



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

KIMBERLEY HARRINGTON
Commissioner

July 26, 2017

Mr. Frank Haines
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer
Office of Legislative Services
State House Annex
P.O. Box 068
Trenton, NJ 08625-0068

Dear Mr. Haines:

Below are the New Jersey Department of Education's (Department's) responses to the questions raised by the Assembly Budget Committee in the correspondence dated May 5, 2017.

Assemblyman Schaer:

- Please provide a list of states, other than New Jersey, that continue to administer the assessments developed by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC assessments).

A: In the spring of 2017, the following states administered PARCC: Colorado, District of Columbia, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, New Mexico, and Rhode Island. Additionally, Massachusetts and Louisiana licensed PARCC items for their assessments, while the Bureau of Indian Education and the Department of Defense also administered PARCC.

- In a December 2016 report, the State Auditor noted weaknesses in the department's oversight of its contract with the PARCC consortium. Please provide an update of the actions that the department has taken to address the recommendations presented by the State Auditor. Additionally, please provide a copy of the contract with the PARCC consortium and indicate when the contract will end. Has the department considered pursuing any modifications to the contract?

A: Prior to the audit, steps were already being taken to strengthen the Department's controls around vendor payments. Each state contract now has a detailed payment schedule and payments are tracked against the payment schedule as they are made to ensure proper payments. All State contract managers within the department receive in-person training on their responsibilities as contract managers. Topics covered include the relevant circular letters; parts of a contract; best practices around receipt of invoices and three-way match;

contract modifications; review and monitoring of state contracts by state contract managers; and general procurement issues. Additionally, Department staff is provided procurement policies and procedures, which were created based upon Department of Treasury guidelines and are followed when procuring supplies, equipment or professional services on behalf of the Department.

The PARCC contract is attached to this letter (Attachment A) and expires June 30, 2018. At this time the Department is not pursuing any modifications to the contract.

- How does the department determine the amount of PARCC readiness aid that a school district receives? Is the amount of funding provided by the State sufficient to fully reimburse school districts for the costs associated with administering the assessments?

A: PARCC readiness aid was first provided in FY2015 at a rate of \$10 per student in each district. Districts have the autonomy to determine how best to allocate their PARCC aid. The FY2018 budget proposal maintains readiness aid at its currently funded level.

- In a response to the State Auditor's December 2016 report, the department stated that it "...will endeavor to comply with Title 18A by submitting relevant required reports to the Legislature in the future." When does the department anticipate submitting the following annual reports to the Legislature:

A: Since 2016, the Department has identified an office to track our annual legislative reporting requirements to ensure compliance. Progress specific to each identified report can be found below.

- the condition of educational programs in State facilities, required pursuant to section 20 of P.L.1979, c.207 (C.18A:7B-13);

A: The Department has published, or otherwise provided to various parties, several related data collections:

- The Consolidated State Performance Report, submitted annually by the New Jersey Department of Education to the U.S. Department of Education pursuant to the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, collects data on programs and facilities that serve students who are neglected, delinquent, or at risk under Title I, Part D. New Jersey's most recent such report can be found here: <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/consolidated/sy14-15part2/nj.pdf>
- Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7B, N.J.A.C. 6A:17-3, and the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Department annually reviews the condition of educational programs in state facilities operated by the New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission, the New Jersey Department of Children and Families, and the New Jersey Department of Corrections. The DOE is currently compiling this information in a report to be submitted to the legislature.

- the impact of the State graduation proficiency assessment, required pursuant to section 7 of P.L.1988, c.168 (C.18A:7C-10);

A: The Department has published, or otherwise provided to various parties, several related data collections:

- New Jersey Statewide Assessment Reports are published annually on the Department's website, and include school- and district-level test performance data, disaggregated by grade level and assessment. Those reports can be found at the following link: <http://www.nj.gov/education/schools/achievement/index.html>
- The number of students meeting high school graduation assessment by pathway can be found in the table included in response to a question below.
- the effectiveness of the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program, required pursuant to section 11 of P.L.2010, c.65 (C.18A:36B-24);

