



The School District of the City of York





PREPARING OUR STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS:
Pennsylvania's New High School Graduation Requirements

February 2011

Options for Testing

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Big Picture: How Does It All Connect?

Two-thirds of all new jobs created in the United States require at least some postsecondary education


It's critical that we prepare all students to graduate high school with the potential to continue their studies and grow their skills.

New Graduation Requirements and Assessments:

- Designed to help all students, beginning with the class of 2015, demonstrate proficiency in state academic standards
- Complement the standards that guide Pennsylvania's high schools' education systems: Pennsylvania Standards and the Common Core State Standards
- Grounded in Pennsylvania's comprehensive approach to supporting student achievement using the Standards Aligned System (SAS) portal





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100-Point Scale

Each Keystone Exam is graded on a 100-point scale. The chart below shows the points associated with each performance level.

Performance Level	Points
Below Basic	0
Basic	50-69
Proficient	70-89
Advanced	90-100

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Test Format

Keystone Exam Questions:



- Includes multiple-choice questions and constructed-response, or open-ended questions.
- Algebra and Biology: 60%-75% of the total score from multiple-choice questions and, 25%-40% of the total score from constructed-response questions
- English Composition: 20% of the total score will come from multiple-choice, and 80% from constructed-response questions

Keystone Exam Scoring:


- Each correct multiple-choice question is worth one point
- Partial credit could be given on constructed-response questions, depending on the rubric

Keystone Exam Format:

- Online and paper/pencil formats available for all Keystone Exams
- Each district will individually determine if online, paper/pencil or both formats will be used
- Each exam will take approximately 2 to 2.5 hours to complete



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Retesting

Students can take the Keystone Exam up to 3 times per school year.

- Students who don't score 'proficient' can retake the entire test or just the module they didn't pass
- Retesting scoring will be based on the highest module scores, so it is in the best interest of the student to retake the entire Keystone Exam
- If a student has not achieved proficiency after 2 attempts, he/she can complete a project-based alternative to demonstrate his/her knowledge in the subject matter





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KEYSTONE EXAMS: THE 33% OPTION

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Keystone Exams

A district may choose to administer a state-developed Keystone Exam in core subjects that would serve as the final exam and count for at least 33% of the course grade.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2015, Keystone Exams are:

- Administered at the end of the course
- Counted for at least 1/3 of the overall course grade
- Available for students to retake either in their entirety or just a portion (module) 3 times during the year: winter, spring, and summer


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DEMONSTRATION OF PROFICIENCY IN MAIN SUBJECTS AS DETERMINED BY:



- State-developed Keystone Exam Counting as at least 33% of Course Grade
- Students in the classes of 2015 and 2016 will demonstrate proficiency in with a final Keystone Exam in the following:
 - Algebra I
 - Biology
 - Literature
 - English Composition
- The Keystone Exam will count for one-third of the final course grade.

For the classes of 2017 and beyond, requirements will be expanded to include the following:


- Passing 2 English courses (Composition and Literature)
- Passing 2 Mathematics courses (Algebra I, Algebra II, or Geometry)
- Passing 1 Science course (Biology or Chemistry)
- Passing 1 Social Studies course (Civics and Government, U.S. History, or World History)
- The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) recommends administering the English Composition exam at the end of English 9 and Literature at the end of English 10.



KEYSTONE EXAMS: THE STAND-ALONE OPTION

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Stand-Alone Requirement


Some districts may choose to require proficiency on a Keystone Exam as a stand-alone graduation requirement.

This allows:



- District discretion on how to weigh the assessment in course grading – meaning that the 33% weight is not required.
- Districts to be deemed approved for validation requirements in a content area without having to undergo a local validation process.





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LOCAL ASSESSMENTS: INDEPENDENTLY VALIDATED

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Local Assessments

Validation Requirements:



- To meet the state graduation requirements all local assessments must:
 - Align with state academic standards
 - Meet rigorous expectations, comparable to those used for the Keystone Exams
 - Be administered to all students


Validation Cost Share:

- For districts creating local assessments, the state will provide:
 - Technical assistance to help meet criteria
 - Half the cost of the assessment validation



Validation Timeline:


- A detailed timeline will be available on the SAS website (www.pdesas.org) in spring 2011

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NATIONAL ASSESSMENTS: AP/IB EXAMS


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AP/IB National Assessments

- Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) exams can be taken in place of a Keystone Exam or a locally developed assessment
- A high score on either exam in a related content area will fulfill the new graduation requirements
- The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) will release policy guidance regarding the minimum score on each AP or IB exam that will satisfy graduation requirements

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Project-Based Assessment

A student who does not achieve proficiency on a Keystone Exam after 2 attempts will be eligible to complete a project-based assessment.

Projects will be:

- Aligned with Keystone Exam modules
- Developed by the department and administered by school staff
- Scored by regional panels of educators

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