

**Dr. David W. Kistler Elementary School
301 Old River Road
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702**

To: Parents/Guardians of 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Grade Students
From: Ms. Margo Serafini, Principal

Date: April 6, 2021

Re: PSSA- Pennsylvania System of School Assessment 2020-2021

Please be advised that your child will be participating in the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) On-Line Version in less than three weeks. The PSSA testing window is April 19- May 28, 2021. Below we have provided a detailed testing schedule and information regarding the upcoming assessments in the following pages of this packet. In addition, please check your child's school planner daily for PSSA updates. For more detailed information, you may access the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) website at www.pde.state.pa.us

2020-2021 PSSA INFORMATION FOR <u>OPTION 1</u> STUDENTS PSSA TESTING INFORMATION FOR KISTLER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL			
April 19-23, 2021	English Language Arts	3 Sections	Grades 3-8
April 26- April 30, 2021	Mathematics	2 Sections	Grades 3-8
May 3-7, 2021	Science	2 Sections	Grades 4 & 8
May 10-May 28, 2021	Make-ups		

Please note: ***Students are required to participate in these assessments and family vacation request that will result in student absences will not be approved during these assessments dates.***

The Pennsylvania System of School Assessments will begin each day at 10:00 a.m. Please have your child in school for these dates and on time. If your child is ill or absent, your child will make up the test they missed upon their return to school. It is imperative that you have your child get a good night sleep and a good breakfast each morning as proper preparation for the assessment.

Please stress the importance of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment. All 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Grade Students throughout the state of Pennsylvania will be tested in content areas focusing on Reading/Mathematics/Writing/Science. Your child's score is recorded in their permanent educational record and a copy of their scores will be sent to the school and home once the results are received from PDE.

These assessments are not the type of assessment your child can study for the night before. Students have been learning and practicing for these assessments all year as the content is part of the Wilkes-Barre Area School District Curriculum. However, as parents we urge you to reinforce that these assessments are important to students and the school. Students should not rush during the assessment and overall you should encourage your child to do their best.

Thank you for your cooperation on this most important matter. We are taking these assessments very seriously at Kistler Elementary School and we need your continued help to reach proficiency.

Please be advised that this year's PSSA test will be on-line. Therefore, we require your child to bring his/her fully charged Chromebook, with the charger, to school every day during the testing window. Thank You!

Escuela Elemental Dr. David W. Kistler
301 Old River Road
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702

Para: Padres/Guardianes de Estudiantes de 3^{ro}, 4^o, 5^o y 6^o Grado
De: Srta. Margo Serafini, Principal

Fecha: 6 de abril de 2021

Re: PSSA- Sistema de Evaluación Escolar de Pennsylvania 2020-2021

Favor de tener en cuenta de que su hijo(a) participará en el Sistema de Evaluación Escolar de Pennsylvania (PSSA) en la versión en línea en menos de tres semanas. El periodo de prueba de PSSA es desde el 19 de abril al 28 de mayo de 2021. A continuación, le hemos proporcionado un detallado calendario e información respecto a las próximas evaluaciones en las siguientes páginas de este paquete. En adición, favor de revisar el planificador de su hijo(a) diariamente por actualizaciones de PSSA. Para más detallada información, puede acceder el Departamento de Educación de Pennsylvania (PDE) al sitio web www.pde.state.pa.us

2020-2021 INFORMACION DE PSSA PARA ESTUDIANTES EN OPCION 1			
PSSA INFORMACION DE PRUEBAS PARA ESCUELA ELEMENTAL KISTLER			
19 al 23 de Abril de 2021	Artes de Lenguaje Inglés	3 Secciones	Grados 3-8
26 al 30 de Abril de 2021	Matemáticas	2 Secciones	Grados 3-8
3 al 7 de Mayo de 2021	Ciencias	2 Secciones	Grados 4 & 8
10 al 28 de Mayo de 2021	Exámenes de Compesación		

