

Myths vs. Facts about the state of Ohio's assessments

PARCC assessments are mandated by the state.

TRUE.

Madison-Plains is mandated to give certain tests to students this spring. Federal and state legislation requires Madison-Plains to administer several tests that have been created by different entities including:

- American Institute of Research (AIR) for Science Test and Social Studies Tests
- Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) for Math and English Language Arts
- OAA for 3rd grade Reading and OGT for 10th graders

PARCC assessments ask my child to provide private information about our family.

MYTH.

At no time are students asked to supply personal information about themselves or their families. There is no data being collected about our students' family lives. We believe this misunderstanding was based on an incident in another state where a school district gave an ***unrelated*** social issues survey to students ***after*** they completed their PARCC assessments.

Student data is well protected.

TRUE.

Student data has always been protected, and nothing will change. Privacy of all student information is protected by federal and state law. Student-identifiable information has not and will not be shared with the federal government, nor sold by PARCC or anyone else. This is defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, otherwise known as FERPA.

Ohio created a plan that allows parents to exempt their children from taking the tests.

MYTH.

Ohio has not passed any laws nor does the Ohio Department of Education have an official opt-out form or procedure to withdraw a child from the assessment. The form currently in circulation is from a special interest group.

The tests do not test what Madison-Plains is teaching.

MYTH.

All state tests are aligned to Ohio's new learning standards. Madison-Plains teachers have worked diligently over the past few years to implement the measures.

If my child does not take the assessment, it will impact my child's teacher(s) evaluation.

TRUE.

50 percent of the a teacher's evaluation in grades 4-9 is based on the results of the student state test scores. If a student does not take the test, the score will be considered a zero and averaged into the teacher and school's evaluation.

Madison-Plains Local Schools could face financial consequences if students opt out.

TRUE.

If participation rates drop below 95 percent for all students and/or any specific demographic group of students, Madison-Plains could face consequences from the federal government and have funding restricted or dictated for how it is utilized.

On March 3, 2015, Ohio's Superintendent of Public Instruction Richard A. Ross said the state will not penalize a district financially due to non-test-takers. An excerpt from a [letter he sent to all districts](#) explains in more detail: *State law forbids the Ohio Department of Education from funding a student who does not take a state test in the prior school year. However, Ohio law also allows the state superintendent to issue a waiver that permits the department of education to fund that student the following school year. Under that authority, the department has, in the past, automatically funded these students for many years. We plan on continuing the same practice this year. This means that we will continue to fund each student in your district, regardless of their participation.*

Ohio passed a bill that eliminates consequences for the school district if children do not take these assessments.

MYTH.

An individual teacher, school and the district may face consequences from the state based on the participation rates and results of the state assessments. Ohio passed HB 487 that provides a safety net for district sanctions based on receiving an overall letter grade for 2014-2015. The district and the schools will still receive letter grades (A-F) based on student performance, progress (value added), literacy, graduation rates, and gap closing. *HB 487 only eliminates an overall letter grade.*

Ohio is going to eliminate the PARCC assessments anyway, so it won't matter if my child does not take the assessment.

MYTH.

Ohio is fully committed to continuing formal statewide assessment practices to evaluate schools, teachers, curriculum and instruction. The elimination of PARCC assessments would mean more time and money placed on the creation of new state tests. However, the state Superintendent Richard Ross, Ph.D., has recommended to our legislature to significantly reduce the current amount of time schools required for testing. Madison-Plains supports this recommendation so we can gain valuable instructional time. We encourage our parents and community to join us by contacting local representatives in this effort.

Opting my child out of PARCC assessments is the best way to get the attention of our legislature and send the message that Ohio spends too much time testing.

MYTH.

The best way to get the attention of the legislature is to contact your representative directly. While some parents and groups feel this will send a message to congress, the only current impact is on students, teachers and schools that face the consequences imposed by the state.

My child may face consequences if they do not take the PARCC assessments.

TRUE.

Madison-Plains will lose out on valuable information that tells us how to best implement our curriculum and instruction. This will directly affect your child. When the district receives the test results we utilize these scores to evaluate our curriculum and our teaching. We will use the results to determine our areas of strength and areas where we need to make improvements.

There are other consequences associated with not taking PARCC assessments, especially for high school students. Students in the graduating class of 2018 and beyond must take the assessments as part of their graduation requirements. The OGT will no longer be in place for those students. Refusing the tests could have a direct impact on a child's ability to graduate. High school PARCC assessments are directly aligned to courses such as Algebra I, Geometry, English I and English II. While there could be other opportunities for your child to make up these assessments in future years, we believe your child's best chance for success now is to take the tests during the same year they take the course.

PARCC assessments are standardized assessments based solely on rote memorization that do not allow students to show their thinking and have no purpose in helping inform instruction.

MYTH.

Previous generations of students grew up on tests that relied heavily on rote memorization, multiple-choice guesses and filling in bubbles. PARCC questions are designed to measure critical thinking, problem-solving and higher-order analytical skills. The questions also ask students to use evidence to support an answer. All of these are skills students need throughout their schooling and beyond. PARCC may be more sophisticated than previous generations of assessments, the questions do measure grade appropriate content. In fact, each PARCC question was reviewed by no less than 30 educators and content experts.

Many Madison-Plains students have reported preferring the PARCC testing format, citing their ability to represent their own thinking and the opportunity to focus on one topic at a time, all within a shorter testing time period. This is different than the older OAA format that forced students to focus on a larger variety of topics for a much longer period of time in a single sitting.

PARCC tests will impact my child's placement in courses or grade level next year.

MYTH.

The Ohio Department of Education is delaying the reporting of scores for the PARCC assessments and AIR science and social studies tests in grades 3-11. Madison-Plains will not receive the results until next fall. Third-grade reading and the Ohio Graduation test results are the only test results we will receive this summer. As is always the case, Madison-Plains considers a number of factors in placing students in the appropriate learning environments, including but not limited to state assessments.