



Brian J. Polito, CPA
Superintendent of Schools

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Secretary

Erie's Public Schools
148 West 21st Street
Erie, PA 16502-2834
P: 814.874.6000
F: 814.874.6049
www.eriesd.org

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March 25, 2024

Dear Parent/Guardian:

During the months of April and May Erie's Public Schools will administer the 2024 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) to students in grades 3-8 and the Keystone exams to students taking Algebra I, Literature, and Biology. PSSA Science assessments involve grades 4 and 8. Some students in special education programs may be included in alternative assessments (PASA). PSSA test administration is mandated for all school districts within the Commonwealth which will begin the week of April 22nd. Spring Keystones will begin the week of May 13th. These assessments have been designed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education to help determine the agreement of district curriculum with state standards. Performance on the PSSA will become part of the Future Ready PA Index to be released in the fall of 2024. Students taking the state assessments will receive individual score reports. Your child's results will be distributed to you and the principal. The state will not receive any reports with individual names included.

You have the right to review the test items by making arrangements with the school principal. Students can be excluded from testing only if their parent/guardian finds the assessment items to be in conflict with their religious beliefs. Please read the attached flyer entitled: *Information for Parents or Guardians, Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)* which will provide you with further information about the assessment.

Under state and federal law, the integrity of these tests cannot be compromised. The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) prohibits cell phones and electronic devices from entering the testing location during the test administration. The 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/flag on the student's test and the student will retake the exam. Furthermore, if a student uses a cell phone or electronic device in any manner during the administration of the test, the device will be confiscated until 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. Under PDE regulations, violation of the no cell phone or other electronic device will result in disciplinary action, the severity of which will vary depending on whether test material has been compromised. If any item on an assessment has been compromised, and can no longer be used or needs to be replaced, the parent/guardian and/or student may be responsible for PDE's cost to replace the item/test statewide.

Please encourage your child to try their very best on these tests and be sure they come to school well-rested and ready to demonstrate all that they have learned this year. Thank you for your support in your child's education.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Polito, CPA
Superintendent of Schools