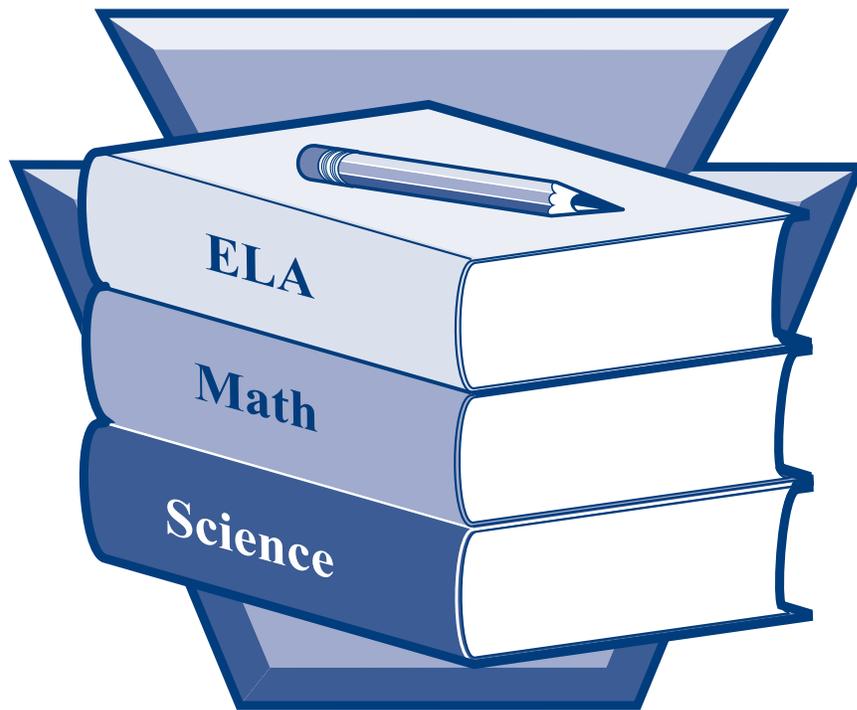




pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



2016

PENNSYLVANIA SYSTEM OF SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

Handbook for Assessment Coordinators

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IMPORTANT REMINDERS

1. PIMS

The PIMS student data DRC receives for PSSA reporting will indicate a student's enrollment status on the last day of each subject-specific testing window (i.e., the student's district/school of attendance and Full Academic Year status for each subject). PDE's attribution rules have been established to follow these subject-specific testing windows. The same PIMS student data will also be used to calculate each school's participation. Every public student enrolled in grades 3–8 at the end of the testing windows will be included in the PIMS file and included in the participation calculation. It is the responsibility of each public school to ensure that all of its students are administered the exam, whether the student is being educated within the district or testing in an out-of-district placement.

It is imperative that a booklet is returned for every student eligible for the PSSA, including students who are not participating because of recent medical emergencies, parental exclusions, or other reasons. This also includes first-year ELL students who are not required to attempt the ELA assessment. An ELA answer booklet must be returned for these students so that an ELA record exists for the participation calculation.

NEW PDE POLICY: A student must be assessed at his/her grade level at the time of the assessment window. PDE no longer requires a student to be tested at his/her grade level on October 1 of the current school year. This new policy is meant to ensure that a student's grade in the PIMS file for PSSA reporting and participation will match the grade level of the student's assessment. Note: If a student is in Grade 8 at any time during the current school year, he/she must participate in the Grade 8 assessment (see page 7 for more information).

2. TEST SECURITY

It is necessary to ensure validity and security of the PSSA's, all school assessment coordinators, test administrators, and proctors should read and understand the new Handbook for Secure Test Administration. The Handbook for Secure Test Administration is a standalone document that was shipped with this handbook. If additional copies are needed, a PDF can be downloaded from PDE's website.

In addition, coordinators and test administrators should understand the Ethical Standards of Test Preparation and Administration, Appendix B, and complete the online PSTAT Training, www.pstattraining.net.

3. REFERENCE MATERIALS

To give students easier access to the rubrics that are used to score their open-ended responses, the mathematics and science Scoring Guidelines will be presented as separate handouts rather than printed in the back of the test booklets. The Scoring Guidelines will be printed and packaged separately by subject and grade (when necessary) and will include all applicable rubrics. The mathematics reference sheets for grades 4–8 will also include formula sheets. For English Language Arts, the Writing prompt and TDA prompt Writer's Checklists will be provided as a separate reference document. The Scoring Guidelines for ELA will be located in the back of the test booklets. The *Directions for Administration Manuals* provide clear instructions for the distribution and collection of these reference documents. Schools may make copies of the Scoring Guidelines and Writer's Checklists if additional handouts are needed.

4. LATE RETURN OF TEST MATERIALS

All PSSA materials must be returned in accordance with the dates provided in this handbook. All PSSA answer booklets must arrive at DRC by the final processing date to be included in 2016 reporting. UPS pickups must occur in accordance with the established timelines, and absolutely no later than May 10 to ensure that your materials arrive prior to the close of answer booklet processing. Failure to return your PSSA answer booklets in the required timeline can negatively affect PSSA and accountability reporting. The exclusion of any students in accountability reporting because of an LEA's failure to return answer booklets within the established timeline will be reported to and researched by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

PART I – GENERAL ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

1. ADMINISTRATION MANUALS

Building Principals, District Assessment Coordinators, and School Assessment Coordinators who coordinate the administration of the assessments must become familiar with this handbook and the *Directions for Administration Manuals*. The *Directions for Administration Manuals* are mode (i.e., online or paper) specific. Manuals will be provided to school entities based on whether students will be participating in the PSSA via either online testing or paper/pencil testing.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidelines and procedures for online testing and paper/pencil testing. Additional information associated with utilizing the eDIRECT system for online testing can be found in the *eDIRECT Test Setup User Guide* which can be found at <https://pa.drctdirect.com>. Click on Documents under the General Information tab. Select the appropriate administration and select 'User Guide' under Document Type, and click Show Documents.

Note: For testing sites that receive their materials directly from Data Recognition Corporation (e.g., ship-to-school districts, IUs, charter schools, non-public and private schools, and other special sites); the School Assessment Coordinator fulfills the responsibilities of the District and School Assessment Coordinator as outlined in this handbook.

Schools may make copies (in full or in part) of this handbook and the *Directions for Administration Manuals*. PDF versions of these documents can be found in eDIRECT and also on the PDE website at www.education.pa.gov.

- Click on K-12 in the dark blue bar across the top of the page.
- Select Assessment and Accountability.
- Click on the PSSA Link that says "Continue to Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) Information..." under the paragraph titled, PENNSYLVANIA SYSTEM OF SCHOOL ASSESSMENT (PSSA).

2. TESTING WINDOWS FOR 2016

Materials for the assessments will be delivered according to the schedule below. Instruct personnel who are responsible for receipt of the shipments to contact you as soon as the shipments arrive. (Avoid the common error of having shipments placed in the book storage area or the supply room without the assessment coordinator's knowledge.) Boxes can be identified by a fluorescent label that reads "Test Materials Enclosed: Open Immediately and Inventory."

By March 14	Manuals (all subjects) arrive at districts/schools
By March 28	Administrative and secure materials (all subjects) arrive at districts/schools
April 11 – 15	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TESTING WINDOW
	<i>English Language Arts materials picked up by April 20</i>
April 18 – 22	MATHEMATICS TESTING WINDOW
	<i>Mathematics materials picked up by April 27</i>
April 25 – 29	SCIENCE TESTING WINDOW
	<i>Science materials picked up by May 4</i>
May 2 – 6	MAKE-UP TESTING WINDOW FOR ALL SUBJECTS
	<i>ALL make-up materials picked up by May 6</i>

3. MATERIALS RECEIPT NOTICE

Boxes should be opened immediately to inventory the contents. If not inventoried centrally, boxes should be distributed intact to schools, allowing enough time for the School Assessment Coordinator to inventory the materials. District Assessment Coordinators (or School Assessment Coordinators that receive materials directly from DRC) are required to enter the date secure materials arrive at the district/school using the Materials Receipt Notice in eDIRECT. All District Assessment Coordinators have access to the Materials Receipt Notice and are responsible for assigning permissions to School Assessment Coordinators (if appropriate).

After logging in to eDIRECT, click on Receipt Notice under the Materials tab on the left menu. Select the appropriate Administration and then District and School; click Show. Clicking the complete button certifies that the school listed has received and inventoried its secure testing materials and that any discrepancies from the packing list have been reported to DRC.

NOTE: All secure materials must be returned to DRC. Any materials that are not returned to DRC or accounted for on the school's Materials Accountability Form will be reported to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

4. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

If additional materials are needed, the School Assessment Coordinator should request them from the District Assessment Coordinator. Additional materials must be requested through eDIRECT at <https://pa.drccedirect.com>. All District Assessment Coordinators have access to the Additional Materials Request and are responsible for assigning permissions to School Assessment Coordinators (if appropriate). The Additional Materials Request system will be available starting on March 28, 2016.

After logging in to eDIRECT, click on Additional Materials under the Materials tab on the left menu. Select the appropriate Administration and then District and School. Click the Add Order button to see the materials available to order. Fill in the amount of materials needed in the Request Quantity box, then click the Submit button. **When ordering additional materials, please enter the exact number needed. DRC will determine final counts and pack sizes.**

This system allows for all users with proper permission to see orders that have been placed. To search or view orders, click on Additional Materials under the Materials tab on the left menu. Select the appropriate Administration and then District and School. Select 'All' under Status and then click the Find Orders button. All orders for that School will be displayed with the current status. Materials ordered from DRC after 2:00 p.m. EST will be shipped on the following business day. All materials must be ordered four days prior to the start of a testing window in order to ensure delivery prior to the start of testing. If additional Braille material is needed, please call DRC Customer Service at 1-800-451-7849.

5. SCHOOL ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR ORIENTATION

Every District Assessment Coordinator must train School Assessment Coordinators prior to the School Assessment Coordinator training the Test Administrators. The following topics must be included in the training:

1. The district assessment schedule
2. Directions in this handbook; emphasizing
 - a) student participation;
 - b) requirements for completing demographic and accommodations information for all participating students;
 - c) barcode labels (for paper testers, every used answer booklet must have a label applied to the front cover);
 - d) required PAsecureID lists; and
 - e) Test Security Certifications
3. Procedures for distribution and collection of assessment materials, including Test Tickets for online testers
4. Directions in the *eDIRECT Test Setup User Guide*, if testing online
5. Test Administrator training

6. School Assessment Coordinator responsibility for the security of assessment materials
7. Distribution of parent information
8. A complete review of test security
9. School Assessment Coordinators should be given ample time to distribute the *Directions for Administration Manuals* (available online) to Test Administrators and to schedule an orientation session within the two weeks prior to the assessment window.

6. TEST ADMINISTRATOR ORIENTATION

Any person who functions as a Test Administrator must complete the PSSA and Keystone Exams Test Administration online training module at www.pstattraining.net. This interactive course is designed as an individual, one-to-one training for Test Administrators and is a key component of the training that School Assessment Coordinators are required to perform as outlined in this manual. School Assessment Coordinators must ensure that their Test Administrators register and complete this training annually prior to administering the PSSA or Keystone Exams.

At least one week prior to the scheduled assessment dates, School Assessment Coordinators **must** conduct a training session for Test Administrators and Proctors. Qualified teachers, counselors, administrators, and paraprofessionals employed by the LEA may act as Test Administrators. Student teachers may be present during the administration of the assessments as part of their professional experience; however, they may **not** be either Test Administrators or Proctors. In this training session, the following topics must be included:

1. **Assessment Schedule**—Be certain that Test Administrators and Proctors know the assessment schedule.
2. **Administration Preparation**—Test Administrators and Proctors must receive and study the *Directions for Administration Manuals* and the Ethical Standards of Test Preparation and Administration (found in Appendix B) prior to training.
3. **Students with Special Needs**—Explain which students are to be included in the assessment and what special accommodations may be provided for these students (see “Participation Guidelines for All Assessments” starting on page 7 of this handbook).
4. **Assessment Conditions**—Remind Test Administrators and Proctors the importance of good assessment conditions (e.g., a comfortable, quiet room) and a positive approach to the assessment.
5. **Special Instructions**—Remind Test Administrators and Proctors that all testers using paper/pencil mode of testing must use a No. 2 pencil when responding to the assessment. Also, all demographic data must be coded using a No. 2 pencil prior to the assessment—only if there is no student specific label.
6. **Cell Phones**—All cell phones, smart phones, and other prohibited electronic devices are to be collected as students enter the testing site. To ensure students (and parents/guardians) are aware of this policy, school districts and schools should distribute to parents/guardians the letter found in Appendix A before testing. The consequences for using and/or having a cell phone or other electronic device during the test administration includes:
 - a Do Not Score Label will be placed on the student’s answer booklet (for online mode, DRC invalidates assessment and resets the test) and the student must retake the assessment during the same administration testing window in order to receive a score;
 - the phone or electronic device will be confiscated and in the presence of the parent or guardian, and, with the parent/guardian’s permission, the cell phone or other electronic device will be viewed to ensure that no information or material regarding the assessment is present;
 - the student will be disciplined in accordance with LEA policy, and that discipline will vary depending on whether test material has been compromised; and
 - the parents and students may be responsible for the cost of replacing compromised items.

District personnel, school personnel, and students must understand that the integrity of the test cannot be compromised.

7. **Use of Calculators**—Except for the Non-Calculator section of the PSSA Mathematics assessment, calculators may be used for any part of the following assessments as long as the Pennsylvania Calculator Policy (found in Appendix C) is followed:
 - Remaining sections of the PSSA Mathematics assessment
 - PSSA Science assessment
8. **Use of Dictionaries, Thesauruses, Spell- or Grammar-Checkers**—Make sure all Test Administrators and Proctors are aware that the use of these items is not permitted on any section of the PSSA.

Note: As an accommodation for English Language Learners, word-to-word dictionaries that translate a native language to English (or English to a native language) without definitions or pictures are allowed on the mathematics and science assessments only.
9. **Classroom Displays**—Explain that only the *General Description of Scoring Guidelines*, Writer’s Checklists, and the mathematics formula sheets may be displayed in the testing room. The subject-specific scoring guidelines and formula sheets are printed as separate documents for easy student reference. They can also be found in eDIRECT and the PDE website at www.education.pa.gov. Click on K-12 in the dark blue bar across the top of the page. Select Assessment and Accountability. Click on the PSSA Link that says “Continue to Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) Information...” under the paragraph titled, PENNSYLVANIA SYSTEM OF SCHOOL ASSESSMENT (PSSA).
10. **Barcode Labels**—Emphasize the important aspects of barcode label use for paper/pencil mode (see “Labeling Answer Booklets” starting on page 13 of this handbook).
11. **Make-up Sessions**—Clarify the school entity’s make-up procedures (see “Make-up Sessions” on page 38 of this handbook for complete instructions).
12. **Scratch Paper**—Remind Test Administrators and Proctors that scratch paper must be provided to students for use during the assessments. Blank graph and grid paper are allowed. All scratch paper must be removed from the answer booklets by the students. Collect all scratch paper at the end of each test session and return to the School Assessment Coordinator to be destroyed. Test Administrators must collect all used scratch paper after the non-calculator portion of the assessment to ensure students have not recorded non-calculator items on scratch paper.
13. **Response Space**—Emphasize that students are limited to the response space provided in the answer booklets or in the online test engine (INSIGHT). Additional pages/booklets will not be scored.
14. **Code of Conduct**—Remind Test Administrators to review these requirements (found in Appendix D of this manual) with all students in advance of the testing day. Prior to starting the assessment, students will be required to indicate that they understand the Code of Conduct for Test Takers that was reviewed with them by their Test Administrators (or teachers). It is important that Test Administrators are prepared to answer any questions about the code of conduct so that all students can acknowledge their understanding of the requirements.
15. **Security**—Emphasize that all test materials, including test booklets, answer booklets, test tickets, and content in the online test must be kept secure at all times prior to, during, and after the assessment, and that completed booklets must be kept secure.

To prevent any suspicion of testing anomalies, PDE strongly encourages school entities not to allow teachers to be Test Administrators and/or Proctors of their own students. As such, it is recommended that other teachers be used as Test Administrators and/or Proctors, or that a Proctor be in the testing room with the teacher if the teacher acts as the Test Administrator of his/her own class.

