

CANTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

“WARRIOR PRIDE”

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

509 East Main Street - Canton, PA 17724
Ph: (570) 673-3191 Fax: (570) 673-3680

OFFICE OF SUPPORT SERVICES

545 East Main Street - Canton, PA 17724
Ph: (570) 673-3983 Fax: (570) 673-7929



www.canton.k12.pa.us

CANTON AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

545 East Main Street, Canton, PA 17724
Ph: (570) 673-5196 Fax: (570) 673-7929

CANTON JR. SR. HIGH SCHOOL

509 East Main Street, Canton, PA 17724
Ph: (570) 673-5134 Fax: (570) 673-5566

4/1/24

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires all school districts to administer the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. The PSSA exams will be administered according to the schedule below.

PSSA Exam	Date	Exam Time
ELA	4/23/24-4/25/24	8:20am-11:05am
Math	4/30/24-5/1/24	8:20am-11:05am
Science	5/2/24-5/3/24	8:20am-11:05am
ELA/Math Science Makeup Exams	5/6/24-5/7/24	8:20am-3:00pm

All 7th and 8th grade students including those enrolled in CAVE will be required to complete the exams according to the schedule above. Please be sure to arrange transportation and plan to arrive no later than 8:15am. CAVE students will arrive at the main office. Students will remain in their respective rooms until all students have completed the exams. Please review the documents titled Information for Parents/Guardians (FAQ) and the Use of cell phones/electronic devices located on our CHS webpage. Additional information regarding the PSSAs can be found on the Pennsylvania Department of Education's website.

Chapter 4 of school code provides language and procedures for parents/guardians to opt out of testing due to religious reasons. This process includes signing a confidentiality agreement, reviewing the assessment booklet(s), and signing an affidavit to the superintendent indicating your religious objection. Parents/Guardians also have the right of refusal to participate in this assessment process. This request must be provided to the building principal in writing that includes the student's name, grade level and your refusal for them to participate in the assessment.

We recognize that PSSA scores are not a full representation of student performance and will not be considered as the only indicator of student achievement. Data obtained from the assessments is used for planning various school programs, curriculum decisions and facilitates the organization and implementation of specific staff development opportunities. Please feel free to direct any questions to the CHS main office, Guidance office or myself.

Sincerely,

Donnie Jacopetti, CHS Principal

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4/1/24

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires all school districts to administer the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. The PSSA exams will be administered in grades 7-8 beginning on 4/23/24.

Chapter 4 of school code provides language and procedures for parents/guardians to opt out of testing due to religious reasons. This process includes signing a confidentiality agreement, reviewing the assessment booklet(s), and signing an affidavit to the superintendent indicating your religious objection. Parents/Guardians also have the right of refusal to participate in this assessment process. This request must be provided to the building principal in writing that includes the student's name, grade level and your refusal for them to participate in the assessment. Below is a detailed description of the opt out process for your review.

- 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.
- 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.

More information on the opt-out process can be found at
<https://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter4/s4.51b.html>

Please contact the CHS main office at 570-673-5134 to schedule an appointment. As always, we sincerely appreciate your support and are available to answer any questions that may arise.

Sincerely,

Donald Jacopetti, CHS Principal

Use of Electronic Devices During PSSA or Keystone Exam Testing

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. The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has requested that districts make clear to students and families that the material contained in the PSSA and Keystone Exams is copyrighted property of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Copying or duplicating the material from an 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 PDE 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 and remind your child that the possession and/or use of a cell phone or any other electronic device during the administration of the PSSA or Keystone Exams is strictly prohibited and will result in the assignment of consequences at both the school and State levels.

Test administrators follow protocols in the testing rooms to do everything possible to make sure students are not in possession of devices that could be used to capture or record content from the state assessment. If a student is discovered using and/or having a cell phone or other electronic device in his or her possession during the testing, the school will contact the parent/guardian. Students will be subjected to school disciplinary consequences that could include suspension. Additionally, per the requirements of the PDE, the student's test will not be scored and the student will be required to retake the entire exam. The school will hold the electronic device until the parents are contacted to come in and review together with administration the photographic content on the electronic device to ensure that no photographs or duplications of state test materials have been created. If a photograph of state test items is found on the electronic device or if the permission to search the device is refused, the district will contact the PDE and further action may be taken, as the State holds the copyright to all materials contained within the PSSA and Keystone Exams.

