



The Central Bucks Schools will provide all students with the academic and problem-solving skills essential for personal development, responsible citizenship, and life-long learning.

March 30, 2023

Dear Jamison Parents,

This information within this letter provides an update to families regarding PSSA testing and scheduling in our school this year. The Pennsylvania Department of Education requires all school districts to administer PSSA testing for the 2022-23 school year. The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment is aligned with the PA Standards. The English Language Arts and Mathematics PSSAs are administered in grades 3 through 8 and the Science PSSA is administered in grade 4 and grade 8. The specific dates for the English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science Assessment are listed below.

Testing Schedule:

English Language Arts	3 rd -6 th grades	Monday, April 24 th	Section 1 Gr. 3 (11:00AM) Gr. 4 (10:15AM) Gr. 5 (8:45AM) Gr. 6 (9:30AM)
English Language Arts	3 rd -6 th grades	Tuesday, April 25 th	Section 2 Gr. 3 (11:00AM) Gr. 4 (10:15AM) Gr. 5 (8:45AM) Gr. 6 (9:30AM)
English Language Arts	3 rd -6 th grades	Wednesday, April 26 th	Section 3 Gr. 3 (11:00AM) Gr. 4 (10:15AM) Gr. 5 (8:45AM) Gr. 6 (9:30AM)
Mathematics	3 rd -6 th grades	Monday, May 1 st	Section 1 Gr. 3 (11:00AM) Gr. 4 (10:15AM) Gr. 5 (8:45AM) Gr. 6 (10:30AM)
Mathematics	3 rd -6 th grades	Tuesday, May 2 nd	Section 2 Gr. 3 (11:00AM) Gr. 4 (10:15AM) Gr. 5 (8:45AM) Gr. 6 (9:30AM)
Science	4 th Grade	Wednesday, May 3 rd	Section 1 @ 10:15 AM Section 2 @ 1:20PM

Students learn all skills, concepts, and content necessary to take the assessment within their daily reading, writing, mathematics and science instruction. These assessments are critically important; please encourage your child to do their best. The results will be one of the measures we use as we make curricular updates and revisions. Individual performance will be one of the factors we consider when determining which students need additional support or enrichment. The data will help the district plan support for students who are not meeting the expectation of *proficient* on the exam. Additional information from PDE is enclosed. The attachment contains general information on testing and outlines the electronics policy.

Each year there is a question regarding whether students must take the PSSA. A parent/guardian may choose to exempt their child from participating in the exam(s) if the tested content is found to be in conflict with their religious beliefs as per PA Code 22, Chapter 4.4. To exclude your child from taking one or more PSSA Exam(s), a parent/guardian must complete the following actions required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE).

1. Email the School Assessment Coordinator. For our school, please email both Matt Croyle, principal and the Jamison School Assessment Coordinator, at mcroyle@cbsd.org and Becky Levy, rlevy@cbsd.org to request an appointment to view the exam(s) to determine if they conflict with your religious beliefs.
2. Report to Jamison at the appointed time and sign the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Confidentiality Agreement prior to viewing the exams.
3. Write a letter to the Superintendent of Schools for Central Bucks School District, Dr. Abram M. Lucabaugh, stating the specific exam(s) you want your child exempt from for religious reasons. Submit the letter to Jamison Elementary Assessment Coordinator, mcroyle@cbsd.org and Becky Levy at rlevy@cbsd.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew D. Croyle', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Matthew D. Croyle
Jamison Elementary School

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 your child 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 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.

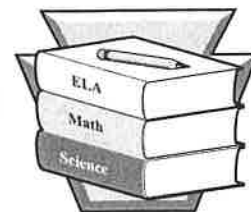
If, after testing is complete and test materials have been returned, it is discovered that a student used and/or had a cell phone or other unapproved electronic device during the administration of the test, the school's discipline policy will be followed and the student's test will not be scored.

Frequently Asked Questions

Information for Parents or Guardians

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

English Language Arts Assessment, April 24–28, 2023
Mathematics and Science Assessment, May 1–12, 2023



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.