

Quarterly Assessments FAQs

1. What was the rationale for moving to a Quarterly Assessment (QA) format?

With the onset of PARCC, discussion has been taking place for some time about moving to QAs. PARCC will require amended schedules to facilitate the testing of nearly 2000 students in the HS and MS in ELA and Math during two separate windows (PBAs and EOYs) in the spring. With the loss of instructional time that PARCC will cause, it is important to mitigate any additional lost time for testing. With QAs, teachers can continue instruction without major interruption, as there is no impact to the daily schedule. All teachers will continue to see their students for their regularly scheduled classes throughout the assessment process. At the HS, the use of midterms and finals has typically been preceded by days of review, followed by a week of testing that involved a change to the daily and bell schedules. This change meant that most teachers have not seen their students daily during exam time. Clearview is not alone in this transition to QAs; many schools in the county have adopted this structure this year, and others are planning to move to QAs next year. In addition to the scheduling implications, QAs can be used to more frequently and commonly monitor students' performance in meeting the curriculum and aligned standards.

2. Do common courses need common assessments?

Yes, it's important to insure that all students of a common course are being assessed in the same format. Common assessments ensure same-assessment to same-assessment comparison of student growth in a consistent, reliable and effective manner. If assessments are used to inform the delivery of the curriculum, it is important that the curriculum is being assessed. There are many benefits to common assessment. These include: 1) Consistent expectations within a common course regarding standards, instruction, and assessment priorities. 2) Agreed-upon criteria for proficiency to be met within each individual class of that course. 3) Objective feedback regarding student attainment of standards allows teachers to modify instruction to better meet the learning needs of students. 4) Ongoing collaboration opportunities for common-course teachers.

3. Do QAs need to be aligned to their corresponding Common Core and/or NJCCC standards?

Yes, assessments should evaluate the mastery of the curriculum. Since curriculum is aligned to the standards, assessments should reflect that alignment as well. Assessments aligned to the standards provide data to inform instruction and identify strengths and gaps in the curriculum and its delivery.

4. Are all teachers in all subjects required to give QAs?

Yes, with the exception of Cycle courses, PE and self-contained Special Education classes.

5. Are QAs required for MS students?

Yes, students in the Middle School will be taking QAs during the 2014-15 school-year. The number of major assessments per marking period has been reduced to 2 to accommodate the addition of the QAs. A committee will be formed to discuss and review the use of the QAs and common assessments overall for the following school year.

6. Can common Unit Assessments replace QAs?

No, common Unit Assessments cannot replace the QAs. QAs should reflect the course content and major skills of the marking period. Unit tests should be grades within the marking period. The QA can be compiled by the material taught and assessed within the marking period as well as the overarching vocabulary and major concepts of the course.

7. Can the QA be something other than a pencil/paper assessment, such as a project or other performance assessment?

Yes, teachers are encouraged to use of multiple types of authentic assessments including: performance, project-based, and portfolio assessments to provide formative measures that benefit students' growth and provide teachers with feedback for adjusting instruction.

8. Will there be a scheduled make-up day for QAs or is it left to individual teachers to schedule?

There will not be a scheduled make-up day provided for QAs. For students that are absent on the date of the QA, teachers should communicate and coordinate directly with the students about the process for making up the assessment as they do for any missed tests/quizzes during the marking period. Typically, it is expected that the make-up QA may be administered in the week following the end date for the quarter. For grading purposes, please be aware that a 14 day make-up period is allowed at the end of each quarter for any incomplete grades.

9. When will students with extended time IEP accommodations be able to complete their assessments?

Extended time for QAs will be handled in the same manner that teachers typically provide extended time for any other class tests/quizzes. If scheduling extra time becomes an issue, teachers can request guidance for students from CST.

10. Are teachers required to administer an assessment on their scheduled protected day?

While teachers are NOT required to administer a QA on their scheduled protected day, NO other department may administer a QA on another department's day. Teachers who assign a performance-based QA that is due earlier than their protected day may use the scheduled day to administer another assessment that can be used as part of the marking period grades. Despite some courses not having a planned QA on their scheduled day, it is important to protect days by content area, so that the members of the department can use their scheduled day for some form of assessment. This ensures that students are not overloaded with assessments on any given day.

11. What assignments/assessments (minor or daily) may be given in class on days assigned to other departments?

While NO major or minor assessments are to be administered outside of any department's protected day, daily assignments may continue to be given to provide continuity to the course's curriculum and pacing.

12. Are teachers required to submit their QAs in advance to their Department Coordinators?

Yes, teachers are required to submit their QAs in advance. Teachers should work collaboratively with their course-level colleagues and their Department Coordinators in the formation of the QAs. The assessments will be reviewed and approved by the Department Coordinators prior to administering to students. The approved assessments (test, project, writing activity, portfolio, report, etc.) should be saved to the V drive. Scoring rubrics should also be placed in the V drive. Answer keys should not be stored on the V drive.