

# TITUSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

*INSPIRE TO ACHIEVE*

302 East Walnut Street  
Titusville, PA 16354  
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PHILIP A. KNAPP  
Principal

CRYSTAL D. GATES  
Assistant Principal

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April 10, 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Titusville Area School District will participate in the 2019 statewide Keystone Assessments beginning May 13th – May 24th. The Keystone tests will be administered to students who are completing the following courses this school year: Algebra I, Algebra 1B, Math 10, Biology, Science 11, Science 10 and any English 10 class. Additionally, students who are not currently proficient on the exam and have taken it at least one time previously will also be tested. The exams will be administered in the morning on the following dates:

Algebra I	May 14 & 15
Literature	May 16 & 17
Biology	May 21 & 22

Please encourage your student to get a good night of sleep, eat a healthy breakfast and be on time to school. Also, please let us know if your student will have a morning appointment during the testing dates so we can make arrangements for make-up testing.

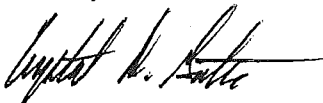
Section 4.4 of Chapter 4 provides for the right of parents (or guardians) to excuse their children from the state assessment if upon inspection of the testing materials, they find the assessment to be in conflict with their religious beliefs. This is the only basis for a parental excusal from the statewide assessments. The state assessments will be available for parents (or guardians) to review beginning 2 weeks prior to the administration of the test. The assessments must be reviewed at the school. 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 records any portion of the assessment including directions. After reviewing the test(s) parents/guardians must provide a written request addressed to the superintendent for excusal based upon religious conflict.

If you wish to review the assessments, please contact the school that your child attends and make arrangements with the principal to examine the test materials during the weeks of April 29<sup>th</sup> – May 3, 2019.

The assessment is used to measure a student's attainment of the academic standards. It also determines the degree to which school programs enable students to attain proficiency of the standards. Since this information provides valuable local data for planning future school programs, curriculum development, in-service training, and informing the public about student achievement, it is very important for all children in the designated grades to put forth their best effort.

Attached you will find additional information regarding the Keystone Exams. If you have any questions about your student taking the exam, please call the THS guidance office at 827-2715 x1425.

Sincerely,



Crystal D. Gates  
Assistant Principal

*"The Titusville High School  
is a community partnership working to meet the diverse needs of our students.  
It is our mission to ensure that our students reach their full potential as responsible and productive citizens of the  
21<sup>st</sup> century 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.).

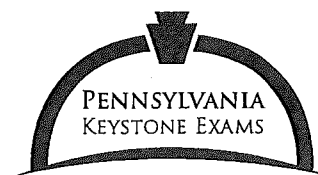
In order to ensure reliable test results and to avoid the cost of replacing test items, the Department of Education requires schools to set rules and take certain steps to protect test materials. Electronic devices such as but not limited to cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, E-readers, Nooks, Kindles,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

# 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. Additionally, students who take a Keystone Exam and do not score Proficient 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. These groups 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 2 to 3 hours to complete. There are two modules on each test, and each module (or Test Session) of the Keystone Exam should take 1 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 specifying their objection to the school district superintendent or charter school CAO to request their child be excused from the exam(s).

### **Report Testing Irregularities**

Parents/guardians who believe that a testing irregularity may have occurred may email [ra-ed-pssa-keystone@pa.gov](mailto:ra-ed-pssa-keystone@pa.gov) or call 844-418-1651 to report the incident.

**For additional information about the Keystone Exams, visit the PDE website at [www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov) or contact your school district.**