

Dear Parents and Guardians:

The Methacton School District will be administering the 2022 Pennsylvania Keystone Exams to all students in Keystone related courses (Biology, English 10 Literature and Algebra 1) this May. New this year, students will be completing the assessments online. Students will need to bring their fully charged, district-issued Chromebook and charger to school each day of testing. The testing schedule is outlined below.

KEYSTONE TESTING SCHEDULE

Keystone	Testing Dates
English 10	May 16
Biology	May 18
Algebra 1	May 23

The Keystone exams meet the federal accountability criteria of ESSA for the high school level. Students must take the Keystone Exams for purposes of federal accountability. Failure to do so will affect a Local Education Agency (LEA) and school's participation rate. Beginning with the Class of 2023, Keystone Exams are a key criteria for Pathways to Graduation in Pennsylvania. Additionally, they reflect for the public the work we do here in our Methacton schools.

Parents can assist our efforts and reaffirm the importance of the assessment at home by ensuring their child gets plenty of rest prior to each testing session, is provided a healthy breakfast every morning, and arrives to school on time. Please avoid the scheduling of doctor's appointments and vacations during this time frame; students are required by the PDE to make-up any missed portion of the test within a specific window of time.

Chapter 4 of Title 22 of the Pa. Code (22 Pa. Code 4.4) provides for the rights of any parent/guardian to excuse their child from the state assessment if they find the assessment to be in conflict with their religious beliefs. If a parent pursues a religious exemption from the PSSA or Keystone Exams, they are to contact their school principal at least 1 week prior to the start of testing to follow the appropriate procedures, which include:

- Communication via email to the building principal of the request for religious exemption.
- The building principal will respond to your request, and ask for you to preview the materials in person, and if due to Covid-19 concerns, this is not possible then that should also be communicated to the principal
- Letter to the Superintendent of Schools indicating the opt-out for religious reasons

Included in this letter is the PDE *Information for Parents or Guardians - Frequently Asked Questions* and information concerning electronic devices as they pertain to testing. This information will also be posted on the District website.

Thank you for your support throughout the Keystone testing sessions. If you have additional questions, please contact your child's school principal.

Sincerely,



Tara L. Ricci
Supervisor of Continuous Improvement
District Assessment Coordinator



PDE CELL PHONE AND ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY FOR TESTING

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.).

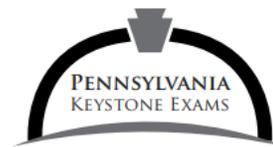
In order to ensure reliable test results and to avoid the cost of replacing test items, the Department of Education requires schools to set rules and take certain steps to protect test materials. Electronic devices such as but not limited to cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, E-readers, Nooks, Kindles, 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.

Information for Parents or Guardians

Pennsylvania Keystone Exams



What are the Keystone Exams?

The Keystone Exams are end-of-course assessments designed to evaluate proficiency in academic content. Beginning with the class of 2022–2023, students must demonstrate proficiency on the Algebra I, Literature, and Biology Keystone Exams to graduate or fulfill one of the other pathways provided to graduate. Students will be offered multiple opportunities to take the Keystones throughout their high school career.

Who will participate in the Keystone Exams?

In 2012–13, the Algebra I, Literature, and Biology Keystone Exams replaced the 11th-grade Pennsylvania System of School Assessments (PSSA) in math, reading, and science for purposes of student, educator, and school accountability. Students should take the Keystone Exams at or near the end of a Keystone-related course. The students' results are banked until their junior year for accountability purposes and until their senior year for graduation purposes. Some students who previously completed a Keystone-related course but did not take the Keystone Exam will also participate for accountability purposes. All students who take a Keystone Exam may re-take the exam.

When will the exams be offered?

The Keystone Exams will be administered three times each year—winter, spring, and summer. Specific administration dates will be published by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Who decided what Keystone Exams should measure?

Groups of educators from across Pennsylvania chose the areas of knowledge on which the Keystone Exams are based. The groups included teachers, supervisors, curriculum directors, and college specialists. Other groups of Pennsylvania educators also reviewed, edited, and approved exam questions. Pennsylvania Keystone Exams

What is assessed on the Keystone Exams?

Pennsylvania adopted the Pennsylvania Core Standards, standards aligned with expectations for success in college and the workplace. The Keystones are designed to measure these standards.

How long is a Keystone Exam administration?

There is no time limit for a student to complete a Keystone Exam. Each Keystone Exam should take the typical student two to three hours to complete. There are two modules on each test, and each module (or Test Session) of the Keystone Exam should take one to 1.5 hours to complete. Districts can administer the Keystone Exam modules across two days or divided across the morning and the afternoon of the same day.

What are the available formats for administering the Keystone Exams?

The Keystone Exams are available in both online and paper/pencil formats. Districts will determine if online, paper/pencil, or both formats will be used locally. Makeup exams will also be administered in either online or paper/pencil format.

Will students have an opportunity to experience online testing before taking a Keystone Exam

online? Tutorials and online training programs have been developed for the Keystone Exams. The PA Online Assessment Student Tutorial uses pictures, motion, and sound to present visual and verbal descriptions of the properties and features of the PA Online Assessment system. Students are allowed to repeat the Student Tutorial as often as desired and needed. The Online Tools Training (OTT) provides an introductory experience using the PA online assessment software allowing students to observe and try out features of the PA online assessment software prior to the actual assessment. Within the OTT, students also have the opportunity to practice typing responses in a narrative format, graphing functions, and entering equations using an equation builder tool. The online exam also has a “Help” feature that is available to the student during the exam.

What types of questions are on the Keystone Exams?

The Keystone Exams will include multiple-choice questions and constructed-response, or open-ended, questions. For each Keystone Exam, approximately 60 percent to 75 percent of the total score will be from multiple-choice questions and 25 percent to 40 percent of the total score will be from constructed-response questions.

How are the written responses to constructed-response questions scored?

The written responses for constructed-response questions are scored by evaluators trained in applying a pre-determined scoring system. Scores are based on content only. Spelling and punctuation are not included as part of the scoring process. Most constructed-response questions require students to show their work or explain their reasoning. These Keystone Exam questions will ask students to explain, analyze, describe, or compare. Some questions will also require students to perform calculations or create graphs, plots, or drawings.

How are the results reported?

Keystone Exam scores will be processed as quickly as possible and provided to the districts. Two copies of the individual student report for all Keystone Exams will be sent to the school districts and charter schools. One copy should be sent home to parents/guardians; the other is kept by the school/ district. School-level reports will be used for curricular and planning purposes. School districts and charter schools may publish the results of Keystone Exams for each school. The state will also release school-by-school exam data.

May parents see the Keystone Exams?

Parents and guardians may review the Keystone Exams if they believe they may be in conflict with their religious beliefs by making arrangements with the School Test Coordinator once the exams arrive at the school. Confidentiality agreements must be signed, and no copies of the Keystone Exams or notes about exam questions will be permitted to leave the school. If, after reviewing the Keystone Exams, parents or guardians do not want their child to participate in one or all of the exams due to a conflict with their religious beliefs, they may write a letter indicating they have a religious objection to the school district superintendent or charter school CAO to request their child be excused from the exam(s).