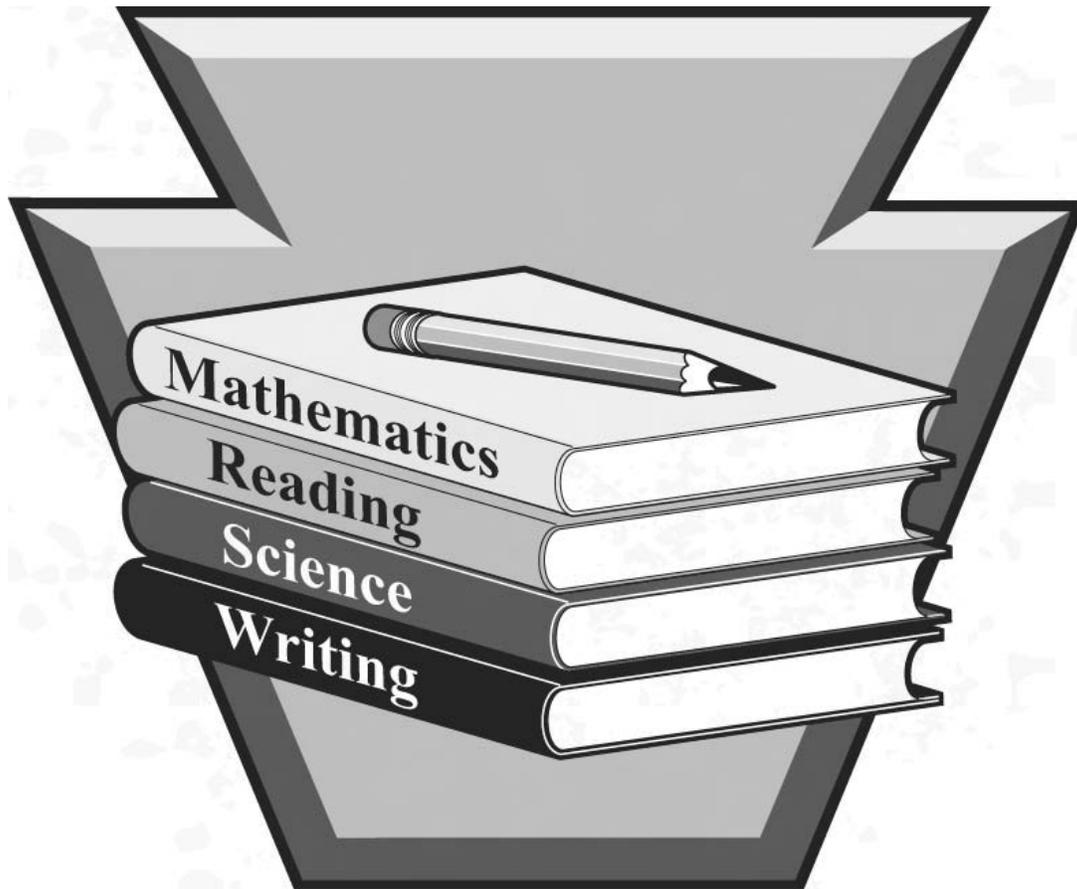


The 2008-2009 Pennsylvania System of School
Assessment

***HANDBOOK FOR ASSESSMENT
COORDINATORS***

**Writing
Reading and Mathematics
Science**



The state assessment is administered by the Bureau of Assessment & Accountability, Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333 [(717) 705-2343, fax (717) 783-6642, TDD (717) 783-8445]. The assessment contractor is Data Recognition Corporation (DRC). DRC can be reached by calling toll-free 1-800-451-7849, by emailing pacustomerservice@datarecognitioncorp.com, or by faxing 1-763-268-3008 or 1-763-268-3031.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

THE DISTRIBUTION AND APPEARANCE OF THE ADMINISTRATION MANUALS HAS CHANGED

The *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators* (this handbook) and the *Directions for Administration Manuals* have been revised so that it is only necessary for test administrators to receive a copy of the subject/grade-specific *Directions for Administration Manual* to administer the test. As such, each school will receive only one copy of the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*. DRC will not supply additional copies. Schools may make copies of the handbook (in full or in part) and an electronic version of the handbook is available on the PDE website that can be downloaded for school-level use.

Note: The term “answer booklets” is used throughout this handbook to denote the scannable booklets into which students record their answers, including the writing booklets (all grades), the third-grade reading/math booklet, and the eleventh-grade science booklet; all of which combine both the test and answer documents into one booklet.

PROCEDURE FOR EXPEDITED RETURN OF ANSWER BOOKLETS

All testing sites are expected to return answer booklets as soon as the majority of their testing population has completed the assessment. All PSSA materials will be returned via UPS. It is important that districts and schools understand that multiple shipments can be made to DRC to facilitate the early return of the answer booklets. Districts will need to coordinate this early return process with their schools to ensure that answer booklets are forwarded for return service as each school completes the assessment.

Although schools should return the majority of their answer booklets prior to the end of each PDE-established testing window, testing sites must retain at least one box of testing materials until the end of the window to facilitate make-ups and to maintain the ability to administer the assessment to new students who enroll during the assessment window. More information regarding the return procedures can be found on page 20 of this handbook.

LARGE-PRINT AND BRAILLE BOOKLETS MUST BE ORDERED FROM AND RETURNED TO DRC

New for the 2009 PSSAs, large-print and Braille booklets were ordered by the districts through DRC’s online Enrollment Verification System and **must be** returned to DRC after testing. These accommodated booklets are secure materials and will be treated as such by DRC. PaTTAN no longer supplies accommodated PSSA materials. If you need additional large-print or Braille booklets, call a DRC Customer Service Representative at 1-800-451-7849. More information regarding large-print and Braille booklets can be found on page 8 of this handbook.

DO NOT RETURN PSSA ANSWER BOOKLETS FOR STUDENTS TAKING ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS

Students who are eligible to take the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) for Reading/Math and Science and an alternate assessment for Writing **should not** have a PSSA answer booklet returned to DRC. If you receive a Student Precode Label for a student registered to take an alternate assessment, discard the label. Do not affix the precode label to any booklet. More information regarding participation in an alternate assessment can be found on page 8 of this handbook.

UPDATED PSSA CALCULATOR POLICY

PDE has updated the calculator policy for the PSSA. Although the PSSA is designed so that calculators are not necessary for students to be successful, it is incumbent upon the school test coordinators to ensure that the calculator policies are implemented and followed whenever students choose to use a calculator on the portions of the PSSA for which calculators are permitted. More information regarding the use of calculators can be found on page 5 of this handbook. Please refer to the PDE website (www.pde.state.pa.us) for the complete and current copy of the PSSA calculator policy.

