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## NJ State Board of Education to Begin Developing New Regulations to Improve Implementation of Student Assessments and Update High School Graduation Requirements

*Proposed Regulations Follow Recommendations of Study Commission on the Use of Student Assessments*

### For Immediate Release

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**Trenton, NJ** – Based on the recommendations in the final report of the state's Study Commission on the Use of Student Assessments, the New Jersey State Board of Education announced today that it will begin the regulatory process to improve the implementation of PARCC assessment, by providing additional flexibility and advance notification while transitioning to the use of PARCC assessments as a high school graduation requirement. The process includes opportunities for public input over the next few months once the proposal is published in the *New Jersey Register*.

In its final report, the study commission recommended a transition period through the year 2020 for students to learn the knowledge and skills required by the academic standards measured by PARCC in English Language Arts and Mathematics before being required to demonstrate proficiency on PARCC as a high school graduation requirement. The testing program from now through 2020 will continue to allow students to use alternate ways to demonstrate proficiency in English Language Arts and Mathematics in order to meet the graduation requirement. That would include the use of PARCC end-of-course (EOC) assessments in English Language Arts 10 and Algebra I; meeting the proficiency criteria through alternative assessments such as the PSAT, SAT, ACT, Accuplacer; or the use of another end-of-course PARCC assessment such as Geometry, Algebra II, English Language Arts 9 or English Language Arts 11.

Beginning with the graduating Class of 2020, students will be required to take PARCC — although not have to achieve a certain score — before they can choose an alternative assessment to meet the graduation requirement. Starting with the Class of 2021, the study commission called on the Department to require students pass English Language Arts 10 and the Algebra I end-of-course PARCC assessments as the requirement for graduation for the initial years of implementation with a provision for reassessing the regulations in future years. Accordingly, the proposed regulations provide that for the Class of 2021, all students would be required to take the PARCC EOC assessments to meet the graduation requirement and to achieve a certain score in English Language Arts 10 and the Algebra I end-of-course PARCC assessments in order to graduate high school. The State Board of Education will establish the minimum levels of proficiency for the two tests. The board also indicated it would reassess the requirements in the future after the full implementation in 2021.

The proposed regulations also continue to allow for a portfolio appeals process for those students who are unable to demonstrate proficiency through standardized tests.

The State Board regulatory process for new rules or major revisions to rules is as follows:

- The Commissioner presents amendments for discussion to the State Board of Education.
- The State Board receives public comment and accepts written and oral testimony prior to formal proposal level.
- Proposed code is published in the *New Jersey Register*.
- Public input is accepted and public testimony sessions are held by the State Board for 30 to 60 days after publication in the *New Jersey Register*.
- Amendments are adopted by the State Board after evaluation of input.

As recommended by the study commission, the proposed regulations will also provide opportunities for high school students to obtain a waiver from their local school district from taking the PARCC English Language Arts 11 test if they take a validated assessment program designed to be used nationwide by postsecondary institutions for placement (e.g., Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate).

The proposed regulations also direct school districts to notify each student entering grades 3-12 of the statewide assessment schedule.