New Jersey Department of Education

Educational Partnerships

Parent Academy for Student Success (PASS)

Buzz Words: A Shared Language to Support Student Success

Academic Standards – Description of the knowledge and skills a student needs to acquire by the end of each school year. Standards answer the question, "What should a student know at each grade level to prepare for college and career". Teams of educators and experts develop academic standards. The standards are posted for public comment, considered, and adopted by the New Jersey State Board of Education. Academic standards do not limit student learning but rather provide an assurance that students are taught the skills they need. The State of New Jersey has had academic standards for more than 20 years.

Core Curriculum Content Standards – Description of the knowledge and skills that a student needs in seven content areas including; science, social studies, technology, 21st century life and careers, comprehensive health and physical education, visual and performing arts, and world languages. The Core Curriculum Content Standards were originally adopted in 1996 and have been reviewed and readopted every five years, most recently in 2014.

Common Core State Standards - Describe the knowledge and skills that a student needs in two content areas including; English language arts and mathematics. The New Jersey State Board of Education voluntarily adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2010 to replace the previous English language arts and mathematics standards. The Common Core State Standards were re-adopted in 2014.

Curriculum - The school district's plan for day-to-day teaching of the concepts contained in the standards. Curriculum is the detailed plan for day-to-day teaching, the "how" of education. Curriculum is written by a team of district teachers and administrators and adopted by local school boards.

College And Career Readiness - The K-12 preparation that allows students to gain, and build on, the knowledge and skills required to perform well in entry-level college classes and as a valued employee. When students are college and career ready they are able to apply their knowledge and skills to real-world situations.

21st-Century Skills – The knowledge and abilities that colleges and employers are seeking to grow the economy and solve the problems of the future. There are many new skills including flexible problem-solving (people who solve problems in new and creative ways), collaborative communication (global thinkers who express themselves effectively and can work productively with people all over the world), and digital fluency (workers who are highly successful using technical and digital media skills in their everyday work).

Innovative Problem-Solvers – Students that investigate real-world problems and find creative ways to solve them

Investigative Explorers – Students that develop research skills and use technology to find solutions

Creative Communicators – Student that explore different points of view and use evidence to support and express ideas

Critical Thinkers – Students that analyze complex topics and learn academic vocabulary to understand and connect different subject matter.

Resourceful Learners – Students that build a strong foundation of skills and expand on those abilities every year.

Versatile Readers – Students that learn about the world with challenging fiction and nonfiction texts.

English language arts (ELA) – Include the skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and using language effectively. The ELA Common Core asks students to read stories and literature, as well as more challenging texts that provide facts and background knowledge in areas such as science and social studies. Students will be asked questions that expect them to refer back to what they've read. This enables critical-thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills that are required for success in college, career, and life.

Fiction and Non-Fiction Texts – In their simplest forms, fiction is an entertaining, make-believe story that is not real; non-fiction is true information that uses facts to explain something. Fiction refers to literature created from the imagination. Mysteries, science fiction, fairy-tales, romance, and fantasy are some examples of fiction. Nonfiction refers to literature based in fact. It is the broadest category of literature. Nonfiction is made up countless categories of reading materials. For example, non-fiction includes books in business, science, history, social studies, math, cooking, health, fitness, home repair, languages, travel, art, music, self-help, science, etc.

Informational Text – Part of the non-fiction category, the primary purpose of teaching and learning with informational text is to inform the reader of facts, technical instructions, procedures, and the actions of cause and effect. It also assists the reader in finding information quickly and efficiently. There are no characters or story lines in informational text because it informs the reader about a specific topic. This type of reading usually includes: books about history, social studies, science, and the arts; technical texts (including how-to books and procedural books); and literary nonfiction. Informational text can significantly influence development of new knowledge as well as student's ability to comprehend what they read. 80% of all adult reading is devoted to informational text. In school, and out-of-school, students will need to master communication through informational texts.

Close Reading – Students have the ability to closely and attentively read texts in a way that will help them understand and enjoy complex works of literature

Fluency –Students' ability to make a confident and smooth transition from one idea, activity, or challenge to the next. Fluency is achieved when student performance is progressive and reflects advancement without difficulty.

Cogent Reasoning – Students' ability to make sense of ideas using logic to establish a fact, present a convincing argument, justify a position, or validate a belief based on new or existing information. Good reasoning is "cogent". These skills help students develop ideas and support them using evidence of one kind or another.

Mathematical Reasoning - Requires that students make sense of quantities and their relationships in problem situations.

Operations and Algebraic Thinking – The ability to think through the calculations needed to solve a problem and to represent a mathematical situation with symbols and/or diagrams and manipulate those symbols to arrive at a solution

Higher-Order Thinking Skills – This refers to a process which well above that of just rote memorization. It requires that students ask questions of themselves and of others in order to learn at a deeper level.

Deeper Learning – This refers to examining a specific topic or concept and diving deeper into it rather than just superficially glance over it. The Common Core State Standards is based upon the principle of 'diving deeper'.

Personalized learning – The process of examining where a student is in terms of their knowledge, finding their strengths and weaknesses and then designing ways in which the student can become successful. If a student struggles with the material then the teacher would try to help the student understand the concepts and if a student already has an understanding of it the teacher would enrich their learning.

Assessment – The use of various methods (i.e. formative, summative) to determine whether or not students have acquired the knowledge which the standards state that the students need to know.

PARCC – It is the acronym for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers. This is the assessment which New Jersey will use at the various grade levels to determine whether or not students demonstrate mastery in the areas of Mathematics and English Language Arts.