



BILL: House Bill 723
TITLE: Education – Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)
Assessment – Administration
DATE: February 22, 2018
POSITION: Oppose
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means
CONTACT: Renee McGuirk Spence, Executive Director, PSSAM
Email: pssamed@gmail.com; Cell: 410-925-2183

House Bill 723 requires the State Department of Education, in entering or renewing a contract for the administration of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers assessment or a successor assessment, to require that each segment of the assessment be administered within a 40-minute time period; etc.

PSSAM **opposes** House Bill 723.

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) assessments were developed by a consortium of states of which Maryland is one of the leaders. The PARCC assessments are aligned to the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards and they assess students' mathematics and literacy skills. The PARCC assessments require students to demonstrate their ability to read complex texts, express ideas through writing, solve mathematics problems, and use critical thinking skills. Students take the Literacy and Mathematics assessments in grades 3–8 as well as at the conclusion of the English 10 and Algebra 1* high school courses.

Maryland's local school systems administered the PARCC tests for the first time in the 2014-15 school year. The fourth administration of PARCC will be during the 2017-18 school year. Administration of the PARCC assessments is complex and time-consuming as the assessments are given on multiple days. We anticipate that this year's administration will go smoothly without any complications.

House Bill 723 alters the PARCC testing schedule requiring that each segment of the assessment be administered within a 40-minute time period. Such a significant change would necessitate smaller time slots which would create serious havoc to school schedules. As local superintendents, we do not see any positive value in legislating this change. Rather, we strongly advocate that the current assessment administration timeline has been fine-tuned and is effective for students and school staff. We believe that any change is not necessary and would actually be disruptive. Finally, PSSAM strongly believes that it is critical that locally-governed education policies and procedures remain under the authority of local boards of education.

For the reasons stated above, PSSAM **opposes** House Bill 723 and urges an unfavorable committee report.