

What are Next Generation Assessments?

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)

In general, online assessments are collectively referred to as Next Generation Assessments. PARCC is an online test that requires students to demonstrate what they have learned in mathematics and English language arts by using a computer as a tool. *Next generation tests do not measure computer skills. Use of the computer is how students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of subject content.*

The high unemployment rate among recent high school and college graduates is causing people to rethink their own education assumptions and question whether the traditional model of teaching, learning, and assessing K-12 student learning is serving children's best interests. These issues are not without questions and the New Jersey State Board of Education, New Jersey Department of Education, New Jersey educators, parents, students, and other stakeholders are engaged in conversations about next generation assessments.

In order to consider the issues around assessing student learning, and the manner in which students demonstrate that learning, it is helpful to look at the way students need to learn and how their learning is measured for success in the current and future workplace.

Global societies and business cultures throughout the world operate with various levels of technology. It is virtually impossible to find a small business or a large organization that does not depend on its employees to perform all or part of their job with computers and other technology. As the world shifts into the technological age, employees - new and veteran - are already required to have proficiency in computer skills. Therefore, schools around the world are shifting to online teaching, learning, and assessment for their students who are preparing for college, careers, and a successful adult life.

It is critical for students to learn how to use technology and become proficient using the computer as part of their classroom learning, measurement of their learning, and in preparation for success in college and careers.

Next Generation Assessments have many of the following characteristics:

- Delivered online;
- Interactive responses (drag and drop, click, highlight, use of voice commands with earphones, type, etc.);
- Use of manipulatives (virtual protractors, rulers, calculators);
- Use of simulations of real-world problem-solving;
- Use of multimedia (videos, audio); and
- Multiple part questions.

What technical skills are needed for Next Generation Assessments?

To successfully complete the assessments, students will need to be able to perform technology tasks* including:

Click / tap	Select object	Use text highlighter
Scroll	Select text	Use calculator

Plot points	Select area	Use protractor
Drag and drop	Select and drag / slide	Use ruler
Type with text editor	Unselect	Use video player

**With PARCC, teaching, learning and assessment with computers is developmentally adjusted for students by grade level and appropriately adjusted for students with IEPs and other special needs.*

Since students learn with technology, why not measure their learning with technology, too?

Some parents, teachers, students, and others are not comfortable using technology to take tests, however, by reviewing the brief list below it is easy to see that using technology in everyday life is as common for most of us as it is for our children playing games on the computer.

Cell phones	Check the weather and news	Corporate networks to keep people informed
Email to communicate via the internet	Shopping and ordering merchandise	Schedule vacations
Text messages for short communications	Call a cab or order food	Access mail
Google to look up answers to curiosities	GPS your destination	Going beyond historical reporting to predictive analytics
Webinars instead of attending workshops with investments of cost and time	Skype to visually communicate with people who are in another location	Fill in medical records; online Drs and hospitals share test results in minutes
Linkedin for a job search	Make reservations	Pay bills
Read books	Improved real-time decision making	Banking
Research	Find phone numbers and addresses	Calendars for organizing tasks

Are our students prepared to use technology on next generation tests?

In the Spring PARCC conducted a survey of students who took the practice tests to find out about their experience. Full results from the survey can be found here:

- Statistical summary –<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1PVVT2001xlUn2qcNxql62xzU5uGl7xfxD7JB-dx6Y/edit?usp=sharing#gid=0>
- Student feedback - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qXRCm-gAcboGelWTrVAGIkNIRMHC076BodaJXATmM1k/edit?usp=sharing>

In summary:

Next Generation Assessments are intended to directly align with updated student learning standards. They are administered online and will go beyond memorization and multiple choice questions to include performance tasks that allow students to demonstrate research, writing, and analytical skills. The tests will be a balanced perspective between teaching, learning, and demonstrating students' ability to apply new knowledge and perform new skills.

The purpose of Next Generation Assessments like PARCC is to determine students' mastery of the subject-area content (math and English language arts), not their technology abilities. Next Generation Assessments such as PARCC are an important 21st century tool for teaching, learning, assessing, and preparing students for college and careers.

PASS 2 documents and partnership supports are intended to compliment 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.