PSSA SCORING GUIDELINES ARE PRINTED IN THE TEST MATERIALS

The subject-specific PSSA General Scoring Guidelines are printed in the back of the 2009 assessment booklets for easy student reference during testing. Copies of the scoring guidelines are also included in Appendix B of this handbook. The PSSA General Scoring Guidelines are the only visual aides that may be displayed in a PSSA testing room. The addition of the scoring guidelines to the assessment booklets eliminates the need for schools to photocopy and provide them to students as may have been done for past administrations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I – GENERAL ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES FOR ALL ASSESSMENTS	4
1. ADMINISTRATION MANUALS.....	4
2. IMPORTANT GENERAL INFORMATION	4
3. TESTING WINDOWS FOR 2009	4
4. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS	4
5. SCHOOL ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR ORIENTATION	5
6. TEST ADMINISTRATOR ORIENTATION.....	5
7. SCHEDULING THE ASSESSMENT	6
8. MAKE-UP SESSIONS	6
9. STUDENT WITHDRAWAL/ENROLLMENT DURING THE TESTING WINDOW.....	7
10. STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE ASSESSMENT	7
11. BARCODE LABELS.....	10
12. PROCEDURES FOR COMPLETING ANSWER BOOKLETS.....	12
13. TEST SECURITY	16
14. RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS	17
15. DISTRIBUTING AND COLLECTING ASSESSMENT MATERIALS	18
16. PROCEDURES FOR ASSIGNING BOOKLETS USING SECURITY NUMBERS	18
17. PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE ASSESSMENT	19
18. PREPARING THE CLASSROOM PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT.....	19
19. MANAGING EXTENDED ASSESSMENT SESSIONS	20
20. MANAGING DAMAGED ANSWER BOOKLETS	20
21. RETURN OF ASSESSMENT MATERIALS	20
PART II – WRITING SPECIFIC GUIDELINES.....	22
1. RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS – SHIPMENT II	22
2. SCHEDULING THE ASSESSMENT	22
3. BOXING MATERIALS FOR RETURN	23
4. WRITING CHECKLISTS	25
PART III – READING AND MATHEMATICS SPECIFIC GUIDELINES.....	26
1. RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS – SHIPMENT II	26
2. SCHEDULING THE ASSESSMENT	26
3. BOXING MATERIALS FOR RETURN	28
4. READING AND MATH CHECKLISTS	29
PART IV – SCIENCE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES.....	31
1. RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS – SHIPMENT II	31
2. SCHEDULING THE ASSESSMENT	31
3. BOXING MATERIALS FOR RETURN	32
4. SCIENCE CHECKLISTS	34
Appendix A Sample Parent/Guardian Flyers.....	35
Appendix B PSSA General Description of Scoring Guidelines	39
Appendix C Additional Materials Request Forms	48
Appendix D Index.....	52

PART I – GENERAL ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES FOR ALL ASSESSMENTS

1. ADMINISTRATION MANUALS

District and school assessment coordinators who coordinate the assessment should become familiar with this handbook and the grade-specific *Directions for Administration Manuals*.

Note: *The school assessment coordinator fulfills the responsibilities of the district and school assessment coordinator as outlined in this handbook for schools that receive their materials directly from Data Recognition Corporation (e.g., ship-to-school districts, IUs, charter schools, non-public and private schools, and other special sites).*

Test administrators only need the grade and subject-specific *Directions for Administration Manuals* to administer the assessments and will not receive copies of this handbook. Electronic versions are available on the PDE website and can be printed and copied in full or in part, as needed.

2. IMPORTANT GENERAL INFORMATION

- The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment should challenge all students with tasks requiring inferencing, problem-solving, and concept identification. These tasks appear in formats that are strongly encouraged by experts. The instruments include tasks that require students to write their own responses to items, as well as multiple-choice items.
- PDE’s student attribution rules require that all students are reported at the school and/or district level, including students who take the PASA. All students in alternate educational settings will be included in school and/or district AYP calculations for their district and school of residence.
- The Federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires the collection of specific student data at the time of testing, including data for students who are not participating and students who are exempt from participation due to special circumstances. To ensure student privacy and data accuracy, this information must be reported by school personnel on pages 2 and 3 of the answer booklet after testing is complete.
- Materials for each assessment will be delivered according to the schedule below. Instruct personnel who are responsible for receipt of the shipments to contact you as soon as possible (frequently, the shipments are placed in the book storage area or the supply room without the assessment coordinator’s knowledge). Boxes can be identified by a fluorescent label that reads “Test Materials Enclosed: Open and Inventory Immediately.”

3. TESTING WINDOWS FOR 2009

DATE	ACTIVITY
By January 12	Writing manuals arrive at districts/schools
By January 26	Writing secure materials arrive at districts/schools
February 9-20	WRITING TESTING WINDOW
By February 16	Reading/Mathematics manuals arrive at districts/schools
By February 25	Writing materials picked-up from schools
By March 2	Reading/Mathematics secure materials arrive at districts/schools
March 16-27	READING/MATHEMATICS TESTING WINDOW
By March 30	Science manuals arrive at districts/schools
By April 1	Reading/Mathematics materials picked-up from schools
By April 13	Science secure materials arrive at districts/schools
April 27 - May 8	SCIENCE TESTING WINDOW
By May 13	Science materials picked-up from schools

4. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Boxes should be opened to inventory the contents. If not inventoried centrally, boxes should be distributed intact to schools, allowing enough time for the school assessment coordinator to inventory the materials and determine if a sufficient quantity of materials has been sent. If additional materials are needed, the school assessment coordinator should request them from the district assessment coordinator.

District assessment coordinators should complete and send a separate Additional Materials Request Form (found in Appendix C) for each requesting school. Please note that materials ordered from DRC after 2:00 p.m. EST will be shipped on the following business day.

5. SCHOOL ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR ORIENTATION

Every district must conduct an orientation session for school assessment coordinators prior to their meetings with test administrators. Meet to review and/or discuss the following topics.

- 1) The district assessment schedule.
- 2) *Part I – General Assessment Guidelines for All Assessments*, in this handbook. Make sure to emphasize:
 - a) Student participation;
 - b) The requirements for completing pages 1–3 of the answer booklet for all enrolled students;
 - c) Barcode label use (make sure there is awareness that every used answer booklet must have a label applied to the front cover).
- 3) The distribution of parent/guardian flyers, including instructions for distribution to the students’ parents and/or guardians.
- 4) Procedures for distribution and collection of assessment materials.
- 5) Test administrator orientation.

School assessment coordinators should be given ample time to distribute the *Directions for Administration Manuals* to test administrators and to schedule an orientation session within the two weeks prior to the assessment window.