Favor de notar: *Estudiantes son requeridos a participar en estas evaluaciones y solicitudes de vacaciones familiares que den lugar a la ausencia del estudiante no serán aprobadas durante estas fechas de evaluaciones.*

El Sistema de Evaluación Escolar de Pennsylvania comenzarán cada día a las 10:00 a.m. Favor de traer a su hijo(a) a la escuela durante estas fechas y a tiempo. Si su hijo(a) está enfermo(a) o ausente, su hijo(a) tomará prueba que haya perdido al regresar a la escuela. Es imperativo que su hijo(a) tenga un buen descanso durante la noche y un buen desayuno cada mañana como apropiada preparación para la evaluación.

Por favor enfatice la importancia del Sistema de Evaluación Escolar de Pennsylvania. Todos los estudiantes de 3^{ro}, 4^o, 5^o y 6^o Grado a través del estado de Pennsylvania será evaluado en contenido de áreas enfocándose en Lectura/Matemáticas/Escritura/Ciencia. La puntuación de su hijo(a) es grabado en su expediente permanente educativo y una copia de sus puntajes serán enviados a la escuela y al hogar una vez los resultados sean recibidos de PDE.

Estas evaluaciones no son del tipo de evaluación que su hijo(a) puede estudiar la noche anterior. Estudiantes han estado aprendiendo y practicando para estas evaluaciones todo el año como parte del contenido del Currículo del Distrito Escolar en el Área de Wilkes-Barre. Sin embargo, como padres nos urge que ustedes refuercen que estas evaluaciones son importantes para los estudiantes y la escuela. Estudiantes no deben apresurarse durante la prueba y en general, usted debe alentar a su hijo(a) para de lo mejor de sí.

Gracias por su cooperación en este asunto tan importante. Estamos tomando estas evaluaciones muy seriamente en la Escuela Elemental Kistler y necesitamos su continua ayuda para alcanzar la aptitud.

Tenga en cuenta que este año de prueba de PSSA será en línea. Por lo tanto, requerimos que su hijo(a) traiga su Chromebook completamente cargado, con el cargador, para la escuela todos los días durante el periodo de prueba.
¡Gracias!

PENNSYLVANIA CALCULATOR POLICY

If a student chooses to use a calculator (other than the online options) on the Keystone Exams or PSSA in sections where the calculator is permitted, the student must adhere to the guidelines listed below. It is incumbent upon the School Assessment Coordinator to ensure that all calculator policies are implemented and followed, including making sure calculators have no programs or other data stored in their memory other than those that are factory installed. Please note that if a student wants to restore the deleted programs, the student will need to back up these programs prior to the assessment. In addition, the memory must be cleared on the calculator prior to and following each test session of the assessment.

The following are **not** permitted for the PSSA or Keystone Exams:

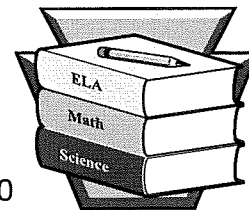
- Devices that have a primary purpose other than functioning as a calculator such as cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, PDAs, laptops, tablets, pocket organizers, etc.
- Calculators with infrared, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, or other beaming or wireless capabilities, unless the beaming or wireless capabilities are disabled
- Calculators with built-in Computer Algebra Systems (CAS)
- Calculators that make noise, have paper tape, need to be plugged in, or talk; these specific calculators can only be used as a required accommodation as stated in the Accommodations Guidelines
- Calculators shared by students during a test session
- Any and all non-factory (add-on) programs or information stored in the calculator

This calculator policy is intended to be a general description of what is not allowed. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list of specific calculators, devices, or technologies that must not be used on the PSSA or Keystone Exams. Please note that as technology changes, this policy may also change.

Information for Parents or Guardians

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

English Language Arts Assessment, April 20–24, 2020
Mathematics and Science Assessment, April 27–May 1, 2020



GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PSSA

Which schools participate?

All school districts and charter schools participate in the assessments. Nonpublic and private schools may also participate on a voluntary basis.

