[Date]

Dear Parent or Guardian:

As your child grows, we want to determine how children in our school are learning core academic skills. We are writing to inform you that [school name] will administer the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) [and DC Science, if applicable] test this spring. Due to the pandemic, DC has not administered annual summative tests for the last two school years, so it is more important than ever to have a clear picture of how our students are doing academically. Our educators have worked incredibly hard during the pandemic. These assessments allow us to know where students are in their academic journey, how we can best respond to their needs and how our city can make the right investments for student success. We want to take a few moments to explain what these assessments are and why your student is taking them. [If applicable, add: Eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities will take the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) or Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) assessments. Students who are English learners will take the ACCESS assessments.]

We are fortunate to have peer-reviewed, tried-and-true assessments that have been successfully administered every year since 2015 other than the two-year break when students were not physically in schools. These assessments are developed and improved upon every year by our state education agency, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), in partnership with content experts and outstanding local educators. They test student understanding of key academic skills for each grade level that they are learning every day, so your student does not need to study or do any special preparation. Of course, these assessments are one measure of student learning at one point in time. They do not tell your child’s whole story; they help us support them. The detailed results will help us understand your child’s strengths and needs so that we can better support them through instruction and enrichment.

In the District of Columbia, the PARCC [or MSAA] Mathematics and English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) assessments are required for students in grades 3-8, and for high school students when they are enrolled in courses aligned with the PARCC ELA I and II, and PARCC Algebra I and Geometry assessments [or in 11th grades for MSAA eligible students] depending on the student’s and school’s curriculum. As a city, we need to have a high participation rate to ensure we receive much-needed federal funding for our schools. [Additionally, the District of Columbia requires the DC Science or DLM assessments for students in grade 5, 8, and for high school students when they are enrolled in courses aligned with Biology.] At our school, [most students] will take the PARCC [and/or MSAA, DC Science and/or DLM] assessments on computers [specify laptops, tablets if appropriate]. [ACCESS for ELLs is a secure large-scale English language proficiency assessment administered to kindergarten through 12th grade students who have been identified as English learners. Eligible English learners may take the Alternate ACCESS assessment.] Please rest assured that students with identified learning needs will be provided necessary test accommodations per their individual plans (IEP, 504 plan, and/or EL plan).

At [school name], the assessments will be administered in the following windows:

[list your windows here]

* PARCC:
* DC Science:
* MSAA:
* DLM:
* ACCESS for ELLs:

[Insert any school-specific information]

We are excited that DC students are participating in these high-quality, next generation assessments that will help all of us better understand what our students know and are able to do. You can find a suite of helpful resources, including sample score reports, at [www.osse.dc.gov/parcc](http://www.osse.dc.gov/parcc) to help you better understand and prepare for the assessments. We ask for your assistance in encouraging your child to do his or her best, and in making sure your child is present and on time during the testing windows for both assessment and instruction. Additionally, if your child was part of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) sample this year, we want to thank you and your child for participating!

If you have any questions regarding these assessments, please contact me, and I will be happy to speak with you. Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

Sincerely,

[School Principal]

[School Contact information] ­