

Shaler Area School District

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April 8, 2025

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Beginning on April 22, 2025, we will administer the PSSA (Pennsylvania System of School Assessment) according to the schedule below:

April 22, 23 and 24	English Language Arts in Grades 3,4,5,6,7 & 8
April 29 and 30	Mathematics in Grades 3,4,5,6,7 & 8
May 1 and 2	Science in Grades 4 & 8
May 5-9	Makeup Tests (All content areas)

Not all students will be testing for the entire testing window above. The building administrators have developed a schedule of specific dates and times for each test within the required testing window for that test. The schedule provides adequate time for students to complete the assessments and is aligned with the age group and developmental needs of students in their building.

The English Language Arts (ELA) and Math assessments consist of a total of seven sections, four ELA and three Math.

The Science assessment in Grades 5 and 8 will consist of two sections. Each section takes approximately one hour including both multiple choice and open-ended questions. The Science assessment addresses four major categories: The Nature of Science, Biological Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Earth and Space Sciences which are aligned to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards.

Additionally, we will be piloting online assessments in Grades 6, 7, and 8, as well as 3rd grade at Reserve Primary. This pilot is in preparation for the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) mandate that all state assessments be administered fully online beginning in the 2025-2026 school year. The pilot will allow us to assess technological readiness, familiarize students with the online testing format, and ensure a smooth transition to fully digital assessments next year.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education has experienced an unprecedented number of issues pertaining to electronic devices during the state assessment. PDE requests that parents and students understand that the integrity of the test cannot be compromised. That said, we are informing parents and students of the following information pertaining to possession and/or use of electronic devices during test administration:

- Cell phones are not allowed during the test administration.
- Consequence for using and/or having a cell phone or other electronic device during the test administration will result in the application of a "Do Not Score" label on his/her test booklet, and the student will not receive a score;

- If the student uses a cell phone or electronic device in any manner during the administration of the test, the phone or electronic device will be confiscated until such time that the parent or guardian can come to the school, and in the presence of the parent or guardian, the cell phone or other electronic device will be viewed to ensure that no information or material regarding the assessment is present;
- Violation of the no cell phone or other electronic device rule will result in discipline (minimum of a one day suspension up to expulsion) and discipline will vary depending on whether test materials has been compromised;
- Any items on an assessment that have been compromised and can no longer be used will have to be replaced, and the parents and students may be responsible for the cost of replacement.

Finally, attached to this letter you will find a Frequently Asked Questions document pertaining to the state assessments in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics and Science. Your child cannot study for this assessment but can prepare by getting plenty of rest and eating a healthy breakfast the morning of the test. Breakfast is available for free to all students in each of our buildings through the nationwide School Breakfast program.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please call us at (412) 492-1200 Ext. 2835.

Sincerely,

Brian P. Brown, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent of Schools