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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**We Raise NJ and NJ Department of Education Announce Pledge to Parents
*Two more organizations join coalition and sign the pledge***

TRENTON, NJ (February 25, 2015) – We Raise NJ, a broad coalition created to help parents raise student achievement, and the New Jersey Department of Education announced a pledge to parents regarding state tests.

The pledge outlines the joint commitment of the coalition and the department toward better assessments that align with high quality academic standards. The seven principles of the pledge call for smarter, more effective statewide testing as well as the support needed to realize that goal.

“We want to create a real dialogue across the state about the role standardized testing should play in our schools,” said Debbie Tyrrell, president of the New Jersey PTA. “Schools and parents should talk about the ways they are helping children transition to the new assessments.”

The New Jersey PTA formed We Raise NJ in collaboration with other organizations to constructively engage parents during this important time for students. The coalition drafted the pledge and enlisted the support of the Department of Education.

“New Jersey is a national leader in education,” said David C. Hespe, New Jersey’s Commissioner of Education. “I commend the education and community leaders of the coalition for reinforcing our commitment to providing students with the best possible education using the best available resources.”

In addition to the pledge, We Raise NJ announced that two new organizations have joined the coalition. The Garden State Coalition of Schools is an association of approximately 100 school districts that advocates at the state level for quality public education in New Jersey. The New Jersey Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (NJASCD) is an organization of diverse educational leaders that supports the collaborative growth of students, teachers and administrators in New Jersey. Both organizations signed the pledge upon officially joining the coalition.

Earlier this week, We Raise NJ launched [Best Foot Forward](#) to address the growing number of questions from parents about the PARCC assessments and to help parents make informed decisions about how to best support their children during testing season. In addition to the resources on the website, the initiative features weekly text messages, a [blog](#) and a [brief video](#), which provide parents important information during testing season.

About We Raise NJ

We Raise NJ is a broad coalition led by the New Jersey PTA that supports parents in navigating recent changes to our children’s education. The coalition aims to elevate parent engagement in



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order to advance the state of education in New Jersey and ensure more successful futures for our students. For more information on the coalition's initiatives, visit www.bestfootforwardnj.org.

Coalition members

New Jersey PTA

New Jersey Association of School Administrators

New Jersey Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

New Jersey Council of County Colleges

New Jersey Chamber of Commerce

Garden State Coalition of Schools

JerseyCan

New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association

New Jersey School Boards Association

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