



**TO:** RIDE Leadership Team

**FROM:** ESSA Committee of Practitioners

**DATE:** October 28, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Committee of Practitioners Input on the High School State Assessment Program

The following is a summary of the Committee of Practitioners' input from a meeting on August 24, 2016. The notes here do not represent consensus but rather a high level overview of the most frequent and representative comments. The Committee of Practitioners was presented with three options for the future High School State Assessment Program in Rhode Island:

**Option 1:** PARCC assessments in English Language Arts 9, English Language Arts 10, Algebra I, and Geometry

**Option 2:** PARCC assessments in English Language Arts 9, and Algebra I; SAT assessment in grade 11

**Option 3:** PSAT assessment in grade 10; SAT assessment in grade 11

Each member ranked the options and gave comments on perceived benefits and challenges of each. More information on the input activity can be found [here](#).

**Highest Ranked Option: PSAT assessment in grade 10 and SAT assessment in grade 11**

*Rankings*

- 11 members ranked this option as optimal
- 5 members ranked this option as acceptable
- 1 member ranked this option as least desirable

*Benefits*

- Link to college-going culture and encourages college participation from students who may not be thinking of college
- Allows high schools to focus on college readiness rather than just high school graduation
- Meaningful to most students, parents, and teachers
- Motivate students to take exams seriously
- Better for English Learners and former English Learners
- Strong score can lead to scholarships
- Aligned with Common Core
- Many students already take the SAT
- Comparable across all states, not just PARCC states
- Only two days of testing and shorter tests means minimal disruption to instruction
- Requires less technology
- District's comprehensive assessment plan should provide adequate data to inform instruction until PSAT results come in

*Challenges*

- Has potential to exacerbate achievement gap because of the prevalence of test prep for the SAT
- Testing program would be starting too late in grade 10 to inform instruction early in high school
- College Board profits from the administration, while test proctors are not paid
- Students could be seen as not proficient and may perceive themselves as not "college material"
- College Board has strict limits on accommodations for students with special needs

- Racial biases inherent in the SAT

**Middle Ranked Option: PARCC assessments in English Language Arts 9 and Algebra I; and SAT assessment in grade 11**

*Rankings*

- 5 members ranked this option as optimal
- 12 members ranked this option as acceptable

*Benefits*

- Access to information about student performance early in high school, spanning three years of experience from high school with more than one data point.
- Allows opportunities for more than one administration for school data
- 9<sup>th</sup> grade is a predictive year regarding high school graduation so it would be beneficial to have PARCC results in 9<sup>th</sup> grade to use to inform instruction in enough time to catch students up by the time they take the SAT
- PARCC assessments would be used purely for instructional purpose for teachers, but also predictive of SAT results for students & parents
- PARCC is continuous with middle school assessments
- Requires less technology

*Challenges*

- Students will not have had experience with the PSAT to precede taking the SAT
- Potential for growing achievement gaps
- Lack of link between PARCC and SAT
- SAT is administered too late, and is too summative in nature

**Lowest Ranked Option: PARCC assessments in English Language Arts 9, English Language Arts 10, Algebra I, and Geometry**

*Rankings*

- 1 member ranked this as optimal
- 16 members ranked this option as least desirable

*Benefits*

- Allows multiple opportunities to achieve proficiency
- Maintains a continuum of testing with earlier feedback in high school

*Challenges*

- Does not take advantage of new availability of PSAT and SAT
- Opt-out movement
- PARCC is not widely accepted by colleges
- Takes significantly more time and more testing
- Lack of buy-in by educators, students, and families

In addition to the options above, some members argued for the inclusion of only one assessment, rather than two, in the high school time frame.