



## MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.  
*State Superintendent of Education*

January 16, 2015

Dear Educator,

As you may have heard, the Mississippi Board of Education voted today to withdraw from the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) consortium. I am writing this letter to assure you that this decision does not change anything you are doing in your classrooms.

The Board remains fully and unequivocally committed to Mississippi's College- and Career-Ready Standards. You have been implementing these higher standards in your classrooms and should absolutely continue to do so.

The PARCC-developed assessment will remain the statewide assessment for 2014-2015 for grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics and high school English II and Algebra I. The data obtained from these assessments will be used in the 2014-2015 accountability results, as was originally planned. The MDE has a mechanism in place to measure growth as we transition from one assessment to another.

The Mississippi Department of Education will purchase a new assessment that will be administered starting in the 2015-2016 school year. The new assessment will be selected through an open, competitive bid process. The assessment that is chosen will be aligned to Mississippi's College- and Career-Ready Standards. This will be the most important part of the selection decision. The data obtained from the new assessment will be used in the 2015-2016 accountability results.

As you may recall, the reason we are seeking a new assessment is because our contract with Pearson, Inc. to deliver the PARCC assessment for the 2014-2015 school year is a one-year contract. The MDE was limited to one year for this contract because it was an emergency procurement.

Should you have any questions about our statewide assessment program during this transition, please send them to [osa@mde.k12.ms.us](mailto:osa@mde.k12.ms.us). We are in the process of developing a Frequently Asked Questions page that will be posted under the "MDE Hot Topics" section on our homepage at [www.mde.k12.ms.us](http://www.mde.k12.ms.us).

Please rest assured that the Board and the MDE will continue to make all decisions based on what is in the best interest of students.

I want to thank you for your hard work and your commitment as we move through this transition together to help the students of Mississippi reach their greatest potential.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carey M. Wright". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Carey" being the most prominent.

Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education