

**BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE  
COMMISSION RESPONSES  
FOR OCTOBER 6, 2011 MEETING**

- 1. How will the Common Core State Standards and PARCC assessments help students become prepared for careers and college entry-level credit bearing courses?**
  - Generally the assessments must be engaging and challenging in ways the current assessments are not. Learning, teaching and testing must be different, perhaps more emphasis can be placed on post K-12 life. Students are divorced from “the adult world” with applying for jobs daily labor. They may not know that what they learn, what they are tested on, relates entirely to their adult life, interest, labor, and choices. Students must also successfully transition their practices, thinking and expectations to the new requirements. Teachers may be tasked to guide them. However, are students succeeding now? Will they improve or suffer from confusion or poor performance with the change
  - These assessments will provide valuable information for students’ success on both careers and college entry level courses. Remediation along the way is valuable for success (students and teachers).
  - Will the PARCC assessments be timed? ACT is timed; this might hamper correlation between the two, what about kids who choose not to be career and college entry-level ready? We need to teach current teachers how to differentiate the instruction, alignment if certification and alternate certification programs
  - The standards are in alignment with the knowledge and skills necessary for satisfactory performance for entry-level college courses. (by themselves they do not ensure students success). If PARCC assessments are flexible and not conducted at multiple times not sure how they will impact student growth and performance
  - Must meet higher standards before admission to four year institution (no remedial courses offered there)
  - CCSS: will there be “Common Core State Curricula” available? When? PARCC ends with Algebra II and English III. Who defines the transition/bridge/retention courses that are needed for the title when PARCC ends and college starts.
  - It will create a uniform understanding of what skills and/or skill sets are necessary for either (a) employability (b) academic averment

- Will use cut scores to refer to those ready for career training? Common Core & PARCC should guarantee that all students are graded equally and the unevenness of the instructions are avoided
  - The format of aligning content across K-12 grades is long overdue. Using Common Core State Standards and PARCC assessments will validate this alignment
  - Algebra II can be a determinant for career minded students, could affect drop-out rates. Not relevant to many jobs. If we address student's need for their own pursuits of happiness it could be helpful to make up a post secondary education with the new standards and PARCC
  - How will data be prepared, shared, and used? What professional development is being considered? What options are available for math alternatives? What help will be available for students? Focus on algebra
  - Those standards and assessments are more vigorous and will place our students in a more competitive position with their peers across the country. Also, the vigor and standards are designed to prepare students to be ready for entry-level college courses and careers
  - More vigorous curriculum, skills needed for college are skills needed for work place , they will be able to compete with their peers and global economy
  - This will only be as good as the preparation and skills of pre-service and in-service teacher. For a large number of in-service teachers, this would be a massive and complex undertaking
  - Since it appears we will finally align content and courses with college requirements. Students will benefit and be better prepared for college
2. What additional information will Commission members need about the Common Core State Standards and PARCC assessments to successfully respond to the Blue Ribbon Commission Charge and question?

### **State Assessment**

- Will this replace state test - LEAP?

### **Comparison to Existing College Readiness Assessments**

- Will being "college ready" replace exams like ACT?
- Does a passing score mean admission and placement is taken care of? Does this replace ACT/SAT?

- How will SAT/ACT and other tests used for placement decisions be used by college/universities once PARCC is implemented? Will there be any conflicts?

### **Professional Development of Educators**

- Will training be provided for existing teachers (elementary & secondary) to meet these tasks?
- Examples of what “new teaching” will look like - the alignment done by DOE regarding present curriculum of new/standard
- How have other states helped K-12 teachers prepare for this movement? Will teachers be prepared ahead of time (proactive)?
- Will our teacher training institution be ready to prepare future teachers for their tasks?
- Types of technological assistance necessary to provide timely feedback to teachers and teachers education on order to be useful
- Will our teacher training institutions be ready to prepare future teachers for their tasks?
- Professional development for teachers (secondary teachers); parent education for students; and what this means

### **Careers**

- What do employees say about what skills they need - skilled labor to possess?
- State/ future of the early start program, more information about the meaning of “career readiness”

### **PARCC Assessments**

- How the assessments are administered and whether they accurately capture all desired information in quantitative and qualitative format.
- What is the current format used for high school who have passing grades in content but fail to pass the high school graduation exam? Has research been done to determine the impact on enrollment if all schools have the same readiness score for entry-level? (4 year, 2 year, technical)
- Where are we in relation to rest of the world? US? Who is developing assessments? Is the infrastructure in place (computers)? What resources are available? How will cut scores be established?

- Would like to know (see) more about PARCC assessments. What about administration of assessments: special needs; time; would like to see date for correlation of PARCC test scores and teacher preparation programs
- Who is developing the assessments? Are the PARCC assessments “high stakes”? Is there a consequence for the students?
- How Louisiana students will be assessed and what the assessments will determine
- Is there a proved correlation between the teachers training and test results? What about the variables of the children? Will it be a pre/post test to show individual progress under a teacher’s tutelage? I’d like to see a large readable diagram of the proposed test design presented by Allison Jones. Ways to get people on board

## **General**

- Comparison of subject changes, examples of assessments, definition of roles (teacher, district, etc.), more precise timeline, record of what will be phased out (what GLEs leave first?), chain of command - who answers questions? Who speak for PARCC/CCSS? Public outreach? This change will impact everyone and needs to be relayed to all concerned. Do student-teachers in certification programs know what is coming? How involved are colleges/universities; do they know what is changing in k-12. Or do they merely sign-off on approval? Teachers, administration, politicians, employers and parents need to know their role in these changes to help keep the transition moving and successful. Teams have been established and there is communication ongoing but the information may not be spreading.
- Pre-K and K should be mandatory to address critical goals. 1. Pretest 2. Practice Performance 3. Application 4. Summative