In collaboration with the Bureau of Special Education, the following guidance is provided: A separate Test Administrator is required for test settings where an educational sign language interpreter has been assigned to interpret allowable Keystone and PSSA test material for a student(s). The School Assessment Coordinator must ensure that the educational sign language interpreter receives assessment training. The interpreter must sign the Confidentiality Agreement found in the *Accommodations Guidelines* and the General Test Security Certification found in Appendix E. Before signing the certification, cross out the word “reviewed” in the third paragraph.

7. INFORMATION FOR ONLINE TESTERS

The School and District Assessment Coordinators involved with online testing should refer to the *eDIRECT Test Setup User Guide* and the grade/subject-specific *Online Directions for Administration Manuals*. These documents contain specific information related to using the eDIRECT system to set up students and computers for use by students for online testing and managing student test tickets. The user guide and the *Online Directions for Administration Manuals* are available in eDIRECT. Click on Documents under the General Information tab. Select the appropriate Administration and select ‘Manuals’ under Document Type.

Other information related to online testing is also available in eDIRECT, including online testing tutorials and the Online Tools Training.

➤ PA Online Tutorials

The PA Online Tutorials have been created for each assessment and are designed to be used by students at all grade levels. The tutorials use pictures, motion, and sound to present visual and verbal descriptions of the properties and features of the PA Online Assessment System. To view the tutorials:

Go to eDIRECT: <https://pa.drccedirect.com/>.

Under Test Setup on the left navigation pane, click on General Information.

Go to the Test Tutorials tab.

Click on the play button to view the tutorials.

➤ PA Online Tools Training (OTT)

The PA Online Tools Training (OTT) is designed to provide an introductory experience using the online assessment software in preparation for taking the PSSAs. This allows students to become familiar with testing on a computer and allows them to experiment with the features available during an actual test. Two versions of the OTT are available – a public version and a secure version. The secure version is automatically downloaded when the District Technology Coordinator downloads the testing software. To view the public version:

Go to eDIRECT: <https://pa.drccedirect.com/>.

From the bottom of the home page, select Online Tools Training Software Download – Windows or Mac.

Follow the onscreen instructions to start the OTT.

The username and password is contained in the log in screen.

Note: If a student needs to practice with the audio or color accommodations, add “audio” or “color” after the username (i.e., math3audio).

➤ Technology User Guide

The *Technology User Guide* is available for the District Technology Coordinator. This user guide provides detailed assistance for downloading the testing software.

Go to eDIRECT: <https://pa.drccedirect.com/>.

Under General Information on the left navigation pane, click on Documents.

Select the appropriate administration and select ‘Technology’ under Document Type.

District Assessment Coordinators should consult with their District Technology Coordinator for further details about setting up online testing in the school/district.

PART II – PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES FOR ALL ASSESSMENTS

1. STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE ASSESSMENT

With only a few very specific exceptions, the following students must participate (regardless of where the student is being educated).

- All public school students enrolled in grades 3–8 are required to participate in the 2016 English Language Arts (ELA) PSSA or the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA).
- All public school students enrolled in grades 3–8 are required to participate in the 2016 Mathematics PSSA or the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA).
- All public school students enrolled in grades 4 and 8 are required to participate in the 2016 Science PSSA or the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA).
- Participation by students in non-public schools is voluntary.

A student must be assessed at his/her grade level at the time of the assessment window. This is a change from previous PDE policy that required a student to be assessed at his/her grade level on October 1 of the current school year.

Important Note: There is one exception to this new PDE policy to ensure that an eighth-grade student does not miss the assessments because of an accelerated grade advancement. If a student is in eighth grade at any time during the 2015–2016 school year, he/she is required to participate in the grade 8 assessment during the 2016 testing window. For example, if a student was in eighth grade on Nov. 10, 2015, but advanced to ninth grade by the time of the testing window, he/she must take the Grade 8 PSSA.

An answer booklet must be returned for every student as explained above, with the exception of the students who take an alternate assessment (PASA).

2. PARTICIPATION WITH ACCOMMODATIONS

All students with disabilities, except those participating in the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA), must participate in the 2016 Pennsylvania System of School Assessments. These students should be provided with the same allowable accommodations in the state assessment environment as provided for in their 22 PA Code Chapter 14 or Chapter 711 Individualized Education Program (IEP) or their 22 PA Code Chapter 15 Service Agreement regarding their instruction. For more information, refer to the *Accommodations Guidelines* found in eDIRECT. Click on Documents under the General Information tab on the left menu. Select the appropriate administration and select 'PDE Procedures and Guidelines' under Document Type. This document can also be found on the PDE website at www.education.pa.gov.

- Click on K-12 in the dark blue bar across the top of the page.
 - Select Assessment and Accountability.
 - Click on the PSSA Link that says "Continue to Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) Information..." under the paragraph titled, PENNSYLVANIA SYSTEM OF SCHOOL ASSESSMENT (PSSA).
- **Braille and large-print** versions of the assessment are available for students with visual impairments. These versions are available in paper versions only.
- Students who use the Braille or large-print versions must have all of their answers (multiple-choice and open-ended) transcribed by the School Assessment Coordinator or designee into a Form 1 answer booklet (using a No. 2 pencil only). Additional Form 1 booklets for transcription will be provided with the Braille and large-print versions for this purpose. These booklets are identified as packs of 1. If a Form 1 scannable-booklet pack is not received, please use another Form 1 answer booklet from the school's additional materials.
 - The School Assessment Coordinator or designee may not make corrections of student work. No corrections are allowed for spelling, punctuation, or grammar.
 - Student responses in Braille or large-print booklets that are not transcribed into a Form 1 answer booklet will not be scored.

- The answer booklet that has been used for transcription purposes must have a Student Precode Label or a District/School Label properly affixed.
 - All Braille and large-print booklets are secure materials and must be returned to DRC.
- **Audio** versions of the PSSA assessments are available for students with IEPs needing this accommodation. The audio versions are available **online only**. Within eDIRECT, this accommodation must be selected for the student prior to the student being added to a test session. The test ticket must display this accommodation to ensure that the student is setup properly within the online testing tool. For additional information, please refer to the *eDIRECT Test Setup User Guide*.
- **Color Chooser and Color Contraster** accommodations are available with the online assessments for students who need color overlay accommodations. Within eDIRECT, this accommodation must be selected for the student prior to the student being added to a test session. The test ticket must display this accommodation to ensure that the student is setup properly within the online testing tool. For additional information, please refer to the *eDIRECT Test Setup User Guide*.

See the “Accommodations” section on page 19 of this handbook for additional information.

3. PARTICIPATION IN THE PENNSYLVANIA ALTERNATE SYSTEM OF ASSESSMENT

All students must participate in either the PSSA or the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) for mathematics, reading, and science. For more information on PASA, please go to the following website: <http://www.pasadigital.com>.

If a student has an IEP and is eligible to participate in the PASA, school personnel do not need to return PSSA assessments to DRC for the student. Students responding to the PASA should be provided with an alternative learning environment during the PSSA sessions.

Please review the following eligibility criteria for participation in an alternate assessment. Students who meet all six of the criteria may be excused from the Pennsylvania System of School Assessments and must be administered the PASA for mathematics, reading, and science. A student who meets these criteria cannot be eligible for the PSSA in one subject and an alternate assessment in another subject. The Pennsylvania Department of Education is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to monitor the inclusion of students with disabilities in the statewide assessments.

Criteria for Participation in the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment

(Whether or not a student meets the following criteria must be determined by the student's IEP team.)

- Criterion 1:** The student is in grade 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8; and
- Criterion 2:** The student has a severe cognitive disability; and
- Criterion 3:** The student requires very intensive instruction to learn; and
- Criterion 4:** The student requires very extensive adaptations and supports in order to perform and/or participate meaningfully and productively in the everyday life activities of integrated school, home, community, and work environments; and
- Criterion 5:** The student requires very substantial modification of the general education curriculum; and
- Criterion 6:** The student's participation in the general education curriculum differs very substantially in form and/or substance from that of most other students (i.e., requires modified objectives, materials, and/or activities)

Important Reminder: No more than 1% of a district's percentage of Advanced/Proficient scores may come from PASA results for accountability purposes. PASA results in excess of 1% will be counted as Not Proficient for purposes of accountability.

4. PROCEDURES FOR NON-ASSESSED STUDENTS

For a non-assessed student in a school using a paper/pencil assessment, use the “Non-Assessed Students” grid on page 1 of the answer booklet and darken the bubble next to the reason the student did not participate. For online testers, non-assessed information must be provided in eDIRECT (Test Setup > Students). Refer to the *eDIRECT Test Setup User Guide* for more information.

The non-assessed information on the answer booklet or in eDIRECT does not override student responses. If a student attempts all sections of a subject, the student’s responses will be scored.

Students not participating in the assessment must be coded under one or more of the following categories:

- **Student had a recent medical emergency:** This applies only to rare circumstances in which a student cannot take or finish taking the assessment during the entire testing window, including make-up dates, due to a recent significant medical emergency. For example, this might include a situation in which a student is recovering from a recent car accident. In these situations, the student has remained enrolled at the school, yet the circumstances might prohibit him or her from participating in the assessment during the testing window.

Concussion: If a student has been diagnosed with a concussive injury and there is medical documentation within 2 weeks of the start of the testing window that states the student may not participate in standardized testing, school personnel must select “Student had a recent medical emergency.” In all other instances involving concussive injuries and student nonparticipation due to illness/health issue, the student should be coded as “Other.”

The “recent medical emergency” option allows schools to omit such students when calculating student participation rates. This will ensure that schools whose accountability status might be affected by such situations will not be improperly designated. Keep in mind that if a student is receiving education services (school enrollment, hospital, treatment facility, homebound, etc.) during the testing window, the student must be given the opportunity to participate in the PSSAs at the location they are receiving their educational services.

- **Student had an extended absence for the entire testing window:** If a student is absent from school for an extended period that continues beyond the last day of the PDE-established testing window, school personnel must select “Student had an extended absence for the entire testing window.”

Schools must make every effort to ensure that all students who experience absences during the testing window are able to participate in the assessments during the school’s make-up sessions. Students who are non-assessed due to an extended absence will have a negative effect on the school’s participation rate and can potentially have a negative impact on the school’s accountability status.

- **Student had a 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. District personnel may remove the prompt seal from one copy of an ELA booklet to facilitate a review of the ELA assessment.
- Sites testing only online should contact DRC to order a set of paper assessments for the purposes of parental review. These booklets must be returned to DRC following the return instructions outlined in this handbook.
- Parents and guardians must sign the **Parent Confidentiality Agreement**. A copy of this must be locally maintained. (Do not send this statement to PDE or DRC.) Parents and guardians may not photocopy, write down, or in any other manner record any portion of the assessments, including directions. The Parent Confidentiality Agreement can be found in Appendix F of this handbook.

- 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.
- **Student had a parental exclusion based on other reasons:** If a parent chooses to have his/her student not participate in the assessment but does not provide a reason in accordance with Chapter 4 rules, school personnel must select “Student had a parental exclusion based on other reasons.” 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.
- **Other:** Although there is no other apparent reason for student non-participation in the assessment, this category is provided for the rare exception. The most notable rare exception is student refusal to participate at the time of testing. Refusal represents a defiant act on the student’s part despite school personnel’s every effort to obtain compliance. If you have exhausted all options and believe you have a case that fits into this category, select “Other.” Indicating that a student did not participate in the assessments due to “other” reasons will negatively affect the school’s participation rate and can potentially have a negative impact on the school’s accountability status.

5. CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct for Test Takers, found in Appendix D of this manual, provides requirements that students should follow before, during, and after each assessment. This code of conduct must be reviewed with all students in advance of the testing day. Prior to starting the assessment, students will be required to indicate that they understand the Code of Conduct for Test Takers that was reviewed with them by their Test Administrators (or teachers). It is important that Test Administrators are prepared to answer any questions about the Code of Conduct so that all students can acknowledge their understanding of the requirements.

6. OTHER ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

This grid can be found on page 2 of the answer booklet for any student taking a paper/pencil assessment. If the student is testing online, this information must be provided in eDIRECT (Test Setup > Students).

- **Student is court/agency placed (not foster care):** Court/agency-placed students are required to participate in the assessments regardless of whether the student has an IEP or not. All students who have been court or agency placed into a non-public setting (e.g., PRRI or other juvenile delinquency institution, mental health, drug and/or alcohol treatment facility) are required to participate in the assessments. This section does not apply to foster care students.
- School personnel must identify a court/agency-placed student by selecting “Student is court/agency placed (*not foster care*)” in the “Other Assessment Information” section of the answer booklet or under “Testing Codes” in eDIRECT. Do not select “Other” in the “Non-Assessed Students” grid for these students.
 - **Court/Agency-placed information is only captured on the answer booklets or in eDIRECT and is not collected from PIMS.**
 - Students attending alternative education programs, IU programs, or Approved Private Schools are placed by the school or district, not by a court or agency; therefore, these students should not be identified as court/agency placed.

- **Student was absent without make-up:** If a student is absent for any sections of a subject and is unable to make up the incomplete section(s), select the appropriate information in the “Other Assessment Information” section.
 - It is important to indicate if a student was absent without make-up, as not doing so will result in the student’s test being scored and reported under the assumption that the student simply did not attempt to participate in all sections of the assessment.
 - Students who are absent without make-up will negatively affect the school’s participation rate and can potentially have a negative impact on the school’s accountability status.

7. STUDENT WITHDRAWAL/ENROLLMENT DURING THE TESTING WINDOW

PDE has established separate testing windows for English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science that correspond to student data being pulled from PIMS on the last day of each subject’s testing window (excluding the make-up window). The purpose is to ensure that each student can be reported at the district/school of attendance in which he/she was enrolled on the last day of each subject-specific window, including the student’s appropriate Full Academic Year status for each subject. Accordingly, all students are to be attributed to the school and/or district in which they are enrolled on the last day of each testing window. For the vast majority of students, their districts/schools of attendance will not change between the assessments. However, to account for student transfers and enrollment changes that occur within the entire PSSA testing window, please follow the guidelines outlined below.

If a student completed an entire assessment but withdrew prior to the end of a subject-specific testing window, return the used answer booklet to DRC to be scored. If the student tested online and the results have been submitted, no further action is needed. The student’s record should then be attributed to the district and school to which he/she transferred if the student’s new enrollment occurred before that subject’s testing window closed. Please contact DRC for further instructions if a student withdrew during a testing window but did not transfer to a new school prior to the end of that testing window.

- If a student completed the English Language Arts assessment in one district, but withdraws prior to April 15, 2016, the student’s record must be attributed to the district and school to which he/she transferred.
- If a student completed the Mathematics assessment in one district, but withdraws between April 18 and April 22, 2016, the student’s Mathematics record must be attributed to the district and school to which he/she transferred. The ELA record will remain at the site in which he/she was enrolled on April 15.
- If a student completed the Science assessment in one district, but withdraws between April 25 and April 29, 2016, the student’s Science record must be attributed to the district and school to which he/she transferred. The ELA record will remain at the site in which he/she was enrolled on April 15. The Math record will remain at the site in which he/she was enrolled on April 22.

If a school receives a new student prior to the close of the subject-specific testing window, the new school has the responsibility to test the student if he/she has not already completed the assessment. The new school also has the responsibility to complete the necessary research to avoid the unfair burden of re-testing a student who may have completed the assessment in its entirety. Any student who enrolls after the close of a subject-specific testing window is not to be administered that assessment because the PDE-established testing window for the subject will have already passed (regardless of the make-up window).

Districts and schools will have an opportunity to perform attributions during the Online Attribution System window in June of 2016. It is the responsibility of both the sending site and the receiving site to verify that student records have been properly attributed.

In all cases of enrollment during the testing window, the school that receives the transferred student’s score (whether through attribution, via PIMS designation, or by administering the assessment) should be aware that the new student does not meet the Full Academic Year requirement for the school and will not count in the school’s accountability performance calculation. Schools should never attribute the records of transfer students back to their previous districts if the students were enrolled in the new school on the last day of the subject-specific testing windows. Note: The student’s record must properly identify that the student’s enrollment in the new school started after October 1, 2015.

If a student did not complete an entire assessment before withdrawing, or if a student transferred out of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, place a Do Not Score Label on the student's answer booklet before returning it to DRC. If the student began an online assessment and withdraws, contact DRC for assistance on removing the student's assessment.

8. HOME EDUCATION STUDENTS

If the supervisor of a home education program requests that a student take the PSSA, the school district must allow the student to take the assessment at the school building the home education (*home-schooled*) student would normally attend or at another central location agreed to by the school district and the supervisor of the home education program.