Which students take the assessments?

Except for a very few students who meet specific criteria for participation in an alternate assessment, all students are included in the assessments as outlined below:

ELA & Mathematics—Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8
Science—Grades 4 and 8

Who decided what the assessments should measure?

Groups of educators from all levels of education in Pennsylvania chose the areas of knowledge and skills upon which the assessments are based. The groups included teachers, supervisors, curriculum directors, and college specialists. They also reviewed, edited, and approved the test items.

Who administers the assessments?

Each school chooses the person(s) who will administer the assessments. In most cases, these are teachers in the students' building.

How are the results reported?

Two copies of the individual student report for all assessments will be sent to all schools and districts that participate for distribution to parents, teachers, school counselors, and/or principals. The state will not receive any report with individual names included.

School-level reports will be used for curricular and planning purposes. School districts and charter schools may publish the results of PSSA testing for each school. The state will also release school-by-school assessment data.

May parents see the assessments?

Yes, under one circumstance. School entities are required to have policies to ensure that parents or guardians have the right to review a state assessment in the school entity during convenient hours for parents or guardians from the time testing materials are received to the end of the make-up schedule in order to determine whether a state assessment conflicts with their religious belief. This is the only reason allowable under regulation.

Confidentiality agreements must be signed, and no copies of the assessments or notes about assessment items will be permitted to leave the school. If after reviewing the test, parents or guardians find the test to be in conflict with their religious belief and wish their student(s) to be excused from the test, the right of the parents or guardians will not be denied upon written request to the applicable school district Superintendent, charter school Chief Executive Officer, or AVTS Director. Parents or guardians should contact their child's school to make arrangements to review the test.

Report Testing Irregularities

Parents/guardians who believe that a testing irregularity may have occurred may email ra-ed-pssa-keystone@pa.gov or call 844-418-1651 to report the incident.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ASSESSMENT (grades 3 through 8)

How long does the assessment take?

The entire English Language Arts assessment takes approximately three to four hours to complete. Your school district will inform you about the assessment schedule.

What does the assessment include?

Each student completes three sections of questions for the English Language Arts assessment. Some portions will be the same for all students, and some will consist of different groups of questions.

What types of questions are on the assessment?

Students respond to multiple-choice, evidence-based selected-response, and constructed-response questions. In a multiple-choice question, the correct answer(s) is chosen from four options. Evidence-based selected-response questions have two parts, and students select one or more answers for each part. Constructed-response questions may include a short-answer (grade 3) or text dependent analysis (grades 4 through 8). Short-answer questions require students to compose a brief response to support their answer. For the text dependent analysis question, students analyze a text and use evidence from the reading passage to compose an essay.

How are written responses to constructed-response items scored?

The written responses for English Language Arts are scored by evaluators trained in applying an ELA-specific scoring guideline. For short-answer questions, scores are based on content only. Spelling and punctuation are not included as part of the scoring process. Responses to text dependent analysis questions are scored based on both content and writing skills.

What is assessed in English Language Arts?

The English Language Arts assessment addresses six major reporting categories as well as two text types. Students respond to standalone multiple-choice items assessing language. Additionally, students read a number of passages from literature and informational genres and respond to questions about these passages that indicate both comprehension and reading skills and the students' analysis and interpretation of different types of texts.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE MATHEMATICS ASSESSMENT (grades 3 through 8)

How long does the assessment take?

The entire mathematics assessment takes approximately two to three hours to complete. Your school district will inform you about the assessment schedule.

What does the assessment include?

Each student completes two sections of questions for the mathematics assessment. Some portions will be the same for all students, and some will consist of different groups of questions.

What types of questions are on the assessment?

Students respond to two types of questions: multiple-choice and open-ended. In a multiple-choice question, the correct answer is chosen from the four presented options, while open-ended questions require students to compose their responses. Open-ended questions generally require students to provide detail in support of their answers (such as showing or describing the steps performed to complete a calculation).

