

PASS 2: Key Points for Members of Boards of Education to Welcome Parents & Families

Parent Academy for Student Success #2

Measure What Matters: Assessing Student Learning and

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers Assessment (PARCC)

School board members may want to consider using some of the points below when communicating with parents about the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers Assessment (PARCC).

- I would like to welcome you with a few words about our testing program and the new PARCC Assessment.
- The Common Core State Standards help your sons and daughters build the knowledge and skills they need to become successful after high school as college freshmen, highly valued employees, and productive members of the community.
- Expectations of the global workforce continue to change, and if our children are to be competitive when they graduate from high school, our education system must also change.
 - 81% of today's jobs require college or career training and when high school graduates don't have the skills to perform in available jobs; therefore, employers have little choice other than to offer unpaid internships, underemployment or no position.
 - 1/3 of college freshmen need remedial courses that cost additional tuition without credit toward college graduation.
- The future depends on a strong workforce in which critical thinking, effective communication, use of technology, and problem-solving skills can be applied in any context. These are the skills supported by the Common Core State Standards and measured by the PARCC assessments.
- Our board of education members believe that the state testing program should provide a guide for individual students to graduate from high school college- and career-ready, and it is important to provide educators and parents with the information they need to advance students' academic achievement. Our PASS program will do that.
- We know that some parents are unclear about the benefits of annual testing, the Common Core State Standards and PARCC. I strongly encourage you to read through the documents from tonight's PASS event, because they will complement the information from our educators here this evening and will help to answer your questions and turn concerns into confidence in your child's ability to master the education program here at _____ . I'd like to specifically recommend the two documents called:
 - Myths & Facts, and
 - Buzz Words: A Shared Language for Student Success.

The more you know about your son's or daughter's school life and learning expectations, the more you can help them get the best out of their education.

- One main function of the board of education is to ensure that your children have the resources needed to learn at high levels and be prepared for graduation and beyond. Students use computers to take the PARCC test, and over the past few years, we have taken steps to bring our technology standards up to the level students need to build their technology skills for college and careers.

- Technology in the classroom opens an exciting world of learning opportunities for your child. Our students are already successful using a range of technologies enabling them to access information, resources, software and tools that can support and enhance their learning activities.
- Digital technologies also enable you to have greater involvement in your child's learning. Your child will use technology both in the classroom and at home to connect, collaborate, research, create content, and to share their work with you, their teachers, and other learners.
- By learning with the Common Core and using their technology skills as a tool to demonstrate that learning, students will perform well on the PARCC test.
- Our board of education has specific responsibilities relative to PARCC, and I'd like to share some of them with you:
 - School districts are responsible for administering the annual state tests, and PARCC is the annual state test this year.
 - New Jersey law and regulation require students to participate in the state testing program.
 - Neither federal nor state laws include opt-out provisions.
 - Local districts must manage any situation where a parent chooses to keep his or her child out of school at the time the state tests are administered. Our district has developed a (procedure, policy, etc.) to address this issue by: _____.
- Some parents and students have asked if there are consequences to opting out of the PARCC test.
 - The level of student participation in PARCC may affect federal funding for K-12 education in New Jersey, state aid to school districts among other things.
 - The federal *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* requires that 95% of all students and 95% of students in subgroups (e.g., English language learners, economically disadvantaged, etc.) take state-required assessments. Federal funding of key education programs may be dependent upon districts' meeting this requirement.
 - The state's district monitoring system (NJQSAC) requires meeting annual measurable objectives in student achievement based upon 95% of the *total* student population demonstrating proficiency on state tests. A low participation rate may negatively affect QSAC outcomes.
 - A low participation rate will affect the amount of information educators receive to make informed decisions, modify curriculum, and differentiate and personalize instruction for individuals and groups of students.
 - Parents won't receive important information about their child's learning with the new Common Core Standards.
- Our superintendent has explained how we will manage a situation where students do not participate in the required state tests, but I hope that you will use this opportunity at our PASS program to learn more about the tests, ask questions and consider the benefits of taking the tests to your child and our schools.
- Good schools are constantly evolving to meet the needs of students. Learn more about attendance, homework, report cards, tea-teaching methods and the use of innovative technologies in your child's classroom. There are many opportunities for you to engage in your child's learning out of school so that you can support their learning in school.
- This is a time of great change in education, and we want to partner with you to make sure that your child receives the best preparation for success in school and beyond. I am happy to see you here at our PASS event, and I look forward to working with you to help your children succeed in school and throughout their future after graduation.