



State of New Jersey

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TO: Chief School Administrators
Charter School Lead Persons

FROM: Christopher D. Cerf *CDC*
Acting Commissioner

SUBJECT: Transition to Next-Generation Assessment Systems

New Jersey's transition to the Common Core State Standards over the next few years will be supported by a related transition to a next-generation assessments system. By selecting an assessment system now, New Jersey educators can contribute more substantially to the critical decisions in the development of the system and will have more time to create focused curriculum and instructional plans based on the assessment specifications. Following careful review of both next-generation systems, New Jersey has decided to become a Governing state in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC).

New Jersey chose PARCC for several reasons. First, the accountability system in PARCC includes four assessments throughout the instructional year. As such, the accountability system is based on multiple assessments administered at different points during the year, so students can demonstrate their knowledge and skills throughout the school year. This will de-emphasize the impact of any one test score because all four test scores will be weighted to calculate an accountability score. The interim tests will provide instructionally relevant data to teachers throughout the school year so they can target interventions in a more timely and personalized way for each student. Second, as a result of substantial federal funding received by ten other PARCC members, New Jersey educators will have more opportunity to share resources across states to increase instruction and learning. Third, PARCC membership will ease comparisons of student results across states, as the majority of states within PARCC are eastern or southern states (including New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Massachusetts, and Maryland).

The New Jersey Department of Education will continue to provide districts with updates regarding PARCC and the transition to the Common Core State Standards. During the transition, PARCC is committed to providing New Jersey with professional development, high quality model instructional units, and prototypes of the through-course assessments. If you have any further questions, please contact Jeffrey Hauger, director, Office of Student Learning Assessments, at jeffrey.hauger@doe.state.nj.us or 609.984.6311.

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