACTS

Rhode Island Statewide Assessment Transition

Frequently Asked Questions

Why change tests?

We're always looking for ways to improve teaching and learning, and that includes our state assessments. This shift from PARCC to the RICAS and PSAT/SAT is responsive to feedback we have received from educators, students, and families. Massachusetts has a long history as a leader in education, and adopting the RICAS ensures long-term sustainability with a reliable neighboring state partner. The PSAT and SAT are well-respected and accepted by U.S. colleges and universities.

By changing tests, are we changing grade-level learning standards and expectations?

No. Rhode Island will continue to use the rigorous, high-quality standards of the Common Core, meaning that teachers will not have to change their approach to classroom instruction.

But Massachusetts doesn't have the same exact learning standards. How does that work?

Even though our standards are not identical, both Massachusetts and Rhode Island were members of the PARCC consortium, which means that we share similar grade-level expectations aligned to college and career preparedness. Massachusetts recently made some updates to its standards, with a focus on implementation guidance based on feedback from classroom teachers and other educators. We will review this recent guidance from Massachusetts and work with Rhode Island educators to determine what can be of use in Rhode Island.

How and when would the RICAS test be administered?

In Rhode Island, the RICAS will be administered online, using the same test platform as the PARCC. We will continue to administer this assessment each spring beginning in the 2017-18 school year.

Don't we need more time to prepare for the transition to the new tests?

No, the new tests aren't changing how and what we expect our students to learn.

How much time does the test take?

When comparing the 2017 versions of both the PARCC and MCAS tests, MCAS takes, on average, 85 minutes less total recommended testing time.

Will the RICAS continue to offer accommodations to students?

Yes, students will continue to be offered a wide range of accommodations to support their ability to demonstrate their learning. The range of accommodations will be posted on RIDE’s website and explained to educators well before the beginning of the new assessment program.

What support will be provided to educators to prepare for the new assessments?

RIDE will offer workshops so that teachers and administrators will understand the new assessments’ design and implementations strategies. The new tests will have a mixture of short and extended response questions, similar to the current test.

What support will be provided to students to prepare for the new assessments?

The most important preparation for students for any high quality assessment is great teaching aligned to our challenging learning standards and expectations. There will also be practice assessments available on RIDE’s web site so students will have familiarity with the format of the new test.

Will Massachusetts have access to Rhode Island’s assessment information?

While both states will administer the same assessment, our students’ private information will be secure and confidential.

At the high school level, will SAT scores be a graduation requirement?

No. Graduation requirements are not changing, and performance on the PSAT and SAT will not be tied to the earning of a diploma.

The full press release can be found [here](#).