A: The Department prepared a presentation outlining the status of the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program, which was presented to the State Board in November, 2016. The presentation may be found at the following link on the Department's website: http://www.nj.gov/education/sboe/meetings/2016/November/public/Interdistrict%20Public%20School%20Choice%20Power%20Point_p.pdf

- the effectiveness of substance abuse intervention, prevention, and treatment referral programs established by school districts, required pursuant to section 13 of P.L.1987, c.387 (C.18A:40A-20); and

A: The Department collects and publishes data on substance-related incidents and risky student behaviors in its annual Violence, Vandalism, and Substance Report and its Student Health Survey. These data may be found at the following links:

Violence, Vandalism, and Substance Reports: <http://www.nj.gov/education/schools/vandv/>
NJ Student Health Survey: <http://www.nj.gov/education/students/yrbs/>

- data on the participation of minorities and women in training programs for technical trades, required pursuant to section 4 of P.L.1985, c.427 (C.18A:54D-4)?

A: The Department maintains and makes available to program providers two data collections which include the participation of minorities and women in state approved Career and Technical Education programs: (1) CTE Program Performance Reports which, for a given program, disaggregate enrollment data by career cluster and include a career cluster's progress towards nontraditional participation rate targets; (2) Perkins Performance Reports which measure, at the school- and program-level, attainment of performance targets in various indicators pursuant to the federal Carl D. Perkins Act of 2006, including indicators for nontraditional participation and completion. These reports are not publicly available, but the DOE will work to compile this information in a report to be provided to the Legislature.

- What is the department’s plan for continuing to offer preschool opportunities in school districts that have benefitted from the federal Preschool Development Grant program after the federal funds are no longer available? How much State funding would be needed to sustain these programs?

A: In the DOE’s approved grant application, the state committed to incorporating each Sub-grantee school district into New Jersey’s High-Quality Preschool Program to receive Preschool Education Aid (PEA) in accordance with the per pupil amounts in the SFRA. Under current enrollment projections, the total cost to maintain services in the 16 participating school districts will be \$17,500,000 per year.

Assemblymen Schaer and Johnson:

- How many students in the graduating class of 2016 satisfied the graduation proficiency test requirement through a means other than passing the PARCC assessment? Please provide this information for each alternative. How many, and what percent, of students would have graduated based on passing the PARCC assessment only?

A:

| Path to Graduation | Total # of Students | % of students |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Students Graduated through PARCC assessment (ELA & Math) | 9,024 | 9.37% |
| Students Graduated through Substitute Competency tests (ELA & Math) | 47,292 | 49.11% |
| Students Graduated through Portfolio Appeals process (ELA & Math) | 5,887 | 6.11% |
| Students Graduated through alternate requirements specified in their IEP's (ELA & Math) | 7,602 | 7.89% |
| Students Graduated through multiple pathways (ELA & Math) | 26,479 | 27.50% |
| Total | 96,284 | 100% |

Assemblyman Schaer and Assemblywoman Muoio

- Based on the department's typical definition of a charter school, how many charter schools will be in operation in the 2017-2018 school year? Of those schools, how many will operate at least one satellite campus? If one counts satellite campuses as separate charter schools, how many charter schools will be in operation in the 2017-2018 school year? Please provide a list of charter schools that operate satellite campuses and the name of the school associated with that satellite campus.

A: New Jersey statute defines a charter school as a "public school operated under a charter granted by the commissioner, which is operated independently of a local board of education and is managed by a board of trustees." The Department considers a charter school to be one school regardless of the number of campus locations in that school's district of residence. There is one board of trustees for each school that is responsible for oversight of the charter school.

There are currently 88 charter schools in operation. Four schools were informed to cease operations by June 30, 2017. On July 17, 2018, five charter schools were approved to open in 2017-2018. There will be 89 charter schools operating in the 2017-2018 school year.

In the 2017-2018 school year, 25 schools will operate at least one satellite campus.

