

PARCC Testing: Frequently Asked Questions - Student Refusals

- 1. *NEW* If a student refuses to test, can a school contact parents?**
Yes. A school may contact a parent to notify that a student has refused to participate in required state testing, just as a school can notify a parent of student refusal to participate in other school activities.
- 2. *NEW* Can a school require parent permission for a student to refuse to test?**
No. A school cannot require parent permission for students to refuse to test. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) does not recognize the right of a parent to opt a child out of testing or refuse on the child's behalf. If a student refuses to test, the student must make this clear to the test administrator.
- 3. *NEW* Can a student who refused to test for one unit decide to participate in a future unit?**
Yes. Per ISBE, schools are required to offer students the opportunity to participate in required state testing for each required unit. A student can decide to participate at any point and should be scheduled for make-up testing for any units missed.
- 4. *NEW* Can a school offer incentives to motivate students to participate and try their best on required state testing?**
Yes. A school can offer incentives to participate and concentrate on state testing, just as a school can offer incentives to participate in other school activities (e.g. district testing, school benchmarks, perfect attendance...etc.).
- 5. *NEW* Can a school limit incentives to only students who actually participate in required state testing?**
Yes. A school can limit incentives to only students who participate, just as a school can limit incentives for other required activities to students who participate.
- 6. *NEW* Can a school withhold normal activities from students who refuse to participate?**
No. A school cannot withhold normal school activities like art or PE class, recess or lunch with their class. All students, regardless of participation status, should be treated with respect and allowed to participate in normal school activities.
- 7. May a parent or guardian opt a child out of testing?**
No. The Illinois State Board of Education does not recognize the right of a parent or guardian to refuse participation in testing on a child's behalf. ISBE has made it clear that all students must be provided the opportunity to participate in required yearly testing.
- 8. May a student refuse to participate in PARCC testing?**
Yes. Students may communicate to a test administrator verbally or in writing that they will not be participating in the particular PARCC unit being administered.
- 9. If students refuse to test on one unit, do they have to refuse again for subsequent units?**
Per ISBE, a student must be presented the opportunity to participate in each unit of the test. A

prior refusal does not change a school's responsibility to present the student with the additional opportunity to participate.

10. What should test administrators do with students who refuse while other students are testing?

Students who refuse to test should be removed to another section of the room or to another location. They may engage in a silent, self-guided activity while the test administrator continues to monitor the testing students. Note: if the student remains in the testing room, the activity the student is engaging in should not be in the same subject tested.

11. May a teacher advocate for students to refuse to test?

No, teachers may not engage in this advocacy during work time or on school property. This is a violation of ISBE's mandate and their professional responsibilities, which may subject them to disciplinary action (see [here for ISBE](#)). Such advocacy will subject the employee to discipline, up to and including discharge, by the Chicago Board.

12. May a teacher refuse to administer the PARCC test?

No. Teachers must perform their professional responsibilities and assigned job duties, including administration of PARCC. Employees who refuse to administer PARCC will be disciplined by the Chicago Board.

13. May school staff prohibit a parent or other community member from handing leaflets, advocating PARCC refusal, to students or parents on school grounds?

School staff may ask a parent or community member not to leaflet elementary school children, and may call the police if the individual refuses to stop. School staff should permit parents/community members to hand leaflets to high school students and parents on the public sidewalk or off school grounds, as long as they do not block individuals from entering or leaving the school. School staff do not have to permit a parent or community member to leaflet on school property or inside the school.