MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Preparing World-Class Students

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TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Bernard J. Sadusky, Ed.D

DATE: March 27, 2012

SUBJECT: PARCC Update

PURPOSE:

To provide an update concerning the status of the transition to the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum and the new assessment system under development by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), the 24-state consortium of which Maryland is a Governing State.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

PARCC, with support from Achieve, Inc., is designing a set of assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English Language Arts and mathematics. The assessments will track student progress over time and will report status on a trajectory towards college- and career-readiness. The assessments will include a mix of item types, will involve the use of technology, and will be accompanied by an array of tools designed to help teachers implement CCSS and to prepare students for the cognitive demands of the tests. The assessment development under the leadership of PARCC is occurring concurrently with the implementation of CCSS in the classroom.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

PARCC is providing support to member states through publications, training sessions, and conferences to guide the transition process. At a recent conference in Baltimore, representatives from all Consortium states shared concerns and plans related to implementation challenges including communication, developing and using timelines as planning tools, and integrating technology in instruction and assessment.

Additional updates include the following:

— Plans are underway for the development of training models and rubrics to be delivered electronically and used by states, school districts, and schools as they evaluate, design, or revise curriculum materials, instructional guides, and lessons to be aligned with CCSS.

— Item development for the PARCC assessments will begin shortly. Educators representing all PARCC member states will be engaged in the item review process beginning in Summer, 2012.

— Detailed plans and strategies for item try-out and field-testing are being finalized. Some items will be ready for tryout in Spring, 2013, and test forms will be field-tested in Spring, 2014. PARCC envisions that all students will have some opportunity to participate in some sort of field-testing during 2014 although results may be available only on a limited basis.

— By Spring, 2015, it is expected that all PARCC assessments will be operational, and standard-setting is expected to occur during Summer, 2015.

— A standard-setting work group has been convened to consider the language to be used in reporting levels of student performance aligned with college and career readiness.

ACTION:

For information and discussion only.