Supervisors of home education programs who plan to request that a student take the PSSA with accommodations or the PASA should be aware that certain procedures and timelines must be adhered to before any student is eligible to do so, regardless of whether the student is educated at the public school or is home educated. According to law, it could take several months for the determination to be made that a student is eligible for administration of the PSSA with accommodations or the administration of the PASA.

Information about home education in Pennsylvania, including the Pennsylvania law on home education and related statutes, regulations, frequently asked questions (and answers), and a list of home education organizations serving Pennsylvania families, is available on PDE's website at www.education.pa.gov (keyword search "home education").

Note: For students taking a paper/pencil assessment, a district/school label must be affixed to the used answer booklet in order for the booklet to be scored. For full-time home education students, "student is home-schooled and assessed at parental request" must be bubbled on the student's answer booklet (Item 5-option 6 on page 2 of the answer booklet) or selected in eDIRECT (Test Setup > Students). This information is not collected from PIMS.

9. TESTING OF SUSPENDED AND EXPELLED STUDENTS

Students who have been suspended from daily classroom attendance, but remain on the school's enrollment, should be administered the assessments. The location of the testing (at a school within the district or via homebound instruction) is a district decision. If the district chooses not to test the suspended student, a paper booklet must be returned and coded as non-assessed due to extended absence (which will negatively impact the school's accountability participation calculation).

Students who have been expelled from school and who have been completely removed from the district's enrollments do not need to be administered the assessments. However, if the student remains on the district's enrollment after the expulsion (e.g., the student is placed in an alternate education facility, program or setting), it is the district's responsibility to ensure that the student is tested.

PART III – LABELING ANSWER BOOKLETS

1. OVERVIEW OF BARCODE LABELS

Student Precode Labels, District/School Labels, and Do Not Score Labels will be provided for use on all 2016 PSSA answer booklets. The labels are intended to increase the accuracy of information collected from the booklets. With the exception of students participating in the PASA, all enrolled students must have an answer booklet with a Student Precode Label or a District/School Label or an online test returned to DRC.

DRC’s booklet receiving system is driven by barcodes. Barcodes help DRC identify and sort documents for processing. The four types of barcodes are:

- **BLANK**—DRC has preprinted a “blank” barcode on the cover of every answer booklet. A “blank” barcode indicates that the document has not been used and should not be processed.
- **STUDENT PRECODE**—DRC uses data received from the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS) to produce Student Precode Labels. The labels contain barcodes that indicate the answer booklet should be processed and scored for the student whose name is printed on the label. These labels eliminate the need to hand bubble the student’s name, birth date, PAsecureID, and demographic items 1–7 on page 2 of the answer booklet. **If you receive a label for a student who is no longer enrolled or is testing online, that label should be discarded.**
- **DISTRICT/SCHOOL**—If a student does not have a Student Precode Label, the School Assessment Coordinator or his/her designee must use a District/School Label and hand bubble all demographic information on pages 1 and 2 of the answer booklet before testing begins. The labels contain barcodes with district/school-specific information that indicates the document should be processed and scored for the student whose information is bubbled on the booklet.
- **DO NOT SCORE**—These labels contain barcodes that indicate the answer booklets should NOT be processed. Answer booklets that have a Do Not Score Label will be handled as if they are blank.

General Instructions for Using Barcode Labels

- District/School Labels and Do Not Score Labels are not grade or subject specific and can be used on any PSSA answer booklet.
- Before affixing any label to an answer booklet, check the label to ensure that the information is correct.
- Schools should destroy Student Precode Labels or District/School Labels that contain inaccurate information.
- The School Assessment Coordinator or his/her designee must affix the appropriate label to each answer booklet that will be used by a student.
- Place the label in the box located in the lower left corner on the cover of each student’s answer booklet.
- Do not remove any label that has been affixed to an answer booklet; this will damage the booklet. Instead, the label must be covered with another label of the appropriate type.
- Do not write on the labels. Do not correct information on a label.
- **Do not use labels from another school or a previous exam.** If you need more labels, submit an Additional Materials Request in eDIRECT.

2. STUDENT PRECODE LABEL INSTRUCTIONS

Most testing sites will receive Student Precode Labels that are linked to individual student demographic information and district/school information in PIMS. Student Precode Labels were created directly from a PIMS report and are not created through test sessions in eDIRECT system. It is important that school personnel make sure the readable information printed on the label is correct.

- Testing sites will receive up to three sets of Student Precode Labels (*depending on what grades are tested at the school*). Each set of Student Precode Labels will be separated by a slip-sheet that identifies the assessment for which the labels should be used.
 - The first set will include students in grades 3–8 and are intended for use on students’ PSSA ELA booklets.
 - The second set will include students in grades 3–8 and are intended for use on students’ PSSA mathematics booklets.
 - The third set will include students in grades 4 and 8 and are intended for use on students’ PSSA science booklets.
- If a student’s name, PAsecureID, or birth date is incorrect, the label should not be used. Use a District/School Label in its place and bubble the student’s name, birth date, and PAsecureID exactly as it appears in PIMS.
 - Student name, PAsecureID, and birth date are matching criteria between the precode snapshot and the reporting snapshot. If a student record is uploaded to the precode snapshot with a different name than the reporting snapshot (i.e., printed on the Student Precode Label), DRC cannot match the student’s precode label to the PIMS data for final PSSA and accountability reporting.
 - If a student’s test record cannot be matched to the PIMS reporting file (which will happen if an incorrect precode label is used in the scenario above), it will be the district’s responsibility to match the “PIMS student” to his/her PSSA test record(s) within the attribution system. This is new functionality for the PSSA Attributions System to support the use of PIMS student records for the participation calculation.
- If a Student Precode Label is being used, the information needed for pages 1 and 2 of the answer booklet is embedded in the barcode on the label; therefore, these items should not be bubbled. Items 8–11 on page 3 of the answer booklets need to be completed by school personnel for all assessed students, if applicable. See page 19 for more instructions regarding the accommodations on page 3 of the answer booklet.
- It is essential for assessment coordinators to verify that the student demographic information in PIMS is correct.
- **All embedded Student Precode Label information will supersede any bubbling on page 1 or page 2 of the answer booklet.** Any student information changes or demographic changes made by writing on a Student Precode Label or by bubbling page 1 or page 2 of the answer booklet WILL NOT change the PIMS information embedded in the Student Precode Label.
- If a Student Precode Label is destroyed, school personnel must use a District/School Label in its place and bubble pages 1 and 2 of the answer booklet before testing begins.
- If a student’s score should be attributed to a site other than what appears on the Student Precode Label, the label should be used. The correct district and/or school of residence should be listed in the final PIMS reporting, however, school personnel may need to enter the attribution information in DRC’s online Attribution System (June 2016).

3. DISTRICT/SCHOOL LABEL INSTRUCTIONS

All sites will receive District/School Labels that contain district/school-specific information only. District/School Labels must be used when Student Precode Labels are not available. When using District/School Labels, school personnel must bubble pages 1 and 2 of the answer booklets and all applicable items on page 3.

- District/School Labels have a stripe across the top of the label.
- When using District/School Labels, it is imperative that the student’s name, birth date, and PAsecureID are bubbled exactly as it appears in PIMS. All other applicable demographic information on page 2 of the answer booklet should also be completed in the event that the student-identifying information provided on the booklet does not match to a PIMS record.

- All test records that match to the PIMS reporting file will automatically be attributed to the public school and/or district provided in the PIMS file. If a student uses a District/School Label and his/her test record does not match to PIMS, the record will be reported at the site that appears on the District/School Label. If the student needs to have his/her record attributed to a site other than what appears on the District/School Label, school personnel will need to enter the attribution information in DRC's online Attribution System (June 2016).
- **Do not use labels from another school or another year.** If you need more labels, submit an Additional Materials Request in eDIRECT.

4. DO NOT SCORE LABEL INSTRUCTIONS

Do Not Score Labels are supplied for use on answer booklets that are defective and cannot be scored or answer booklets that should not be scored. Always place the Do Not Score Label directly over any Student Precode Label or District/School Label that was originally affixed to the answer booklet.

Use the Do Not Score Labels when the following has occurred:

- A used answer booklet is torn, soiled, or defective. When a student has used a booklet and it becomes torn, soiled, or is found to be defective (e.g., missing pages) the student's already recorded responses must be transcribed by the School Assessment Coordinator or his/her designee in the presence of a professional staff member who has signed the Test Security Certification Statement into a new booklet of the **same form designation** and a Do Not Score Label affixed to the defective booklet. The School Assessment Coordinator should write "DEFECTIVE" on the damaged booklet. If a student becomes ill on an answer booklet, transcribe the responses into a new booklet, record the security number found on the back of the soiled booklet, and securely destroy the soiled booklet. **Make sure this information is recorded on the Materials Accountability Form found in eDIRECT.**
- A student uses two booklets. Submit one booklet for scoring and return the other booklet with a Do Not Score Label (the student's responses must be transcribed from one booklet into the other).
- A Student Precode Label (for a student who withdrew prior to the testing window) or District/School Label is inadvertently affixed to a blank/unused booklet (a blank/unused booklet does not have any bubbles marked or any student responses). Affix a Do Not Score Label over the incorrect label.
- A student has been completely removed from the school's enrollment on or before the end of the testing window **and** the student **did not** complete the assessment. Affix a Do Not Score Label over the incorrect label. Please refer to page 11 for information regarding students who complete the assessment and transfer to a new school during the PDE-established testing window.

Do not use Do Not Score Labels for the following types of booklets:

- Blank/unused booklets—there is a **preprinted** "BLANK" barcode in the box located in the lower left corner on the cover of the answer booklet to indicate that the booklet is blank/unused. For **unused** answer booklets, a Do Not Score Label does not need to be affixed to these "BLANK" barcodes.
- Booklets for students who are designated as non-assessed and have been coded as such on page 1 of the answer booklet. These booklets must have a Student Precode Label or District/School Label affixed to the front cover.

PART IV – COMPLETING STUDENT INFORMATION

Federal and state accountability measures require the collection of specific student data at the time of testing.

1. PAPER/PENCIL TESTING

Name

For students who are using the Student Precode Label, it is not necessary to complete the name boxes. For students who are using a District/School Label, the School Assessment Coordinator or his/her designee must print the student's name in the boxes on the right-hand side of the cover page of the booklet.

Birth Date and PAscoreID Grids

The **Birth Date** grid on page 2 of the answer booklet must be completed for all students using a District/School Label by darkening the appropriate month of the student's birth date, followed by writing the two-digit day and year in the boxes provided and darkening the corresponding bubbles below.

All public school students have a **PAscoreID**. The PAscoreID grid on page 2 of the answer booklet must be completed for all students using District/School Labels by writing the students' state-assigned, ten-digit PAscoreIDs in the boxes provided and darkening the corresponding bubbles.

If the district does not have a PAscoreID for a student, please follow the instructions below. Questions regarding PAscoreIDs can be e-mailed to RA-PAscoreIDHelp@state.pa.us.

- If a student is home-schooled, the grid should be left blank.
- If a student transferred from another district within the state, the new district can access the PAscoreID website to look up the student's PAscoreID.
- If a student is new to the state or previously attended a private school, the district can access the PAscoreID website and enter the student's information to have a PAscoreID assigned.

Demographics

This information must be reported by school personnel on the answer booklet.

If a student testing with a paper assessment is using a Student Precode Label, the information needed for pages 1 and 2 of the answer booklet is embedded in the barcode on the label; therefore, these items should not be completed by hand. Students with District/School Labels must have pages 1 and 2 completed by school personnel prior to administering the assessment.

Completing Items 1–7 on Page 2 of the Answer Booklet

Item 1 Gender

Indicate whether the student is Male or Female.

Item 2 Race/Ethnicity (*indicate only one*)

Indicate the ethnicity with which the student most closely identifies. You must choose only one. If a student should be counted in more than one racial category, choose *"Two or more races."*

Item 3 Student’s current enrollment status initially started after October 1, 2015 (mark all that apply, if any):

- **in the school of residence** – Student’s current enrollment in this school started after October 1, 2015.

To be considered enrolled in the school for a full academic year, a student must have been continuously enrolled in the school from at least October 1, 2015, to the last day of the PDE-established testing window. Scores for students not enrolled in the school for the full academic year will not be included in the school’s accountability performance calculation.

Note: Alternative education sites only select this item if the student entered his/her school of residence after October 1, 2015.

- **in the district of residence** – Student’s current enrollment in this district started after October 1, 2015.

The same rules previously described for the school of residence apply to the district of residence bubble. Scores for students not enrolled in the district for the full academic year will not be included in the district’s accountability performance calculation.

- **as a Pennsylvania resident** – Student became a Pennsylvania resident after October 1, 2015.

School personnel should complete this item if the student moved to Pennsylvania after October 1, 2015. It is possible that a student may have moved into your school or district from another Pennsylvania school, but enrolled in the previous Pennsylvania school after October 1, 2015, and was not a Pennsylvania resident prior to that date. School personnel are urged to check students’ records carefully.

Item 4 Student’s current enrollment status initially started after October 1, 2014, but on or before October 1, 2015 (mark all that apply, if any):

- **in the school of residence** – Student’s current enrollment in this school started after October 1, 2014 but on or before October 1, 2015.

- **in the district of residence** – Student’s current enrollment in this district started after October 1, 2014, but on or before October 1, 2015.

This item does not apply to normal progression from school to school within a district (i.e., school changes that occur in the course of regular advancement from one grade to the next). Therefore, a student who moves from an elementary to a middle school due to class advancement should not have this field marked.

Item 5 Mark all of the following that apply, if any:

- **Student has an IEP (not Gifted)** – Student has an IEP and has a disability but is not gifted. This demographic item pertains to a student’s IEP status at the time of testing.

It is recognized that gifted students, while not having a diagnosed disability, have a GIEP. The data collected in response to this item are intended to identify ONLY those students with IEPs who have disabilities. Therefore, if a gifted student has a GIEP, but does NOT have a disability, DO NOT select this item.

- **Student has exited an IEP program within the past 2 years** – Student exited an IEP program between April 15, 2014–April 15, 2016. (The end date is based on the last day of the ELA testing window for the 2016 PSSA.)

This information is being collected to allow the flexibility of including these students in the IEP subgroup for accountability calculations.

- **Student participates in Title I program** – All Title I students.

Title I is a federally funded supplemental education program that provides financial assistance to LEAs to improve educational opportunities for educationally deprived children. Title I programs are designed to help children meet the state content and performance standards in reading, language arts, and mathematics. Title I students are not excluded from the PSSA.

- **Student receives Migrant Education Program services** – All students identified as receiving Migrant Education Program services by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Student Services.

This division of PDE is responsible for compiling and distributing an official list of students eligible for Migrant Education Program services. Only personnel from this division can identify students receiving these services. The official list is distributed to district superintendents and building principals. Please see the Migrant Education Program portion of the PDE website for more information.

- **Student is classified as economically disadvantaged** – All students who meet the district’s economically disadvantaged criteria.

Students are commonly classified as economically disadvantaged if they qualify for free or reduced lunch; however, other criteria used by the district may be substituted.

- **Student is home-schooled and assessed at parental request** – A home-schooled student is being assessed at your testing facility at parental request.

A home-schooled student is not to be considered as enrolled in a school program, and the student’s scores will not be included in the district or school results for accountability calculations.

If a student is a full-time home education student, “Student is home-schooled and assessed at parental request” must be indicated in eDIRECT or on the answer booklet regardless of the type of label used. This information is not collected from PIMS. If a student is partially enrolled at a public school for his/her education, do not indicate that the “student is home-schooled and assessed at parental request.”

- **Student attends this school as part of a foreign exchange program** – Student attends your school as part of a foreign exchange program.

Foreign exchange students must participate in the PSSA. Only the student’s participation counts for purposes of accountability calculations.

Item 6 Student’s English Language Learner (ELL) status is as follows (*indicate only one, if any*):

- **ELL and enrolled in a U.S. school after May 8, 2015** (previous enrollment in Puerto Rico is not considered as enrollment in U.S. schools).

Participation is mandatory for the mathematics and science assessments, and optional for the ELA assessment for students identified as English Language Learners who are in their first year of enrollment in a U.S. school. May 8, 2015, (the last day of the 2015 PDE-established testing window) should be used as the enrollment date to identify students in their first year of enrollment in U.S. schools.