How are written responses to open-ended items scored?

The written responses for mathematics open-ended items are scored by evaluators trained in applying a mathematics-specific scoring guideline. In mathematics, scores are based on content only. Spelling and punctuation are not included as part of the scoring process.

What is assessed in Mathematics?

The mathematics assessment addresses five major reporting categories across four clusters. The reporting categories assessed and the proportion of questions in each reporting category vary by grade level. As a part of the assessment of Cluster A, Numbers and Operations, students in grades 4 through 8 respond to a set of questions without a calculator. Constructed-response items may require the students to show all of their work (e.g., calculations, graphs, drawings) and/or to explain in writing how they solved the problems.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCIENCE ASSESSMENT (grades 4 and 8)

How long does the assessment take?

The entire science assessment takes approximately one to two hours to complete. Your school district will inform you about the assessment schedule.

What does the assessment include?

Students in grades 4 and 8 complete two sections of questions for the science assessment. Some portions will be the same for all students, and some will consist of different groups of questions.

What types of questions are on the assessment?

Students respond to two types of questions: multiple-choice and open-ended. In a multiple-choice question, the correct answer is chosen from the four presented options, while open-ended questions require students to compose their responses. At grade 8, the science assessment also includes science scenarios.

What is a science scenario?

A science scenario contains text, graphics, charts, and/or tables and uses these elements to describe the results of a class project, an experiment, or other similar research. Students use the information found in a science scenario to answer multiple-choice questions.

How are written responses to open-ended items scored?

The written responses for science open-ended items are scored by evaluators trained in applying a science-specific scoring guideline. In science, scores are based on content only. Spelling and punctuation are not included as part of the scoring process.

What is assessed in science?

The science assessment addresses the four major reporting categories: The Nature of Science, Biological Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Earth and Space Sciences. The proportion of items in each reporting category varies by grade level.

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In an era of cell phones, smartphones and other electronic devices which can easily photograph and instantly share photographs, confidential and secure test materials can be easily compromised. Not only is it expensive to replace a compromised test item, the material contained in the PSSA and Keystone Exams is copyrighted property of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Copying or duplicating the material from the assessment, including the taking of a photograph of secure assessment material, is a violation of the federal Copyright Act. Penalties for violations of the Copyright Act may include the cost of replacing the compromised test item(s) or fines of no less than \$750 up to \$30,000 for a single violation (17 U.S.C. § 101 et seq.).

In order to ensure reliable test results and to avoid the cost of replacing test items, the Department of Education requires schools to set rules and take certain steps to protect test materials. Electronic devices such as but not limited to cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, E-readers, Nooks, Kindles, iPods, tablets, camera-ready devices, and any other electronic device which can be used to photograph or duplicate test materials, access the internet and/or communicate with others during the administration of the PSSA or Keystone Exams are not permitted in any testing site. Please speak with your child and let him or her know that the possession and/or use of a cell phone or other electronic device during the administration of the PSSA or Keystone Exams will result in consequences.

You will be contacted by the school if your child is discovered using and/or having a cell phone or other unapproved electronic device in his or her possession during the administration of the PSSA or Keystone Exams. Students who ignore this directive will be subject to the school's discipline policy and the Department of Education's requirement that the student's test will not be scored and the student will be required to retake the entire exam. The electronic device will be held by school staff, and the device's stored photographs and other functions will be examined with your permission. You may request to be present when the electronic device is examined. If a photograph of the PSSA or Keystone Exam is discovered or if permission to search other functions of the electronic device is refused, the device will be held by the school staff. The Pennsylvania Department of Education holds the copyright to all material contained within the PSSA and Keystone Exams, the Pennsylvania Department of Education will be contacted and further action may be taken.

If, after testing is complete and test materials have been returned, it is discovered that a student used and/or had a cell phone or other unapproved electronic device in his or her possession during the administration of the test, the school's discipline policy will be followed and the student's test will not be scored.