Dear Parents and Guardians,

Once again this year, students in New Jersey will participate in our state-required assessments, PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career). In keeping parents informed about these assessments, we are sharing some updates and improvements related to the assessment procedures. Following last year’s test administration, both the state and district have made enhancements based upon feedback from local districts and our community.

- One test administration (consolidated from two separate administrations)
- Reduced time of testing (90 minutes fewer)
- Decreased number of test sessions (ELA – 3 sessions; Math – 3 sessions)
- No lost instructional time outside of test administration; students will not miss classes, as their classes will be not held during the testing sessions.

PARCC assessments are aligned to the state-adopted standards and were created to measure students’ abilities to apply their knowledge of concepts rather than rote memorization. On these assessments, students solve problems using mathematical reasoning and model mathematical principles. In ELA, students are required to closely read multiple passages and to respond to literary analysis, research tasks, and narrative tasks.

In December, you received a copy of your child’s PARCC score report from the 2014-15 school year. If your child did not participate in last year’s testing, you received a copy of a sample student report, so that you could ascertain the valuable information that would have been available to you about your child’s specific assessment performance. The PARCC reports provide greater information about student progress than previous tests, which make them a valuable tool in measuring student performance. PARCC identifies specific areas in both ELA and Math where a student may need additional supports, as well as where he or she has mastered content and may be prepared to take more rigorous course work.

At Clearview, students will take the PARCC assessments within the authorized testing window of April 4, 2016-May 20, 2016. The testing calendar by building, grade level and content can be found on our district website at this link:

Testing Calendar

In the event that changes are necessary, the calendar will be adjusted on the website. Additional information about the PARCC assessments and our district’s procedures will be disseminated as the testing window gets closer.
Neither federal nor New Jersey administrative code allows for an opt-out provision for its state assessments. While that is state code, the district recognizes that some parents will still refuse to have their child take these required assessments. Please note that refusal for your child’s participation in the PARCC assessments is subject to the Clearview BOE adopted policy #2622-Student Assessments. With regard to testing refusals, the policy reads, *Parent refusals of their students’ participation in the statewide assessment may prevent students from having access to all options to meet graduation assessment requirements including the portfolio appeal process.* In anticipation of some parents still exercising this decision, the district will require all refusals to be made in person at individual brief meetings with district administrators. These meetings will be held on Tuesday, March 15th from 5-7pm and on Wednesday, March 16th from 3-7pm in our Administration Building. Meeting times need to be scheduled in advance by calling Mrs. Priscilla Booker at 223-2766 no later than 4pm on Monday, March 14th.

Statewide assessments have been a requirement in New Jersey since the 1970s. Over the years, mandatory testing has evolved, beginning as a measurement of basic skills and transitioning to an assessment of the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards in the late 1990s and the recent transition to the PARCC assessments. The federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* requires that 95% of all students in grades 3 to 11 be tested annually. Schools that do not meet this standard could face implementation of a corrective action plan and possibly risk loss of federal funding.

The district is well aware of the concerns that were raised last year during the first administration of PARCC across our state. We truly believe that, like previous introductions of new state assessments, challenges exist during the initial implementation of any new testing program. With that realization, adjustments have been made both at the state and local levels. Locally, we have made it our goal to administer PARCC with the least disruption to our academic programs. We believe that the PARCC itself is a better assessment of students’ mastery of standards and preparation for college and careers than any previous state assessment. We also believe that the comprehensive PARCC data and student reports will provide us with additional information to better serve our students. We appreciate your cooperation and support as we fulfill our state-assessment requirements both efficiently and effectively.

Thank you,

John Horchak, III
Superintendent

Diane Cummins, Assistant Superintendent

Dodd Terry, Director of Guidance

Tammy McHale, Director of Special Services

Robin Bazzel, Middle School Principal

Keith Brook, High School Principal