

DENNIS TOWNSHIP



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SCHOOL DISTRICT

March 14, 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Beginning on April 16, 2018 students in grades 3-8 will begin taking the PARCC assessment. This assessment is a state mandated test, which school districts are required to administer. Nevertheless, the New Jersey Department of Education has, to date, left it up to local school districts to address situations in which parents refuse the test for their child.

In the Dennis Township Schools, we recognize that a sensible, fair and child-centered set of protocols for those parents who choose not to have their child tested is in the best interest of all students. We also recognize that clearly communicating those protocols in advance will avoid unnecessary confusion and misinformation as the testing dates approach. In outlining the protocols below, we **ARE NOT** endorsing a refusal to test. Rather, our goal is to minimize stress for children and families, enable our school to plan appropriately for space and other logistical considerations on the days of testing, and to enhance the smooth implementation of the PARCC assessments that we are legally required to administer.

Protocols for parents who choose not to allow their child to take the PARCC standardized assessment:

STATEMENT:

- Parents must submit a written statement TO THE BUILDING PRINCIPAL prior to the actual dates of testing in which they document their intention for their child not to take the PARCC assessment. We strongly urge parents contemplating the submission of such statements to do so **PRIOR TO MARCH 29, 2018** so that schools may plan accordingly. Statements would, of course be accepted after that date but may hinder the implementation of the accommodations outlined below. We encourage you to retain a written copy of your statement.

STUDENTS:

- Children whose parent(s) have submitted a written statement of intent who attend school on a PARCC testing day will be marked present for the day. During the testing period, those children will be located in a room separate from the "testing environment" and will be asked to read and work independently and quietly while supervised by a staff member. Testing sessions last between 60-110 minutes, and we encourage those children not sitting for the test to bring a favorite book or other materials to read during that time.

ATTENDANCE:

- Children whose parent(s) have NOT submitted a written statement of intent but who are not present on the day of the assessment will be marked absent and will sit for the PARCC make-up as scheduled. Similarly, children whose parent(s) have not submitted a written statement of intent and who arrive at school after the testing is completed, will be marked as tardy for the day and absent for the test. Those children will be required to sit for the PARCC mark-up test as scheduled.
- Children whose parent(s) have submitted a written statement of intent and who do not attend school during testing will be marked absent. Those children will NOT be required to sit for the PARCC make-up test. The reason these children will be marked absent is because even though the PARCC testing is taking place on that day, the testing units (1-2 scheduled a day) between 60-110 minutes each, is not the only activity occurring throughout the day. Similarly, children whose parent(s) have submitted a written statement of intent and who arrive at school after the test begins will be marked tardy, although they will not be required to sit for the PARCC make-up test. Thus, even if you choose for your child not to take the PARCC test, we encourage you to send your child to school on time on the testing days unless there is a verified reason for their absence (e.g. illness, doctor appointment, etc.)

RECORDING AND REPORTING

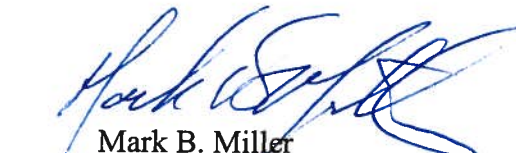
- In the past, when a parent chose not to allow their child to take the state-mandated test, the school was required to record the test as a "void" and include the student's ID number on an "irregularity" report. Please be assured that whatever record-keeping measures the state requires of the district will not affect the student's class grades or attendance records.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Additional information regarding the PARCC assessment may be found at www.parcconline.org. Our hope is to ensure that all families are appropriately informed about this assessment.

Yours in Education,


Jamie Lynn VanArtsdalen
Principal


Mark B. Miller
Superintendent