The scores for these students will not be used for accountability, but their participation in ELA (if attempted), math, and science is used in the calculation of the accountability participation rate.

Important: If an ELL student does not participate in the ELA assessment due to first year of enrollment in a U.S. school, a booklet must still be returned.

- If the student does not have a Student Precode Label, the reason for non-participation must be reflected on page 2 of the answer booklet (item 6 – option 1) or in eDIRECT by indicating “[Student is] ELL and enrolled in a U.S. school after May 8, 2015”
- If the student has a Student Precode Label, verify that the student’s initial enrollment dates are correct in the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS).

Note: This exemption can only be used for a student one time. For example, if an ELL student enrolls in a U.S. school for the first time in 3rd grade, that student is exempt from taking the 3rd-grade ELA assessment due to his/her first year of enrollment in a U.S. school status. If this same student withdraws and leaves the U.S. after the assessment, and re-enrolls in a U.S. school in the 5th grade, he/she is no longer considered in his/her first year of enrollment in U.S. schools and is required to take the assessment.

- **ELL and enrolled in a U.S. school on or before May 8, 2015.**

All students identified as English Language Learners who have completed at least one year of enrollment in a U.S. school must participate in all assessments.

- **Exited an ESL/bilingual program and in the first year of monitoring.**
- **Exited an ESL/bilingual program and in the second year of monitoring.**
- **Former English Language Learner and no longer monitored.**

The last three ELL demographic items have been included as a means for PDE to monitor the progress of students who have exited ESL/bilingual programs and are in the various stages of monitoring. Please check your students' records carefully so the most accurate information is reported.

For more information on ELL, refer to the *Accommodations Guidelines for English Language Learners* found in eDIRECT and also on the PDE website at www.education.pa.gov.

Item 7 Student is currently in ESL instruction and has the following Title III status (*indicate only one, if any*):

Students who are English Language Learners (ELL) are eligible to receive supplemental instruction and/or services funded by Title III. Districts/schools can apply for the Title III funding, which is a federally funded supplemental program that concentrates on delivering educational language instructional programs and/or other services to students who have a primary language other than English. Districts may use Title III funding for professional development; therefore, an ELL student (in an ESL instructional program) can indirectly receive Title III funding via the instructor's professional development. Students who fall into this classification should be marked as "Title III served." There are two categories for Title III students.

- **Title III served**

Mark this when the ELL student is eligible for and receiving supplemental instruction and/or services, directly or indirectly (as previously described), through district/school Title III funded programs.

- **Title III not served**

This should be marked for either of the following scenarios:

- ELL student is eligible for supplemental instruction and/or services through district/school Title III-funded programs, but is not currently receiving said services.
- ELL student is eligible for supplemental instruction and/or services, but the district/school has not received Title III funding.

Note: *One of the first two options in item 6 must be selected in conjunction with the Title III options in item 7. Indicating that a student is Title III (served or not served) confirms that the student is ELL and in ESL instruction.*

2. ONLINE TESTING

Students testing online who do not have student data loaded into eDIRECT must have demographic information completed in eDIRECT (Test Setup > Students). Detailed instructions for completing demographic information for students testing online can be found in the *eDIRECT Test Setup User Guide*.

3. ACCOMMODATIONS

When an accommodation is used by a student taking a paper/pencil assessment, the Accommodations Section on page 3 of the answer booklet must be completed by the School Assessment Coordinator (SAC) regardless of the label that was used. Students testing online must have accommodation information completed in eDIRECT (Test Setup > Students). Detailed instructions for completing accommodation information for online students can be found in the *eDIRECT Test Setup User Guide*.

A student's use of an accommodation is not collected from any other source for reporting. If a school wishes to use an accommodation that is not listed, a documented request must be made to the Pennsylvania Department of Education. DRC cannot authorize the use of accommodations. For more information on accommodations, refer to the *Accommodations Guidelines* found in eDIRECT and the PDE website at www.education.pa.gov.

Item 8 Student used the following Presentation Accommodations (mark all that apply, if any):

- **Braille format** (Paper only) – Student used a Braille version of the assessment.
- **Large-print format** (Paper only) – Student used a large-print version of the assessment.

Students who use the Braille or large-print versions must have all of their answers transcribed or scribed (as per the Accommodations Guidelines) verbatim into a matching Form 1 regular answer booklet.

NOTE: Large-print answer booklets will not be scored. Additional Form 1 booklets for transcription are provided with the Braille and large-print for this purpose. These booklets are identified as packs of 1.

- **Computer Assistive Technology—does not apply to online testing (PDE must approve the program and all functions)** – Student used a PDF version of the assessment provided on a secure CD. This accommodation is intended for those students with a severe disability that precludes them from accessing the assessment through the online testing system and the hard copy test booklet.
- **Some test items/questions read aloud** (Mathematics and Science) – Student had some test items/questions read aloud. Any student may request the read aloud of a word, phrase, or test item on the mathematics and science assessments.
- **Some language items/writing prompts/text dependent analysis prompts read aloud** (ELA only) – Student had some language items/writing prompts/text dependent analysis prompts read aloud.
- **All test items/questions read aloud** (Mathematics and Science) – Student had the entire assessment read aloud. However, there are items for which reading the item aloud (questions and/or answer options) would cue the correct answer. It is not permissible to read aloud the part or parts of an item for which the correct answer would be cued. For example, when an item asks students to identify a symbol, only the words and numbers may be read aloud, not the symbols. Also, when a student is asked to identify a shape, the names of the shapes may not be read aloud.
- **All language items/writing prompts/text dependent analysis prompts read aloud** (ELA only) – Student had all the language items/writing prompts/text dependent analysis prompts read aloud.

Read-aloud Accommodation Guidelines for Operational Assessments can be found in eDIRECT and the PDE website at www.education.pa.gov.

- **Test items/questions signed** (Mathematics and Science) – Student used an interpreter/translator to sign test items/questions.
- **Language items/writing prompts/text dependent analysis prompts signed** (ELA only) – Student used an interpreter/translator to sign language items/writing prompts/text dependent analysis prompts.
- **Test items/questions interpreted for ELL** (Mathematics and Science) – Student used an interpreter/translator to present test items/questions.
- **Language items/writing prompts/text dependent analysis prompts interpreted for ELL** (ELA only) – Student used an interpreter/translator to present language items/writing prompts/text dependent analysis prompts.
- **Amplification device** – Student used an amplification device (e.g., hearing aid, personal sound amplifier).
- **Magnification device** – Student has a documented need for magnification and used a magnification device (e.g., CCTV, hand held magnifier, online magnifier tool). Do not select if a student simply used the online magnification tool as an available test feature.
- **Color overlay** (Paper only) – Student used a color overlay, background, or contrast.

- **Other (noise buffers, whisper phone, etc., as indicated in Accommodations Guidelines or a unique accommodation as approved by PDE)** – Student used any other device or visual organizer during the assessment. Some may require a separate setting.
- **Audio** (Online only) – Student used the text-to-speech software to have the ELA, mathematics, and/or science assessment read aloud. For ELA, only approved language items/writing prompts/and text dependant analysis prompts will read aloud within the online tool.
- **Color Chooser** (Online only) – Student used the Color Chooser to change the background color.
- **Contrasting Text Chooser** (Online only) – Student used the Contrasting Text Chooser to change the text color and background color.

Item 9 Student used the following Setting Accommodations (mark all that apply, if any):

- **Hospital/home setting** – Student completed the assessment at a hospital or at home.
- **One-on-one setting** – Student completed the assessment in a one-on-one setting.
- **Small group setting** – Student completed the assessment in a small group.
- **Other (as indicated in Accommodations Guidelines or approved by PDE)** – Student completed the assessment in a separate or unique setting.

Item 10 Student used the following Response Accommodations (mark all that apply, if any):

- **Assessment Coordinator or designee marked multiple-choice responses at student’s direction** – Student dictated multiple-choice responses to a Test Administrator. Responses must be marked into student’s online test or answer booklet.
- **Assessment Coordinator or designee scribed open-ended/short answer responses at student’s direction** – Student dictated open-ended responses to a Test Administrator. Responses must be scribed verbatim into student’s online test or answer booklet. If a student has special scribing needs for writing prompts and text dependent analysis prompts, refer to the *Accommodation Guidelines*.
- **Assessment Coordinator or designee transcribed student responses (per Accommodations Guidelines)** – Student marked responses in anything other than the answer booklet being returned for scoring. Responses must be transcribed verbatim into student’s online test or answer booklet.
- **Qualified interpreter translated, transcribed, and/or scribed student’s signed responses** – Student used an interpreter to sign responses to a Test Administrator. Responses must be scribed verbatim into student’s answer booklet.
- **Qualified interpreter translated, transcribed, and/or scribed ELL student responses (per Accommodations Guidelines)** – Student used an interpreter/translator to respond to a Test Administrator. Responses must be scribed verbatim into student’s answer booklet.
- **Keyboard, word processor, or computer—does not apply to online testing (per Accommodations Guidelines)** – Student used a keyboard, word processor, or computer with the paper test booklet. Responses that are written or typed must be transcribed verbatim into student’s answer booklet.
- **Braille/Note taker (per Accommodations Guidelines)** (Paper only) – Student used a Braille/Note taker. Responses must be transcribed verbatim into student’s answer booklet.
- **Augmentative communication device** – Student used any device to aid in communication. Responses must be transcribed verbatim into student’s answer booklet.
- **Audio recording of student responses (per Accommodations Guidelines)** – Student used a tape/ CD/electronic recorder (with NO speech recognition) to record responses. Responses must be transcribed verbatim into student’s answer booklet and the recording must be permanently deleted. If an audio recording is used for writing items, the student must transcribe his/her own responses.

- **Computer Assistive Technology—does not apply to online testing (*PDE must approve the program and all functions*)** – Student dictated text into the computer or gave commands to the computer using Computer Assistive Technology software with the paper test booklet. Responses must be transcribed verbatim into student’s answer booklet.
- **Translation dictionary for ELL student** – Student used a non web-based word-to-word translation dictionary without definitions or pictures.
- **Other (*special paper, etc., as indicated in Accommodations Guidelines or a unique accommodation as approved by PDE*)** – Student used special paper (e.g., blank graph paper, large-squared paper) during the assessment.

Item 11 Student used the following Timing Accommodations (*mark all that apply, if any*):

- **Extended time** – Student required more time than the rest of the regular testing group or required scheduled extended time.
- **Frequent breaks** – Student required frequent breaks within a regularly scheduled test session. Students must be monitored during all breaks.
- **Changed test schedule** – Student required the assessment to be administered on a different day or time for medical or learning needs. No single section may be administered over more than one day.
- **Other (*as indicated in Accommodations Guidelines or approved by PDE*)** – Student required a unique timing accommodation.

Local Student ID Grid, Optional Field, and Supplemental Data Field Grid

- The Local Student ID grid is provided to allow districts/schools the option to continue the use of the Local Student ID.
- The Optional Field is provided to allow districts/schools the option to measure information specific to the district/school. Each district/school may choose to gather information based on a specific need in the district/school and would code this field accordingly. If the district/school is not interested in gathering additional information, this field may be left blank.
- The Supplemental Data Field will only be used in the event that a determination is made that the demographic information already contained in the answer booklets has overlooked an element that should be considered for reporting requirements. This field will be used if districts/schools are instructed to do so by DRC or PDE.

4. TRANSCRIBING

Student responses that are marked or written in anything other than the answer booklet will not be scored; only responses in the regular answer booklet will be scored. Student responses that are marked or written in anything other than the answer booklet must be transcribed verbatim into an answer booklet of the correct form designation. Typewritten pages, separate handwritten pages, and large-print answer booklets will not be processed for scoring. Using a No. 2 pencil, responses (multiple-choice and open-ended) must be transcribed verbatim by the School Assessment Coordinator or designee exactly as the student has recorded. No corrections are allowed for spelling, punctuation, or grammar.

Multiple-choice items should be transferred first. For mathematics and science constructed-response items, transfer the student’s responses, including any work done to achieve the responses, exactly as written. For drawings or figures the student made, copy the drawings or figures onto the correct space in the answer booklet. For ELA, transfer the student’s responses exactly—letter for letter, punctuation mark for punctuation mark, word for word—taking care to replicate misspelled words, all uppercase/lowercase letters, and all spacing and paragraphing in the student’s original responses.

PART V – TEST SECURITY

The PSSAs rely on the measurement of individual achievement. Any deviation from procedures meant to ensure validity and security (e.g., group work, teacher coaching, teaching or release of any PSSA items, use of old Pennsylvania assessments as preparation tools) is strictly prohibited and will be considered a violation of test security. District/school personnel with access to the assessment materials cannot review (Note that the security seal on the ELA assessment must not be broken by anyone other than the student while taking the assessment.), discuss, disseminate, or otherwise reveal the contents to anyone. (This prohibition excludes the *PSSA Item and Scoring Samplers* available on PDE’s website.)

Any action by an educator that is willfully designed to divulge test questions, falsify student scores, or compromise the integrity of the state assessment system will be subject to disciplinary action under the Educator Discipline Act, 24 P.S. § 2070.1a et seq, including a private reprimand, a public reprimand, a suspension of their teaching certificate(s), a revocation of their teaching certificate(s), and/or a suspension or prohibition from being employed by a charter school. In this regard, an educator is any individual who holds public or private academic school certification and all charter and cyber charter school staff members and contracted educational providers who would be required to hold certification if they served in a traditional public school.

Avoid inappropriate test-taking strategies – Every answer booklet will be processed by scanners that detect all pencil marks. As such, it is not appropriate to have students taking a paper assessment eliminate answers by striking through an answer bubble or by bubbling multiple answers and later erasing. Likewise, students should not make any extraneous marks in the answer booklet (e.g., crossing out answers believed to be incorrect). Students must mark their final response in the answer booklet. Students cannot discuss, disseminate, or otherwise reveal the assessment content to others.

Test Administrators must report testing irregularities/security breaches to the School Assessment Coordinator, principal, or the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The School Assessment Coordinator must report the testing irregularities/security breaches to the District Assessment Coordinator. The District Assessment Coordinator must report any suspected violations of testing protocol to the Pennsylvania Department of Education immediately. Allegations should be referred to: 00testing@psupen.psu.edu or by phone at 717-787-4234.

PDE has DRC (the test contractor) prepare a report on excessive logins by the same student to an online assessment. Please keep a record of system failures such as the loss of the internet, etc., in the event there are questions regarding excessive logins.

Refer to the Ethical Standards of Test Preparation and Administration found in Appendix B of this handbook and to the separate Handbook for Secure Test Administration. Also refer to the Test Security Policy found in eDIRECT. Click on Documents under the General Information tab on the left menu. Select the appropriate administration and select ‘PDE Procedures and Guidelines’ under Document Type.

1. SECURE STORAGE

All paper answer and test booklets and test tickets for online assessments must be kept in a predetermined, locked, secure storage area at both the district and school levels. Secure materials must never be left unattended or in open areas. Test Administrators must not be given access to secure test materials before the administration day. Instead, Test Administrators should be only given access to secure test materials immediately preceding test administration.

- The *Directions for Administration Manuals* are not considered secure test materials and should be provided to Test Administrators prior to the assessment for review.
- All testing materials must be inventoried, counted, and returned immediately to the predetermined, locked, secure storage area after testing is completed for the day. Materials must be kept secure after testing and prior to shipping to DRC.
- Please refer to the *eDIRECT Test Setup User Guide* for information on security associated with online testing.

2. TEST SECURITY CERTIFICATIONS

It is required that each District Assessment Coordinator, School Assessment Coordinator, Principal, Test Administrator, Proctor, and any individual who handles secure assessment materials sign a Test Security Certification. The Test Security Certifications must be signed **after** the assessments have been administered either online or paper.

