

New ISAT Cut Scores/Transition to PARCC Assessments Talking Points November 2012

- **Illinois is establishing expectations for college and career readiness.**
 - Each student in the state should be equipped with the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to pursue higher education and enter the workforce in the 21st century.
 - A world-class education is a necessity as we become more of a global economy in which our students compete with peers around the state, across the country and around the world for the jobs of tomorrow.
 - Schools have begun implementing the Common Core State Standards, a multi-state initiative that established year-by-year guidelines outlining the skills and content our students must master at each grade level to continue on the path to college and career readiness.
 - The Common Core standards are higher, fewer and deeper than the Illinois Learning Standards in providing greater strength in preparing students for 21st century careers.
 - The adjustment of performance levels on the ISAT is needed to better inform administrators, teachers and students of students' progress toward college and career readiness, especially as we move to implementation of the Common Core and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments.
- **ISBE is raising ISAT performance expectations to better align with more rigorous and robust standards.**
 - ISBE will be recalculating the ISAT performance expectations that align to higher expectations for elementary and middle school students.
 - The new performance expectations will not affect Adequate Yearly Progress determinations for the 2012 ISAT data. However, the ISAT data collected in Spring 2013 will be analyzed for school and district accountability determinations using the new performance levels.
 - The higher expectations of the new standards will likely result in a downward shift of where students rank in meeting or exceeding standards. This shift may be more significant than expected.
 - These new expectations do not mean that our students know less than they did before or are less capable than they were in previous years. Instead, ISBE is raising the bar on how well students are prepared to meet college and career readiness benchmarks.
- **The new performance expectations pave the way for the PARCC assessments to replace the ISAT.**
 - Illinois is moving toward replacement of the ISAT in Math and English Language Arts with assessments created by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), a consortium of 23 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

- The transition is scheduled for the 2014-2015 school year and will include a computer-based assessment that will provide more timely results.
- The PARCC assessments will align to the Common Core State Standards and will provide information to ensure students are mastering the appropriate skills and content benchmarks for college and careers on an annual basis.
 - Unlike the ISAT, which is given once a year, the PARCC assessment will be administered more than once during the school year. Therefore, teachers will receive real-time information about how well their students are learning.
 - These assessments will provide teachers, parents and students a clearer, more detailed picture of students' strengths and areas that need improvement. Educators and parents will be able to tailor their attention to a student's individual needs.
 - The PARCC assessments also give ISBE the opportunity to compare Illinois students' progress on a national scale and ensure that we are keeping pace with the goal of college and career readiness.
- **The state is also implementing a multiple measures model to determine if students are making progress on current state tests.**
 - The state has submitted a comprehensive waiver application to the federal No Child Left Behind Act that proposes using multiple measures to evaluate public schools.
 - The growth model will replace the current status determinations for Adequate Yearly Progress under No Child Left Behind. Schools will instead be assessed on outcomes.
 - ISBE is confident that the state will receive the waiver next year and be able to cut in half achievement gaps and the percent of students not making progress by 2018.
 - **Illinois' previous expectations for our grade 3-8 students did not align to the new learning standards that are now focused on success in college and the workforce.**
 - The current ISAT performance expectations are not aligned to college and career readiness. The PSAE, which is aligned with the ACT, however, does provide a good indicator of college and career readiness.
 - The higher performance standards will help to increase the number of students who are on track for successful entry into college or the workforce.
 - To provide better information about college and career readiness expectations to educators, parents and students in grades 3-8, we need to align the ISAT with the college and career ready expectations of the PSAE.
 - The PSAE includes the ACT, which is the gold standard for college and career readiness. We back-mapped scores to set the new cut scores to be in line with college and career readiness goals and to provide better information to parents and students sooner than just their junior year of high school.
 - We're adding a third component to the PSAE which will allow students to earn a national career readiness certificate.
 - There will be no changes to the performance levels for the PSAE.
 - **The new cut scores will provide a more accurate indication of whether a student is on course for college and a career.**

- Local districts will receive college and career-ready guidance so they will be able to provide the appropriate supports and interventions for students based on the new learning standards at an earlier point in their academic career, thus boosting a student's chances for success in college and the workforce.
 - A 2011 Pew Research Center Report found that 94 percent of parents surveyed expect their child to go to college. However, too many of those students lack the tools necessary to succeed once they arrive. Recent ACT results showed that only 25 percent of students in the graduating Class of 2012 met all four College Readiness Benchmarks.
- **Performance expectations for the science assessments will remain the same.**
 - New science standards, the Next Generation Science Standards, will be in final format in spring 2013.
 - Similar to the changes with the Common Core standards, these standards will require changes to curriculum and instructional practices.
 - The changes to the science standards will provide the opportunity to develop a rigorous assessment that incorporates the practices, cross-cutting content and disciplinary core ideas of the Next Generation Science Standards.
- **The new performance expectations are part of the educational reform agenda here in Illinois and throughout the United States as well.**
 - Illinois is among 45 states that have formally adopted the Common Core State Standards for college and career readiness.
 - New York, Michigan, Tennessee, Massachusetts and Kansas are among states that recently changed their performance expectations.
- **ISBE will send out an analysis of the 2012 ISAT scores later this school year using the new performance expectations.**
 - The comparison information will allow districts, schools and families to determine where their students stand in college and career readiness performance levels.
 - After reviewing the data, educators and families will have better information and can provide additional supports for their students if needed.
 - Knowing how our students perform under the higher standards and are making progress toward achievement of standards will better position them to be competitive in a global marketplace.