

# CMAS: PARCC Assessments Myth Busters

## *Separating Fact from Fiction*

**MYTH:** CMAS: PARCC tests are arbitrary assessments without meaningful results.

**FACT:** The new CMAS: PARCC assessments measure important problem-solving and critical-thinking skills students need to be successful in school and in life. The tests are designed to provide a roadmap to help all students prepare for success beyond high school. Too many students graduate from high school without the skills they need to succeed in college and in the workforce; 34 percent of 2013 graduates who went to public colleges in Colorado needed remediation.

**MYTH:** My child scored lower than on past tests, so therefore my student isn't on track for college.

**FACT:** The CMAS: PARCC assessments are much more challenging than previous tests; the tests are so different, the results can't even be compared. Lower scores don't mean students aren't progressing; they just mean we've raised the expectations for our students. We know our students can reach these higher standards, and we are committed to ensuring we have the tools and resources to grow from this baseline.

**MYTH:** This test is going to impact my child's grade.

**FACT:** Statewide assessments do not impact your child's grade. CMAS: PARCC assessments are one measure to make sure that at each grade level students know and are able to do what they need to in order to be on track for college and career paths.

**MYTH:** All my child is doing in the spring is taking tests.

**FACT:** The CMAS: PARCC assessments for English language arts and math fall under the statewide testing umbrella called the Colorado Measures of Academic Success or CMAS. Also included under the umbrella are the CMAS science and social studies assessments, and the new 10th grade College Preparatory Exam and the 11th grade College Entrance Exam. Students can expect state CMAS testing time to be less than 1.5 percent of their total yearly instructional time.

TEST	GRADES
PARCC Language Arts and Mathematics	3-9
CMAS Social Studies and Science	4, 7* (Social Studies) 5, 8, 11 (Science)
College Preparatory Exam	10
College Entrance Exam	11

*\* Sample schools on a three-year rotation*

**MYTH:** My child is taking CMAS: PARCC tests for three weeks straight.

**FACT:** While the state-mandated timeframe for schools to administer CMAS: PARCC tests is three weeks (including other tests under the state CMAS umbrella), CMAS: PARCC testing does not take the entire three-week window. For example, beginning in third grade, students spend 8.25 hours on the CMAS: PARCC tests, gradually increasing to 9.7 hours of testing time in ninth grade. Visit your child's school website for specific test dates.