

# School panel adopts new national assessment to begin in two years

Beginning in the 2014-15 school year, NECAP will no longer gauge reading, math

BY KAT MCKIERNAN

In less than three years students will test their math and reading skills on a new national test that will make American students more competitive with students from across the world.

As part of the newly mandated Common Core State Standards, Jamestown schools have embarked on preparing students and teachers for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), a new literacy and mathematics assessment to replace the current state assessment in 2014-15. (The current system

is the New England Common Assessment Program.) Rhode Island is one of 44 states to adopt the new standards, the School Committee learned at its Jan. 19 meeting.

PARCC is composed of two assessment components given at the end of the school year. These include hard-to-measure standards through performance tasks like writing effectively when analyzing text. The second component is an end-of-year component. They will provide a total score for students.

Superintendent Marcia Lukon said the district has already set aside two professional development days for teachers to learn the new curriculum in time for the multi-state effort to “regain our competitive edge and to make sure the kids coming out of our high schools are college and career ready.”

As part of Jamestown’s preparation, Lukon said the district will introduce the common core standards and work with Rhode Island Department of Education professionals, who have developed resources for teachers, administrators and parents. The state department will make sure schools are using curricula aligned to the Common Core State Standards and outlining a transition plan to implement the curriculum in time for PARCC.

In Rhode Island, the districts will be divided into two groups to initiate the curriculum. South County schools will work on the math assessment.

“We’ll be continuing our work with curriculum analysis, writing and analyzing the materials we have in place,” Lukon said. “How does everyday math align with common core standards? It’s going to take a tremendous effort to get us ready.”

According to the Department of Education, the Common Core State Standards define the knowledge and skills students should have within their K-12 education careers so that when they graduate from high school they will be able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs. The Rhode Island Board of Regents

adopted the Common Core State Standards on July 1, 2010.

The common core standards combine existing standards of grade level expectations and grade span expectations for math, reading and writing. The standards were designed to bridge an “expectation gap” found nationwide that marks a disconnect between what is needed for a high school diploma and what is needed to be successful in college and careers.

In other school news, Lukon reported that profits from food service is growing. Total revenue for December was \$14,763. The district served 5,115 meals in December, averaging 256 meals per day. This includes all reimbursable meals along with equivalent meals based on cash sales. Total meals

*“[Educators will need to] regain our competitive edge and to make sure the kids coming out of our high schools are college and career ready.”*

Dr. Marcia Lukon

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