- The **District Assessment Coordinator Test Security Certification** is provided in Appendix E of this handbook. Each District Assessment Coordinator is responsible for photocopying and signing the Certification after the end of the testing window. This Certification covers security for all assessments administered during the testing window.
 - Collect all of the Test Administrator/Proctor, School Assessment Coordinator/Principal, and General Test Security Certifications from each testing site.
 - Report to the Chief School Administrator anyone (TA/Proctors, SAC/Principal, or others) who had access to the assessments and refused to sign or modified a corresponding Test Security Certification.
 - Follow LEA procedures to ensure Test Security Certifications are maintained for a minimum of three years. The signed Test Security Certifications should not be returned to Data Recognition Corporation.
- The **School Assessment Coordinator and Principal Test Security Certification** can be found in Appendix E of this handbook. This Certification covers security for all assessments administered during the testing window. The School Assessment Coordinator and Principal Test Security Certification must be signed and dated by the School Assessment Coordinator and Principal after the end of the testing window. It is the responsibility of the District Assessment Coordinator to obtain the School Assessment Coordinator's and Principal's signature and return the form to the Chief School Administrator who must retain the Certifications for three years. The signed Test Security Certifications should not be returned to Data Recognition Corporation.
- The **Test Administrator/Proctor Test Security Certification** is provided in Appendix E of this handbook. This Certification covers security for all assessments administered during the testing window. Prior to the administration of the assessment, the School Assessment Coordinator must distribute copies of this certification to all Test Administrators and Proctors involved in the administration of the PSSA. Prior to receiving any assessment materials or participating in the administration of the PSSA in any way, the Test Administrator and the Proctor must read and understand the Test Administrator/Proctor Test Security Certification. Post-administration, the Test Administrator and Proctor must sign and return the certification to the School Assessment Coordinator.
- The **General Test Security Certification** is provided in Appendix E of this handbook. This Certification is for any individual (custodian, secretary, etc.) who will handle secure assessment materials during the testing window and who is not covered by any of the other certifications. The executed General Test Security Certification must be retained for three years by the Chief School Administrator. The signed Test Security Certifications should not be returned to Data Recognition Corporation.
 - The School Assessment Coordinator must report to the District Assessment Coordinator any Test Administrators/Proctors or anyone else who had access to the assessments and refused to sign or modified a corresponding Test Security Certification before signing.
 - When reporting to the District Assessment Coordinator, include names and reason(s) for refusal or modification.

If an individual does not execute the appropriate Test Security Certification, the Chief School Administrator must provide the Department of Education's Bureau of Assessment and Accountability with a written explanation of the reason or reasons why the Certification was not executed. The explanation must be provided within five days of the refusal and must include a description of the action taken by the Chief School Administrator in response to the failure to execute the Test Security Certification.

The written explanation should be sent to rayyoung@pa.gov or to:

Ray A. Young
Chief, Division of Instructional Quality
333 Market Street – 3rd Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126

PART VI – RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

1. DISTRICT AND SCHOOL COORDINATOR CHECKLISTS

The following checklists are general guidelines of critical dates by which an activity should take place. As a reminder, schools that receive materials directly from DRC should use both checklists.

District Assessment Coordinator’s Checklist for the 2016 PSSA Administration		
_____	Receive Shipment I from DRC	March 14, 2016
_____	Distribute Shipment I to School Assessment Coordinators	March 16, 2016
_____	Read the <i>Handbook for Assessment Coordinators</i>	March 17, 2016
_____	Distribute parent/guardian flyers in newsletter or mail	March 17, 2016
_____	Conduct orientation session for School Assessment Coordinators	by March 21, 2016
_____	Receive Shipment II from DRC	March 28, 2016
_____	Distribute Shipment II to School Assessment Coordinators	March 28, 2016
_____	Request additional materials (if needed)	March 28–May 5, 2016
_____	PSSA English Language Arts Assessment Window	April 11–15, 2016
_____	Inventory English Language Arts materials returned by schools	April 18, 2016
_____	Return English Language Arts materials to DRC	April 20, 2016
_____	PSSA Mathematics Assessment Window	April 18–22, 2016
_____	Inventory Mathematics materials returned by schools	April 25, 2016
_____	Return Mathematics materials to DRC	April 27, 2016
_____	PSSA Science Assessment Window	April 25–29, 2016
_____	Inventory Science materials returned by schools	May 2, 2016
_____	Return Science materials to DRC	May 4, 2016
_____	ELA, Math, and Science Make-Up Window (if needed)	May 2–6, 2016
_____	Inventory and return ALL secure assessment materials to DRC	May 6, 2016

School Assessment Coordinator's Checklist for the 2016 PSSA Administration		
_____	Receive and inventory Shipment I	March 16, 2016
_____	Distribute the <i>Directions for Administration Manuals</i> to appropriate personnel	March 17, 2016
_____	Distribute parent/guardian flyers in newsletter or mail (if assigned to do so by the district)	March 17, 2016
_____	Read the <i>Handbook for Assessment Coordinators</i> and the <i>Directions for Administration Manuals</i>	March 21, 2016
_____	Attend School Assessment Coordinator orientation	by March 21, 2016
_____	Receive and inventory Shipment II	March 28, 2016
_____	Request additional materials (if needed)	March 28–May 5, 2016
_____	Conduct orientation session for Test Administrators	by April 4, 2016
_____	Assist and supervise Test Administrators during the ELA assessments	April 11–15, 2016
_____	Inventory, package, and return ELA materials to the District Assessment Coordinator	April 15, 2016
_____	Assist and supervise Test Administrators during the Math assessments	April 18–22, 2016
_____	Inventory, package, and return Math materials to the District Assessment Coordinator	April 22, 2016
_____	Assist and supervise Test Administrators during the Science assessments	April 25–29, 2016
_____	Inventory, package, and return Science materials to the District Assessment Coordinator	April 29, 2016
_____	Assist and supervise Test Administrators during the ELA, Math, and Science make-up assessments	May 2–6, 2016
_____	Package and return all make-up materials and any other secure assessment materials to the District Assessment Coordinator	May 6, 2016
_____	Destroy handbooks, administration directions, and scratch paper	May 11, 2016

2. RECEIPT OF MATERIALS

For the spring 2016 assessments, materials for all subjects will arrive at the same time in two separate shipments. Districts and schools should be prepared to receive, store, and distribute the volume of boxes associated with the multiple assessments. For ship-to-district sites, school boxes are provided for each participating school. If not inventoried centrally, the boxes should be sent to the schools as soon as they have been received. A copy of each school's packing list is contained in the district administrative materials. Ship-to-school and other special sites receive both district and school materials.

Shipment I will contain this handbook and the *Directions for Administration Manuals*. School Assessment Coordinators should be given ample time to distribute the *Directions for Administration Manuals* to Test Administrators. This should be done as soon as the manuals are received to allow time for the Test Administrators to study them prior to an orientation session.

Shipment II contains the secure assessment booklets, precode labels, *Online Directions for Administration Manuals*, and all Spanish materials. If this shipment is not received by March 28, 2016, District Assessment Coordinators (or School Assessment Coordinators at ship-to-school districts) should contact DRC directly by calling a DRC Customer Service Representative at 1-800-451-7849.

Note: DRC will be providing precode labels for all students regardless of whether they are testing online. If a student is testing online, the precode label can be discarded. A booklet does not need to be returned for a student completing an online assessment.

- Accurately inventory the materials immediately upon receipt, without breaking the shrink-wrapped packs. If more materials are needed:
 - **Ship-to-district sites:** District Assessment Coordinators must complete an Additional Materials Request in eDIRECT.
 - **Ship-to-school sites:** School Assessment Coordinators must complete an Additional Materials Request in eDIRECT.
 - For more details on completing an Additional Materials Request, see page 3 of this handbook.
- **Be sure to save the box(es) in which the materials were sent.** They will be used to return the materials after the assessments. (If a box is damaged, or if all materials do not fit into the original box(es), a box similar in size and strength from the school may be substituted.)
- After inventorying Shipment II, store all materials in a predetermined, locked, secure storage area.
- Complete the Materials Receipt Notice in eDIRECT (see page 3).

SHIPMENT I MATERIALS (for all assessments)

DISTRICT—ADMINISTRATIVE MATERIALS

- Copies of School Packing List(s)—one per school
- School Box Range Sheet—indicates the number of boxes packaged for each school in the district for ship-to-district sites
- *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*—this manual
- Grade-specific paper/pencil *Directions for Administration Manuals*
- *Handbook for Secure Test Administration*

SCHOOL—MANUALS

- *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*—this manual
- Grade-specific paper/pencil *Directions for Administration Manuals*
- *Handbook for Secure Test Administration*

SHIPMENT II MATERIALS (for all assessments)

DISTRICT—ADMINISTRATIVE AND RETURN MATERIALS

- School Box Range Sheet—indicates the number of boxes packaged for each school
- DRC Return Shipment Labels
- UPS Return Shipment (RS) Labels
- Plastic Return Shipment Bags—used to package answer booklets for return to DRC
- Plastic ties—for sealing Plastic Return Shipment Bags
- Grade-specific *Online Directions for Administration Manuals* (if testing online)

SCHOOL—ADMINISTRATIVE MATERIALS

- Security Checklist
- School Packing List
- *Supplementary Information for Assessment Coordinators and Administrators*
- Student Precode Labels, District/School Labels, and Do Not Score Labels
- Spanish-translation *Directions for Administration Manuals* (when applicable)
- Grade-specific *Online Directions for Administration Manuals* (if testing online)

SCHOOL—SECURE PSSA MATERIALS

English Language Arts

- Grade 3 ELA booklets—shrink-wrapped in packs of 17 and presented as a combined test/answer booklet
- Grade 3 ELA Writer’s Checklists—shrink-wrapped in packs of 20
- Grades 4–8 ELA test and answer booklets—shrink-wrapped in packs of 17
Note: The test booklets and answer booklets will be shrink-wrapped together by form designation (i.e., a Form 1 test booklet will always be followed by a Form 1 answer booklet).
- Grade 4 ELA Writer’s Checklists—shrink-wrapped in packs of 20
- Grade 5 ELA Writer’s Checklists—shrink-wrapped in packs of 20
- Grade 6 ELA Writer’s Checklists—shrink-wrapped in packs of 20
- Grade 7 ELA Writer’s Checklists—shrink-wrapped in packs of 20
- Grade 8 ELA Writer’s Checklists—shrink-wrapped in packs of 20
- Shrink-wrapped large-print ELA test and answer booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Shrink-wrapped Braille ELA booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Shrink-wrapped Form 1 ELA test and answer booklets for transcription (per grade level, only provided with large-print and Braille booklets)

Mathematics

- Grade 3 mathematics booklets—shrink-wrapped in packs of 17 and presented as a combined test/answer booklet
- Grade 3 mathematics scoring guidelines—shrink-wrapped in packs of 20
- Rulers for grade 3 students to answer PSSA mathematics questions
- Grades 4–8 mathematics test and answer booklets—shrink-wrapped in packs of 17
Note: The test booklets and answer booklets will be shrink-wrapped together by form designation (i.e., a Form 1 test booklet will always be followed by a Form 1 answer booklet).
- Protractors for grade 4 students to answer PSSA mathematics questions
- Grade 4 mathematics scoring guidelines/formula sheets—shrink-wrapped in packs of 20
- Grade 5 mathematics scoring guidelines/formula sheets—shrink-wrapped in packs of 20
- Grade 6 mathematics scoring guidelines/formula sheets—shrink-wrapped in packs of 20
- Grade 7 mathematics scoring guidelines/formula sheets—shrink-wrapped in packs of 20
- Grade 8 mathematics scoring guidelines/formula sheets—shrink-wrapped in packs of 20
- Shrink-wrapped Spanish-translation test and answer booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Spanish-translation scoring guidelines/formula sheets (per grade level, if applicable)

- Shrink-wrapped large-print mathematics test and answer booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Shrink-wrapped Braille mathematics booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Shrink-wrapped Form 1 mathematics test and answer booklets for transcription (per grade level, only provided with large-print and Braille booklets)
- Red stickers to seal the mathematics, non-calculator items in Section 1 (grades 4–8 only)

Science

- Grades 4 and 8 science test and answer booklets—shrink-wrapped in packs of 17
Note: The test booklets and answer booklets will be shrink-wrapped together by form designation (i.e., a Form 1 test booklet will always be followed by a Form 1 answer booklet).
- Scoring Guidelines—shrink-wrapped in packs of 20
- Shrink-wrapped Spanish-translation test and answer booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Spanish-translation scoring guidelines (per grade level, if applicable)
- Shrink-wrapped large-print science test and answer booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Shrink-wrapped Braille science booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Shrink-wrapped Form 1 science test and answer booklets for transcription (per grade level, only provided with large-print and Braille booklets)

3. DISTRIBUTION AND COLLECTION OF ASSESSMENT MATERIALS

All assessment booklets are in shrink-wrapped packages. Where applicable, answer booklets are packaged together with the test booklets. For all assessments, test and answer booklets have been spiraled in a predetermined sequence in each shrink-wrapped pack. The spiraling process ensures an equal distribution opportunity for each form within a classroom. Under no circumstances should you arrange the booklets by form designation prior to distribution.

Each shrink-wrapped package has a range sheet that identifies the quantity of booklets and the range of security numbers it contains. These range sheets can be used to inventory the booklets without opening the packages. In most cases, the School Assessment Coordinator will be responsible for assigning secure ranges of materials for Test Administrators. It is vital that everyone understands the importance of assigning materials by security range. The shrink-wrapped packages may be broken open to assemble proper quantities for each Test Administrator. Shrink-wrapped packages should only be opened at the school level and should not be opened until school personnel are ready to affix barcode labels, no more than one week prior to the start of a testing window.

On the days of an assessment, distribute the correct number of appropriate booklets needed for that day's assessment to each Test Administrator as recorded on the Security Checklist. In addition, each Test Administrator should be given at least one extra assessment booklet to use as a sample, as the *Directions for Administration Manuals* may instruct the Test Administrators to use a sample booklet for demonstration. All assessment materials, including the booklet used as a sample, should be returned to the SAC as soon as possible on each day of an assessment. It is mandatory that school districts utilize a sign-out/sign-in sheet for distribution and collection of secure test materials. It is recommended that TAs count the number of test booklets received and returned in the presence of the SAC or his/her designee.

If the school has students testing online, test tickets will be distributed to each student. These test tickets are secure materials and must be managed during distribution to the students. The test tickets are generated and printed from eDIRECT. For more information on how to print and distribute the test tickets, see the *eDIRECT Test Setup User Guide*.

After all testing is complete for an assessment, be sure Test Administrators return **all** materials to the School Assessment Coordinator, including used and unused test and answer booklets, test tickets, the *Directions for Administration Manuals*, and scratch paper.

4. PROCEDURES FOR ASSIGNING BOOKLETS USING SECURITY NUMBERS

The Security Checklist should be used as a tool to account for the secure materials as they are distributed to the Test Administrators and to monitor the materials as they are returned by the Test Administrators. Account for any difference between the number of materials distributed and the number returned by noting the reason on the Security Checklist. **Any discrepancies that are not resolved before materials are returned to the District Assessment Coordinator must be noted on the Materials Accountability Form found in eDIRECT.** No one is permitted to retain any assessment booklets for any reason after all testing and make-ups are complete.

The Security Checklist should not be returned to DRC. Instead, keep this list on file after you return materials to DRC. If DRC determines that a site has not returned all materials from one of the assessments, the Security Checklist may help the site locate the missing document(s).

An electronic copy of the school's security barcodes is available starting on March 28, 2016. If your school would like the electronic version, email DRC.

5. PAsecureID LIST

The Pennsylvania Department of Education requires that all School Assessment Coordinators generate a list(s) of students by PAsecureID to show all students taking the PSSA for both online and paper. All lists must be retained at the district/school for three years and must be available when requested by PDE.

Each list should indicate which students are being assessed by which Test Administrator and Proctor. The list should include the school name, Test Administrator, PAsecureID, grade, subject being administered, and year. Lists should include substitute teachers, TAs administering make-ups and extended time sessions. Below is a sample layout.

School Name	Test Administrator and Proctor	PAsecureID	Grade Tested	Subject	Year
PA School	Mr. Trenholm	1234567890	8	Math	2016
PA School	Mr. Trenholm	1234567890	8	ELA	2016
PA School	Mr. Trenholm, Mr. Weller	1234567890	8	Science	2016
PA School	Mr. Trenholm	4567891230	8	Math	2016
PA School	Mr. Trenholm	4567891230	8	ELA	2016
PA School	Mr. Trenholm	1122334455	8	Science	2016

PART VII – PREPARATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE ASSESSMENTS

1. SCHEDULING THE ASSESSMENT

PDE provides the flexibility for LEAs to choose specific testing dates that work within the PDE-established testing windows. However, **every LEA is required to provide PDE with the specific dates, times, and mode (online or paper/pencil) it has selected for administering the PSSAs.** Each LEA will receive an e-mail from DRC Customer Service with a link to a survey that will be used to collect this information. LEAs are required to submit this information for each of their schools.

