Interim Assessments: Mathematics Frequently Asked Questions

R.I. Department of Education (RIDE)

This guide provides an overview and FAQs for the math interim assessments being developed through Race to the Top funding.

Are calculators allowed when students are taking an interim assessment?

- For the fixed forms students are not allowed to use calculators for grades 3 through 5 and Algebra I. They are able to use a calculator on the fixed forms for grades 6 through 8, Geometry and Algebra II. The use of a calculator is item specific for the TCT assessments so a teacher should take this into consideration when designing an assessment with the TCT.

Is the use of scratch paper permissible on the interim assessments?

- Scratch paper should always be provided to students when they are taking a fixed form or TCT assessment. Grid, lined, or unlined scratch paper are all acceptable. Teachers should collect all scratch paper at the end of the testing period.

What type of additional resources can I give my students to use when they are taking an assessment designed through the Test Construction Tool?

- As with the fixed form, teachers may provide their students with the grade appropriate reference sheet during administration of a TCT assessment. There are reference sheets designed for grades 5 through 8 and high school and they parallel those provided for use on the PARCC Assessment. By allowing students access to these reference sheets both during interim administration and instruction, teachers will help students establish the practice of *using an appropriate tool strategically*.

What should a student do if they are taking a computer-based test and a mathematical symbol is not available on the keyboard?

- The CCSS-M calls students to *attend to precision* in their communication. Students should create the missing symbol using the drawing tool provided in the system. It is not advisable to use a similar symbol from the keyboard, e.g. using the equal sign to designate congruency.

How much work or mathematical explanation should a student provide when answering a test item?

- As is the case with any type of assessment, a student should provide work or an explanation that allows a reader to clearly and fully understand the student's mathematical thinking. In some instances, this requires a student to outline a step by step process for solving a multi-step problem or providing an argument that follows a logical progression including examples. The use of proper mathematical vocabulary and appropriate symbols are important facets to consider when a student is crafting their response

How can I use the fixed form assessments if they don't fit exactly with my scope and sequence?

- The standards assessed on the fixed forms represent the major work of each grade/course as identified by the PARCC Model Content Frameworks. All of this major work is assessed on each of the three administrations of the fixed forms. Therefore, alignment to any particular scope and sequence is not necessary or possible. By using the fixed forms, a teacher is able to make judgments about what level of proficiency a student possesses in his/her journey to acquire mastery in the essential end-of-year content.