6. TEST ADMINISTRATOR ORIENTATION

At least one week prior to the scheduled assessment dates, school assessment coordinators must conduct an orientation session for test administrators. Any teachers, counselors, administrators, or other qualified education personnel may act as test administrators. In this orientation session, please discuss the following topics:

- 1) **Assessment Schedule**—Be certain that test administrators know the assessment schedule.
- 2) **Administration Preparation**—Test administrators are to have received and studied the *Directions for Administration Manuals* prior to orientation.
- 3) **Students with Special Needs**—Explain which students are to be included in the assessment and what special accommodations may be provided for these students (see “Student Participation in the Assessment” in Part I of this handbook).
- 4) **Assessment Conditions**—Impress upon test administrators the importance of good assessment conditions (e.g., a comfortable, quiet room) and a positive approach to the assessment.
- 5) **Use of Calculators**—Explain that calculators are not allowed on the grade 3 assessment and that students in grades 4 – 8 and 11 cannot use calculators on the first five items in Section 1 of the mathematics assessment. Calculators can be used on the other mathematics items. Test administrators must be aware that calculators cannot be shared during a test session and that all programs/information stored in a calculator (other than those factory installed) must be deleted prior to using that calculator for the PSSA. The following are not allowed for the PSSA:
 - Non-calculators such as cell phones, PDAs, laptops, minicomputers, pocket organizers, etc.
 - Calculators with beaming capabilities or wireless communication technologies. (These features must be disabled if such calculators are used for the PSSA.)
 - Calculators with QWERTY keyboards or other typewriter-like keyboards or keypads.
 - Calculators with built in Computer Algebra Systems – CAS.
 - Calculators that make noise, have paper tape, need to be plugged in, or talk (unless these specific calculators are required as an accommodation).

This is a general description of what is not allowed and is not meant to be an exhaustive list of specific calculators, devices, or technologies that cannot be used for the PSSA. Please refer to the PDE website (www.pde.state.pa.us) for the complete and current copy of the PSSA calculator policy.

- 6) **Use of Dictionaries, Thesauruses, Spell- or Grammar-Checkers**—Make sure all administrators are aware that the use of these items is not permitted on any section of the PSSA. **Note:** *Word-to-word dictionaries that translate a native language to English (or English to a native language) without definitions or pictures are allowed on the mathematics assessment only.*
- 7) **Permitted Help During the Assessment**—Explain that only the PSSA General Description of Scoring Guidelines may be displayed in the PSSA testing room. The subject-specific scoring guidelines are printed in the back of the testing materials for easy student reference. Appendix B of this handbook also contains copies of the scoring guidelines.
- 8) **Special Instructions**—Remind test administrators that all students must use a No. 2 pencil when responding to the assessment. Additionally, student name and demographic data must be coded using a No. 2 pencil.
- 9) **Barcode Labels**—Emphasize the important aspects of barcode label use (see “Barcode Labels” starting on page 10 of this handbook).
- 10) **Make-up Sessions**—Clarify the district’s assessment make-up procedures (see “Make-up Sessions” on page 6 of this handbook for complete instructions).
- 11) **Scratch Paper**—Remind test administrators that scratch paper may be provided to students for use during the assessment. All scratch paper must be removed from the answer booklets when the assessment is complete.
- 12) **Response Space**—Emphasize that students are limited to the response space provided in the answer booklets. Additional pages/booklets will not be scored.
- 13) **Security**—Emphasize that all assessment booklets must be kept secure at all times prior to and during the assessment, and that completed booklets must be kept confidential.

7. SCHEDULING THE ASSESSMENT

It is important to establish an assessment schedule prior to testing. The first administration should not be scheduled before the beginning of an assessment window, and all assessments including make-ups must be completed by the end of the testing window. The first week of the testing window should be used for administering the assessment. The second week should be used for make-up sessions or as a backup if unusual circumstances do not allow testing in the first week.

It may be advisable to postpone the assessment if a large percentage of the school population is absent on any selected day or days, or if a disruption or event (such as a bomb threat, fire in the school, plumbing or heating problems, death of a classmate, etc.) may have caused a level of distress that could result in students performing below their capabilities. District personnel are urged to keep the best interests of the students in mind when making a determination to reschedule assessment dates. Early use of the assessment window should eliminate most scheduling problems.

Scheduled extended time can be provided, but this accommodation must be recorded on page 3 of the answer booklet. Students may request extended time if they indicate that they have not completed the task. Such requests should be granted if the test administrator finds the request to be educationally valid. Not permitting ample time for students to complete the assessment may impact student and school performance. As a general guideline, however, when all students indicate that they have finished a session, that session should be closed. Students requiring time beyond the majority of the student population may be allowed to continue immediately following the regularly scheduled session in another setting. When such accommodations are made, school personnel must ensure that students are monitored at all times to prevent sharing of information. Students should not be permitted to continue a section of the assessment after a significant lapse of time from the original session. **Any student granted an extended assessment period must have this information gridded in his or her answer booklet on page 3.**

8. MAKE-UP SESSIONS

If a student is absent during a testing session, he or she should resume or begin the assessment in the same section as the rest of the testing population upon return. The section that was missed due to absence can be made up in a separate session. For example, a student who is absent on a day in which the rest of the student population completed section one, should start at section two along with the rest of the student population and continue with the regularly scheduled sessions. During the scheduled make-up session, the student will go back to section one. If multiple sections are missed, the make-up session(s) must follow the order of the booklet.

9. STUDENT WITHDRAWAL/ENROLLMENT DURING THE TESTING WINDOW

If a student completes the entire assessment in one district, but withdraws prior to the end of the PDE-established testing window (see table on page 4), it is the responsibility of the testing district to attribute the student's record to the district and school to which he/she transferred. This attribution can be completed in DRC's online system (June 2009) using the "Attribution Change Form."

- Districts **are not** responsible for attributing a transferred student's PSSA record if the following occurs:
 - The student did not complete the entire assessment.
 - The student transferred out of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
 - *In these cases, the testing school should place a Do Not Score Label on the student's answer booklet before returning it to DRC.*
- Schools should be aware of the possibility that a student who enrolls during the PDE-established testing window may have already completed the assessment at his/her previous Pennsylvania school. It is the new school's responsibility to complete the necessary research to avoid the unfair burden of re-testing a student who has already completed the assessment.
- Schools should test the newly-enrolled student if the student did not complete the entire assessment at his/her previous school.
 - In all cases of enrollment during the testing window, the school that receives the transferred student's score (whether through attribution or administering the assessment) should be aware that the new student does not meet the Full Academic Year requirement for the school, and will therefore not count in the school's AYP performance calculation if the student's record properly identifies that the student's enrollment in the school started after October 1, 2008.

10. STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE ASSESSMENT

With only a few very specific exceptions, the following students must participate.

- All public school students enrolled in grades 5, 8, and 11 are required to participate in the 2009 Writing PSSA or a locally determined alternate assessment.
- All public school students enrolled in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11 are required to participate in the 2009 Reading and Mathematics PSSA or the PASA.
- All public school students enrolled in grades 4, 8, and 11 are required to participate in the 2009 Science PSSA or the PASA.
- Participation by students in non-public schools is voluntary.

Because some students begin the school year at one grade level but acquire enough credits by the assessment window to be considered in the next grade, the following PDE policy must be used as the guideline for determining student participation. **A student's status on October 1, 2008, not at the time of the assessment window, is the status that should be recognized in determining the student's participation in the assessments.**

- There is an exception to this policy to ensure that an 11th grade student does not miss an assessment because of an accelerated advancement from grade 10 to grade 12. If a student was in 10th grade on October 1, 2008 and will be in 12th grade on October 1, 2009, he or she should participate during the 2009 testing window. This exception to the policy ensures that these students do not miss the grade 11 assessment entirely.
- Additionally, a student who is in 10th grade on October 1, 2008; **and** will be in 11th grade on October 1, 2009; **and** is on schedule to graduate in the spring or summer of 2010, should participate during the 2009 testing window. This additional exception to the policy is meant to ensure that the student receives 11th grade PSSA results before graduating in 2010.

An answer booklet must be returned for every participating student as explained above, assessed or non-assessed, with the exception of the students who take an alternate assessment (PASA). Pages 1 and 2 of the answer booklet must be completed for all students without a precoded label, assessed or non-assessed.

PARENT/GUARDIAN NOTIFICATION OF THE ASSESSMENTS

For each assessment, a sample parent/guardian flyer has been included in Appendix A of this handbook to use as is or to revise to suit your needs. This information should be distributed to the parent or guardian of each student enrolled in your school(s) about three weeks prior to the assessment. You should supply all school assessment coordinators with enough copies to meet their needs. Please note that the district or school is responsible for duplicating this flyer. Copies are not provided, except for the sample in this handbook. If a district newsletter is regularly published, include the information in the newsletter. However, if history indicates that parents/guardians do not regularly read the newsletter, direct mail may ensure delivery to parents and guardians.

PARTICIPATION WITH ACCOMMODATIONS

All students with disabilities, except those participating in the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) or an alternate assessment for writing, must participate in the 2009 Pennsylvania System of School Assessments. These students should be provided with the same accommodations in the assessment environment as stipulated under Chapters 14 and 15 of PA Code 223 regarding their instruction. For more information, refer to the PDE website at www.pde.state.pa.us.

- Braille and large-print versions of the assessment will be available for students with visual impairments.
 - Students who use the Braille or large-print versions must have all of their answers (multiple-choice and open-ended) transcribed by school personnel into a “Large Print and Braille Transcription Booklet” (using a No. 2 pencil only). Large Print and Braille Transcription Booklets will be provided with the Braille or large-print versions for this purpose.
 - School personnel should not make corrections of student work. If a Large Print and Braille Transcription Booklet is not provided, please use a Form 1 from the school’s additional materials. Student responses in Braille or large-print booklets that are not transcribed into a Large Print and Braille Transcription Booklet will not be scored. The Braille and large-print booklets must be returned to DRC.

PARTICIPATION IN THE PENNSYLVANIA ALTERNATE SYSTEM OF ASSESSMENT (PASA)

All students must participate in either the PSSA or the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) for mathematics, reading, and science, and an alternate assessment for writing.

If a student is eligible to participate in the PASA, school personnel do not need to return a PSSA answer booklet to DRC for the student. Students responding to the PASA should be provided with an alternative learning environment during the assessment sessions.

Please review the following eligibility criteria for participation in an alternate assessment. Students who meet all six of the criteria that follow may be excused from the Pennsylvania System of School Assessments and must be administered the PASA for mathematics, reading, and science, and an alternate assessment for writing. A student who meets these criteria cannot be eligible for the PSSA in one subject and an alternate assessment in another subject. The Pennsylvania Department of Education is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to monitor the inclusion of students with disabilities in the statewide assessments.

Criteria for Participation in the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment

- Criterion 1:** The student is in grade 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 11; and
- Criterion 2:** The student has a very severe cognitive disability; and
- Criterion 3:** The student requires very intensive instruction to learn; and
- Criterion 4:** The student requires very extensive adaptations and supports in order to perform and/or participate meaningfully and productively in the everyday life activities of integrated school, home, community, and work environments; and
- Criterion 5:** The student requires very substantial modification of the general education curriculum; and
- Criterion 6:** The student’s participation in the general education curriculum differs very substantially in form and/or substance from that of most other students (i.e., requires modified objectives, materials, and/or activities).

Remember: If all six of the criteria listed above apply to the student, it would be appropriate for the IEP team to consider assigning the student to the PASA and the district’s alternate assessment for writing.

- Important Reminder: No more than 1% of an LEA’s percentage of Advanced/Proficient scores may come from PASA results. PASA results that exceed the 1% will be counted as Low Below Basic for purposes of AYP only.

PROCEDURES FOR NON-ASSESSED STUDENTS

For a non-assessed student, use the “Non-Assessed Students” grid on the cover of the answer booklet and darken the bubble next to the reason the student did not participate. **Please note that the Non-Assessed Students grid appears on page 3 of the grade 3 booklet.**

- The Non-Assessed Students grid does not override student responses recorded in the answer booklet. If a student responds to all sections of a subject within the booklet, that student’s responses will be scored.
- Only use the Non-Assessed Students grid if the answer booklet contains no student responses.

Students not participating in the assessment must be coded under one or more of the following categories.

- **Student had a recent medical emergency:** This applies only to rare circumstances in which a student cannot take or finish taking the assessment during the entire testing window, including make-up dates, due to a recent significant medical emergency. For example, this might include a situation in which a student is recovering from a recent car accident. In these situations, the student has remained enrolled at the school, yet the circumstances might prohibit him or her from participating in the assessment during the testing window. School personnel must complete the “Non-Assessed Students” grid on the front cover of the answer booklet by marking “Student had a recent medical emergency.”

This non-assessed option allows schools to omit such students when calculating their participation rates. This will ensure that schools whose AYP status might be affected by such situations will not be improperly identified for improvement.

- **Student had an extended absence for the entire testing window:** If the student is absent from school for an extended period that continues beyond the assessment window (i.e., the last day of the PDE-established testing window), school personnel must complete the “Non-Assessed Students” grid on the front cover of the answer booklet by marking “Student had an extended absence for the entire testing window.”

