



Date: May 16, 2016

From: Adam Larsen, Assistant Superintendent

To: Board of Education

Cc: Thomas Mahoney, Superintendent

Re: May 2016 Board Report

## Illinois Science Assessment

On April 28, 2016, the Illinois State Board of Education announced that the Illinois Science Assessment window would be from May 2 to May 27. The test packages were available for us to download starting at 5:40pm on Sunday, May 1. Our Department of Technology worked quickly to install the testing software, work out all bugs, and deploy for all students. Given that the last day of school is May 18, we needed to work especially quickly for our high school students to avoid conflicting with preparations for final exams.

The majority of our high school students (biology) tested on Thursday, May 5. Elementary students (grade 5) were on May 10, and junior high (grade 8) were on May 11. Attempts were made to build schedules at each building that would accommodate the estimated time to take the assessment while also minimizing the impact on instruction.

### 12. How much time is allotted for ISA?

**Answer:** Students must complete the test in one day. The table below shows the estimated time of testing, but this is not a time limit. Districts have flexibility to allow students to continue testing during the session if they are actively engaged with the assessment.

Test	Number of Items	Before/After Time (in minutes)	Estimated Test Time (in minutes)	Total Time (in minutes)
Grade 5	18	15	38	53
Grade 8	23	15	40	55
High School	21	15	32	47

The times above are estimates based on operational testing in Washington, D.C. ISBE does NOT impose a time limit other than the session cannot span over two days. Districts have the flexibility to continue testing if students are still working during the session.

While technical issues were few and far between, the lack of ability to precache content, manage students quickly and easily in the online system, troubleshoot errors on our own, or contact a technical support line, it means some students were not assessed. In all cases, a good faith effort to test each student was attempted. We also had students whose test events did not appear to be sent to the processing center in the testing interface, but the online management system indicated that the test was received. It is unclear whether we will receive scores for those students.



## Spring 2016 Data Meetings

As we wrap up the 2015-2016 school year, several meetings are held in each building, across grade levels, and within departments. There are two major focuses of these end-of-year meetings. One is to see growth data for students and to review their progress in the various interventions and instructional programs that are in place. The other is to articulate levels of risk to the receiving grade level, both in academics and in behavior or engagement. Grade-level data meetings tend to focus on academic screening data, such as the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test, AIMSweb benchmarking assessments, guided reading levels, and other classroom data. All of these data sources are synthesized into a single view and sorted by academic risk to help teachers see which learners are still struggling and who has demonstrated significant growth during the year.

The Early Warning Systems (EWS) that are created for various grade levels take academic data and pair it with sources such as assignment completion rates, attendance, office disciplinary referrals, and school involvement to produce metrics on overall student risk. These systems began in our 8-to-9 transition several years ago and has grown both up and down in grade levels to help teachers prioritize student needs before they even enter the school the following year.

Articulation meetings using the Early Warning Systems have been occurring throughout May. As the benchmarking period are finishing for MAP, AIMSweb, and the classroom assessments, the data meetings are occurring now as well.

## New PARCC cutscores

One large change in MAP testing this season is the cutscores we will be using to determine performance levels. You may recall that the MAP test does not publish criterion-referenced cutscores for its assessments. That is, NWEA does not tell schools what score a student must have in order to be considered proficient or at grade level. The intent of the MAP test is to measure growth, and the organization instead publishes normative data, both for point-in-time attainment and across-season growth. However, because NWEA knows that districts want to be able to predict how students will perform on popular criterion-referenced tests, a side project for state alignment is conducted to create these cutscores. Illinois is currently administering the PARCC exam as its state-level test, and aligned cutscores for the PARCC were finally released in March of 2016.

