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News Release

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State Education Officers Release RFP to Select Vendor for the Next Phase of PARCC

WASHINGTON (December 15, 2016) – The state education leaders who make up the Governing Board of the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to select a vendor to implement and manage the next phase of the high-quality PARCC assessment system. The new model, which includes the tiered licensing structure unveiled in November 2015, allows all states to continue to create high quality assessments and content collaboratively, while offering greater flexibility and increased access to that content for any state seeking to strengthen its summative assessment. The action announced today represents a collective decision by Partnership states to implement the new structure and select a vendor to manage the next phase of the work intended to begin in July 2017 upon the completion of the base term of the original Program Management and Support Contract (PMSC).

Hanna Skandera, New Mexico Secretary of Education, speaking on behalf of the PARCC Governing Board said, “the success of the PARCC assessment has been nothing short of remarkable. Over the past six years, the PARCC consortium has grown from what was essentially a start-up into a world-class product that has been administered to 8 million students across 10 states. The implementation of the new model and approach is a natural progression to build on the success of the past while evolving to meet the needs of the future.”

In November of 2015, the Governing Board embarked on a process to respond to the demand they were hearing among states for greater options for accessing high quality tests and testing items. The first step in that process was the consortium’s new offering of a tiered system for states to access high-quality summative content. In early 2016, the Governing Board issued a Request for Information (RFI) seeking input from stakeholders on ways to:

1. Expand access to the highest quality content to all states;
2. Allow states more choices and the ability to customize their test;
3. Maintain test quality and comparability among states;
4. Allow for state collaboration on content creation;
5. Ensure states benefit from economies of scale;
6. Create stability and sustainability for states in the development and delivery of high-quality assessments.

Over the last few months, feedback received as part of the RFI process has been thoroughly considered and is reflected in the model outlined in the RFP released today.

Rhode Island will lead the procurement process, on behalf of the Governing Board states, and each state will contract independently with the awarded contractor. As the lead procurement state, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) will manage the procurement process on behalf of all states. Once an intent to award is issued, individual states will independently contract with the awarded contractor with a scope of work that meets their needs.

Ken Wagner, Commissioner of Education in Rhode Island, stated, “the model outlined in the RFP provides states with access to high quality assessments, the flexibility to administer and develop testing products that meet all state’s unique circumstances. This announcement is an important step forward in advancing the availability of high quality tests while maintaining comparability.”

The current, full PARCC test and other PARCC instructional supports will continue to be available to states and this process will not disrupt the administration of the PARCC test in the coming weeks or in the 2016-2017 school year and beyond.

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The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers is a consortium of states working together to develop a set of mathematics and English language arts assessments that measure whether students are on track to be successful in the next academic work and, ultimately, in college and their careers. The Governing Board of PARCC established the governance structure for the consortia and it is responsible for the major policy and operational decisions about the design, administration and scoring of the PARCC test. The Governing Board is made up of state education leaders from the following states: Colorado, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, New Mexico, Rhode Island and the District of Columbia.