Schools must make every effort to ensure that all students who experience absences during the testing window are able to participate in the assessments during make-up sessions. Students who are non-assessed due to an extended absence will have a negative effect on the school’s participation rate and can potentially have a negative impact on the school’s AYP status.

- **Student had a parental request for exclusion from the assessment:** Section 4.4 of Chapter 4 provides for the right of any parents or guardians to excuse their child from the state assessment if, upon inspection of the testing materials, they find the assessment to be in conflict with their religious beliefs. This is the only basis for a parent or guardian to excuse his or her child from the statewide assessments.
 - Two weeks prior to each testing window, each assessment must be made available for review by parents and guardians. The assessment must be reviewed on school district property, and district personnel must be present at all times. Districts must provide a convenient time for the review. This may include an evening review time, if requested. Proper security and confidentiality of the assessment must be maintained at all times throughout the review process. District personnel may remove the prompt seals from one copy of a writing booklet to facilitate a review of the writing assessment.
 - Parents and guardians must sign a locally prepared statement concerning the requirements of assessment security and confidentiality. A copy of this should be locally maintained. (It is not necessary to send this statement to the Pennsylvania Department of Education or DRC.) Parents and guardians may not photocopy, write down, or in any other manner record any portion of the assessments, including directions.
 - After reviewing the test, parents and guardians must provide a written request addressed to the Superintendent or Chief Academic Officer to excuse their child based upon religious conflict. The parents and guardians do not have to defend their religious beliefs, nor do they have to identify specific test content to which they object. Simply stating that they are requesting exclusion based on religious grounds is sufficient.

If the student is excused from the state assessment due to parental or guardian request, school personnel must provide an alternative learning environment for the student during the assessment and complete the front cover of the answer booklet in the Non-Assessed Students grid by marking “Student had a parental request for exclusion from the assessment.”

Please be aware that students who do not participate in the assessment due to parental request will negatively affect the school’s participation rate and can potentially have a negative impact on the school’s AYP status.

- **Other:** Although there is no other apparent reason for student non-participation in the assessment, this category is provided for the rare exception. The most notable rare exception is student refusal to participate at the time of testing. Refusal represents a defiant act on the student’s part despite school personnel’s every effort to obtain compliance. If you have exhausted all options and believe you have a case that fits into the “Other” category, complete the Non-Assessed Students grid on the front cover of the answer booklet by marking “Other.”

Indicating that a student did not participate in the assessments due to “other” reasons will negatively affect the school’s participation rate and can potentially have a negative impact on the school’s AYP status.

NON-ASSESSED COURT/AGENCY PLACED STUDENTS

Students who do not have an IEP and have been court or agency placed (not foster care) into a different setting (e.g., PRRI or other juvenile delinquency institution; mental health, drug and/or alcohol treatment facility) are not required to participate in the assessment.

- If the court/agency placed student does not have a Student Precode Label, the reason for non-participation must be reported by darkening “Student is court/agency placed (not foster care)” on page 2 of the answer booklet, Item 5-option 1.
- If the student has a Student Precode Label, verify that the court/agency placement has been properly reported in the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS).

Note: Exclusion from the assessment based on IEP status does not apply to alternative education programs, IU programs, or Approved Private Schools, as students attending these programs are placed by the school or district, not by a court or agency.

NON-ASSESSED FIRST-YEAR ELL STUDENTS (READING AND WRITING ONLY)

ELL students who are in their first year of enrollment in a U.S. school are not required to participate in the reading or writing assessments; they must take the mathematics and science assessments. April 11, 2008, (the last day of the 2008 Reading and Mathematics testing window), should be used as the enrollment date to identify students in their first year of enrollment status in U.S. schools.

- If the student does not have a Student Precode Label, the reason for non-participation must be reported by darkening “[Student is] ELL and enrolled in a U.S. school after April 11, 2008” on page 2 of the answer booklet, Item 6-option 1.
- If the student has a Student Precode Label, verify that the student’s initial enrollment dates are correct in the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS).

Note: This exemption can only be utilized for a student one time. For example, if an ELL student enrolls in a U.S. school for the first time in 3rd grade, that student is exempt from taking the 3rd grade reading assessment due to his/her first year of enrollment in a U.S. school status. If this same student withdraws and leaves the U.S. after the assessment, and re-enrolls in a U.S. school in the 5th grade, he/she is no longer considered in his/her first year of enrollment in U.S. schools and is required to take the assessment.

11. BARCODE LABELS

Student Precode Labels, District/School Labels, and Do Not Score Labels will be provided for use on all 2009 PSSA answer booklets. The labels are intended to increase the accuracy of information collected from the booklets. With the exception of students participating in the PASA, all enrolled students must have an answer booklet with a Student Precode Label or a District/School Label returned to DRC.

DRC’s booklet receiving system is driven by barcodes. Barcodes help DRC identify and sort documents for processing. The four types of barcodes are:

- **BLANK**—DRC has preprinted a “blank” barcode on the cover of every answer booklet. A “blank” barcode indicates that the document has not been used and should not be processed.
- **STUDENT PRECODE**—DRC uses data received from the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS) to produce Student Precode Labels. The labels contain barcodes that indicate the answer booklet should be processed and scored for the student whose name is printed on the label. These labels eliminate the need to hand bubble the student’s name, birth date, PAsecureID, and demographic items 1–7 on page 2 of the answer booklet. Student Precode Labels are to assist with the assessment; they are NOT for accountability purposes. If you receive a label for a student who is no longer enrolled, that label should be destroyed.

- **DISTRICT/SCHOOL**—If a student does not have a Student Precode Label, school personnel must use a District/School Label and hand bubble all demographic information on pages 1 and 2 of the answer booklet. The label contains a barcode that indicates the document should be processed and scored for the student whose information is bubbled on the booklet.
- **DO NOT SCORE**—These labels contain barcodes that indicate the answer booklets should NOT be processed. Answer booklets that have a Do Not Score Label will be handled as if they are blank.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING BARCODE LABELS

- Before affixing any label to an answer booklet, check the label to ensure that the information is correct.
- Schools should destroy any District/School Labels containing inaccurate information.
- Districts should update information in PIMS to make corrections to Student Precode Label data.
- School personnel must affix the appropriate label to each answer booklet that will be used by a student.
- Place the label in the box located in the lower left-hand corner on the cover of each student's answer booklet.
- Do not remove any label that has been affixed to an answer booklet; this will damage the booklet. Instead, the label may be covered with another label of the appropriate type.
- Do not write on the labels. Do not correct information on a label.
- **Do not use labels from another school or a previous assessment.** If you need more labels, contact a DRC Customer Service Representative at 1-800-451-7849.

STUDENT PRECODE LABEL INSTRUCTIONS

Most testing sites will receive Student Precode Labels that are linked to individual student demographic information and district/school information in PIMS. It is important that school personnel make sure the readable information printed on the label is correct.

