

We Raise NJ Coalition FAQ

What is We Raise NJ?

We Raise NJ is a newly formed broad coalition led by the New Jersey PTA that supports parents in navigating recent changes to their children's education. The coalition aims to elevate parent engagement in ways that advance the state of education in New Jersey. Among its first initiatives, the coalition will provide objective information, tools and resources during the state's transition to new student assessments.

When did We Raise NJ form?

We Raise NJ officially announced its formation in January 2015. The coalition developed from the informal network of organizations that supported the update of New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards to reflect the Common Core State Standards. Coalition members identified a shared concern that parents lacked adequate information and resources on standards and testing.

How did We Raise NJ form?

Most of the coalition members were working and continue to work to educate parents about New Jersey's adoption of new academic standards. Coalition members would often work together, and frequently the coalition members would ask to work with the New Jersey PTA. Recognizing that a coordinated effort would be more effective in addressing the questions and concerns of parents across the state, the New Jersey PTA launched the We Raise NJ coalition.

What is We Raise NJ's position on the PARCC tests?

We Raise NJ supports higher academic standards that prepare our students for college and careers. The coalition endorses a transition to smarter assessments that will measure student progress against all – not just some – of New Jersey's state education standards and provide more meaningful, timely data to teachers, parents and students. We Raise NJ is focused on providing information and resources to help parents support their children during the transition to PARCC – not to endorse or advocate for one test over another.

What is We Raise NJ's position on opting out?

New Jersey joined the PARCC consortium to fulfill its mandate for statewide assessments of students in grades 3-12. The state is a national leader in education because of the trust placed in teachers and principals to use assessments that are worth students' time. The participation of all students in statewide testing is critical to obtaining a complete picture of student progress and identifying inequity of achievement in our schools. While schools cannot force students to take tests, federal and state laws mandate that schools administer annual testing, and New Jersey educators have chosen PARCC to align with the new standards.

What is We Raise NJ's position on the legislation addressing standardized testing in New Jersey?

We Raise NJ does not officially take a position on legislation. However, many of the coalition members testified in front of the New Jersey Assembly regarding the bills and the importance of standards and measurements that prepare our students for college and careers.

Who are the members of We Raise NJ? (As of February 13, 2015)

New Jersey PTA
New Jersey Association of School Administrators
New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association
New Jersey Council of County Colleges
New Jersey Chamber of Commerce
New Jersey School Boards Association
JerseyCan