



Prince George's County
Public Schools

FINAL REPORT

More Learning Less Testing Committee June 2024

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Executive Summary

Prince George's County Schools (PGCPS) convened the More Learning Less Testing Committee (MLLTC), in response to the requirements of Senate Bill 452 to meet and discuss information on local assessment implementation. The , as required by the SB 452 meets every two years, and this year did so on Tuesday, June 18, 2024 with over 48 members in attendance.

The MLLTC was chosen from a variety of stakeholders that represent a wide range of perspectives in the school system. The purpose of the meeting was, in compliance with the requirements in Senate Bill 452 and in accordance with state legislation to review our PGCPS' testing calendar, assessment administrations and to discuss the purpose of assessments and data reporting timeline and resources.

The following report provides detailed information about the MLLTC's work and recommendations on improving the overall assessment program in PGCPS. The work of all committee members is both appreciated and valued. The work of the MLLTC also had challenges. There were several observations made through the MLLTC discussions and feedback, which is shown below:

- All members assigned to the MLLTC attended the meeting. If not able, MLLTC member sent surrogates to represent their department or division.
- Many of the committee members improved their assessment literacy by attending the meeting, but several committee members had a difficult time understanding the technical details of the assessment process. Much of this confusion derives from the state assessment program having undefined direction and constant change which in turn impacts local assessment programs.
- PGCPS was already reviewing its assessment program due to contracting, alignment, and assessment needs prior to formation of the MLLTC. The MLLTC was presented with information provided at the time of each meeting. However, it is a challenge to present assessment info when the instrument or measurement has not been written or chosen.
- When the MLLTC met, staff from the Department of Testing, Research, and Evaluation (DTRE) along with Curriculum and Instruction was able to discuss logistics of current assessment administrations as well as feedback from schools regarding state and district test administration.

Background

Senate Bill 452 More Learning Less Testing Act of 2017 was signed by Governor Hogan in May 2017. The Bill has several components. It required the State Board of Education to develop a specified middle school level social studies assessment for implementation, as well as redesign the high school level social studies assessment for implementation. All Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are required under Maryland Senate Bill 452, introduced and passed in 2017 to create a District Committee on Assessments (DCA) and comply with certain assessment guidelines. The DCA is tasked to review the assessment programs in each school district to look for efficiencies, duplicity, and reporting.

More specifically, for our purposes, it requires county boards of education to establish on or before specified dates a DCA, and county boards of education to establish on or before specified dates a mutual agreement to the limited amount of time that may be devoted to federal, State and locally mandated assessments for each grade.

The Local Education Agency (LEA) must establish a District Committee on Assessments (DCA) beginning on or after January 1, 2018, and each January in an even-numbered year, that includes administrators, parents, and teachers selected by the exclusive bargaining unit to advise and make recommendations in the following areas:

- The time required to administer each assessment;
- The duplicativeness of assessments;
- The purpose of assessments;
- The value of feedback provided to educators; and
- The timeliness of results.

Committee Representation

The MLLTC was established with members representing a variety of departments and divisions across PGPCS. The committee members represented the following groups: School administrators (elementary, middle, and high) PGCEA, DTRE, Special Education, School Counseling, Curriculum & Instruction (Reading/Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science and Visual/Creative Arts), College Career Readiness and Specialty Programs, Family and School Support, ESOL, Early Learning, Pupil Services, Specialty Programs Parents and the PGCPs Board of Education.

Purpose

The MLLTC met with several goals in mind to review the current PGCPs assessment program and to discuss planning for and review of assessments and their purpose in the program. The following goals were

- To discuss the purpose and why of the committee meeting and link to the PGCPs Strategic T26 Plan;
- To review the history of Senate Bill 452
- To review PGCPs assessment strengths and challenges;
- To review the draft PGCPs testing schedule by month for 2023-2024;
- To evaluate grade band testing schedules by grade band for 2023-2024;
- To engage in learning about Equitable Assessments; and
- To conclude by sharing recommendations and next steps in planning for the PGCPs SY25 Assessment Program.

Timeline of Next Steps

1. All committee recommendations were collected from the meeting and were reviewed, synthesized and are shown in the below section.
2. The draft report will be shared with all committee members for their review and any additional feedback or recommendations. The final report will then be shared with the Executive Leadership team for their review and input on next steps.
3. The MLLTC report will be shared with Executive Leadership for their review and approval.

Proposed Recommendations

1. Prioritize assessments that provide immediate results and provide information for instructional decision making.
2. Consider feedback on purchased interventions and how they relate to assessment data.
3. Require administration of the Assessment surveys to all school based and Central Office staff.
4. Create and disseminate Assessment and Data Literacy resources, materials and documents to all schools.

5. Re-examine required district assessments; Benchmarks, i-Ready, and Curriculum embedded and consider an option between required and optional and possible reduction in test administration.
6. Review communication and messaging to schools around the value and purpose of state and district assessments.
7. Support classroom teachers on training and accountability of district assessments.
8. Review the sample versus census testing of TAG and Specialty Program identification assessments for purpose and validity.
9. Consider additional and required training opportunities for teachers in assessment platforms and data reporting tools.
10. Continue to develop assessment literacy for teachers and connect it to the curriculum pacing guides.
11. Continue to develop data literacy for teachers and connect it to lesson planning and differentiation.
12. Continue to administer assessments that are purposeful and drive instruction.
13. Review all district required assessments and look for overlap in what is being tested and evaluate if any are redundant and can become optional.
14. Utilize MLLTC feedback to make adjustments to the format of the testing calendar.

Final Recommendations and Reductions

1. Continue reduction of ESOL Quarterly Speaking and Writing Tasks to three administrations.
2. Continue reduction of Grades six through eight reading assessment (i-Ready) to a required Fall administration and an optional Winter and Spring administration.
3. Continue reduction of Kindergarten on i-Ready assessment for the Fall administration.
4. Continue online administration of PSAT 8/9 and administer earlier in the year.
5. Continue online administration of SAT and offer a week testing window.
6. Disseminate Assessment Literacy document, which identifies the purpose of assessment and use of its reported data for each state and district test.
7. Disseminate the 2024-2025 PGCPs Testing Calendar with minimized redundancy of multiple tests listed, one main calendar and three grade band calendars and add a preliminary data return window column.

Conclusion

The task of the committee was to evaluate the designated district assessments and provide recommendations to leadership regarding these assessments. We thank the committee for their attendance and their input in the evaluation of these assessments.

School system leadership should review the recommendations in context as decisions are made for the assessment program in PGCPs. According to Senate Bill 452, no more than 2.2% of the minimum required annual instructional hours can be devoted to federal, state, or locally mandated assessments. At the eighth grade level, no more than 2.3% of the minimum required annual instructional hours can be devoted to federal, state or locally mandated assessments. Currently, PGCPs is in compliance with this mandate in all grade levels.

Additional Committee Recommendations:

- Continue to meet as a group to review the district testing calendar (as dictated by SB452);
- Continue to review high stakes assessments such as PSAT 8/9 and SAT for value add;
- Utilize the committee to review all new district level assessments prior to implementation;
- Continue to explore options for the district's testing schedule by grade level in addition to systemically;
- Continue to create resources and guides for parents and families at each grade level to assist them in properly preparing their students for required assessments and understanding data results.

Attachments

- [More Learning Less Testing Meeting Presentation](#)
- [More Learning Less Testing Meeting Agenda](#)
- [More Learning Less Testing Time on Tests](#)
- [More Learning Less Testing Assessment Chart](#)
- [More Learning Less Testing Committee Members](#)