- If a student's name is misspelled, the label may still be used, but PIMS should be updated promptly.
- It is essential for assessment coordinators to verify that the student demographic information in PIMS is correct.
- Any student information changes or demographic changes made by writing on a Student Precode Label or by bubbling page 1 or page 2 of the answer booklet WILL NOT make changes to the information embedded in the Student Precode Label. **All embedded Student Precode Label information will supersede any bubbling on page 1 or page 2.** Hand-bubbled information on pages 1 and 2 is only captured if a District/School Label is affixed to the answer booklet.
- If a Student Precode Label is destroyed, school personnel must use a District/School Label in its place and bubble pages 1 and 2 of the answer booklet.
- If a student's score should be attributed to a site other than what appears on the Student Precode Label, the label should be used and school personnel must enter the attribution information in DRC's online system (June 2009).

DISTRICT/SCHOOL LABEL INSTRUCTIONS

All sites will receive District/School Labels that contain district and school specific information only. District/School Labels must be used when Student Precode Labels are not used. When using District/School Labels, school personnel must bubble pages 1 and 2 of the answer booklets and all applicable items on page 3.

- District/School Labels have a yellow stripe across the top of the label.
- If a Student Precode Label contains an incorrect school, place a District/School Label over the Student Precode Label and bubble pages 1 and 2.
- If a student is using a District/School Label and needs to have his or her score attributed to a site other than what appears on the District/School Label, school personnel must enter that information in DRC's online system (June 2009).
- **Do not use labels from another school.** If you need more labels, contact a DRC Customer Service Representative at 1-800-451-7849.

DO NOT SCORE LABEL INSTRUCTIONS

Do Not Score Labels are supplied for use on answer booklets that are defective and cannot be scored or answer booklets that should not be scored. Always place the Do Not Score Label directly on top of the Student Precode Label or District/School Label that was originally affixed to the answer booklet. Use the Do Not Score Labels when the following has occurred:

- A used answer booklet is torn, soiled, or defective. When a student has used a booklet and it becomes torn, soiled, or is found to be defective (e.g., missing pages) the student's responses must be transcribed into a new booklet of the **same form designation** and a Do Not Score Label affixed to the defective booklet. If a student becomes ill on an answer booklet, transcribe the responses into a new booklet, record the security number found on the back of the soiled booklet, and securely destroy the soiled booklet. **Make sure this information is recorded on the Materials Accountability Form.**
- A student uses two booklets. Submit one booklet for scoring and return the other booklet with a Do Not Score Label (the student's responses must be transcribed from one booklet into the other).
- A Student Precode Label (for a student who withdrew prior to the testing window) or District/School Label is inadvertently affixed to a blank/unused booklet (a blank/unused booklet does not have any bubbles marked or any student responses). Affix a Do Not Score Label over the label.
- A student has started the test, but withdraws from school prior to the end of the testing window. A Do Not Score Label should be affixed over the Student Precode Label or District/School Label only if the student has been completely removed from the school's enrollment on or before the end of the testing window **and** the student did not complete the assessment. Please refer to page 7 for information regarding students who complete the assessment and transfer to a new school during the PDE-established testing window.

Do not use Do Not Score Labels for the following types of booklets:

- Blank/unused booklets—there is a preprinted "BLANK" barcode in the box located in the lower left-hand corner on the cover of the answer booklet to indicate that the booklet is blank/unused.
- Booklets for students who are designated as non-assessed and have been coded as such on page 1 of the answer booklet. These booklets must have a Student Precode Label or District/School Label affixed to the front cover.

12. PROCEDURES FOR COMPLETING ANSWER BOOKLETS

STUDENTS WITH PRECODE LABELS

If a student is using a Student Precode Label, the information needed for pages 1 and 2 of the answer booklet is embedded in the barcode on the label; therefore, these items should not be completed by hand. Items 8–12 on page 3 of the answer booklets need to be completed by school personnel for all assessed students, if applicable.

STUDENTS WITH DISTRICT/SCHOOL LABELS

Students with District/School Labels must have page 1 completed by hand. School personnel must also complete items 1–7 and the "Birth Date" and "PAsecureID" grids on page 2 and any applicable items on page 3.

Following is the list of items that appear in the 2009 answer booklet on pages 2 and 3.

Item 1 Gender

Indicate whether the student is Male or Female.

Item 2 Ethnicity

Indicate the ethnicity with which the student most closely identifies. You must choose only one. If a student should be counted in more than one racial category, choose Multi-Racial/Ethnic (two or more races).

Item 3 Student's current enrollment status initially started after October 1, 2008, for the following (mark all that apply, if any):

- **in the school of residence** - Darken this bubble if the student's current enrollment in this school started after October 1, 2008.

To be considered enrolled in the school for a full academic year, a student must have been continuously enrolled in the school from at least October 1, 2008, to the last day of the testing window. Scores for students not enrolled in the school for the full academic year will not be included in the school's AYP performance calculation.

- **in the district of residence** - Darken this bubble if the student's current enrollment in this district started after October 1, 2008.

The same rules previously described for the school of residence apply to the district of residence bubble. Scores for students not enrolled in the district for the full academic year will not be included in the district's AYP performance calculation.

- **as a Pennsylvania resident** - Darken this bubble if the student became a Pennsylvania resident after October 1, 2008.

School personnel should complete this item if the student moved to Pennsylvania after October 1, 2008. It is possible that a student may have moved into your school or district from another Pennsylvania school, but enrolled in the previous Pennsylvania school after October 1, 2008 and was not a Pennsylvania resident prior to that date. School personnel are urged to check students' records carefully.

Item 4 Student's current enrollment status initially started after October 1, 2007, but on or before October 1, 2008 (mark all that apply, if any):

- **in the school of residence** - Darken this bubble if the student's current enrollment in this school started after October 1, 2007, but on or before October 1, 2008.
- **in the district of residence** - Darken this bubble if the student's current enrollment in this district started after October 1, 2007, but on or before October 1, 2008.

The information from Item 4 is collected to determine the amount of student mobility occurring throughout the Commonwealth and is not used for AYP calculations. The item does not apply to normal progress from school to school within a district (i.e., school changes that occur in the course of regular advancement from one grade to the next). Therefore, a student who moves from an elementary to a middle school exclusively due to class advancement should not have this field marked.

Item 5 Mark all of the following that apply, if any:

- **Student is court/agency placed (not foster care)** - Darken this bubble if the student has been court or agency placed into a non-public setting (e.g., PRRI or other juvenile delinquency institution; mental health, drug, and/or alcohol treatment facility). This does not apply to foster care placement. Participation in the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment is based on one of the following:
 - If the court/agency placed student has an IEP, he/she is required to participate in the assessment.
 - If the court/agency placed student does not have an IEP, he/she is not required to participate.

