



Combined Test/Answer Booklets Coming This Spring

Select subjects of both the PSSA and Keystone Exams are transitioning to combined test/answer booklets this spring! These “consumable” booklets combine both the test items and response space within one booklet and eliminate form mismatches and misaligned bubbling, simplify the distribution and collection of materials, and decrease the work of inventorying and boxing test materials. Students, test administrators, and the district and school assessment coordinators who interact with paper test materials will all benefit from combined test/answer booklets.

What Is Changing?

The following assessments will be transitioning from separate test and answer booklets to combined booklets this spring. Note: The grade 3 PSSA already utilizes combined test/answer booklets.

- 2024 PSSA-Mathematics, Grades 4-8
- 2024 PSSA-Science, Grades 4 and 8
- 2024 Spring Keystone Exams-Algebra I
- 2024 Spring Keystone Exams-Biology

What Is Not Changing?

The 2023–24 Winter Keystone Exams will not transition to the new booklet format. Those assessments will continue to be presented as separate test and answer booklets. In addition, the PSSA-English Language Arts (ELA) assessments and the Literature Keystone Exams will not transition to the new booklet format. Transitioning ELA and Literature to combined test/answer booklets would directly affect a student’s ability to have a side-by-side display of a passage from the test booklet and response space from the answer booklet. In the best interest of the students, those assessments will continue to utilize separate booklets until more research can be completed to evaluate the potential impact of a format change.

No More Red Stickers!

The transition to combined test/answer booklets for PSSA Mathematics presented an opportunity to reformat the non-calculator section that was previously in the test booklets. The non-calculator section in the new booklets will not need to be sealed with a red sticker upon student completion. Instead, the section will include a colored border that will be highly visible to both students and test administrators and will alert both to any intentional or unintentional access of the completed section. The *Directions for Administration* manual will include clear instructions for managing and monitoring non-calculator items.

Improved Spanish-Translation Materials

Spanish booklets for mathematics and science have previously presented each item’s Spanish translation with its English counterpart as a reference within the same booklet. This “stacked” (grade 3) or “paired” (grades 4-8 & Keystone Exams) presentation increased the size of the items and caused items to break across pages. The approach also resulted in significant page-count increases for the Spanish-translation booklets, which would have been exacerbated in the new combined test/answer booklets.

This spring, a student who requires a Spanish translation will receive a Spanish-only test/answer booklet. This updated format will control the page count and will allow the Spanish-translation booklet to match the layout and sequence of the English-language booklet. The new format will also reduce the potential of students being distracted or confused by the stacked or paired Spanish-English presentation.

Each Spanish-translation booklet will be shipped to schools in a shrink-wrapped “kit” that includes an English-language booklet. The English-language booklet can be used as a reference by the student, but the student must record all responses in one booklet only. DRC cannot combine responses from a Spanish and English booklet to generate a single score. Further instructions for managing and administering the Spanish materials will be included in the *Spanish Translation Directions for Administration* manual.

Contact DRC PA Customer Service 1-800-451-7849

Email: PAcustomerservice@datarecognitioncorp.com

DRC INSIGHT Portal: pa.drccdirect.com

PSA Assessments Site: sites.google.com/datarecognitioncorp.com/psa-assessments/home

Testing Devices: Background Applications and Configurations

If your district or school has added software to the devices on which your students will take the state assessment (e.g., Grammarly), it's important that you have an understanding and a plan for disabling the software during the administration of the assessment. DRC's INSIGHT test engine blocks student access to standard system applications when the test is launched. However, add-on software that is not part of a device's standard operating system (background applications) must be disabled by the school prior to testing.

It's also critical that schools understand PDE's policy for students who use one-to-one devices for testing (a device that the student uses at school and at home). Any one-to-one student device that will be used for testing must be configured to the school's Central Office Services - Service Device (COS-SD). This configuration prevents unauthorized student access to an active test administration outside of the building that houses the COS-SD.

