

Information for Parents: Students with IEPs and State Assessment

New Jersey Department of Education

Both the new *Every Student Succeeds Act* and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* require that all students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) participate in state assessments. The purpose of inclusion in these assessments is to ensure that schools are held accountable for the achievement of **every student** and that the results of **all students** are used for curriculum development and other decisions about instruction.

The vast majority of students with IEPs participate in the **PARCC assessments** which were developed using the principles of Universal Design for Learning to enable all students to participate. Accessibility features that can be used by all students, as well as a broad array of accommodations available to students with IEPs, enable all students to fully participate in the assessments. A small number of students with the most significant intellectual disabilities participate in the **Dynamic Learning Maps assessment**.

Although participation of all students with IEPs in state assessments is critical to improving instruction for every student, it is important to remember that state assessments are only one measure of student achievement. They measure whether students have achieved what is expected for their grade and should be used in conjunction with the many other forms of assessment used by your child's teachers in the classroom to get a full picture of what your child has learned and his/her progress in academic areas, as well as in other areas of need.

The IEP team, which includes you as the parent, decides which state assessment is appropriate for each student with an IEP based on specific criteria. For students taking the PARCC, accommodations are also selected by the IEP team. Parents are integral participants in the development of the IEP and in making decisions about state assessment participation. The following resources will assist you with preparing for the IEP meeting and in determining what the assessment results mean for your child. Remember that your child's participation in state assessments ensures inclusion in decisions about instruction at the local, state and national levels.

For information on the PARCC including test items, accessibility features and accommodation, and understanding score reports go to:
www.parcconline.org

Information about **Universal Design for Learning** is available at: www.cast.org

The criteria IEP teams use to select PARCC or DLM is at: www.dynamiclearningmaps.org/newjersey

Read more about the DLM including how the test was designed & understanding score reports at: www.dynamiclearningmaps.org

Information about the **Essential Elements**, the basis for the DLM, is available at: <http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/content/essential-elements>

General information about New Jersey's assessments, results and the testing schedule is available at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/assessment/>