Note: *Exclusion from the assessment based on IEP status does not apply to alternative education programs, IU programs, or Approved Private Schools, as students attending these programs are placed by the school or district, not by a court or agency.*

When DRC receives a blank student booklet and the student is indicated as court/agency placed (not foster care), this is sufficient to identify the reason the student was non-assessed. **Do not mark "Other" in the "Non-Assessed Students" grid for these students.**

- **Student has an IEP (not Gifted)** - Darken this bubble if the student has an IEP, has a disability but is not gifted. This demographic item pertains to a student's IEP status at the time of testing.

It is recognized that some gifted students, while not having a diagnosed disability, have an IEP. The data collected in response to this item are intended to identify ONLY those students with IEPs who have disabilities. Therefore, if a gifted student has an IEP, but does NOT have a disability, DO NOT mark this bubble.

- **Student exited an IEP program within the past 2 years** - Darken this bubble if the student exited an IEP program between March 27, 2007 – March 27, 2009. (The end date is based on the last day of the testing window for the 2009 Reading and Mathematics PSSA.)

This information is being collected to allow the flexibility of including these students in the IEP subgroup for AYP calculations.

- **Student participates in Title I program** - Darken this bubble for all Title I students.

Title I students are not excluded from the PSSA.

- **Student receives Migrant Education Program services** - Darken this bubble for all children identified as receiving Migrant Education Program services by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Student Services & Migrant Education.

This division of PDE is responsible for compiling and distributing an official list of students eligible for Migrant Education Program services. Only personnel from the Pennsylvania Migrant Education Program can identify students receiving these services. The official list is distributed to district superintendents and school building principals. Please see the Migrant Education Program website at www.migrated.state.pa.us for more information.

- **Student is classified as economically disadvantaged** - Darken this bubble for all students who meet the district's economically disadvantaged criteria.

Students are commonly classified as economically disadvantaged if they qualify for free or reduced lunch; however, other criteria used by the district may be substituted.

- **Student is home-schooled and assessed at parental request** - Darken this bubble if a home-schooled student is being assessed at your testing facility at parental request.

A home-schooled student is not to be considered as enrolled in a school program, and the student's scores will not be included in the district or school results or AYP calculations. However, provisions for their inclusion upon parental request need to be made. As with all students, it is essential that any home-schooled student who takes the assessment respond to all items.

Item 6 Student's English Language Learner (ELL) status is as follows (indicate only one, if any):

- **ELL and enrolled in a U.S. school after April 11, 2008** (previous enrollment in Puerto Rico is not considered as enrollment in U.S. schools).

Participation is mandatory for the mathematics and science assessments and optional for the reading and writing assessments for students identified as English Language Learners who are in their first year of enrollment in a U.S. school. April 11, 2008 marks the last day of the 2008 Reading and Mathematics testing window and is used as the enrollment date to identify students in their first year of enrollment in U.S. schools for the 2009 assessment.

The scores for these students will not be used to calculate AYP status, but their participation in math and reading (if attempted) is used in the calculation of the participation rate for AYP.

- **ELL and enrolled in a U.S. school on or before April 11, 2008.**

All students identified as English Language Learners who have completed at least one year of enrollment in a U.S. school must participate in the assessment.

- **Exited an ESL/bilingual program and in the first year of monitoring.**
- **Exited an ESL/bilingual program and in the second year of monitoring.**
- **Former English Language Learner and no longer monitored.**

The last three ELL demographic items have been included as a means for the Pennsylvania Department of Education to monitor the progress of students who have exited ESL/bilingual programs and are in the various stages of monitoring. Please check your students' records carefully so the most accurate information is reported. **These demographic items will not be used in AYP calculations.**

See the *Accommodations Guidelines for English Language Learners* at www.pde.state.pa.us for additional information.

Item 7 Student is currently in ESL instruction and has the following Title III status (indicate only one, if any):

Students who are English Language Learners (ELL) are eligible to receive supplemental instruction and/or services funded by Title III. Districts/schools can apply for the Title III funding, which is a federally-funded supplemental program that concentrates on delivering educational language instructional programs and/or other services to students who have a primary language other than English. Districts may use Title III funding for professional development; therefore, an ELL student (in an ESL instructional program) can indirectly receive Title III funding via the instructor's professional development. Students who fall into this classification should be marked as "Title III served." There are two categories for Title III students.

○ **Title III served**

Mark this bubble when the ELL student is eligible for and receiving supplemental instruction and/or services, directly or indirectly (as previously described), through district/school Title III funded programs.

○ **Title III not served**

This bubble should be marked for either of the following scenarios.

- ELL student is eligible for supplemental instruction and/or services through district/school Title III-funded programs, but is not currently receiving said services.
- ELL student is eligible for supplemental instruction and/or services, but the district/school has not received Title III funding.

Note: *One of the first two bubbles in item 6 must be darkened in conjunction with either of the Title III bubbles in item 7. Indicating that a student is Title III (served or not served) confirms that the student is ELL and in ESL instruction.*

Page 2, Birth Date and PAsecureID Grids

The **Birth Date** grid must be completed for all assessed students using a District/School Label by darkening the appropriate month of the student's birth date, followed by writing the two-digit day and year in the boxes provided and darkening the corresponding bubbles below.

All public school students should have a **PAsecureID**. The PAsecureID grid must be completed for all students using District/School Labels by writing the students' state-assigned, ten-digit PAsecureIDs in the boxes provided and darkening the corresponding bubbles.

If the district does not have a PAsecureID for a student, please follow the instructions below. Questions regarding PAsecureIDs can be emailed to RA-PAsecureIDHelp@state.pa.us.

- If a student transferred from another district within the state, the new district can access the PAsecureID website to look up the student's PAsecureID or have one assigned.
- If a student is new to the state or previously attended a private school, the district can access the PAsecureID website and enter the student's information to have a PAsecureID assigned.

ACCOMMODATIONS SECTION

Items 8 – 12 in the Accommodations Section on page 3 must be completed for assessed students, if applicable.

See the PDE website at www.pde.state.pa.us for additional information concerning accommodations.

Item 8 Student was absent without make-up for one or more sections of the following subjects - Darken the appropriate bubble if a student was absent for any sections of a subject and was unable to make up the incomplete section(s).

