



# PENNRIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Dr. Kathleen Scheid*  
*Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education*  
*Dr. Anthony Rybarczyk*  
*Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education*

Penridge District Administration Office  
1200 North Fifth Street  
Perkasie, PA 18944  
215-453-2783

---

February 19, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Students in the state of Pennsylvania will be taking the PSSA and Keystone Exams during the months of April and May 2020. Please see school testing schedules attached to this letter.

The annual Pennsylvania System School Assessment (PSSA) is a standards-based, criterion-referenced assessment which provides students, parents, educators, and citizens with an understanding of student and school performance related to the attainment of proficiency of the academic standards. These standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Technology identify what a student should know and able to do at varying grade levels. Every Pennsylvania student in grades 3 through 8 is assessed in English Language Arts and Math. Every Pennsylvania student in grades 4 and 8 is also assessed in Science. In compliance with §4.51(a)(4) of the PA School Code, the State Board of Education approved "specific criteria for advanced, proficient, basic and below basic levels of performance."

The Keystone Exams are end-of-course assessments designed to assess proficiency in the subject areas of Algebra, Literature, and Biology. The Keystone Exams are one component of Pennsylvania's new system of high school graduation requirements. Keystone Exams will help school districts guide students toward meeting state standards.

The assessment scores represent a snapshot in time of student performance and should not be considered the sole indicator of student achievement. Standardized assessments, like the PSSA and Keystone exams, help Pennsylvania meet federal and state requirements, as well as provide educators, stakeholders, and policymakers with important information about the commonwealth's students and schools. Individual student scores, provided only to their respective schools, can be used to assist teachers in identifying students who may need additional educational opportunities. School scores provide information to schools and districts for curriculum and instruction improvement discussions and planning.

**Prior to students taking the exams, school districts are required by PDE to notify parents of the following:**

- Copying or duplicating the material from the assessment, including the taking of a photograph, 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.
- Electronic devices are not permitted. Electronic devices include cell phones, smartphones, E-readers, Nooks, Kindles, iPads, iPods, tablets, camera-ready devices, and any other devices which can be used to photograph or duplicate test materials, access the internet and/or communicate with others during the administration of the assessment. Please speak with your child and let him/her know that the possession and/or use of a cell phone or other electronic device during the administration of the assessment will result in certain consequences.
- If a student is discovered using and/or having a cellphone or other electronic device in his/her possession during the administration of the assessment, you will be contacted by the school. A student who ignores this directive will be subject to the school's discipline policy and it is 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 test. In addition, the electronic device will be held by school staff and the device's stored photographs will be searched. School staff will also ask for permission to search other functions of the electronic device. If a photo of the assessment is discovered or if permission to search other functions of the electronic device is refused, the device will be held by the school staff and, because the Department of Education holds the copyright to all material contained within the assessment, the Pennsylvania Department of Education will be contacted.

- 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/her possession during the administration of the test, the school's discipline policy will be followed and the student's scores will be invalidated.
- Parental exclusion based on Chapter 4 rules: Chapter 4 of Title 22 of the Pa. Code (22 Pa. code 4.4) provides for the right of any parent/guardian to excuse their child from the state assessment if, upon inspection of the testing materials, they find the assessment to be in conflict with their religious beliefs. This is the only basis for a parent/guardian to excuse his or her child from the statewide assessments.
  - At least two weeks prior to each testing window, assessments will be available for review by parents and guardians. The assessment must be reviewed on district property and district personnel must be present at all times. Districts must provide a convenient time for the review. This may include an evening review time, if requested. Proper security and confidentiality of the assessment must be maintained at all times.
  - Parents and guardians must sign the Parent Confidentiality Agreement. Parents and guardians may not photocopy, write down, or in any other manner record any portion of the assessments, including directions.
  - If after reviewing the test parents/guardians find the test to be in conflict with their religious beliefs and wish their student(s) to be excused from the test, the parents/guardians must provide a written request that states the objection to the Superintendent or Chief Executive Officer.
  - If the student is excused from the assessment due to parental or guardian request, school personnel must provide an alternative learning environment for the student during the assessment and select "Student had a parental exclusion based on Chapter 4 rules".
  - Please be aware that students who do not participate in the assessment due to parental request will negatively affect the school's participation rate and can potentially have a negative impact on the school's accountability status.

Please be mindful that vacation requests, as in years past, will not be honored during testing days. Thank you for your kind attention to this matter.

We are grateful for all you do to support the educational experiences for your children and value your contribution to the success of every student in the Pennridge School District!

Sincerely,



Dr. Kathleen Scheid  
Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education



Dr. Anthony Rybarczyk  
Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education