



MISSISSIPPI  
DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

Ensuring a bright future for every child

**Carey M. Wright, Ed.D., State Superintendent of Education**

Office of Communications & Legislative Support

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Mississippi Students Begin Statewide Testing on College and Career Readiness Standards**

JACKSON, Miss. – This week, Mississippi students will begin taking the first part of a two-part test that will measure what they know under Mississippi College- and Career-Ready Standards. This is the first year for assessments that align to the new standards.

For the current school year, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) replaces the Mississippi Curriculum Test – 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (MCT2) for English Language arts and Mathematics for grades 3 through 8 and the Subject Area Testing Program – 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (SATP2) for Algebra I and English II. The PARCC tests are now referred to as MCT3 and SATP3.

The MCT3 and SATP3 have two parts: A performance-based assessment (PBA), beginning in March, asks students to provide and explain their answers. The end-of-the-year exam (EOY), given before school is out, is multiple-choice. The EOY exam is scheduled to begin April 27.

The new assessments will measure what the students have been learning under the standards, and they will provide a more accurate picture of student knowledge than previous tests because they ask students to demonstrate and apply what they know instead of just picking the right answer from a multiple-choice question. Dr. Carey Wright, state superintendent of education, said the assessment measures real-world skills, such as critical thinking, writing and problem solving.

“These are skills that adults need to succeed, and our students are learning how to do this each day in school to better prepare them for the rigors of college coursework or direct entry into the workplace,” she said.

Students will spend only 5 to 10 ¼ hours on statewide exams this year, depending on their grade level and type of test. On the former assessments, students spent 5 to 11 hours on exams. The new tests provide writing assessments in all grades 3-11 whereas Mississippi previously only assessed writing in grades 4, 7 and 10.

Testing in grades 3 through 8 and in high school in Science, English Language Arts and Math are required under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The test results provide valuable information for parents and communities.



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“Parents should be able to know whether or not their children have the knowledge and skills they need to succeed. The new assessments provide an academic check-up and help teachers and parents know whether students are on track to be college and career ready each step of the way,” Wright said.

The MDE is currently seeking proposals for a multi-year assessment beginning in the 2015-16 school year. The testing contract with NCS Pearson Inc. for administering the PARCC assessment is an emergency procurement, which is limited to one year. Any assessment vendor may submit a bid for the assessment contract provided they meet the RFP requirements.

Additional information can be found in the [PARCC Q&A](#) located at the bottom of the PARCC page. Also, take the [sample tests](#) to learn more about the assessments.

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