
Google to Disable NPAPI for Chrome browser in 2015

This bulletin provides Pearson recommendations for TestNav customers who plan to use the Chrome browser for 2015 TestNav online test sessions.

Google’s plan to phase out support for the Netscape Plugin Application Programming Interface (NPAPI) architecture will affect how you set up TestNav on the Chrome browser. TestNav relies on Java, which is a NPAPI plugin. As a result, TestNav customers that decide to continue using the Chrome browser must follow very specific instructions to enable Java (see below).

This does not affect customers who use TestNav on Chromebooks (Chrome OS). Chromebooks run the TestNav app (downloaded from the Chrome Web Store), and apps do not run on a browser.

If you have concerns about this process change, Pearson recommends that you use any of the other browser options indicated on the TestNav System Requirements page.

If your organization cannot use another supported browser, you must complete the instructions below to set up TestNav on the Chrome browser, beginning in January 2015.

Phase Overview

Google plans to gradually discontinue support for NPAPI in three phases:

- **Phase 1, January 2015** - Currently the NPAPI plugins for Chrome are blocked by default unless the user chooses to allow them for specific sites. A small number of the most popular plugins have been whitelisted and allowed by default in the past. In January 2015 Chrome will remove the whitelist, meaning all plugins will be blocked by default and must be chosen to be allowed. Instructions on how to choose to allow the Java plugin are below.

- **Phase 2, April 2015** - NPAPI support will be disabled by default. Chrome will provide an override for individual users (via chrome://flags/#enable-npapi) and enterprises (via Enterprise Policy) to temporarily re-enable NPAPI. Instructions below.

- **Phase 3, September 2015** - Chrome will remove the override and NPAPI support will be permanently removed.
Instructions for Phase 1 (January 2015) – Allow the Java plugin

In your browser address bar go to chrome://plugins. A list of plugins for the browser is displayed. Look for the Java plugin and verify that it is Enabled.

- If the link reads ‘Disable’ the plugin is currently Enabled and no further action needs to be taken at this time.
- If the link reads ‘Enable’, click the link to Enable the Java plugin.

Until you complete these steps, users will experience the behaviors referenced below in the Phase Behavior for Individual Users section.

Instructions for Phase 2 (April 2015) – Override to allow the Java plugin

Individual User

In your browser address bar go to chrome://flags. You will see a list of experimental features for Chrome. Locate Enable-NPAPI in the list and select the Enable link. This will require a browser restart.

*Enable-NPAPI is not going to appear on the list until April so you cannot do this step until phase 2.

Note: The following instructions eliminate both phase 1 and phase 2 behaviors for enterprise versions of Chrome. You need to complete these steps only once, anytime during phase 1 and phase 2, to avoid encountering behaviors related to the NPAPI plugin depreciation.
Enterprise Policy - Windows

1. Run regedit.
2. Go to HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Policies\Google\Chrome and, create a new key EnabledPlugins.
3. Select EnabledPlugins, and create a new string value with the name 1.
4. Select 1 and modify it so data contains Java*

After you complete the steps, the folder structure resembles that of the following image:

Enterprise Policy - Mac OS X

Create the file /Library/Preferences/com.google.Chrome.plist with the contents as follows:

```xml
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<!DOCTYPE plist PUBLIC "-//Apple//DTD PLIST 1.0//EN" "http://www.apple.com/DTDs/PropertyList-1.0.dtd">
<plist version="1.0">
  <dict>
    <key>EnabledPlugins</key>
    <array>
      <string>Java*</string>
    </array>
  </dict>
</plist>
```

Verify Java is Enabled

To verify that you enabled Java in the Chrome browser:

- Quit the Chrome browser.
- Reopen the Chrome browser, and go to chrome://policy.
- Click **Reload policies**.
  - You should see the policy EnabledPlugins with the value Java*:
If **Java** does not appear in the **Policy value** column, you did not correctly enter in the policy. Follow the instructions for the appropriate OS to try again.

You can also go to **chrome://plugins** in the Chrome browser to confirm that you enabled Java. If enabled correctly, (Enabled by enterprise policy) displays as shown below:

After verifying that Java is enabled, run SystemCheck to confirm that the testing environment receives a Pass notification.

**Expected Behavior for Users During Each Phase**

This bulletin provides instructions for Chrome Enterprise administrators; however, until an administrator completes the above process, individual users will experience the behaviors detailed in Google’s [NPAPI deprecation: developer guide](#) during each phase. Please note that completing the instructions above eliminates these behaviors during Phases 1 and 2.

Phase 1 Behavior – January 2015

- NPAPI Plugins will be disabled by default.
- Users will need to enable the Java plugin if it is disabled.

Phase 2 Behavior – April 2015

- NPAPI Plugins will be completely disabled.
- Individual users can enable the plugin using the Chrome://flags/#enable-npapi flag option.
- Enterprise users can enable the plugin through an Enterprise Policy described above.

Phase 3 Behavior – September 2015

- NPAPI Plugins will be completely disabled with no way to re-enable.

You can bookmark the guide to monitor any changes in Google’s plan for NPAPI plugin depreciation.
Looking Forward

PARCC will continue to accommodate TestNav users on a range of platforms, and Pearson software engineers are evaluating possible technical solutions in preparation for Phase 3.

Periodic updates will be provided prior to September 2015 to help TestNav customers plan and prepare for upcoming test administrations.