

CONNEAUT SCHOOL DISTRICT
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
219 West School Drive
Linesville, Pennsylvania 16424
PHONE (814)683-5900 - FAX (814)683-4127

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

August 21, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Conneaut School District will participate in the statewide Fall Keystone Exams on September 28 – October 16, 2020. The Keystone Exams are end-of-course assessments designed to evaluate proficiency in academic content. The Fall Keystone Exam will also retest those students who were not successful in one or more modules in the past. This is a result of students affected by the cancellation of the Keystone Exams during spring 2020 who may choose to make-up one or more Keystone Exams in the delayed Summer window, the Winter testing window (December 1, 2020-January 15, 2020), or the Spring testing window (May 17-28, 2021).

Section 4.4 of Title 22, Chapter 4 provides for the right of parents (or guardians) to excuse their children from the state assessment, if upon inspection of the testing materials, they find the assessment to be in conflict with their religious beliefs. The state assessments will be available for parents (or guardians) to review in the school district beginning 2 weeks prior to the administrations of the test. The assessments must be reviewed at Conneaut Area Senior High. Parents/guardians who desire to review the assessment forms will be asked to sign a prepared statement concerning the requirements of assessment security and confidentiality. They may not photocopy, write, or in any other manner record any portion of the assessment including directions. After reviewing the test(s) parents (guardians) must provide a written request addressed to Mr. Jarrin Sperry, Superintendent, for excusal based upon religious conflict.

If you wish to review the assessment forms, please contact your child's school by September 18th and make arrangements with Mr. Maskrey and the School Assessment Coordinator. The test will be available to review from September 21-23, 2020, at Conneaut Area Senior High.

The information attached to this letter will help answer questions that you may have regarding the assessment. If you require additional information regarding the Keystone Exams, please contact Mrs. Brenda Kantz, Assessment Coordinator, at 814-683-5900, ext. 4974.

Sincerely,



Brenda Kantz
Supervisor of Curriculum/Assessment



Jarrin Sperry
Superintendent

AN EQUAL RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES SCHOOL DISTRICT

The mission of the Conneaut School District is to provide a safe and supportive environment in which all students acquire the skills necessary to become productive members of a global society.

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.).

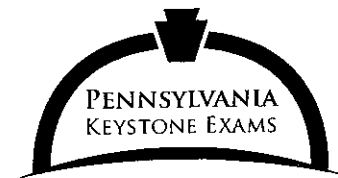
In order to ensure reliable test results and to avoid the cost of replacing test items, the Department of Education requires schools to set rules and take certain steps to protect test materials. Electronic devices such as but not limited to cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, E-readers, Nooks, Kindles, 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 2021–2022, 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.

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.