



LEO E. SOLOMON-PLAINS MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Mr. Anthony Khalife, Principal

Mr. Gerry McGroarty, Guidance

Mrs. Lenore Metzger, Secretary

Mrs. Marlena Mondulick, Secretary

Mr. Hal Gabriel, Special Programs Administrator

TO: Parents/Guardians
FROM: Mr. Khalife
RE: PSSA Test Window
DATE: March 31, 2022

This letter is to inform you that your child will be participating in the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). Students in grades 6th, 7th, and 8th grades will be given the **PSSA Math, ELA, and Science (8th grade only) Tests**.

The testing window for these important assessments will be as follows according to subject area:

ELA – April 26 – April 28

Math – May 3 – May 4

Science – May 5 – May 6 (8th grade only)

Assessments are used as helpful indicators to measure your child's achievement. An assessment may measure a basic skill or a child's overall performance in ELA, Math, and Science. It is important for all children to do as well as they can when taking the PSSA. These scores will be part of a student's record until they graduate.

The ELA, mathematics, and science assessments should challenge all students with tasks requiring problem-solving and concept identification. In addition to multiple-choice items, there will be tasks requiring students to write their responses in short answer and paragraph form. **All PSSA tests will be administered to students in person using an online format only.**

The following are a few reminders to keep in mind for this assessment:

- Please try to have your child in school and on time during the testing days. Kindly avoid scheduling educational trips or appointments for any of the mornings during the testing window. Our goal is to have 100% participation!
- Kindly stress the importance of this test and encourage your child to do their best. Reinforce the idea of listening to the teacher's instructions, avoiding rushing, and staying calm.
- Reassure your child that the assessment provides the opportunity to demonstrate his/her own learning and to help teachers plan for the best possible instruction.
- Please make sure your child gets plenty of sleep the night before and provide a healthy breakfast on the mornings of the assessment days.

Thank you, in advance, for your cooperation in this important matter. If you have any questions regarding the PSSA tests, please do not hesitate to contact me, Mr. McGroarty, or your child's attendance teacher.

Attached you will find important information regarding the PSSA:

- PDE Information for Parents or Guardians
- PDE Parent/Guardian Letter and Electronic Device Policy
- Calculator policy from the PA Department of Education
- PDE Code of Conduct for Test Takers
- District Electronic Device Policy

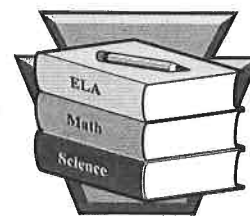
Kindly review the PSSA Parent Packet with your child prior to the start of testing and familiarize yourself with the District and PDE policies.

Frequently
Asked
Questions

Information for Parents or Guardians

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

English Language Arts Assessment, April 25–29, 2022
Mathematics and Science Assessment, May 2–13, 2022



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-edirregularities@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.



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.

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.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TEST TAKERS

DO ...

- Listen to, read, and follow all directions given.
- Ask questions if you do not understand the directions.
- Read each question carefully, especially multiple-choice items that ask for the “best answer.” Also, be sure to read any open-ended items carefully before responding.
- Be careful when marking your answers so that you do not skip spaces or fill in the wrong sections.
- Make sure to completely fill in the bubble for the answer(s) you select and erase completely any answers you change.
- Keep your eyes on your own test.
- Try to answer each test item.
- Check that you have completed all the test items in the test section before closing your test booklet or submitting your final responses online.
- Report any suspected cheating to your teacher or principal.

DO NOT ...

- Have notes in your possession during the test.
- Have any unapproved electronic devices (cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, etc.) in your possession during the test. Note, you may have approved calculators, if applicable, during the test.
- Share a calculator with others.
- Use the bubbles in the answer booklet to either eliminate possible incorrect answers or possible correct answers by making marks in multiple bubbles and erasing. Mark only the bubble for the correct answer(s) you have chosen.
- Talk with others about questions on the test during or after the test. (Students should be assured that they may discuss the testing process or issues of concern with their parents/guardians.)
- Take notes about the test to share with others.
- Leave an online test session until the session is complete or until instructed to do so.
- Use social media to post information about the test and/or test items.

November 6, 2013

CURRICULUM / ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE: **LATINSKI**, Galella, Toole

TO: The President and Members of the Wilkes-Barre Area School Board.

The Curriculum/Administration Committee respectfully submits the following report and recommendations:

1. That approval be given to the following policy:

ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY

It is the policy of the Wilkes-Barre Area School District to be committed to ensuring that every student is provided a safe, nondisruptive environment in which to learn. Therefore, the District has enacted a policy that prohibits the use of all electronic devices.

POSSESSION OF CELLULAR TELEPHONES

The possession of cellular telephones shall be allowed in schools. All students shall have cellular telephones out of sight and turned off. The use of cellular telephones is prohibited. Students are not permitted to carry cellular telephones visible on their person during the school day.

Students who use a cellular telephone or have it visible shall have it confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the day. Upon second and subsequent offenses the cellular telephone will be confiscated and additional disciplinary actions will be taken.

DEFINITION

Electronic devices include but is not limited to long and short wave radios, all MP3/USB/Data Storage type radios (including iPods), CD players, remote control devices, cameras, video recorders, laser pointers, portable gaming devices, and toys that do not serve any educational value in school.

ENFORCEMENT

The use of electronic devices is prohibited in school, on school property or in any conveyance providing transportation to or from any school, school event, or function during the hours and days that school is in session. These devices will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the day. Upon second and subsequent offenses additional disciplinary actions will be taken, including a mandatory parent/guardian conference.

WAIVER

Upon second and subsequent offenses, parents/guardians shall sign the district's agreement report acknowledging the electronic device was returned to them. In consideration of being advised of this policy, the parent/guardian waives and releases any and all claims for damages and theft of the electronic communication device they may have against the Wilkes-Barre Area School District.

Phillip B. Latinski, Chairperson