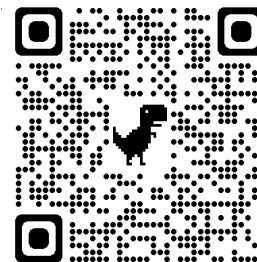
For more information and support for either of these topics, please access the *Technology User Guide* or the *PDE Policy for One-to-One Devices* from the DRC INSIGHT Portal.

**Did
you
know?**

The PSSA Mixed-Mode accommodation that allows students to respond to multiple-choice questions online and open-ended items on paper is available for all subjects.

Committee Meetings

Are you interested in becoming more involved with the Pennsylvania assessments? PDE is looking for educators to serve on various committees to review test items, determine scoring rules for open-ended responses, and more! Participating educators are rewarded with rich professional development experiences and Act 48 hours as well. Click [here](#) or scan the code with your smart phone.



New Science Assessments on the Horizon

After years of careful research and planning, PDE has introduced new science standards that were recently adopted by the Pennsylvania State Board of Education. The new STEELS standards (Science, Technology & Engineering, Environmental Literacy & Sustainability) will begin to be incorporated into science curriculum across the Commonwealth in the 2024-2025 school year. At the same time, Pennsylvania's assessment program will begin to transition to assessments that are aligned to the new STEELS standards. The transition to the STEELS standards will impact all three assessment programs beginning in 2024-2025.

- The 2024-2025 Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT) will introduce new items on the science-content assessments that will be aligned to the STEELS standards and will prepare students for the types of items they'll encounter on the spring assessments.
- The 2025 Science PSSA will transition to grades 5 and 8 and will be administered as a census field test. All students will be expected to participate in the field test; however, the scores will not be included in any local or state reporting systems. The data from the 2025 field test will be used to produce the 2026 Science PSSA that will be fully aligned to the STEELS standards and used for all state and federal reporting.
- The Spring 2025 Biology Keystone Exams will include embedded field test items that are aligned to the STEELS standards. The field test items will not count toward students' Biology scores in 2025. Like the PSSA, those items will be used as the basis for STEELS-aligned assessments in 2025-2026.

If you have questions about the new STEELS standards or PDE's implementation plan, please contact PDE or your IU representative for more information. If you have specific questions about the future science assessments, please direct those to DRC's Customer Service Team.

Online Parental Reviews

Does your LEA administer the PSSA or Spring Keystone Exams 100% online? If so, you are eligible to conduct your parental reviews 100% online. LEAs can request test tickets for parental reviews three weeks prior to the opening of a test window by sending an email to: pacustomerservice@datarecognitioncorp.com.

Providing and Updating Enrollments

One of the most critical processes for ensuring a successful test administration is providing DRC with accurate enrollment and contact information during the established Enrollment windows in the DRC INSIGHT Portal. But did you also know that providing enrollment updates can be equally as important for receiving accurate shipments and material quantities?

DRC gathers enrollments long before an administration window to calculate the material quantities needed to support statewide orders. This timing is critical because of the significant amount of printing required for the Pennsylvania assessments. However, DRC can make updates to a school's enrollments after the Enrollment window closes that will still impact the materials received by the school. Such updates can generally be made up to two months prior to an administration window.

If you see that your LEA has understated or overstated its enrollments, please contact a DRC Customer Service Representative to see if an update is possible. This is especially important for Spanish-translation enrollments that are often difficult for LEAs to calculate early in the school year. If an update is possible, you will avoid the inconvenience of placing an Additional Materials Order at a very busy time of the school year.

The PSSA enrollment window was open September 28-October 03, 2023. Now is the perfect time to double-check that your LEA's enrollments are accurate! The enrollment window for the 2024 Spring Keystone Exams will be December 4-7, 2023. Make sure you or your staff are prepared to provide enrollments at that time.

Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT) Updates

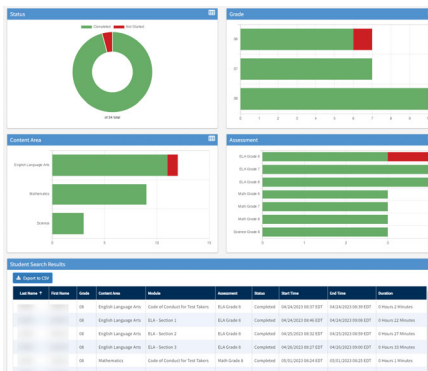
The CDT continues to adapt its reporting functionality to meet the growing needs and expectations of Pennsylvania's educators. Based on feedback from CDT users, the Interactive Reporting system was expanded this fall to include a Flexible Instruction Report. This new report streamlines a process that was previously manual by automatically populating Student Groups by diagnostic-category performance to help teachers quickly identify the needs of a subset of students. This instructional tool, and many others like it, is the direct result of input from CDT users just like you!

If your LEA has not yet tried the CDT, now is the time! There are no restrictions on when schools can implement the CDT or when students can take the CDT assessments, and PDE even offers the option of administering remote (at-home) CDT tests for students in virtual settings. Teachers across the state are utilizing the CDT daily as a free, flexible, and adaptive way to gauge how their students are progressing toward curriculum goals and mastery of specific academic content. More than 470,453 CDT tests have already been administered in the 2023-2024 school year!

Don't miss out on this powerful tool designed and customized for Pennsylvania educators! If you have any questions about the CDT or if your LEA is ready to start administering the diagnostic tests, please contact DRC's Pennsylvania Customer Service team.

Student Status Dashboard

The Student Status Dashboard, located under the Student Management tab, allows you to monitor online testing progress of students at the school level and provides a status by school, grade, content, and assessment. It can also provide you with an exportable student roster with time stamps.



Device Support Awareness

Because each updated release of the DRC INSIGHT online testing system is configured to work within the security and functionality features of the newest operating systems, it is critical to ensure ALL devices are running on the most current version of the device's operating system. If testing devices are running on "obsolete" operating systems, the device will not be able to deliver the online tests with the needed level of functionality to provide the expected student test experience or the level of security the assessments demand. The DRC INSIGHT system requirements and other documentation related to device support are readily available within the DRC INSIGHT Portal.

2023-2024 IMPORTANT DATES

2024 PSSA Enrollment Window	September 28 - October 3 , 2023
Winter Keystone Testing Dates Collection Window	October 4-10, 2023
Winter Keystone Test Setup Window for Precode Labels	October 16-18, 2023
Winter Keystone Wave 1 Secure Materials arrive	By November 16, 2023
2024 Spring Keystone Enrollment Window	December 4-7, 2023
Winter Keystone Wave 1 Testing Window	December 4-15, 2023
Winter Keystone Wave 2 Secure Materials arrive	By December 15, 2023
Winter Keystone Wave 2 Testing Window	January 3-17, 2024
Winter Keystone materials pickup date for report inclusion	January 22, 2024
Winter Keystone Match to Master Window	February 14-16, 2024
Winter Keystone Student Data Files posted	March 5, 2024
Spring Keystone Test Setup Window for Precode Labels	March 18-20, 2024
Spring Keystone Testing Dates Collection Window	March 18-29, 2024
PSSA Secure Materials arrive	By April 8, 2024
PSSA Testing Window ELA	April 22-26, 2024
Spring Keystone Secure Materials arrive	By April 29, 2024
PSSA Testing Window Math, Science, Make-ups	April 29-May 3, 2024
PSSA materials pickup date for early report inclusion	May 3, 2024
Spring Keystone Testing Window	May 13-24, 2024
PSSA materials pickup date for report inclusion	May 15, 2024
Spring Keystone materials pickup date for report inclusion	May 30, 2024
PSSA Student Data Files posted—Early Reports	June 4, 2024
Grades 3-8 Attributions Window	June 17-25, 2024
Spring Keystone Match to Master Window	June 20-25, 2024
PSSA Student Data Files posted	June 24, 2024
Spring Keystone Student Data Files posted	July 15, 2024
Grade 11 Attributions Window	July 17-19, 2024
Accountability District Student Data Files	August 9, 2024

Resources and Training Google Site

The most frequently accessed resource and training materials are now on a Google site. This site supplements what is already available to you on the DRC INSIGHT Portal, and includes training videos as well as a FAQ section. The site is located at sites.google.com/datarecognitioncorp.com/psa-assessments/home or scan the QR code.