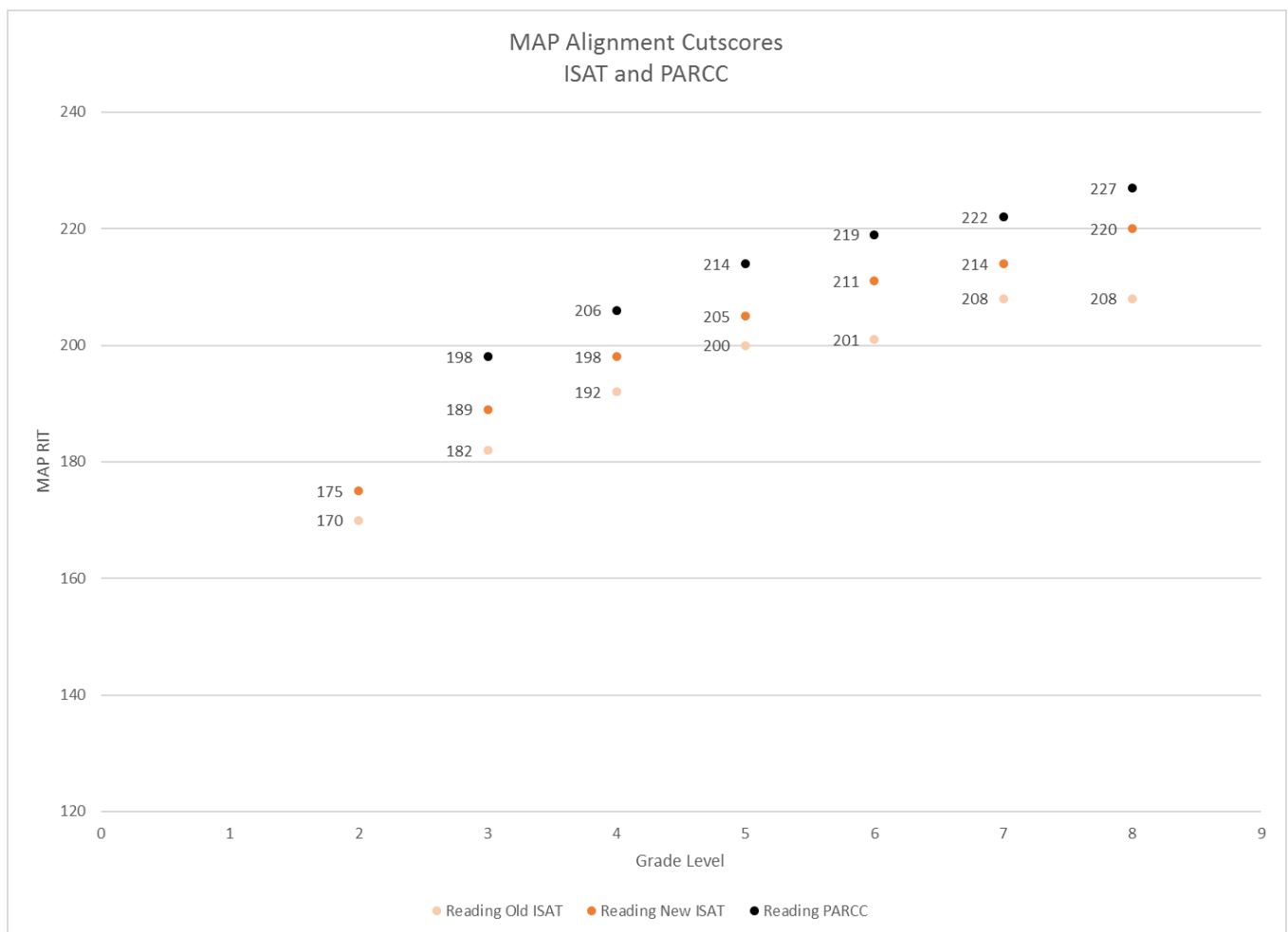
These new cutscores are much higher than what aligned with ISAT, even the “new” ISAT from 2013. For example, a grade 3 student needed to score a 189 to be considered proficient on ISAT when taking the MAP Reading in the fall season, but now that same student must score a 198. This is a reflection of the increased level of rigor demanded by the PARCC. This has resulted in drastically different predictions (from MAP) and reality (actual PARCC scores) than what we are used to seeing in previous years. You may recall from January 2016 that PARCC performance levels, the percentages of students meeting or exceeding expectations, were 30-40% lower in each grade level almost across the board. Without knowing exactly how cutscores were determined, it is unclear what these percentages mean. We do not know which of these three high-stakes test performances most accurately reflect what students know and are able to do. There are percentages from old ISAT cutscores, new ISAT cutscores, and now PARCC. With three drastically different levels of performance, it has become difficult to know how well schools are performing and where improvement needs to be made.



