



Illinois State Board of Education

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FAQ

SAT exam replaces PARCC assessment for high school students in 2016-17

July 2016, ISBE Division of Public Information

Q: Is ISBE eliminating high school testing?

A: ISBE is not eliminating high school testing. Our decision to use the SAT as our high school accountability assessment and college entrance exam enables the state to ensure that students have a no-cost college entrance exam.

Q: What factored into the decision to assess high school students with the SAT instead of PARCC assessment?

A: ISBE listened closely to the feedback provided by stakeholders, including students, parents, schools, districts, educators, administrators, and other interested parties. The feedback overwhelmingly stressed the need for equitable access to a college entrance assessment for all students administered during the school day and at no cost, reduced testing time, and a reduced number of assessments required during high school.

Q: How did the U.S. Department of Education designating Illinois as high risk influence the state's decision to stop administering the PARCC assessment in high schools?

A: ISBE's options were to keep the PARCC assessment at the high school level and in doing so eliminate districts' ability to choose which level of PARCC to administer or utilize the SAT as both the federal accountability exam and a college-entrance exam. ISBE chose the SAT based on feedback received from stakeholders.

Q: How has ISBE explained the shift from PARCC to the SAT to district administrators and stakeholders?

A: On July 11, the Superintendent sent a [letter](#) to district administrators informing them of the change. The reasoning behind the shift is outlined in an ISBE [press release](#). We will continue to provide information to districts and stakeholders as it becomes available.

Q: How much will students have to pay to take the SAT exam?

A: ISBE will fund the SAT, including a writing component, for all 11th-grade students.

Q: What is the future of grades 3-8 testing?

A: At this time, ISBE is committed to continuing to use the PARCC exam at grades 3-8 for the duration of the contract.

Q: Did ISBE enter a new testing contract for assessing students in grades 3-8?

A: Pearson will continue to administer grades 3-8 PARCC testing under the existing contract between the company and the state.

Q: Last year, 95 percent of students had to take the PARCC assessment in order for the state to receive federal funding. Is that also true of the SAT?

A: Yes. States have to give an assessment each year as a federal accountability measure. For the last two years, that assessment at the high school level was the PARCC exam. In the 2016-17 school year, it will be the SAT. The 95 percent participation requirement remains unchanged, regardless of the test administered.

**Please note: This document will be updated as additional information becomes available.*