

**LENAPE REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION
PROTOCOL FOR THE PARCC ASSESSMENT FOR THE 2016-2017 SCHOOL YEAR**

BACKGROUND

Current Federal law requires boards of education with students in grades three (3) through twelve (12) to demonstrate Adequate Yearly Progress (“AYP”). In order to achieve AYP, boards of education must ensure that assessments have been taken by at least ninety-five percent (95%) of enrolled students in each subgroup (i.e., students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, economically disadvantaged students, and students from major racial ethnic subgroups). Federal funding of key education programs is dependent upon school districts meeting this requirement.

In compliance with this federal requirement, New Jersey State law requires the Commissioner of Education (“Commissioner”), with approval of the New Jersey State Board of Education (“State Board”), to establish a program of standards for graduation from secondary school. Pursuant to State requirements, “[t]he Commissioner . . . may implement assessment of student achievement in the State’s public schools in any grades(s) and by such assessments as he or she deems appropriate,” and the Commissioner “. . . shall define the scope and level of student performance on Statewide assessments that demonstrate thorough understanding of knowledge and skills delineated by the [New Jersey Student Learning Standards] at grade levels three [(3)] through 12.” The State regulations also provide that boards of education “shall, according to a schedule prescribed by the Commissioner, administer the applicable Statewide assessments . . .,” and subsection (d) confirms that “all students at grade levels three [(3)] through 12, and at any other grade(s) designated by the Commissioner . . . shall take appropriate Statewide assessments as scheduled.”

In February, 2014, the State Board passed a resolution confirming that all boards of education are obligated to “ensure students meet the expectations and proficiency standards as measured by current and future State and local assessments.” The resolution also included the replacement of NJASK (grades three (3) through eight (8)) and HSPA (high school) assessments with the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (“PARCC”) assessment.

Therefore, based upon Federal and State law and regulations, all students are required to participate in these State assessments. For the 2016-2017 school year, the PARCC assessment is the assessment for high school.

WHAT IS PARCC?

PARCC is a consortium of states that collaboratively developed a common set of assessments to measure student achievement and preparedness for college and careers. The PARCC assessments measure the higher-level skills developed under the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (“NJSLS”), and were created to measure students’ ability to apply their knowledge of concepts rather than memorizing facts.

Once fully implemented, the PARCC assessment will be a useful tool for educators in the classroom, allow for the use of technology to create and deliver real time information on student knowledge by measuring the full range of NJSLS, and provide guidance to all students regarding college and career readiness.

WHY MUST STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN PARCC?

Besides being required to participate under the law, students will gain detailed diagnostic information through the PARCC assessment about their individual performances that educators, parents, and students can use to enhance fundamental knowledge and student achievement of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Each PARCC Individual Student Report (ISR) will clarify a student's level of knowledge and understanding of a particular subject or area of a subject.

Additionally, PARCC scores of 750 (Level 4) or higher on the ELA 9, ELA 10, or Algebra 1 test and 725 (Level 3) or higher on the ELA 11, Geometry, or Algebra 2 test meet the proficiency criteria set by the New Jersey Department of Education for the graduating classes of 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020. To fulfill this graduation requirement, each student must meet at least one threshold score in ELA and one in Math through a PARCC test score or a score on a designated substitute assessment (SAT, PSAT/NMSQT, ACT, ACT Aspire, Accuplacer, or ASVAB-AFQT).

Class of 2020 students must take all PARCC assessments for which they are eligible in order for their scores on any substitute assessments to be permitted to count toward meeting these graduation testing requirements. *Thus, any refusal for a Class of 2020 student is highly discouraged.* A Class of 2020 student's participation in PARCC ensures that he or she may use substitute assessment scores to meet the NJ graduation testing requirements.

The Board is aware that school districts throughout the State may be handling this situation differently. It is not the Board's intention to infringe upon the rights of the parents/guardians of the students or the students through this protocol. To the contrary, under current Federal and State laws and regulations, the Board is fulfilling its obligation to uphold these laws and regulations, and the mandate to administer the PARCC assessment to all students.

TESTING PROCEDURES

Since the PARCC assessment is part of the State-required educational program, boards of education are not required to provide an alternative educational program for students who do not participate in the assessment. In light of the importance of the PARCC assessment, however, the Board has established protocols and procedures to address situations where students are absent on the test date and/or refuse to participate in the assessment. The following procedures are in place for all Lenape Regional High School District schools:

1. Any parent or guardian who notifies his or her student's principal in writing *before Friday, January 13, 2017* that his or her student will not participate in PARCC will be contacted by a school official confirming the parent or guardian notification and will receive an email or letter outlining the Board's protocol for a student refusing to participate in the assessment. The student may attend classes if they meet (many will not because teachers are needed as proctors). For classes not meeting, the student must report to a designated alternative area. Once the school's test administration plan is finalized, the school will inform students where to report.

2. Any parent or guardian who notifies his or her student's principal in writing *after Friday, January 13, 2017* that his or her student will not participate in PARCC will be contacted by a school official confirming the parent or guardian notification and will receive an email or letter outlining the Board's protocol for a student refusing to participate in the assessment. The student may attend classes if they meet (many will not because teachers are needed as proctors). Effort will be made to enable this option, but the option cannot be assured since refusal notification came after January 13, 2017. If room is available in an alternative area, the student may be excused to that location. Otherwise, the student must report to his or her assigned testing room and may complete independent reading there in compliance with the testing manual. Once the school's test administration is finalized, the school will inform students where to report.

3. If a student is absent on the test date, the Board will follow its procedures, i.e., the parent/guardian will receive a phone call, and absences, excused or unexcused, will be treated as they normally would. It is the Board's position that students should attend school on all test dates, and, if not, they will be expected to participate in the assessment on a makeup date. Parents/guardians will be notified of PARCC assessment dates, as well as makeup dates. The Board's attendance policy will be followed.