

Information for Parents or Guardians

Pennsylvania Project Based Assessments

What are Project Based Assessments?

Pennsylvania's Chapter 4 regulations require that students demonstrate proficiency in Algebra I, Biology, and Literature. For students who are unable to demonstrate proficiency via the Keystone Exams, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has developed a project based assessment system (PBA) that is aligned with the modules for each Algebra I, Biology, and Literature Keystone Exam. Successful completion of a PBA aligned to the Keystone Exam or Keystone Exam module on which a student did not demonstrate proficiency shall satisfy the state graduation requirements.

(Note: This requirement applies to students in the class of 2017 and beyond.)

Who participates in Project Based Assessments?

A student in grade 12 who has not demonstrated proficiency on a Keystone Exam or Keystone Exam module may qualify to participate in one or more PBAs if the student has met all of the following conditions:

- Is in the graduating class of 2017 or beyond.
- Has taken the course.
- Has met the attendance requirements of the school district, AVTS, or charter school, including a cyber charter school.
- Has participated in a satisfactory manner in supplemental instructional services consistent with the student's educational program provided by the school district, AVTS, or charter school, including cyber charter school.

A student below grade 12 who has not demonstrated proficiency on a Keystone Exam or Keystone Exam module may qualify to participate in one or more project based assessments if the student has met all of the following conditions:

- Is in the graduating class of 2017 or beyond.
- Has taken the course.
- Was unsuccessful in achieving a score of proficient on the Keystone Exam after at least two attempts.
- Has met the attendance requirements of the school district, AVTS or charter school, including a cyber charter school.
- Has participated in a satisfactory manner in supplemental instructional services consistent with the student's educational program provided by the school district, AVTS, or charter school, including a cyber charter school.

When will the Project Based Assessments be offered?

Project Based Assessments (PBA) are available on a secure online portal. Once the school assessment coordinator enrolls a student, the project is available for students to begin work.

How does a student access PBAs?

PBAs are accessible via a secure, online portal. Students must work on them in a secure environment. A school test administrator must be present.

Who decided what Project Based Assessments should measure?

Groups of educators from across Pennsylvania chose the areas of knowledge on which the Keystone Exams are based. Thus, the PBAs mirror the same areas as assessed by the Keystone Exams.

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What is assessed on the Project Based Assessments?

Like the Keystone Exams, the PBAs are designed to measure the Pennsylvania standards in the respective content areas.

How long does it take to complete a Project Based Assessment?

A PBA may take anywhere from 5–10 hours (on average) to complete; thus, work may occur over multiple time periods. It is a school's decision as to when PBA sessions are scheduled.

What are the available formats for administering the Project Based Assessments?

PBAs are available online. Tutors have access to a pdf document and students may work with pencil and paper prior to entering their responses online.

What type of questions are on the Project Based Assessments?

PBAs are designed as a set of activities a student completes independently of classroom instruction in order to demonstrate proficiency in the content area. The entire PBA is typically framed around a real life scenario, and students must complete the tasks and activities related to the scenario.

How are the Project Based Assessments scored?

A statewide panel evaluates the PBAs. Evaluators have no knowledge of the student or the school from which the PBA originates.

How are the results reported?

If a student is successful on the PBA, the score is reported as Satisfactory.

For additional information about the Project Based Assessments, visit the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Standards Aligned System website at <http://www.pdesas.org/module/assessment/About.aspx#> or contact your school.