It is important to establish an assessment schedule prior to testing. For the ELA assessment, the first administration must not be scheduled before April 11, 2016. With the exception of make-ups, all ELA assessments must be completed by April 15, 2016. The mathematics assessment must not be scheduled before April 18, 2016, and must conclude (with the exception of make-ups) on April 22, 2016. The science assessment must not be scheduled before April 25, 2016, and must conclude (with the exception of make-ups) on April 29, 2016.

The following chart outlines the PSSA English Language Arts assessment schedule guidelines and estimated times for each section for each grade.

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT TIMES FOR PSSA ELA (IN MINUTES)							
Grade		3	4	5	6	7	8
Section 1 ELA: Writing	Number of Items	20 MC 1 CR					
	Student Testing Time	55 to 65					
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20					
	Administration Time (Total Time)	70 to 85					
Section 2 ELA: Reading	Number of Items	12 MC/SR 1 CR	22 MC/SR 0 CR	23 MC/SR 0 CR	23 MC/SR 0 CR	23 MC/SR 0 CR	23 MC/SR 0 CR
	Student Testing Time	40 to 50	60 to 70	65 to 75	65 to 75	65 to 75	65 to 75
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20					
	Administration Time (Total Time)	55 to 70	75 to 90	80 to 95	80 to 95	80 to 95	80 to 95
Section 3 ELA: Reading	Number of Items	16 MC/SR 1 CR					
	Student Testing Time	45 to 55	85 to 95				
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20					
	Administration Time (Total Time)	60 to 75	100 to 115				
Section 4 ELA: Reading	Number of Items	12 MC/SR 1 CR	7 MC/SR 1 CR	6 MC/SR 1 CR	6 MC/SR 1 CR	6 MC/SR 1 CR	6 MC/SR 1 CR
	Student Testing Time	40 to 50	65 to 75	60 to 70	60 to 70	60 to 70	60 to 70
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20					
	Administration Time (Total Time)	55 to 70	80 to 95	75 to 90	75 to 90	75 to 90	75 to 90
Grade		3	4	5	6	7	8

MC refers to multiple-choice questions.

SR questions are selected-response questions.

CR (constructed-response) questions include writing prompts, short-answer questions, and text-dependent analysis questions.

The following chart outlines the PSSA Mathematics assessment schedule guidelines and estimated times for each section for each grade.

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT TIMES FOR PSSA MATHEMATICS (IN MINUTES)							
Grade		3	4	5	6	7	8
Section 1 Mathematics	Number of Items	24 MC 2 OE					
	Student Testing Time	70 to 80					
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20					
	Administration Time (Total Time)	85 to 100					
Section 2 Mathematics	Number of Items	24 MC 1 OE					
	Student Testing Time	60 to 70					
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20					
	Administration Time (Total Time)	75 to 90					
Section 3 Mathematics	Number of Items	24 MC 1 OE					
	Student Testing Time	60 to 70					
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20					
	Administration Time (Total Time)	75 to 90					
Grade		3	4	5	6	7	8

MC refers to multiple-choice questions.
 OE questions are open-ended questions.

The following chart outlines the PSSA Science assessment schedule guidelines and estimated times for each section for each grade.

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT TIMES FOR SCIENCE			
(In MINUTES)			
Grade		4	8
Section 1	Number of Items	34 MC 3 OE	35 MC 3 OE
	Student Testing Time	45 to 55	50 to 60
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20	15 to 20
	Administration Time (Total Time)	60 to 75	65 to 80
Section 2	Number of Items	34 MC 3 OE	35 MC 3 OE
	Student Testing Time	45 to 55	50 to 60
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20	15 to 20
	Administration Time (Total Time)	60 to 75	65 to 80
Grade		4	8

MC refers to multiple-choice questions.
OE questions are open-ended questions.

When possible, the first days of the PDE-established testing window should be used for administering the assessment. Scheduling the assessment to occur at the beginning of the window will allow the school more flexibility if any unusual circumstances delay the anticipated start date. It may be advisable to postpone the assessment if a large percentage of the school population is absent on any selected day or days, or if a disruption or event (such as a bomb threat, fire in the school, plumbing or heating problems, death of a classmate, etc.) may have caused a level of distress that could result in students performing below their capabilities. LEA personnel are urged to keep the best interests of the students in mind when making a determination to reschedule assessment dates. Administering the assessment in the early portion of the assessment windows should eliminate most scheduling problems.

The assessments should be given in regular classroom settings, but other settings may be used based on school needs and available facilities. Appropriate test conditions optimize the chance for greater accuracy of the performance. To the extent possible, all students participating in a subject/grade-specific assessment in a school should begin the paper/pencil administration at the same time. Staggered start times may be necessary for students testing online due to availability of computers, iPads, and/or Chromebooks.

Students may request extended time if they indicate that they have not completed the task. Such requests should be granted if the Test Administrator finds the request to be educationally valid. Not permitting ample time for students to complete the assessment may impact student and school performance. Students requiring time beyond the time provided for the majority of the student population may be allowed to continue immediately following the regularly scheduled session in another setting. Students should not be permitted to continue a section of the assessment after a significant lapse of time from the original session. **Any student granted an extended assessment period must have this information gridded in his or her answer booklet on page 3 or in eDIRECT for students testing online.**

2. PARENT/GUARDIAN NOTIFICATION OF THE ASSESSMENTS

A sample parent/guardian FAQ Document that covers all the assessments has been included in Appendix A of this handbook to use as is or to revise to suit your needs. This information must be distributed to the parent or guardian of each student enrolled in your school(s) about three weeks prior to the assessment.

Please note that the district or school is responsible for duplicating the flyers. Copies are not provided, except for the samples in this handbook. If a district newsletter is regularly published, include the information in the newsletter. However, if history indicates that parents/guardians do not regularly read the newsletter, direct mail may ensure delivery to parents and guardians.

3. ELECTRONIC DEVICE NOTIFICATION LETTER

Electronic devices that could compromise the security of the assessment, including cell phones, are NOT permitted. LEAs must notify and ensure that all students and parents/guardians fully understand the policy regarding electronic devices, including cell phones.

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, the student's score will be invalidated, and the student will have to retake another form of the assessment.

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 of no less than \$750 up to \$30,000 for a single violation. 17 U.S.C. § 101 est seq.

A parent letter regarding electronic devices has also been included in Appendix A. PDE strongly encourages LEAs to distribute this letter as a means to ensure that all students and parents/guardians fully understand the policy regarding electronic devices in the testing rooms.

4. PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE ASSESSMENT

Inform students of the scheduled assessment sessions in advance, perhaps at the time the informational flyers are sent to parents/guardians. Explain to the students why they are being given the assessments and how the results will be used. Usually, students can sense the importance the Test Administrator places on the assessment and their performance may be affected accordingly. Students should realize that doing their best is important to them as well as to the future of the school and its programs. They may also be informed that their parents/guardians and teachers will be receiving the results. However, no assessment situation should be unduly stressful for students.

Inform students of the following:

- They are permitted to use scratch paper.
- They are **not** permitted to use ink pens.
- They may use their own calculators (or school-supplied, if applicable) for the science assessment and most of the mathematics assessment. (Please refer to Calculator Policy found in Appendix C.)

In addition, PDE encourages districts to inform students BEFORE TESTING of the locally determined ramifications/sanctions for student misconduct during the PSSAs. This includes, but is not limited to, sanctions associated with

- cheating and
- sharing and/or reproducing of test content.

Students will not be permitted to have cell phones, cameras, or any other unauthorized electronic devices in their possession during the administration of the assessment. Students must be informed of this policy in advance and encouraged to leave such items at home on administration days. The Test Administrator must collect all such devices prior to distributing assessment materials and shall return them upon completion of the assessment.

School/district personnel must discuss the Code of Conduct for Test Takers with all students prior to the scheduled assessment time. It is essential that students understand the importance of each point in the code of conduct before testing begins. (Please refer to Appendix D of this handbook.)

5. PREPARING THE CLASSROOM PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT

Good organization of assessment materials and well-executed procedures will make the administration proceed smoothly. During the assessment sessions, keep disturbances to a minimum. One way to do this is to put a sign on the door(s) to the classroom to indicate that an assessment session is taking place. A quiet, calm atmosphere is essential for concentration on the task. Extra sharpened pencils should be available to students. Do not permit students to sharpen pencils during the assessment sessions as this may be disruptive to other students.

Remove or cover all classroom instructional materials that may affect the validity of the PSSA. For example, posters about math rules or times tables should be covered or removed from the room on the assessment days.

DO NOT DISPLAY:

- vocabulary words and/or definitions
- examples of problems or answers
- instructions on how to use a calculator
- tips on how to write responses and/or solve problems
- illustrations or drawings of geometric shapes, algebraic equations, graphs, or number lines

6. ADMINISTERING THE ASSESSMENTS

The **English Language Arts** assessment consists of a total of four sections. Each section should be scheduled as one assessment session; however, testing sites can make the final determination whether multiple sections can be administered in the same testing session, as long as the sections are administered in the sequence in which they are printed in the test booklets. In all cases, individual assessment sections must be completed within one school day. Any student requesting additional time should be allowed the extra time. See page 19 for more information concerning accommodations.

With the exception of grade 3, each student will have one test booklet and one answer booklet; the grade 3 assessment is presented in one combined test and answer booklet.

- Answer booklets contain space for recording answers to the multiple-choice, selected-response, and constructed-response questions. Each student must use the same test booklet and answer booklet for all sections of the assessment. Because there are multiple forms at each grade level, **it is imperative that students are provided a test booklet and an answer booklet with the same form designation.** For example, if a student is assigned a Form 3 test booklet, that student must be assigned a Form 3 answer booklet.
- **Under no circumstances should you attempt to match forms by the security barcode printed on the back of the booklets.** The only match between test and answer booklets is the form designation printed on the front cover of each booklet. Failure to ensure that students have the same form of the test booklet and answer booklet may adversely affect district, school, and student results.

The **mathematics** assessment consists of a total of three sections. Each section should be scheduled as one assessment session; however, testing sites can make the final determination whether multiple sections can be administered in the same testing session, as long as the sections are administered in the sequence in which they are printed in the test booklets. In all cases, individual assessment sections must be completed within one school day. Any student requesting additional time should be allowed the extra time. See page 19 for more information concerning accommodations.

With the exception of grade 3, each student will have one test booklet and one answer booklet; the grade 3 assessment is presented in one combined test and answer booklet. Students in grades 4–8 will receive one red sticker. One ruler will be supplied for each student in grade 3. One protractor will be supplied for each student in grade 4. Any student taking the online assessment will not need a physical ruler or protractor; these tools are provided as resources as part of the testing software. For more information on how to use these online tools, see the *Online Directions for Administration Manuals*. Students may practice using the online tools by accessing the Online Tools Training and Tutorials.

- Answer booklets contain space for recording answers to the multiple-choice and open-ended questions. Each student must use the same test booklet and answer booklet for all sections of the assessment. Because there are multiple forms at each grade level, **it is imperative that students are provided a test booklet and an answer booklet with the same form designation.** For example, if a student is assigned a Form 3 test booklet, that student must be assigned a Form 3 answer booklet.
- **Under no circumstances should you attempt to match forms by the security barcode printed on the back of the booklets.** The only match between test and answer booklets is the form designation printed on the front cover of each booklet. Failure to ensure that students have the same form of the test booklet and answer booklet may adversely affect district, school, and student results.
- At the beginning of Section 1 of the grades 4–8 mathematics assessment, students are NOT permitted to use a calculator. Students will use the red stickers provided to seal the cover page through page 6 of the test booklets upon completion of the non-calculator mathematics items. For the remaining mathematics sections of the assessment, students are permitted to use their own calculators or ones that the school might provide. See page 5 for more information concerning allowable calculator use. For students testing online, the calculator in the testing software will not be accessible during the non-calculator items. It is the responsibility of the Test Administrator to ensure that students do not use calculators during the non-calculator portion of the assessment.
- Test Administrators must collect all used scratch paper after the non-calculator portion of the assessment to ensure students have not recorded non-calculator items on scratch paper.

The **science** assessment consists of two sections at grades 4 and 8. Each section should be scheduled as one assessment session; however, testing sites can make the final determination whether multiple sections can be administered in the same testing session, as long as the sections are administered in the sequence in which they are printed in the test booklets. In all cases, individual assessment sections must be completed within one school day. Any student requesting additional time should be allowed the extra time. See page 19 for more information concerning accommodations.

- Answer booklets contain space for recording answers to the multiple-choice and open-ended questions. Each student must use the same test booklet and answer booklet for all sections of the assessment. Because there are multiple forms at each grade level, **it is imperative that students are provided a test booklet and an answer booklet with the same form designation.** For example, if a student is assigned a Form 3 test booklet, that student must be assigned a Form 3 answer booklet.
- **Under no circumstances should you attempt to match forms by the security barcode printed on the back of the booklets.** The only match between test and answer booklets is the form designation printed on the front cover of each booklet. Failure to ensure that students have the same form of the test booklet and answer booklet may adversely affect the district and school results.
- Students may use calculators for the science assessment. If students do not have calculators and the school has not made them available, students can respond to the tasks successfully without them. However, if your students have access to calculators and know how to use them, using them during the assessment is permissible. Note: Students may not share their calculators during the assessment.

7. MANAGING EXTENDED ASSESSMENT SESSIONS

Students should complete all tasks to the best of their ability; however, not all students will finish the assessment sections at the same time. Use the flexibility of the time limits to the students' advantage. Students should not feel rushed and no student should be penalized because he or she works slowly. It is equally important; however, that a student not be given an opportunity to waste time. Students should close their booklets when they have finished the section of the assessment in which they were working. Test Administrators must collect test materials including scratch paper as students finish testing. Students who finish early may sit quietly or read for pleasure until all students have finished. Written work/drawing/coloring of any kind is prohibited to ensure students are not recording secure test content.

Students with special requirements (i.e., physical, visual, auditory, or learning disabilities as defined by their IEPs or service contracts) and students who work slowly may require extended time. Special assessment situations should be arranged for these students. Requests for extended time should be granted if the Test Administrator finds the request to be educationally valid. Students should be permitted to continue immediately following the regularly scheduled session in another setting. Any student granted an extended assessment period must have this information selected in his or her answer booklet on page 3 or in eDIRECT for students testing online.

When allowing extended assessment sessions for a portion of the student population:

- **Do not** allow students to attend a lunch period with other students if the lunch period occurs between the original session and the extended session.
- **Do not** allow students to attend any classes between the original session and the extended session.
- **Do not** allow any overnight extensions.
- **Do not** allow students to return to an unfinished section after indicating they have completed that section.
- **Do not** allow the extended session to be administered without monitoring. It is the School Assessment Coordinator’s responsibility to make arrangements for a Test Administrator to monitor extended sessions.
- **Do not** allow students to move to extended time location without a Test Administrator.
- **Do not** allow students to carry materials to extended time session/location.

8. MAKE-UP SESSIONS

If a student is absent during a testing session, he or she should resume or begin the assessment in the same section as the rest of the testing population upon return. The section that was missed due to absence can be made up in a separate session. If multiple sections are missed, the make-up session(s) must follow the order of the booklet.

- A separate window has been established to facilitate make-up testing (May 2–6, 2016); however, schools should administer make-ups as needed throughout the entire PSSA testing window. In all cases, schools should follow the procedures established by their district when scheduling make-up testing.
- If a school receives a new student during the make-up window, no assessments should be administered to the student—the PDE-established windows for each subject will have already passed.
- If a student becomes ill (as determined by a school nurse, health room aide, principal, etc.) during the administration of a section of the assessment and the student is unable to complete the section, the student may complete that section during a make-up session upon returning to school, starting with the item the student was completing when the illness occurred. The student **must** be monitored closely so that responses to previous items **cannot** be changed.
- Cyber Charter Schools must develop and implement plans that provide for make-up sessions for students absent during testing sessions.

9. MANAGING DEFECTIVE ANSWER BOOKLETS

If a student receives an answer booklet with damaged or missing pages, replace the booklet with an answer booklet **of the same form designation** and allow the student to continue working. If the student has already begun one or more sections of the assessment, he or she should start working in the new booklet at the point where the defect was discovered and use the new booklet for the remainder of the assessment. After the assessment has been completed, school personnel must transcribe all of the student’s responses from the defective booklet into the undamaged answer booklet. **Do not insert pages from one answer booklet into another.** Multiple documents and loose pages returned for one student will not be scored.