There are 25 charter schools currently that operate out of more than one building:

- Bergen Arts and Science Charter School
- Camden's Promise Charter School
- Community Charter School of Paterson
- East Orange Community Charter School
- Elysian Charter School of Hoboken
- Environment Community Opportunity Charter School
- Foundation Academy Charter School
- Great Oaks Legacy Charter School
- Hoboken Charter School
- Hoboken Dual Language Charter School (HoLa)
- Jersey City Community Charter School
- Jersey City Golden Door Charter School
- LEAP Academy University Charter School
- Maria L. Varisco-Rogers Charter School
- Marion P. Thomas Charter School
- North Star Academy Charter School of Newark
- Pace Charter School of Hamilton
- Passaic Arts and Science Charter School
- Paterson Charter School for Science and Technology
- Red Bank Charter School
- Robert Treat Academy Charter School
- TEAM Academy Charter School
- Union County TEAMS Charter School
- University Heights Charter School of Excellence
- Vineland Public Charter School

- What is the total amount of revenue that school districts are projected to transfer to charter schools in the 2017-2018 school year?

A: For FY2018, school districts are projected to transfer \$729.5 million to charter schools.

- For each charter school, including satellite campuses, please provide the following demographic data: race and ethnicity; gender; special education classification rate; percent of students eligible for free-priced lunch; percent of students eligible for reduced-priced lunch; and the percent of students who are English language learners

A: Please see Attachment B for school-level enrollment and demographic data from the 2016-17 school year.

Assemblywoman Muoio

- For the schools located in school districts that are currently under State intervention, please provide data showing changes in student performance on the State assessments. Describe how these changes compare to changes observed Statewide.

A: Across all four State Operated Districts, gains in PARCC performance were generally consistent with statewide gains. However, there were several areas in which the four districts outgained the state, particularly in English Language Arts (ELA). These improvements varied by district, and by school within each district. In Newark, the percentage of students who were proficient (meeting or exceeding expectations) increased by 6.0 percentage points in ELA and 2.5 percentage points in Math. In Camden, this increase was 4.7 points in ELA and 3.1 points in Math. In Jersey City, district-wide improvement ranged from 3-19 percentage points by grade in ELA, and from 3-24 percentage points in Math (with the exception of 8th grade math, which decreased by 2 points due to a shift in the 8th grade test taking population to the Algebra I assessment). In Paterson, most grade levels showed improvement of 2-5 percentage points, but there were slight decreases (less than 1.5%) in ELA 5th and 7th grades and Math 5th, 7th, and 8th grades.

Aside from general strong improvement in ELA, there were several positive trends noted at the individual school or grade level. Among these bright spots are three Newark Public School high schools and five Newark Public School elementary schools that beat the state average in either ELA or Math, or both. In Jersey City, Algebra I proficiency jumped from 28% to 52% based on several key math initiatives that have increased access to Algebra in grade 8.

Assemblyman Singleton:

- Please provide information regarding the number of school districts that will receive adjustment aid in the 2017-2018 school year and are spending above their adequacy threshold. What is the total amount of adjustment aid that these districts will receive? Additionally, how many school districts that will receive adjustment aid in the 2017-2018 school year experienced a decrease in resident enrollment between October 2011 and October 2016? What is the total amount of adjustment aid that these districts will receive?

A: There are 222 districts that receive adjustment aid and are projected to spend over adequacy in FY2018. In total, these districts receive about \$218.8 million in adjustment aid. Projected for FY2018, there are 215 districts that receive adjustment aid and experienced a decrease in resident enrollment between October 2011 and October 2016. These districts receive about \$259 million in adjustment aid.

- For the most recent year for which complete data are available, what were the total expenditures for the Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning?

A: For FY2016, total expenditures for the Office of School Preparedness were \$317,536.25.

- Please identify the categories of State school aid that school districts are, and are not, required to transfer to charter schools.

A: Districts are required to transfer equalization aid, special education categorical aid, security aid, and preschool aid (for those charter schools with an approved program). Districts are not required to transfer educational adequacy aid, choice aid, transportation aid, under adequacy aid, supplemental enrollment growth aid, PARCC readiness aid, per pupil growth aid, adjustment aid, or professional learning community aid.

- When does the department anticipate awarding grants under the county vocational school district partnership grant program?

A: One of the four applicants was awarded their grant on May 9, 2017. The Department expects the remaining three grants to be awarded by June 2017, pending each applicant's satisfactory completion of required pre-award application revisions within the prescribed timeline.

If my team or I can be of any further assistance, please don't hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kimberley Harrington". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kimberley Harrington
Commissioner
Department of Education