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.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TEST TAKERS DO...

- 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." Also, be sure to read any open-ended items and writing prompts carefully before responding.
- Be careful when marking your answers so that you do not skip spaces or fill in the wrong sections.
- Make sure to completely fill in the bubble for the answer(s) you select and erase completely answers you change.
- Keep your eyes on your own test.
- Try to answer each test item.
- Check that you have completed all the test items in the test section before closing your test booklet or submitting your final responses online.
- Report any suspected cheating to your teacher or principal.

DO NOT...

- Have notes in your possession during the test.
- Have any unapproved electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, smart phones, smartwatches, etc.) other than an approved calculator, in your possession during the test.
- Share a calculator with others.
- Use the bubbles in the answer booklet to either eliminate possible incorrect answers or possible correct answers by making multiple bubbles and erasing. Mark only the bubble for the correct answer(s) you have chosen.
- Talk with others about questions on the test during or after the test. (Students should be assured that they may discuss the testing process or issues of concern with their parents/guardians.)
- Take notes about the test to share with others.
- Leave an online test session until the session is complete or until instructed to do so.
- Use social media to post information about the test and/or test items.

PENNSYLVANIA CALCULATOR POLICY

If a student chooses to use a calculator (other than the online options) on the Keystone Exams or PSSA in sections where the calculator is permitted, the student must adhere to the guidelines listed below. It is incumbent upon the School Assessment Coordinator to ensure that all calculator policies are implemented and followed, including making sure calculators have no programs or other data stored in their memory other than those that are factory installed. Please note that if a student wants to restore the deleted programs, the student will need to back up these programs prior to the assessment. In addition, the memory must be cleared on the calculator prior to and following each test session of the assessment.

The following are **not** permitted for the PSSA or Keystone Exams:

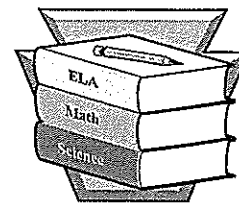
- Devices that have a primary purpose other than functioning as a calculator such as cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, PDAs, laptops, tablets, pocket organizers, etc.
- Calculators with infrared, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, or other beaming or wireless capabilities, unless the beaming or wireless capabilities are disabled
- Calculators with built-in Computer Algebra Systems (CAS)
- Calculators that make noise, have paper tape, need to be plugged in, or talk; these specific calculators can only be used as a required accommodation as stated in the *Accommodations Guidelines*
- Calculators shared by students during a test session
- Any and all non-factory (add-on) programs or information stored in the calculator

This calculator policy is intended to be a general description of what is not allowed. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list of specific calculators, devices, or technologies that must not be used on the PSSA or Keystone Exams. Please note that as technology changes, this policy may also change.

Information for Parents or Guardians

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

English Language Arts, Mathematics,
and Science Assessment



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?

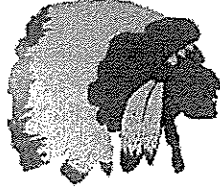
A science scenario contains text, graphics, charts, and/or tables and uses these elements to describe the results of a class project, an experiment, or other similar research. Students use the information found in a science scenario to answer multiple-choice questions.

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.



Canton Area School District

Cell phone Assessment Procedures

Pennsylvania has established very specific guidelines, regarding cell phones, during the administration of PSSA tests and Keystone exams.

These rules and policies apply to the administration of both the Keystone Exams and the PSSA.

All cell phones, smart phones, and other prohibited electronic devices are to be collected as students enter the testing site. Thus, school districts and schools should do the following:

- * Inform parents and students before testing, that cell phones are not allowed during the test administration; Posted on website!
- * Inform parents and students that the consequence for using and/or having a cell phone or other electronic device during the test administration will result in the application of a "Do Not Score" label on his/her test booklet or appropriate notification to not score on the online version, and the student will not receive a score;
- * Inform parents and students that, if the student uses a cell phone or electronic device in any manner during the administration of the test, the phone or electronic device will be confiscated until such time that the parent or guardian can come to the school, and in the presence of the parent or guardian, the cell phone or other electronic device will be viewed to ensure that no information or material regarding the assessment is present;
- * Inform parents and students that violation of the no cell phone or other electronic device rule will result in discipline and that discipline will vary depending on whether test material has been compromised; and
- * Inform parents and students that any items on an assessment that have been compromised, and can no longer be used will have to be replaced, and the parents and students may be responsible for the cost of replacement.