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November 17, 2015

Dear Families,

Results from our first administration of the PARCC Assessments were released today. Over the past year, the PARCC assessments have brought several changes to our assessment system in Rhode Island. Not only are the PARCC assessments more rigorous than our previous state assessment, NECAP, but they require our students to demonstrate what they know in a variety of ways and formats. As a result of these changes, we fully expected to experience an "implementation dip" in scores, as this is common when states and districts transition to a new assessment. To that end, we are committed to keeping the PARCC results in their proper context.

In Smithfield, we will continue to focus on teaching and learning to ensure that our students are prepared for success in the 21st century. We recognize the importance of using multiple forms of student achievement data, including state and local assessments, to analyze gaps in performance. We use these various forms of student achievement data to determine the need for instructional shifts and curriculum adjustments, identify patterns across grade levels and differences in student subgroups, initiate necessary supports to close achievement gaps, and invest our resources to ensure that we are providing the opportunities our students need to thrive in school and the community.

As a result of feedback from students and teachers and their desire to spend less time administering and completing the PARCC assessments, we are pleased to inform you that, moving forward, the number of PARCC testing sessions will be reduced from two to one, resulting in a significant decrease in the amount of time needed to complete PARCC testing. Additionally, in Smithfield, we will be revisiting the PARCC testing graduation requirements for the class of 2017. More information will be shared in the near future.

An overview of results of the first administration of the PARCC assessment will be presented at an upcoming School Committee meeting and shared on our district website. As partners in education, we are asking families and community members to view the results of the PARCC assessments as an opportunity to engage our students in dialogue about school and academic progress while remembering that the PARCC results are merely one indicator of student learning. Together, we will continue to move our district forward and provide the students of Smithfield with a world-class education.

Sincerely,


Robert M. O'Brien

The Smithfield Public Schools: A Partnership of Schools, Families and Community

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