

**Frequently Asked Questions on Keystone Exams
Tredyffrin/Easttown School District
Updated: 12/28/2020**

Q: What are Keystone Exams?

Keystone Exams are state-mandated end-of-course tests intended as a measurement of proficiency for students in identified subjects. Schools will be held accountable for the participation and performance of all students on the Algebra 1, Biology, and Literature Keystone Exams.

Q: What subjects have a related Keystone Exam?

Keystone Exams have been developed for Algebra 1, Biology, and Literature.

Q: How are Keystone Exams related to high school graduation requirements?

It is as a graduation requirement for all students graduating in 2023 and beyond to achieve one of the state-designated pathways related to Keystone Exams.

Q: Does this information mean that the state will be applying test results from middle school students to high school graduation requirements?

Yes. If a student completes a course aligned to a Keystone Exam during the middle school years, the state requires the proficiency outcome to be used to determine eligibility for a high school diploma.

Q: When do students take Keystone Exams?

Keystone Exams are attached to a particular course, not a student's grade level. These tests are designed to be administered like final exams at the completion of the related course. For example, Algebra 1 is taken by both middle school and high school students. The Keystone Exam will be administered at the end of the Algebra 1 course regardless of the grade level of the student.

The state requires that all students complete the Algebra 1, Biology, and Literature Keystone Exams by the end of the junior year. Students who have not taken a Keystone Exam in any of these subjects when entering 11th grade will be required to take these tests during the available testing windows.

Q: Can individual students opt out of Keystone Exams?

As with Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) tests, parents may review Keystone Exams per state regulations and opt out for religious reasons.

Q: Can a student earn credit for a course by passing a Keystone Exam without taking the course?

The District has no plans to enable students to earn credit for a course by examination.

Q: What happens if a student is not proficient?

Students graduating in 2023 (current 10th graders in 2020-2021) and beyond who do not achieve a proficient score may meet the graduation requirement through one of the state-designated pathways.

Q: Will there be testing accommodations for students with special needs?

As with the PSSA tests, students with special needs may take Keystone Exams with the accommodations listed in a student Individualized Education Plan, subject to any limitations the state applies to a particular test.

Q: Will the scores be on the high school transcript?

No. Keystone Exam scores will not be listed on student transcripts.

Q: Will colleges and universities view success on Keystone Exams as an advantage during the college admission process?

Current information that school counselors have shared about college acceptance patterns indicates that state test results are not important factors in acceptance decisions.

Q: Will my child be prepared for Keystone Exams?

District courses aligned with Keystone Exams are designed to address the requirements of these tests. Students who are required to take a Keystone Exam after already completing the course shall be provided with further information about Keystone Exams from their teachers. Information about the test structure, subject content, and released test items will be made available.

Q: Where can I find more information?

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has more information at the following link:
<https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Assessment%20and%20Accountability/Keystones/Pages/default.aspx>.

Q: I have further questions. Whom shall I contact?

You may contact Mark Cataldi, Director of Assessment and Accountability, at cataldim@tesd.net or 610-240-1905.