

**Penn Manor School District**  
**2950 Charlestown Road**  
**Lancaster, PA 17603**  
**(717) 872-9500**

April 4, 2022

Parents/Guardians,

Throughout the school year, Penn Manor teachers have been providing instruction to promote your child's academic success. In April and May, all public schools throughout the state of Pennsylvania will administer a series of standardized assessments, known as the Pennsylvania State System of Assessment (PSSA). These assessments encompass English/Language Arts and Math (Grades 3 - 8), as well as Science (Grades 4 and 8). Further, all students who have taken an Algebra I course will take the Algebra I Keystone Exam. It is vital that all students attend school during the testing windows to participate in the assessments. If students miss school on one of the testing dates, every effort will be made to provide the opportunity for make-up testing sessions. Parent(s) and guardian(s) will receive copies of the assessment results in the fall of 2022.

Middle school students taking Algebra I will take the Algebra I Keystone Exam. Students who score "Proficient" or "Advanced" on the Algebra I Keystone Exam, will not need to take the exam again during their high school experience. However, if scores are rated below proficient on this exam, the student will need to take the exam again after further Algebra instruction occurs.

**Students must not bring electronic devices to school on the testing dates.** The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) requires that schools maintain a high level of test security throughout all exam's administration. For this reason, we are requesting the support of parents to ensure that students do not bring any electronic devices to school on the testing dates. If a student does bring a device, such as a cell phone, iPod, Apple watch, etc., to class with them during testing, they will be prompted to secure it with the teacher who will proctor the assessment. The device will be labeled and safely stored until the assessment has been completed each day.

**FAQ** - Parents of students in Grades 3 through 8 should carefully read the attachment, *Information for Parents/Guardians*, that addresses frequently asked questions about the Pennsylvania's System of School Assessments. Should you have questions regarding the PSSA or the Keystone Algebra I Exam, please contact your school principal, who will provide you with additional information about the assessments. Please note there is a website that shares school progress available for your review. The Future Ready Index is comprised of building specific academic performance on standardized assessments, student attendance, and Career Education and Work Standards indicators. To access this website, log on to <https://futurereadypa.org/#>

Your child's academic success is a collaborative effort that involves teachers, parents, and students. Please encourage your child to do his/her best on each portion of the assessment(s). Results of the assessments are utilized as a component to determine appropriate academic placement in secondary courses. Thank you for your continued support of your child(ren) through their academic journey.

Sincerely,

Gerard A. Egan, Ed.D.  
Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education  
Education

Philip B. Gale, Ed.D.  
Assistant Superintendent for Secondary

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## **Preparation for PSSA and Keystone Exams 2022**

### **Pre-Planned Educational Trips**

- Please be advised that pre-planned trips that coincide with dates during the testing window may be denied and considered on a case-by-case basis (Administrative Regulations 204-AR-3).

### **Here are a few tips we recommend that you discuss with your child about the assessment:**

- 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.”
- Be sure to read any open-ended questions and writing prompts carefully before responding.
- Try to answer each test item.
- **DO NOT bring any electronic devices, (e.g., cell phones, smart phones, iPods, etc.)**

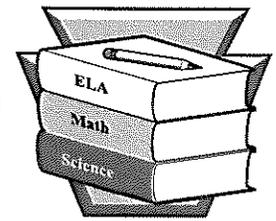
**Cell phones and other personal electronic devices** - The Pennsylvania Department of Education has indicated that schools and students must ensure the integrity of the PSSA/Keystone Exam administration and appropriate test security. Therefore, we strongly recommend that **students do not bring personal electronic devices** to school during the testing window. As noted above, schools and teachers administering the assessments will have measures in place to ensure that tests will not be compromised, in accordance with the state’s requirements. Please be advised that disciplinary measures will be enforced by the school, if any electronic device violation occurs.

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](mailto: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.