Write “DEFECTIVE” on the damaged answer booklet and apply a Do Not Score Label over the existing label on the front cover of the damaged booklet. Return the damaged booklet with the rest of the school’s answer booklets.

PART VIII – RETURN OF ASSESSMENT MATERIALS

In the interest of test security it is of the utmost importance that the District Assessment Coordinator, School Assessment Coordinator, and all persons responsible for handling test materials can account for these materials at all times and return all materials as directed in this section.

Failure to account for and/or return assessment materials constitutes a breach in security, the consequences of which can be severe, up to and including remuneration should it be determined loss of or misappropriation of materials has compromised the integrity of test items.

As soon as the majority of a school's testing population has completed an assessment, School Assessment Coordinators (if a ship-to-school building) or District Assessment Coordinators, should begin to box and ship the school's test materials to DRC. Only enough materials should be retained to account for make-ups and new enrollments.

- When materials are returned to DRC from the LEA (ship-to-district), School Assessment Coordinators are responsible for initiating the early return of test and answer booklets to the DAC for an early return to DRC.
- When materials are returned to DRC directly from the school (ship-to-school), School Assessment Coordinators are responsible for packaging and shipping the materials directly to DRC.
- Unless instructed otherwise, all secure materials such as, test booklets, answer booklets, large-print booklets, Braille booklets, and Spanish booklets must be returned to DRC. **Note: LEAs must ensure that student answers from large-print and Braille answer booklets are transcribed or scribed verbatim (per the Accommodations Guidelines) into the matching Form 1 regular answer booklet. Large-print answer booklets will not be scored.**
- All scratch paper, including scoring guidelines and writer's checklists (used or unused), must be destroyed; DO NOT return them to DRC.
- LEAs should develop a process to ensure that computer files from students who used a keyboarding accommodation are permanently deleted. The typed/word-processed output must be securely destroyed after it has been transcribed into an answer booklet.
- If a student is testing online, Test Tickets need to be returned to the School Assessment Coordinator. More information on how to handle Test Tickets can be found in the *eDIRECT Test Setup User Guide*.
- **PDE's policy states that the test must be administered to any student who enrolls during the PDE-established testing window. Therefore, schools must retain enough testing materials at the school to accommodate new enrollments and make-up sessions.** These remaining test materials should be shipped to DRC consistent with bullet points one and two above on the last day of the testing window.

1. MATERIALS ACCOUNTABILITY FORM

Each LEA is responsible for completing the Materials Accountability Form in eDIRECT. This form may be updated throughout the testing window, but it MUST be completed by the end of the testing window when all materials have been returned to DRC.

The Materials Accountability Form can be found in eDIRECT. All District Assessment Coordinators have access to the Materials Accountability Form. The District Assessment Coordinator is responsible for assigning permissions to School Assessment Coordinators, as needed. After logging in, click on Accountability Form under the Materials tab on the left menu. Then select the appropriate Administration and click Show.

- The "Returned to DRC" column must be completed for all listed materials. District Assessment Coordinators and School Assessment Coordinators are accountable for returning all booklets that were received. Any missing materials and/or materials that are returned late are considered a breach of test security.
- Materials received through an Additional Material Request should be included in the "Returned to DRC" columns.

- All discrepancies between the number of booklets shipped from DRC and the number of booklets returned to DRC should be documented in the “Record reasons for discrepancies here” portion of the form.

Note: Sites that are only testing students online and did not order accommodated forms (e.g., Braille, large-print, or Spanish) will not complete a Materials Accountability Form.

2. PACKAGING MATERIALS FOR RETURN TO DISTRICT ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR

The following process should serve as a guideline for School Assessment Coordinators when packaging materials for return to their District Assessment Coordinator, if applicable.

- 1) Verify that all used answer booklets have a barcode label (District/School, Student Precode, or Do Not Score) affixed to the front cover of the answer booklet.
- 2) Verify that all responses for students using accommodations have been properly transcribed verbatim into the form-appropriate scannable answer booklet.
- 3) After inventorying all materials, use the online Materials Accountability Form to record the number of answer booklets and test booklets your school is returning to the District Assessment Coordinator. Make sure you note the number of test and answer booklets you are retaining for make-up and new enrollment purposes. The form is available in eDIRECT. (See page 39.)
- 4) Separate all answer booklets from test booklets. Make sure there are no answer booklets “tucked” inside a test booklet.
 - “Tucked” answer booklets may not be detected during booklet check-in at DRC, which could impact student and school reporting.
 - Failure to remove answer booklets “tucked” inside of test booklets may cause discrepancies when DRC counts booklets.
- 5) Place all answer booklets in the boxes that you saved from DRC’s original shipment.
 - DRC does not require answer booklets to be sorted by class or grade within the school boxes, only that answer booklets be boxed separately from test booklets.
 - Make-up materials can be returned in one box if the total quantity for all subjects is small enough to fit into a single box.
- 6) Immediately return the boxes of answer booklets to your District Assessment Coordinator, retaining enough materials at the school through the end of the testing windows to account for make-ups and new enrollments.
- 7) Box all test booklets and unopened packs of shrink-wrapped materials separately from the answer booklets in the remaining boxes that you saved from DRC’s original shipment.
- 8) Send all the Test Security Certifications for the School Assessment Coordinator, Principal, Test Administrators, Proctors, and any other individuals to the District Assessment Coordinator for delivery to the Chief School Administrator for filing. Do not return the Certifications to DRC.
- 9) Retain the electronic or hard copies of the PAsecureID lists. These lists of PAsecureIDs should remain on file with the school/district for at least three years. Do not return these lists to DRC.
- 10) Do not return the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*, the *Directions for Administration Manuals*, or scratch paper. Please follow instructions from the District Assessment Coordinator for the destruction of these materials.
- 11) Return all materials that were retained for make-up or new enrollment purposes to the DAC at the end of the testing window.

3. PACKAGING MATERIALS FOR RETURN TO DRC

The following process should serve as a guideline for District Assessment Coordinators when packaging materials for return to DRC. For schools that return materials directly to DRC, the School Assessment Coordinator is responsible for the packaging steps described in the preceding section.

- 1) Condense school boxes whenever possible. DRC does not require that the assessment booklets be sorted by school within the district boxes, only that the answer booklets are boxed separately from the test booklets.
- 2) Send all the Test Security Certifications to the Chief School Administrator for filing. Do not return the Test Security Certifications to DRC.
- 3) Place all answer documents into one of the protective DRC return shipment bags. Seal the bag tightly using one of the plastic ties provided. All answer documents must be placed into a DRC Return Shipment Bag. After the booklets have been placed into a DRC Return Shipment Bag, place the filled bag into a DRC box. Test Booklets and unopened packages do not require plastic bags and can be placed directly into a separate DRC box. NOTE: District Assessment Coordinators and School Assessment Coordinators should not open or look into answer booklets or test booklets.
- 4) Use filler (e.g., crumpled paper or bubble wrap) to make sure that test materials do not shift during transport.
- 5) Close the boxes by folding the flaps to cover the previous shipping labels. The A and B printed on the flaps should be exposed.
- 6) Securely tape all boxes using heavy-duty shipping tape. It is recommended that you **use at least three strips of tape across both the top and the bottom of the box** to ensure the contents are secure during shipping.
- 7) Affix a DRC Return Shipment Label (Answer Booklets or Test Booklets and Unopened Packages) to the top of the box flap labeled A. For sites with very small quantities, both answer booklets and test booklets can be returned in the same box. Use both types of DRC Return Shipment Labels when returning answer booklets and test booklets in the same box.

Note: DRC Return Shipment Labels are not subject specific and can be used to return any PSSA materials.

- 8) Affix a UPS Return Shipment Label to the top of the box flap labeled B. DRC and district addresses have been preprinted on the label.

Note: UPS RS Labels are not subject specific and can be used to return any PSSA materials.

- 9) **IMPORTANT:** Record the UPS Tracking Number for each package, noting the assessment for which it was used and the content of each box. Please keep the number(s) for future reference to document the materials returned to DRC. The LEA is responsible to ensure that all materials are returned to DRC.
- 10) Keep the boxes in a secure, locked location until they are given to the UPS driver.
- 11) Schedule a pick-up with UPS as soon as schools begin the early return of answer booklets.
- 12) Schedule a pick-up with UPS for the test booklets to occur no later than three business days after the close of each assessment window.

- **English Language Arts**, by April 20, 2016
- **Mathematics**, by April 27, 2016
- **Science**, by May 4, 2016
 - **ALL Make-Up Materials**, by May 6, 2016

Important Note: All PSSA answer booklets must arrive at DRC by the final processing date to be included in 2016 reporting. UPS pickups must occur in accordance with the established timelines, and absolutely no later than May 10 to ensure that your materials arrive prior to the close of DRC's answer booklet processing. Failure to return your PSSA answer booklets in the required timeline can negatively affect PSSA and accountability reporting. The exclusion of any students in accountability reporting because of an LEA's failure to return answer booklets within the established timeline will be investigated and researched by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

If the district office does not have a daily, scheduled **UPS pickup, call UPS at 1-866-857-1501** to arrange for materials pickup. Specify that you are using pre-paid, UPS ground return service labels. You must call at least one day prior to the day on which you will ship your materials.

Please refer to the following diagram for further clarification on how to package return materials to DRC.

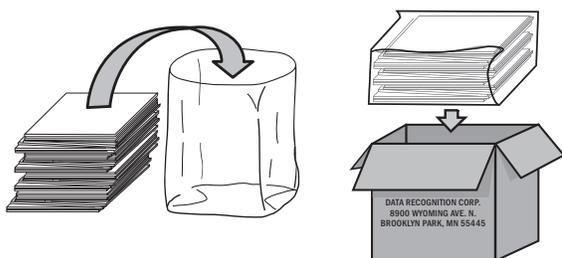
Final District Assessment Coordinator Checklist for Returning Test Materials to DRC

BAGGING, BOXING, PACKING, LABELING, AND TAPING INSTRUCTIONS

IMPORTANT: Use this checklist in addition to the step-by-step instructions for packaging secure answer and test booklets. After verifying the return of each school's materials, use this checklist to prepare each box for shipment to DRC.

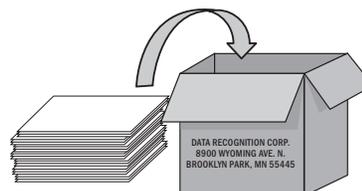
- Pack test materials in boxes provided by DRC. Place answer booklets within the protective, plastic DRC return shipment bags.
- Seal each DRC return shipment bag containing answer booklets tightly using one of the plastic ties provided.

Boxes containing answer booklets



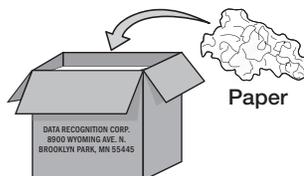
Answer booklets should be placed into a DRC return shipment bag. Seal the DRC return shipment bag and place it in the DRC box. This includes used Answer Booklets; Writing Booklets; and Grade 3 Reading/ Mathematics Booklets.

Boxes containing test booklets and unopened packages

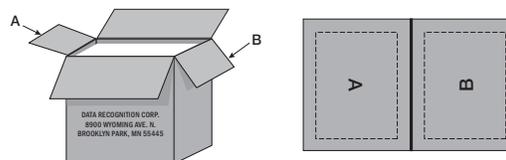


Test Booklets and unopened packages for all subjects do not need to be placed in a DRC return shipment bag when returning them to DRC. These packages can be placed directly into a separate DRC box.

- Boxes do not need to be sorted by school, grade, or class. Condense the answer booklets to fill the boxes to the top. Fill any empty space in the boxes with crumpled paper or bubble wrap to ensure that test material does not shift during transit.



- Fold the flaps with old shipping labels first to expose the A and B flaps.



- Affix a DRC return label of the appropriate color to flap A and verify that each label has the correct district/ school name and address. Boxes containing answer booklets should have a **lilac** label; boxes containing test booklets and unopened packages should have a **white** label.



- Affix a UPS label to flap B.



- Tape boxes securely by using three (3) pieces of packing tape on **BOTH** the top and bottom. Overlap the tape, and make sure it wraps around the sides at least 2 inches.



Bottom

Wrap tape 2" on sides

Top

Appendix A:

Information for Parents or Guardians



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, 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. One step or rule required in all schools is that electronic devices are not permitted at test sites. Electronic devices include cell phones, smartphones, 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. 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 certain consequences.

If a student 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, you will be contacted by the school. Students that 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. 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 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 and, because 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.

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.

Bureau of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction
Department of Education | 333 Market Street | Harrisburg, PA 17126 | 717-787-4234 | www.education.pa.gov

Frequently
Asked
Questions

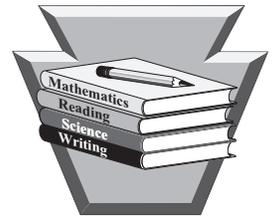
Information for Parents or Guardians

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

English Language Arts Assessment, April 11–15, 2016

Mathematics Assessment, April 18–22, 2016

Science Assessment, April 25–29, 2016



GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PSSA

Which schools participate?

All school districts and charter schools participate in the assessments. Nonpublic 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 assessment should measure?

Groups of educators from all levels of education in Pennsylvania chose the areas of knowledge and skills upon which the assessment is based. The groups included teachers, supervisors, curriculum directors, and college specialists. They also reviewed, edited, and approved the test items.

Who administers the assessment?

Each school chooses the person(s) who will administer the assessment. 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 assure that parents or guardians have the right to review a state assessment in the school entity during convenient hours for parents or guardians at least two weeks prior to their administration 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.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ASSESSMENTS (grades 3–8)

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 four 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 three types of questions: multiple-choice, evidence-based selected response, and constructed-response. In a multiple-choice question, the correct answer 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 require students to compose their responses. These include a writing prompt, short-answer questions (grade 3 only), and text-dependent analysis questions (grades 4–8 only). The writing prompt requires students to compose a response using one of three modes (narrative, informative/explanatory, or opinion in grades 3–5 and narrative, informative/explanatory, or argumentative in grades 6–8). 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. For writing prompts, scores are determined using a holistic scoring guideline that includes composition skills as well as conventions. 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 and a writing prompt. 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 3–8)

How long does the assessment take?

The entire mathematics assessment takes approximately three to four hours to complete. Your school district will inform you about the assessment schedule.

What do the assessments include?

Each student completes three 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 assessments?

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 items in each reporting category vary by grade level. As a part of the assessment of Cluster A, Numbers and Operations, students in grades 4–8 respond to a section of items in which a calculator is not permitted. Constructed-response items may require the students to show all of their work (calculations, graphs, drawings, etc.) 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 two to four 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 the 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 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.

Appendix B:

Ethical Standards of Test Preparation and Administration

ETHICAL STANDARDS OF TEST PREPARATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Before Test Administration:

DO...

- Communicate to students, parents, and the community what the test does and does not measure, when and how it will be administered, and how the results will be used.
- Maintain a positive attitude about testing.
- Be sure that students testing online have prior experience with the Online Tools Training (OTT).
- Read the *Directions for Administration Manual*.
- Follow test security and administration guidelines.
- Consider having a teacher other than the teacher of record administer the assessment to a particular group of students. If local circumstances do not allow that option, assign a Proctor in the classroom with the Test Administrator.
- Schedule the assessment and provide the schedule to PDE via the online system.
- Include all students in the appropriate assessment.
- Attend the annual trainings for the administration of the assessments in order to be properly informed of the procedures to follow. These trainings include understanding test security and the confidential and proprietary nature of the documents.
- Make contingency plans for unexpected disruptions during testing. All school personnel must know what to do in the event of a fire alarm, bomb threat, HAZMAT incident, unruly student, etc.
- Remove or disable monitoring software (spyware) from computers, iPads, and Chromebooks to be used for testing.
- Cover or remove from classrooms or hallways all instructional materials that could aid students in answering test items.
- Make sure the testing environment is comfortable and has appropriate lighting.
- Place a “**Testing—Do Not Disturb**” sign on doors where testing is occurring.
- Review the *Code of Conduct for Test Takers* with students.
- Make sure calculators (other than calculators provided within the online testing engine) meet the requirements of the Calculator Policy. Clear the memory and all stored programs before and after the calculators are used for a test.
- Know the required accommodations for each student with an IEP or 504 Service Plan and for each English Language Learner being assessed.
- Review with students the possible local sanctions the district will enforce for student misconduct (e.g., cheating and recording test questions).
- Count the test materials in the presence of the SAC.

