



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.

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 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 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 scores will be invalidated.

HAZLETON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

April/May 2024 PSSA Exams (Math, ELA, & Science)-State Assessments

The United State Department of Education (USDE) directive states “Pennsylvania must administer statewide assessments in the 2023-2024 school year.” It is the law—one that Pennsylvania, and every other state, must follow to protect vital Federal education funding.

PSSA Exam Dates

- The testing window for PSSA (3rd to 8th): April 22-26-April 29-May 3, 2024
 - 3rd, 5th, 6th, and 7th grade.
 - ELA April 22-26
 - Math April 29-May 3
 - 4th and 8th grade
 - ELA April 24-28
 - Math April 29-30
 - Science May 1-2

Student Information about test:

- We will be administering the PSSA to all students grades 3-8. All testing will occur in-person in their respective buildings.
- **CHECK DISTRICT WEBSITE:**
- Please remember students should not bring any electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, etc.)
- We encourage parents and students to review the exam code of conduct and calculator policy.
- Please review the PSSA frequently asked questions.

Absences/Opt Outs

- If a student is absent or fails to show during the testing window, April 22-26-April 29-May 3, 2024, then the test booklet will be coded as an absence during the testing period.
- The only recognized reason to Opt Out of state assessments is due to religious reasons.
- Procedure for Opt Out: **CHECK DISTRICT WEBSITE FOR PROCEDURES.**

The District must provide all students with an opportunity to complete the assessments in person. Please contact your child’s School Counselor for in-person testing dates.

Valley Elementary/Middle School
Jill Rodgers
570-459-3221 ext. 26516

HAZLETON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Los Exámenes PSSA de abril/mayo de 2024 (Matemáticas, ELA y Ciencias)-Evaluaciones Estatales

La directiva del Departamento de Educación de los Estados Unidos (USDE) establece que "Pensilvania debe administrar evaluaciones estatales en el año escolar 2023-2024". Es la ley, una que Pensilvania, y todos los demás estados, deben seguir para proteger los fondos federales vitales para la educación.

Fechas de Exámenes PSSA

- La ventana de prueba para PSSA (3ro° a 8vo): 22-26 de abril-3 de mayo de 2024
 - 3ro, 5to, 6to y 7mo grado
 - ELA 22--26 de abril
 - Matemáticas 29 de abril-3 de mayo
 - 4to y 8vo grado
 - ELA 24-28 de abril
 - Matemáticas 29-30 de abril
 - Ciencias 1-2 de mayo

Información para el estudiante sobre la prueba:

- Administraremos el PSSA a todos los estudiantes de los grados 3-8. Todas las pruebas se realizarán en persona en sus respectivos edificios.
- **CONSULTE EL SITIO WEB DEL DISTRITO:**
- Recuerde que los estudiantes no deben traer ningún dispositivo electrónico (por ejemplo, teléfonos celulares, teléfonos inteligentes, relojes inteligentes, etc.)
- Alentamos a los padres y estudiantes a revisar el código de conducta del examen y la política de la calculadora.
- Por favor revise las preguntas frecuentes de PSSA.

Ausencias/Excluidos

- Si un estudiante está ausente o no se presenta durante la ventana de pruebas, del 22-26 de abril-mayo 3, 2024, entonces el folleto de la prueba se codificará como una ausencia durante el período de prueba.
- La única razón reconocida para Optar por No Participar en las evaluaciones estatales se debe a razones religiosas.
- Procedimiento para Optar por No Participar: **CONSULTE EL SITIO WEB DEL DISTRITO PARA CONOCER LOS PROCEDIMIENTOS.**

El Distrito debe proporcionar a todos los estudiantes la oportunidad de completar las evaluaciones en persona. Comuníquese con el consejero escolar de su hijo para conocer las fechas de las pruebas en persona.

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