

## **Harrison Township School District PARCC Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

### **OVERVIEW**

#### **What is PARCC?**

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is a computer based assessment of Mathematics and English Language Arts/Literacy Skills that measure whether students are on track to be successful in college and their careers and if students are meeting the Common Core and New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. The PARCC assessments are designed to replace the NJASK in grades 3-8 in Language Arts and Mathematics and the HSPA in grade 11. The PARCC assessments will be administered to students beginning in the spring of 2015.

#### **Do I have the option for my child to opt-out of the PARCC assessment?**

No. The district is obligated by state regulations to administer the PARCC exam to all students. The district's attendance policies and regulations will continue to be followed during this time.

#### **When will the PARCC be administered?**

The PARCC assessment is composed of 2 parts, the Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) or long answer questions and the End-of-Year (EOY) component or short answer questions. Beginning March 2, 2015, the Performance-Based Assessment portion of the PARCC assessment will be administered to all students in grades 3 through 11. Beginning April 27, 2015, the End-of-Year portion of the PARCC assessment will be administered to all students in grades 3 through 11.

#### **How can parents learn more?**

Upcoming events, mailings, and webs-site updates will provide parents and guardians with additional information about PARCC. The PTA is hosting a parent training on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Davis will be sharing Harrison Township's proactive approach to the Common Core, PARCC testing time lines, changes in the assessment, and participants will partake in a LIVE practice assessment.

## **ENSURING STUDENTS ARE PREPARED FOR PARCC**

### **How are the schools preparing our students academically?**

All of the Harrison Township curricula are aligned to the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS) and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). In 2012-13 we formally adopted the Reading Street program from Pearson. Reading Street addresses many of the skills and content defined in the standards. The use of the testing platform in Success Net has provided our students in grades 1 through 6 the opportunity to explore Next Generation testing approaches. Our in-house [Measures of Academic Progress \(MAP\)](#) has been updated to the CCSS edition as well. Our investigation and exploration into the CCSS math standards via EveryDay Math, Progressive Math Initiative, and Engage New York has provided our faculty and staff with a wealth of information in this area of the standards. This information is assisting us to focus on the standards, think across grade levels, and meet the rigor of the CCSS via Math Expressions in grades K through 5 and the Connected Math Project in grade 6. When and where appropriate, the instructional sequence for ELA and math has been reorganized to address the most crucial PARCC content before testing begins in March. PARCC testing mirrors the high quality work our students are already doing in Harrison Township classrooms throughout the year.

### **Are there sample PARCC assessments available?**

Yes. PARCC has released online tutorials that demonstrate how to navigate the test. These tutorials and sample assessments are accessible at this web address:

<http://practice.parcc.testnav.com/#>.

### **What is the district doing to help students master the technological skills required by the PARCC exam?**

Grades three and four became one-on-one with Chromebooks this year. Prior to implementation, we installed high-end routers in all grade three and four classrooms. We have not experienced any connectivity or density issues. The technology plan for 2015-16 calls for additional purchases of routers and Chromebooks for grades 5 & 6. At the start of the 2014-15 school year we adopted a keyboarding program for students in grades 4 through 6 called [QWERTY Town](#) and we are exploring EduTyping and Typing Agent in grades K through 3 for potential adoption in 2015-16. All of our students in grades 3 through 6 have been exposed to the PARCC practice tests for their grade level; grade 2 took the grade 3 assessment. Many of the teachers have infused this exposure into their weekly lessons. Later this year we will be revisiting our technology curriculum to address the NJCCCS and the CCSS while bearing in mind our additional technology resources.

### **What can families do to help prepare students for the PARCC exam?**

As with any standardized assessment, it is important that students have had a good night's sleep and a well-balanced breakfast each day before testing. For additional information, please see the links embedded throughout this document.

## USE OF PARCC DATA

### Will the PARCC assessment be used for academic placement for the 2015-2016 school year?

No. Harrison Township will use in-house measures (e.g. MAP, DIBELS, Reading Street, Math Expressions, I&RS, RtI, report card information, teacher notes) to appropriately place students without the need for state standardized test results.

### Will the Performance Based Assessment (PBA) and the End-of-Year (EOY) Assessment be score separately?

No, students will receive a single score report that brings together the student's performances on both the Performance Based Assessment (PBA) and the End-of-Year (EOY) Assessment sessions.