DO NOT...

- Instruct students to use a test-taking technique that would require them to bubble or strike through more than one response to a test question and then return and erase all but one response.
- Review student test booklets except for purposes as stated in the *Directions for Administration Manual* and any of the accommodations guidelines documents. Knowledge or review of test content is not necessary for valid test administration and is prohibited.
Note: Interpreters may have secure access to test materials in the school three days prior to test administration to prepare for accurate interpretation of the test.
- Reveal any part of secure copyrighted tests to students.
- Copy or otherwise reproduce any part of secure tests.
- Review and/or provide answers to test questions to students.
- Possess unauthorized copies of state tests or any parts thereof.
- Assist in, direct, aid, counsel, encourage, or fail to report immediately any of the actions prohibited in this section.

During Test Administration:

DO...

- Follow test security and administration guidelines.
- Maintain a positive attitude about testing.
- Engage in active monitoring for the duration of testing. Position yourself with the best vantage point by continually moving around the testing site to ensure students are adhering to the instructions given.
- Ensure that students are working in the correct section and that they are bubbling in answers in the correct section of the answer sheet for the section of the test booklet in which they are working, **BUT be cautious in redirecting or assisting students that you are not violating test security by coaching (see DO NOT list on the next page).**
- Make sure students are supervised at all times during testing, including scheduled or unscheduled breaks or emergency interruptions. This supervision requirement includes those students who need additional time to complete any test session.
- Escort all students and carry all secure testing materials to alternate testing sites for extended time.
- Make sure that sections/modules are started and completed in the same day.
- Keep voice inflections neutral if an allowable or required accommodation is to read portions of the test aloud.
- Minimize distractions, including intercom announcements.
- Collect cell phones, smart phones, and other unauthorized electronic devices as students enter the testing site.
- Report testing irregularities/security breaches to the School Assessment Coordinator, principal, or the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

DO NOT...

- Leave students unattended with testing materials or permit any student to leave the testing site with testing materials for any reason.
- Permit students to look ahead to another section or module of the test before being instructed to do so, or allow students to look back in a test booklet once a test section or module has been completed.
- Discuss, disseminate, or otherwise reveal contents of the test to anyone.
- Possess secure test materials at any time other than during the actual administration of the test. NOTE: Test Administrators should only have possession of the secure test materials immediately prior to the administration of the test and during the administration of the test, and the materials should be collected and counted by the School Assessment Coordinator immediately after testing. When materials are exchanged between the SAC and TA, materials must be counted to ensure all materials are accounted for.
- Coach or provide feedback to students (e.g., answer any questions pertaining to the content of the test, review rough drafts, or give feedback of any kind including indicating to students any items that need a second look). This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, a Personal Care Aid (PCA), Therapeutic Support Staff (TSS), or any other one-on-one aide who is assigned to a student.
- Define or clarify a word in a test item.
- Read aloud any portion of the Literature Assessment.
- Read aloud the passages, multiple-choice questions or answer choices, or short-answer questions in Sections 2, 3, or 4 of the PSSA English Language Arts (ELA) assessment.
- Read aloud any part of a mathematics item that will cue the correct answer or provide a hint for the test taker.
- Return a test booklet to any student after it has been turned in to the Test Administrator except for make-up sessions for absences and for students who go to another testing site for extended time.
- Alter, influence, or interfere with a test response in any way, fill in any unanswered item, or instruct the student to do so.
- Assist in, direct, aid, counsel, encourage, or fail to report any of the actions prohibited in this section.

After Test Administration:**DO...**

- Follow test security and administration guidelines.
- Maintain a positive attitude about testing.
- Collect all scratch paper or rough drafts at the end of each test session, and return them to the School Assessment Coordinator to be destroyed.
- Return all secure testing materials to the School Assessment Coordinator immediately after the testing session each day.
- Account for all test booklets and answer booklets daily, and keep them in a secure location.
- Transcribe exact student responses, including incorrect responses, when an alternate test format (such as Braille or large print) has been used or when a student's answer booklet has been damaged.
- Clear the memory of calculators after each testing session.
- Pack and ship the secure testing materials to the testing contractor.
- Sign the appropriate Test Security Certification, and return it to the appropriate individual as directed.

DO NOT...

- Discuss, disseminate, or otherwise reveal the contents of the test to anyone.
- Keep/save, copy, reproduce, or use any test, test item, specific test content, or examinee responses to any item or any section of a secure test in any manner inconsistent with the instructions provided by and through the Pennsylvania Department of Education.
- Review student responses in the answer booklet.
- Review test booklets containing the test items.
- Alter, influence, or interfere with a test response in any way, fill in any unanswered item, or instruct the student to do so.
- Discuss or provide feedback regarding test items.
- Copy or reproduce any portion of the secure test materials or provide answer keys.
- Erase or change student answers.
- Make false or misleading statements about assessment results, including inappropriate interpretations, inaccurate reports, or unsubstantiated claims.
- Erase anything in the answer booklet or darken bubbles.
- Assist in, direct, aid, counsel, encourage, or fail to report any of the actions prohibited in this section.

Appendix C:

Pennsylvania Calculator Policy

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 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 following each test session of the assessment.

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

- Noncalculators such as cell phones, smart phones, 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 QWERTY keyboards, typewriter-like keyboards, or keypads (e.g., Dvorak)
- 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 nonfactory 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 cannot be used on the PSSA or Keystone Exams. Please note that as technology changes, this policy may also change.

Appendix D:

Code of Conduct for Test Takers

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 you select and erase completely any 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...

- Bring notes with you to the test.
- Bring any electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, smart phones, etc.) other than an approved calculator, if applicable, to the test.
- Share a calculator with others.
- Use the bubbles in the answer booklet to either eliminate possible incorrect answers or possible correct answers. Mark only the bubble for the one correct answer you have chosen.
- Talk with others about questions on the test during or after the test.
- 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.

Appendix E:

PSSA Test Security Certifications

2016 PSSA Test Security Certification

(District Assessment Coordinator)



District: _____

School: _____

AUN: _____

Maintaining the security and integrity of all assessment materials, preventing any dishonest or fraudulent behavior in the administration and handling of the assessment, and promoting a fair and equitable testing environment are essential in order to obtain reliable and valid student scores. In that regard, I certify the following:

Prior to the administration of the assessment, all individuals involved in the handling of assessment materials and/or the administration of the assessment received instruction regarding test security protocols and procedures. Additionally, prior to the administration of the assessment, any individual who administered and/or proctored the assessment completed the Pennsylvania State Test Administration Training and all School Assessment Coordinators were trained on the Test Accountability and Security information contained in the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*. Furthermore, prior to the administration of the assessment, all individuals involved in the handling and/or administration of the assessment and all individuals who had access to any assessment materials were informed that the assessment materials are secure, confidential, and proprietary documents owned by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. These individuals were made aware that they were neither to review, discuss, disseminate, describe, or otherwise reveal the contents of the assessment to anyone nor were they to remove any assessment materials from the school building. They were also made aware that they were not to keep, copy, reproduce, release, or use any assessment, assessment question, specific assessment content, or examinee response to any item or any section of the secure assessment in any manner that is inconsistent with the instructions provided by or through the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Prior to the administration of the assessment, all individuals involved in the handling and/or administration of the assessment received instruction that all assessment materials, including all assessment booklets and other materials containing secure assessment questions and student responses, were to be kept secure and precisely accounted for in accordance with the procedures specified in the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*. Further, prior to the administration of the assessment, all individuals who assisted in the administration of the assessment and all individuals who had access to the secure assessment materials were made aware that they were not to in any manner alter or cause the alteration of any examinee response, assessment booklet, or papers used by examinees.

All assessment materials received from DRC have been used and secured in accordance with the directions contained in the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*.

I have not reviewed, discussed, disseminated, described, or otherwise revealed the contents of the assessment to anyone. I am not aware that any individual has reviewed, discussed, disseminated, described, or otherwise revealed the contents of the assessment to anyone. I have neither removed any assessment materials from the school building unless I was specifically authorized to administer the assessment to a student on homebound instruction nor am I aware that any individual has removed any assessment materials from the school building unless specifically authorized to administer the assessment to a student on homebound instruction.

I have not kept, copied, reproduced, released, or used any assessment, assessment question, specific assessment content, or examinee response to any item or any section of the secure assessment in any manner that is inconsistent with the instructions provided by or through the Pennsylvania Department of Education. I am not aware that any individual has kept, copied, reproduced, released, or used any assessment, assessment question, specific assessment content, or examinee response to any item or any section of the secure assessment in any manner that is inconsistent with the instructions provided by or through the Pennsylvania Department of Education. I have neither provided any examinee with an answer to an assessment question or in any way influenced an examinee's response to any assessment question nor am I aware that any individual has provided any examinee with an answer to an assessment question or in any way influenced an examinee's response to any assessment question. I have not in any manner altered or caused the alteration of any examinee response, assessment booklet, or papers used by examinees. I am not aware that any other individual has altered or has caused to have altered any examinee response in any manner.

I understand that I am responsible for the secure administration of the assessment in my school district and for the return of all secure assessment material that was received from DRC and that any breach in assessment security could result in the invalidation of assessment results, professional discipline, and/or criminal prosecution.

I understand that false statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. § 4904.

Assessment Coordinator Name

Assessment Coordinator Signature

Date of Signature

2016 PSSA Test Security Certification

(School Assessment Coordinator and Principal)



District: _____

School: _____

AUN: _____

Maintaining the security and integrity of all assessment materials, preventing any dishonest or fraudulent behavior in the administration and handling of the assessment, and promoting a fair and equitable testing environment are essential to obtain reliable and valid student scores. In that regard, I certify:

Prior to the administration of the assessment, all individuals involved in the handling of assessment materials and/or the administration of the assessment received instruction regarding test security protocols and procedures. Additionally, prior to the administration of the assessment, any individual who administered and/or proctored the assessment completed the *Pennsylvania Test Administration Training*. Furthermore, prior to the administration of the assessment, all individuals involved in the handling and/or administration of the assessment and all individuals who had access to any assessment materials were informed that the assessment materials are secure, confidential, and proprietary documents owned by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. These individuals were made aware that they were not to review, discuss, disseminate, describe, or otherwise reveal the contents of the assessment to anyone nor were they to remove any assessment materials from the school building. They were also made aware that they were not to keep, copy, reproduce, or use any assessment, assessment question, specific assessment content, or examinee response to any item or any section of a secure assessment in any manner that is inconsistent with the instructions provided by or through the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Prior to the administration of the assessment, all individuals involved in the handling and/or administration of the assessment received instruction that all assessment materials, including all assessment booklets and other materials containing secure assessment questions and student responses, were to be kept secure and precisely accounted for in accordance with the procedures specified in the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*. Further, prior to the administration of the assessment, all individuals who assisted in the administration of the assessment and all individuals who had access to the secure assessment materials were made aware that they were not to, in any manner, alter or cause to be altered any examinee response, assessment booklets, or papers used by examinees.

All assessment materials received from DRC have been used and secured in accordance with the directions contained in the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*.

I have not reviewed, discussed, disseminated, described, or otherwise revealed the contents of the assessment to anyone. I am not aware that any individual has reviewed, discussed, disseminated, described, or otherwise revealed the contents of the assessment to anyone. I have not removed any assessment materials from the school building unless I was specifically authorized to administer the assessment to a student on homebound instruction nor am I aware that any individual has removed any assessment materials from the school building unless specifically authorized to administer the assessment to a student on homebound instruction.

I have not kept, copied, reproduced, released, or used any assessment, assessment question, specific assessment content, or examinee response to any item or any section of the secure assessment in any manner that is inconsistent with the instructions provided by or through the Pennsylvania Department of Education. I am not aware that any individual has kept, copied, reproduced, released, or used any assessment, assessment question, specific assessment content, or examinee response to any item or any section of the secure assessment in any manner that is inconsistent with the instructions provided by or through the Pennsylvania Department of Education. I have not provided any examinee with an answer to an assessment question or in any way influenced an examinee's response to any assessment question nor am I aware that any individual has provided any examinee with an answer to an assessment question or in any way influenced an examinee's response to any assessment question. I have not in any manner altered or caused to have altered any examinee response. I am not aware that any other individual has altered or has caused to have altered any examinee response in any manner.

I understand that I am responsible for the secure administration of the assessment in my school(s) and for the return of all secure assessment material that was received from DRC and that any breach in assessment security could result in the invalidation of assessment results, professional discipline, and/or criminal prosecution.

I understand that false statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. § 4904.

Name

Signature

Date of Signature

2016 PSSA Test Security Certification

(Test Administrator and Proctor)

District: _____

School: _____

AUN: _____

Maintaining the security and integrity of all assessment materials, preventing any dishonest or fraudulent behavior in the administration and handling of the assessment, and promoting a fair and equitable testing environment are essential in order to obtain reliable and valid student scores. In that regard, I certify the following:

Prior to the administration of the assessment, I completed the Pennsylvania State Test Administration Training, and I understand that the assessment materials are secure, confidential, and proprietary documents owned by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

I have not reviewed, discussed, disseminated, described, or otherwise revealed the contents of the assessment to anyone. I have not removed any assessment materials from the school building unless I was specifically authorized to administer the assessment to a student on homebound instruction. I have not kept, copied, reproduced, released, or used any assessment, assessment question, specific assessment content, or examinee response to any item or any section of the secure assessment in any manner that is inconsistent with the instructions provided by or through the Pennsylvania Department of Education. I have not provided any examinee with an answer to an assessment question or in any way influenced an examinee's response to any assessment question. I have not in any manner altered or caused the alteration of any examinee response, assessment booklet, or papers used by examinees.

I understand that any breach in assessment security could result in the invalidation of assessment results, professional discipline, and/or criminal prosecution.

I understand that false statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. § 4904.

Administrator/Proctor Name

Administrator/Proctor Signature

Date of Signature

2016 PSSA Test Security Certification (General)

District: _____

School: _____

AUN: _____

Maintaining the security and integrity of all assessment materials, preventing any dishonest or fraudulent behavior in the administration and handling of the assessment, and promoting a fair and equitable testing environment are essential in order to obtain reliable and valid student scores. In that regard, I certify the following:

I understand that all assessment materials are secure, confidential, and proprietary documents owned by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

I have neither reviewed, discussed, disseminated, described, or otherwise revealed the contents of the assessment to anyone nor have I removed any assessment materials from the school building. I have not kept, copied, reproduced, released, or used any assessment, assessment question, specific assessment content, or examinee response to any item or any section of the secure assessment in any manner. I have not provided any examinee with an answer to an assessment question or in any way influenced an examinee's response to any assessment question. I have not in any manner altered or caused the alteration of any examinee response, assessment booklet, or papers used by examinees.

I understand that any breach in assessment security could result in the invalidation of assessment results, professional discipline, and/or criminal prosecution.

I understand that false statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. § 4904.

Name

Signature

Date of Signature

Appendix F:

Parent Confidentiality Agreement



Parent Confidentiality Agreement

In accordance with 22 Pa. Code § 4.4 and to ensure the security and confidentiality of the assessment, when any individual inspects a Pennsylvania System of School Assessment pursuant to 22 Pa. Code §§ 4.4 and 4.5, the individual must attest to the following:

As a parent of a student who will sit for a Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) during the current school year, I understand that I have the right to review the relevant PSSA and that maintaining the validity of the assessment is of the utmost importance. I further understand that all PSSA, including the content contained in each test booklet and answer booklet, are the secure, propriety property of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Education (PDE). Therefore, I agree not to discuss, disseminate, or otherwise reveal the content of the assessment materials to anyone, including my own child(ren).

I understand that violation of these terms could result in personal liability for damages caused by a breach of test security, including but not limited to liability and/or costs associated with any of the following: retesting students; recalculating student/school/school district achievement data; developing/producing new test materials to replace compromised test materials; and investigations relating to the breach of test security.

I further understand that false statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. § 4904 (relating to unsworn falsification to authorities).

Name (Print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witnessed by: _____

Date: _____

2016
HANDBOOK FOR ASSESSMENT COORDINATORS



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The state assessment is administered by the Bureau of Assessment & Accountability, Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333 [(717) 705-2343, fax (717) 783-6642, TDD (717) 783-8445]. The assessment contractor is Data Recognition Corporation (DRC). DRC can be reached by calling toll-free 1-800-451-7849, by emailing pacustomerservice@datarecognitioncorp.com, or by faxing 1-763-268-3008 or 1-763-268-3031.
