

## **Logan Township School District's PARCC Assessments: What You Need to Know**

### ***How long will testing take?***

The state has set aside a total of 10 hours *per year* for PARCC testing. In comparison, our district schedules more than 1,110 hours of instruction per school year. Most students are expected to complete PARCC testing in less than the 10 hours allotted. For example, statewide over half of students in grades 6 through 11 are predicted to finish all PARCC testing in 7-and-a-half hours, while most third graders are expected to complete testing in 6-and-a-half hours.

Last year's administration of the fourth-grade NJ ASK took 5 hours to 7-and-a-half hours. More time has been allocated for PARCC testing because the new assessments measure progress toward all of the standards, not just a sampling of standards as was the case with NJ ASK.

### ***When will the state tests take place?***

The PARCC tests will be administered to students in two windows, in March and May. The March testing dates are March 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> for Grades 5 and 8; March 9 to 13 for Grades 4 and 7 and March 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> for Grades 3 & 6. In March, each child will participate in five testing sessions (one session per day) of 60 to 90 minutes each.

The March tests require written answers in which the children explain and “construct” their answers. While the tests will be taken on computers, children will have paper and pencil to use if they want to work out math problems or draft written answers before entering them on computers.

In May, children will be given “end-of-year assessments,” largely multiple-choice questions that assess their learning for the entire school year. These tests will take place in 3 or 4 sessions per child.

### ***How will the students take the test?***

The PARCC tests are designed to be taken on a computer. This mirrors the movement toward computer-based testing, which will also affect college admissions tests and high school equivalency exams in the future. In our district, students will be using Chromebooks. Students will enter responses on the Chromebook, but will have pencil and paper handy to formulate responses beforehand if they choose to do so.

### ***How will our schools use the PARCC results?***

**The PARCC results will enable our district to evaluate the effectiveness of its education program in mathematics and language arts and to consider adjustments.**

PARCC is more in-depth than the previous state tests. It measures student progress toward *all* grade-level standards in language arts and mathematics, rather than just a sampling of the standards.

PARCC results will help teachers pinpoint areas in which an *individual student* needs more attention. For example, test data will enable an elementary school teacher to know if a student requires attention in a specific application, such as multiplication and division, in addition to his or her overall progress toward grade-level math standards. PARCC results can also guide teachers to individualize instruction for *students who exceed* grade-level standards.

## **Logan Township School District's PARCC Assessments:**

## What You Need to Know (continued)

For parents, PARCC will provide individualized information on their children's progress toward meeting academic standards. The PARCC test results will *not* be used to determine promotion or report card grades.

As has always been our district's practice, the state testing program will not be the sole factor in determining entry into gifted-and-talented programs or classes such as Algebra 1, Italian 1, Spanish 1 or Pre-Engineering. As appropriate, class work, teacher review, portfolio assessments and other test results are major factors in determining your student's school program.

As of this date, student progress demonstrated through the PARCC exams will make up no more than 10% of the information that goes into the evaluations of teachers in the subject areas and grade levels tested.

### *Is PARCC a high-stakes test?*

PARCC is no more "high-stakes" than the previously-used NJ ASK. It will not affect promotion or report card grades. Just as demonstrating proficiency on the HSPA has been a New Jersey high school graduation requirement for many years, PARCC will become a graduation requirement in 2017.

### *Could personal information about my child obtained through PARCC be sold?*

No. Individual student results will remain confidential. Protections at the state and federal levels, and through all contracts and agreements, prevent student-identifiable data from being marketed or distributed. The selling of student data was never allowed in New Jersey under the NJ ASK tests, and it is not allowed under the PARCC tests.

### *What happens if I refuse to let my child take the test?*

Our district will follow the same policies and protocols that it has had in place to govern student participation, or non-participation, in the previous state tests (NJ ASK). Students who are present at school on test day, but whose parents refuse to allow them to participate in this state-mandated testing program, **will be sent to the library for a silent study hall**. No alternative educational program will be provided while PARCC testing is occurring in that student's grade level.

**New Jersey statute and regulations state that all students *shall* take the statewide assessment, which is now the PARCC test. We strongly encourage you to make sure your child participates in PARCC. The information obtained through the assessment will determine how we can improve our school district's education program and help your child reach his or her full academic potential.**