### Is a student who does not pass the PARCC assessment required to retake the assessment?

No. A student is not required to retake an assessment or retake the course based on their PARCC scores.

## TEST ADMINISTRATION AND SCHEDULE

### How long is the PARCC exam?

The Performance-Based Assessment portion of the PARCC assessment requires 5 sessions (2 Math, 3 Language Arts) and the End-of-Year portion of the PARCC assessment requires 4 exam sessions (2 Math, 2 Language Arts).

Grade Level & Content Area	PBA Unit 1	PBA Unit 2	PBA Unit 3	EOY Unit 1	EOY Unit 2
	March 2 <sup>nd</sup> – March 27 <sup>th</sup>			April 27 <sup>th</sup> – May 22 <sup>nd</sup>	
TESTING TIMES in Minutes of Actual Testing					
Grade 3 ELA	75	75	60	75	NA
Grade 3 Math	75	75	NA	75	75
Grade 4 ELA	75	90	60	75	NA
Grade 4 Math	80	70	NA	75	75
Grade 5 ELA	75	90	60	75	NA
Grade 5 Math	80	70	NA	75	75
Grade 6 ELA	75	90	60	60	60
Grade 6 Math	80	70	NA	80	75
TESTING TIMES in Minutes of Actual Testing					

The chart below compares overall testing times between the NJASK and the PARCC assessments per year.

Total Days of Testing Per Student by Grade Level per year		
Grade Level	PARCC	NJASK/HSPA
3	9 days (65 minutes a day)	4 days (111 minutes per day)
4*	9 days (67 minutes a day)	4 days (111 minutes per day)
5	9 days (67 minutes a day)	4 days (113 minutes per day)
6	9 days (72 minutes a day)	4 days (129 minutes per day)
7	9 days (72 minutes a day)	4 days (129 minutes per day)
8*	9 days (72 minutes a day)	4 days (129 minutes per day)
9	9 days (74 minutes a day)	0 days
10	9 days (74 minutes a day)	0 days
11	9 days (75 minutes a day)	3 days (123 minutes a day)

\*excludes Science. Science will still be administered as a paper and pencil test.

### **Will a student be scheduled for more than one test session per day?**

No. Although permitted by the NJ DOE, Harrison Township will not be “stacking” tests. Multiple sessions will be given in one day, but our students will participate in only one test session per day. Each testing session must be completed within the same day and schools must schedule according to “Total Administration Time,” so that students who need the additional time are able to use it. A testing calendar by classroom will be made available as soon as possible.

### **When will the 2015 PARCC scores be available to school districts?**

Student score reports will be available toward the end of September / early October 2015.

### **Are accommodations available for students?**

Yes. The PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual on the PARCC website provides guidance to districts and decision-making teams to ensure that the PARCC assessment provides valid results for all participating students.

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

### **Is our District PARCC ready?**

The Harrison Township School District meets and exceeds all recommendations provided by PARCC and the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). All school districts were required to provide a detailed listing of the network infrastructure and computer devices that would be used to administer the PARCC assessment. We will be running a district-wide test in late January / early February to test all systems and devices.

**What technology equipment will my child use for the PARCC assessment?**

Students in grades three and four will use a Chromebook when taking the PARCC assessment; a headset will be available.

Students in grades five and six will use either a desktop or laptop computer with a headset and mouse available.

The Chromebooks in grades 5 & 6 will not be available for instruction during the test administration periods.

**For more information you can visit:**

[http://www.harrisontwp.k12.nj.us/pages/Harrison\\_TWP/Curriculum/Assessment\\_Schedule](http://www.harrisontwp.k12.nj.us/pages/Harrison_TWP/Curriculum/Assessment_Schedule)

<http://www.corestandards.org/>

<http://www.parcconline.org/for-parents>

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/sca/parcc/>

<http://achievethecore.org/>

<http://www.njpta.org/PTA%20Jersey%20Assessment%20Guide.pdf>

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Davis 856.478.2016 extension 7169 or via e-mail [davisa@harrisontwp.k12.nj.us](mailto:davisa@harrisontwp.k12.nj.us).

