

Instructions for Assessing Readiness Using the PARCC Readiness Tools

In the upcoming PARCC testing, computer and network systems will be stressed by the amount of usage and traffic created by the online testing system. It presents challenges for you as the technical staff for your district. As in any large system rollout, there are always concerns about whether existing systems can handle the load created by the large implementation.

In order to address these concerns, this guide was created to walk you through testing your systems in advance to either verify that your system is ready for the challenges or highlight areas that need to be worked on prior to the testing period.

There are four tools that are available to you now or in the near future to conduct this survey of your IT infrastructure. They are:

- The TestNav 8 System Check Devices tool
- The TestNav 8 System Check Networking tool
- The TestNav 8 Automated Network Stress Testing tool (coming February 2014)
- The TestNav 8 Manual Network Stress Testing tool (coming February 2014)

These tools are being provided directly from Pearson, the company tasked with creating and providing the actual PARCC test, and, as such, are the most accurate measure of the current state of your devices and network as it relates to the PARCC test. Because of this, they are the best way to determine the fitness of your IT systems for the PARCC test.

Initially, you should use the System Check tools to determine if your devices and network are ready for the testing. Once the Network Stress Test tools are released in early February 2014, you should use them to determine if your network is ready for testing.

Tool Location

System Check-The System Check tools are found at <http://systemcheck.parcc.testnav.com/>. For detailed instructions on how to run the tools, refer to the *System Check User Guide 8*, available within the district support toolbox on LDOE's website at <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/classroom-support-toolbox/district-support-toolbox/spring-2014-field-test> or by contacting the LDOE Educational Technology team at edtech@la.gov.

Network Stress Test - The Network Stress Test tools are currently being developed and will be available in early February 2014. They will conduct either manual or automated stress tests of your network by creating the traffic that would be generated by anywhere from 1 to over 1,000 students testing at one time. This means that it is a real stress test and not a simulated one. Once they are available, you will receive instructions on where to obtain them and the User Guide to go along with them.

SystemCheck Testing Checklist

The following checklist will walk you through and assist you in performing all of the steps to assure that your systems are up to the challenge presented by the PARCC test.

Device Testing

This tool determines 3 key factors in assuring the test will run on the hardware in your district. It determines if you have supported versions of:

- The operating system
- Java
- The installed browser

Once it is complete it provides a report showing the current versions of each and whether or not it is supported by the test.

Note that you do not need to run this on every system in your district. If you have numerous machines that are identical in these areas, you merely have to run it on one machine.

For specific instructions on the process of running this tool, refer to to the *System Check User Guide 8*.

- Run the System Check on representatives of all hardware groups.
- Note any failed checks.

Network Testing

Once you have completed testing the device itself, there are several network tests that should be completed. The network capacity tests determine three aspects of your network and reports on them:

- The download speed at the time of the test
- The upload speed at the time of the test, and
- The estimated number of students that could test based on those two measurements.

In addition, if you have a caching server set up in your district, it will allow you to use it for this test as well so that you can see the impact of caching on your PARCC testing. If you do have a caching server available, it is highly recommended that you use it, as it greatly increases the number of students that can test at one time. If you need more information regarding caching and how to set up a caching server for PARCC testing, refer to the *Proctor Caching User Guide*, within the district support toolbox on LDOE's website at <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/classroom-support-toolbox/district-support-toolbox/spring-2014-field-test> or by contacting the Education Technology team at edtech@la.gov.

In all cases, the tests should be conducted at three different times during the school day. By doing this, you will get a better idea of the capacity of your network to handle testing under actual school conditions.

The three times that you should test the network capacity is:

- During a period when the network is not being used (early morning or late afternoon when class is not in session)
- During a period of high usage (while class is in session)
- During a testing period (during EOCs or other online testing, for example)

In addition, you should run the tool on both your wired and wireless network, if you have both, and non-cached and cached, if you have a caching server. This will lead to running the tool 12 times, as shown in this table.

	During a low or non-usage period	During a high usage period	During a testing period
Wired without caching			
Wired with caching			
Wireless without caching			
Wireless with caching			

In all cases, you should record the upload and download speeds and the estimated number of students that can simultaneously test.

Survey

Once you complete the testing, you need to submit the data via an online survey. One survey should be completed for each school and should include all of the data collected.

One thing to note is that the network portion of the survey asks for the lowest and highest numbers for all three statistics: download speed, upload speed, and estimated simultaneous test takers.

To complete the survey:

- Go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/3RYD76X>.
- Complete survey and submit results of tests