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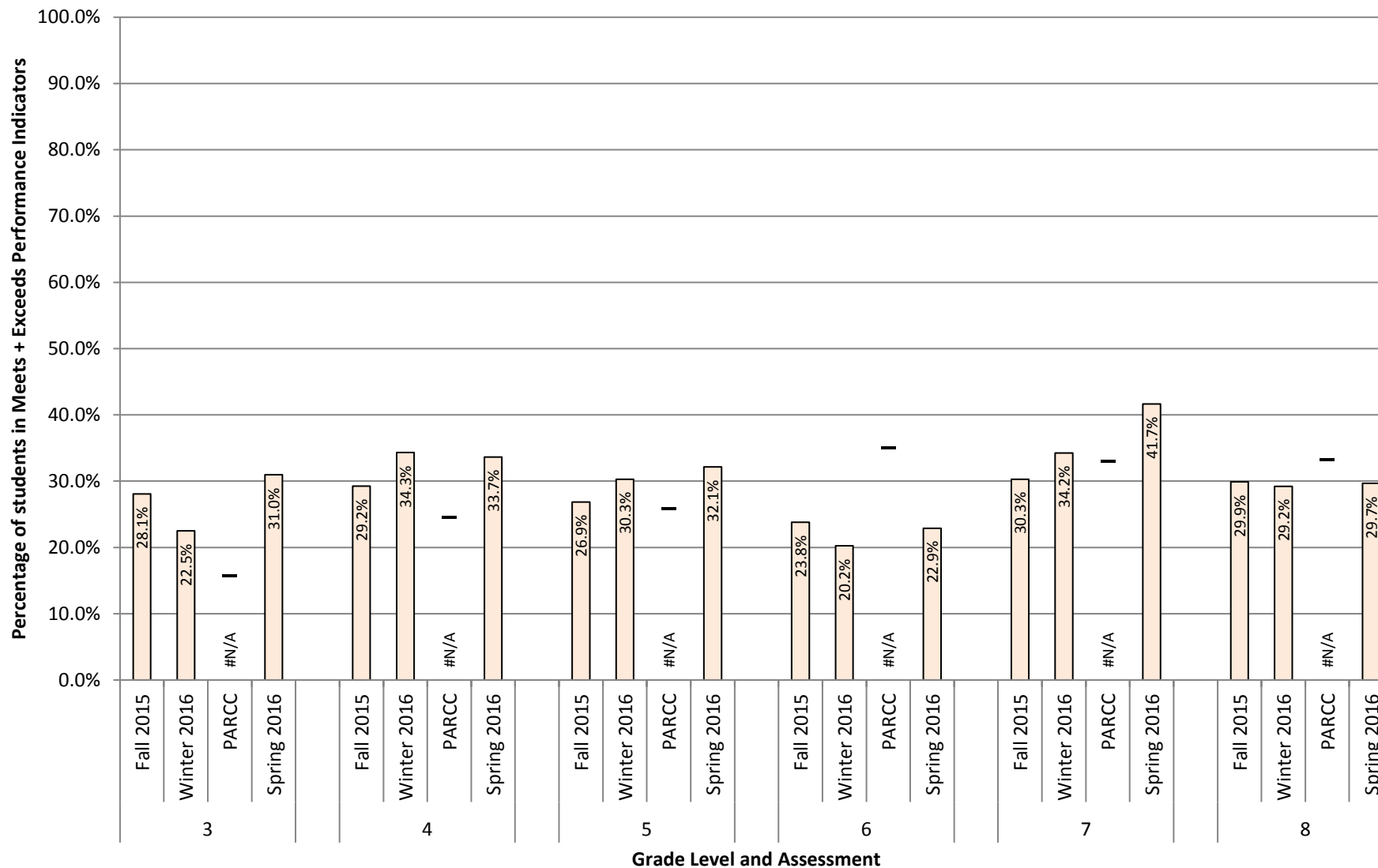
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Below is a comparison of the various cutscore expectations that have been published for these three assessments. In each grade level, the light orange is the old (pre-2013) ISAT cutscore, the darker orange is the new (2013 and beyond), and the black is the PARCC cutscore. The MAP assessment has not changed except for its periodic renorming, but the state's expectations for what proficient performance is have changed substantially with each new assessment. Because we have used MAP throughout all of these years, it is a consistent benchmark against which to measure each of these assessments. It is clear that each one has become harder to pass.

