

Description - Mission - Justification - Goals

Parent Academy for Student Success #2 Measure What Matters: Assessing Student Learning and The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers Assessment (PARCC)

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) has designed an innovative model for strategic support to enhance student achievement through home/school academic partnerships. The purpose of The Parent Academy for Student Success (PASS) Model is to engage in highly focused academic partnerships that will drive student learning and success.

The NJDOE PASS model is singularly focused on student learning and grounded in a new type of home/school partnerships. PASS content is honest, give-and-take communications among stakeholders. Effective PASS implementation requires a new dialogue and commitment from every stakeholder group in the education community. Therefore, PASS partners include superintendents, boards of education, principals, teachers, parents/families, and students.

PASS is not a program where educators "teach" parents and families as they do their students; rather, it is a change in operations regarding an unwavering commitment to critical academic issues shared between educators and parents. Together educators and families hold informed conversations, exchange important information about how students learn, and use instructional strategies that can be applied out-of-school to support in-school performance. PASS partnerships serve as a basis for personalized student success strategies that can be developed among teachers, parents and students.

The model complements a school's traditional methods of parent and family involvement. Attendance at concerts, support for fundraisers, volunteer services, committee membership, and other highly valued traditional activities are vital to a healthy school community; however, such activities rarely have a direct impact on student achievement. In order to align academic partnerships with direct student achievement, the PASS implementation model is clearly separate from conventional parent and family involvement activities. In addition, large groups or small groups, PASS success is measured by impact on student learning rather than attendance at an event. There is one bottom-line question for PASS partnerships and activities - *Will there be a direct outcome on student achievement?*

The toolkit provides materials that are customizable for each school and each PASS event. The documents can be used together as an extended sequence of communication events, a comprehensive packet of information to share with parents, or as individual communications to serve as the focus for alliance.

The PASS tool kit includes items that can be used as: planning guides, handouts, sample agendas, talking points, conversation starters, supplements for classroom conversations, guidance for parent/teacher conferences, topics for professional development, policy guides, information for newsletters/websites, and instructional strategies to strengthen student learning.

It is important to note that instructional strategies are typically understood as interactions between teachers and students. However, limiting the use of instructional strategies to students and teachers eliminates the possibility – and at best - weakens the potential of effective parent engagement and support for academic achievement because it restricts the benefits of “wrap-around” learning that all students need in order to make significant academic gains.

Instructional strategies are designed to engage students in learning, help activate students' curiosity about a class topic, probe critical thinking skills, keep students on task, engender sustained and useful classroom interaction, and, in general, to enable and enhance the learning of course content. The purpose of the suggested PASS model is to reach

those same goals, build authentic academic partnerships between home and school, share specific instructional strategies to support classroom performance, and enhance teaching and learning. Through PASS partnerships, parents and educators can develop instructional strategies for use outside of school in order to support learning inside of school.

Suggested opportunities to implement academies are after the first, second, and third marking periods when parents, teachers, and students can review evidence of student performance and hold informed conversations about learning.

Mission: A Parent Academy for Student Success (PASS)

The mission of the New Jersey Department of Education's model for a Parent Academy for Student Success (PASS) is to enhance student achievement through effective home/school academic partnerships.

Mission of PASS 2

The mission of PASS 2 is to engage parents and educators in a conversation about assessment through strong home/school academic partnerships for students' benefit.

The term **assessment** refers to the wide variety of tools and methods that educators use to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, and skill acquisition of students. While assessments are often equated with traditional tests, educators use a diverse array of assessment tools and methods. Just as academic lessons have different functions, assessments are typically designed to measure specific elements of learning.

Justification: A Parent Academy for Student Success (PASS)

When educators and parents share information, resources, commitment, and support, PASS empowers parents to contribute to home/school academic partnerships and to their child's achievement in the classroom and beyond. Such academic partnerships enable achievement in school and out of school as a foundation for achievement in life.

Implementation of the suggested academy model:

- Provides districts and schools with a framework for supporting home/school partnerships and important two-way conversations focused solely on student learning and performance;
- Strengthens the communication, partnerships and conversations surrounding new expectations for teaching and learning;
- Encourages educators to utilize out-of-school learning as an instructional strategy to support classroom success; and
- Planning for PASS serves as a model for professional conversations that link a school's parent involvement activities with student performance data.

Justification for PASS 2

- Educators, parents, students, and the public have requested communication on the benefits of the updated teaching, learning, and assessment system of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers Assessment (PARCC).
- Implementation of PASS provides opportunities for schools and parents to learn and work together in partnership and develop strategies to use the CCSS and PARCC to raise the personal performance levels of all children and help improve classroom instruction for all students.

Goals: A Parent Academy for Student Success (PASS)

- Districts and schools will provide clarification of learning expectations and facilitate a meaningful exchange where parents and educators share ideas, information and activities that fully support student learning in and out of school.

- Educators will value parents as primary partners in their child’s education and will inform them of learning strategies that support student learning in and outside of school.
- Local districts and schools will create a new, bold and proactive approach to focus home/school partnerships solely on teaching and learning.
- Local districts and schools will use the suggested PASS model to design and implement a unique, progressive series of opportunities for parents to become informed and engaged in supporting their child’s academic achievement.
- Parents will seek opportunities to gain information and understanding of new teaching and learning techniques to actively support their child’s learning in and outside of school.
- Parents and teachers will engage in continuous, two-way, meaningful academic communication to influence student learning and achievement.

Goals for PASS 2

- The state and districts will share facts and consider concerns regarding assessment and PARCC.
- Districts and schools will keep stakeholders informed and engaged in conversations about meaningful assessment of student learning as it applies to college- and career-readiness.
- Through home/school partnerships, districts and schools will develop strategic and technical information about high-quality assessments that will help all students graduate from high school prepared for college and a career.
- Schools will highlight the use of technology as a tool for assessment and familiarize parents with the format of PARCC.
- Schools will provide examples of how teachers assess and measure the kind of work students are already doing in classrooms under the CCSS.
- The state, districts and schools will address questions and conversations on assessment topics.

PASS 2 documents and partnership supports are intended to complement information about the New Jersey Department of Education’s Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) Assessments and provide resources, materials, and opportunities for parents and educators to work together in the best interest of New Jersey students.

*For information on the NJDOE PASS model, the PASS #1 theme of **Student Learning with the Common Core State Standards** or the PASS #2 theme of **Measure What Matters: Assessing Student Learning and PARCC** go to: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/sca/toolkit/>. Send questions to: informccss@doe.state.nj.us.*