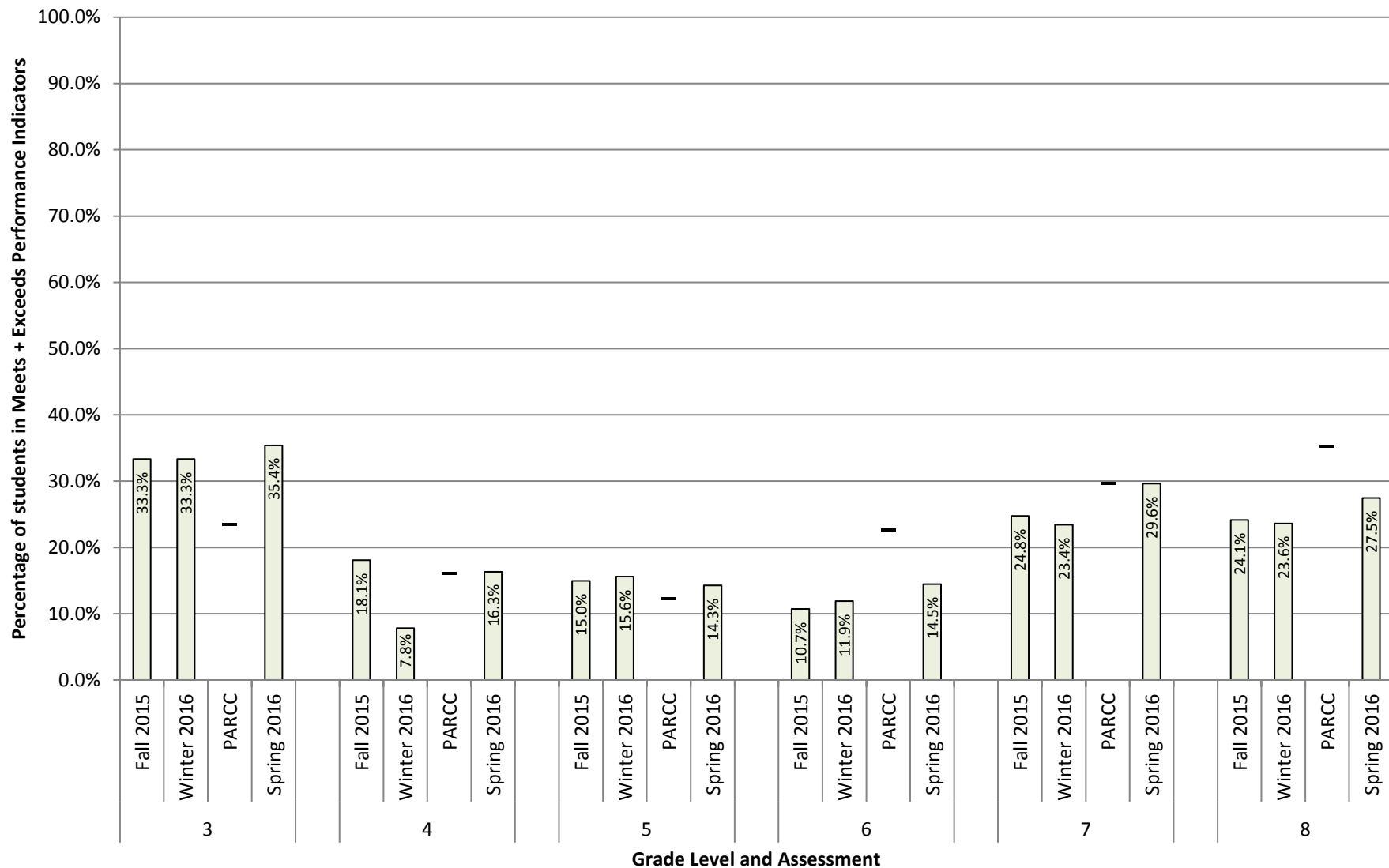


Using these cutscores, we can “predict” levels of performance on the PARCC that was taken this spring. We have MAP results long before PARCC scores, so even though the spring MAP has taken place after PARCC was given, we are still able to estimate the levels of PARCC proficiency before the actual scores arrive. Graphs predicting Reading and Mathematics performance are available below.

## 2016 PARCC Reading with Fall, Winter, and Spring Predictions from MAP



## 2016 PARCC Mathematics with Fall, Winter, and Spring Predictions from MAP





Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Adam P. Larsen'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'A' and 'L'.

Adam P. Larsen  
Assistant Superintendent  
Oregon CUSD #220