Note: *It is important to indicate if a student was absent without make-up, as failure to do so will result in the student's test being scored under the assumption that the student simply did not participate in all sections of the assessment if "absent without make-up" is not indicated.*

Item 9 Student used the following Presentation Accommodations (mark all that apply, if any)

Item 10 Student used the following Setting Accommodations (mark all that apply, if any)

Item 11 Student used the following Response Accommodations (mark all that apply, if any)

Item 12 Student used the following Timing Accommodations (mark all that apply, if any)

In all instances of Presentation, Setting, Response, or Timing accommodations, school personnel must darken the bubble(s) next to the accommodation used **and** for math and reading, the subject for which it was used. If a school wishes to use an accommodation not included in the list, a documented request must be made to the Pennsylvania Department of Education. DRC cannot authorize the use of accommodations.

- Student responses that have been written using an alternate writing device (e.g., typewriter, word processor) must be transcribed into an answer booklet of the correct form designation. Student responses recorded in a modified format (e.g., Braille, large-print) must be transcribed into a Large Print and Braille Transcription Booklet. **Typewritten pages, separate handwritten pages, or large-print answer booklets will not be processed for scoring.** Using a No. 2 pencil, responses must be transcribed by school personnel exactly as the student has recorded. No corrections are allowed for spelling, punctuation, or grammar.)

OPTIONAL FIELD, SUPPLEMENTAL DATA FIELD, AND LOCAL STUDENT ID GRID

Note: The “Non-Assessed Students” grid appears in the Accommodations Section in the grade 3 reading and math booklets. The “Non-Assessed Students” grid appears on page 1 of all other answer booklets.

- The Optional Field is provided to allow districts/schools the option to measure information specific to the district/school. Each district/school may choose to gather information based on a specific need in the district/school and would code this field accordingly. If the district/school is not interested in gathering additional information, this field may be left blank.
- The Supplemental Data Field will only be used in the event that a determination is made that the demographic information already contained in the answer booklets has overlooked an element that should be considered for reporting requirements. This field should only be used if districts/schools are instructed to do so by DRC or PDE.
- The Local Student ID grid is provided to allow districts/schools the option to continue the use of the Local Student ID.

13. TEST SECURITY

The assessment relies on the measurement of individual achievement. Any deviation from assessment procedures meant to ensure validity and security (group work, teacher coaching, pre-teaching or pre-release of the performance or assessment items, use of old Pennsylvania assessments as preparation tools, etc.) is strictly prohibited and will be considered a violation of test security. District/school personnel with access to the assessment materials must not discuss, disseminate, or otherwise reveal the contents of the test to anyone. Any action by a professional employee or commissioned officer that is willfully designed to divulge test questions, falsify student scores, or compromise the integrity of the state assessment system will be subject to disciplinary action under sections 1259–1267 of the School Code (24 P.S. Sections 12-1259-12-1267). **The following list contains guidelines that must be followed to ensure that the integrity of the test remains above reproach.**

Do...continually move around the testing site so as to ensure the students are adhering to the instructions given.

Do...escort all students and carry all secure testing materials to alternate testing sites for extended time, etc.

Do...collect all scratch paper or rough drafts to prompts and return them to the test coordinator to be destroyed.

Do...attend the district’s annual orientation for the administration of the test in order to be properly informed of the procedures to follow, including securing of the test materials, and the knowledge that the tests are confidential and proprietary documents owned by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Do Not...keep, copy, reproduce, or use any test, test item, any specific test content/prompt, or examinee responses to any item or any section of a secured test in any manner inconsistent with the instructions provided by and through the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Do Not...leave students unattended with testing materials or allow any student to leave the testing site for any reason with test materials.

Do Not...possess any secure test materials at any time other than during the actual administration of the test. The administrators will be given their secure materials the morning of the administration of the test and materials must be counted and collected at the end of the test.

Do Not...discuss, disseminate, or otherwise reveal the contents of the test to anyone.

Do Not...coach or provide feedback in any way, which includes answering any questions relating to the contents of the test, before, during, or after the test.

Do Not...alter, influence, or interfere with a test response in any way or instruct the student to do so.

Do Not...fill in any unanswered item or provide actual answers to the students.

Do Not...allow students to look ahead to other sections/prompts before being instructed to do so.

Do Not...define or clarify a word

Do Not...read any portion of the reading assessment and the multiple choice and stimulus passages in the writing assessment.

Do Not...return any test booklet to any student after it has been turned in to the test administrator except in the following cases:

- 1) Make-up sessions for absences
- 2) Students going to another testing site for extended time (Note: If, after the student returns the test booklet, it is noticed that not all of the test items were answered, the booklet cannot be returned to the student to complete.)

➤ **Test Security Affidavit**

- All school assessment coordinators will receive a Test Security Affidavit for their schools for each assessment. It is the school assessment coordinator’s responsibility to disseminate the test security information as appropriate and collect the school principal’s signature.
- The Test Security Affidavit will be included with the secure materials shipment of each assessment and will be pre-printed for each participating school.
- The purpose of the affidavit is to ensure compliance to the established test security procedures. The Test Security Affidavit serves as a tool for school assessment coordinators to document their school’s understanding and acknowledgement of assessment security and accountability.
- The Test Security Affidavit for each participating school should be returned to the district assessment coordinator (after the principal’s signature bar has been completed) along with the answer booklets. Schools and other special sites that receive assessment materials directly should return the Test Security Affidavit directly to DRC.

➤ **Secure Storage**

- All answer and test booklets must be kept in a predetermined, locked, secure storage area at both the district and school levels. Secure materials must never be left unattended or in open areas. Test administrators must not be given access to test materials before the administration day. Instead, test administrators should be given access to secure test materials on the morning of test administration, allowing ample time for the administrators to review the booklets before the assessment begins.
- The *Directions for Administration Manuals* are not considered secure test materials and should be provided to test administrators prior to the assessment for review.
- All testing materials must be returned immediately to the predetermined, locked, secure storage area after testing is completed for the day. Materials must be kept secure after testing and prior to shipping to DRC.

➤ **Returning/Destroying Secure Accommodated Materials**

- All Braille and large-print booklets must be returned to DRC.
- Computer files from students who used a keyboarding accommodation must be permanently deleted. The typed/word-processed output must be securely destroyed after it has been transcribed into an answer booklet.
- Any audio versions of the assessment produced by your school or district for the administration of the PSSA must be returned to DRC. Please place these in any box being returned to DRC.

14. RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

For ship-to-district sites, school boxes are provided for each participating school. If not inventoried centrally, the boxes should be sent to the schools as soon as they have been received. A copy of each school’s packing list is contained in the district administrative materials (Shipment I). School assessment coordinators should be given ample time to distribute the appropriate grade-specific *Directions for Administration Manuals* to test administrators. This should be done as soon as the manuals are received to allow time for the test administrators to study them prior to an orientation session, which should be scheduled within the two weeks prior to the assessment window. Carefully read the *Directions for Administration Manuals* so that you are familiar with the contents and able to answer questions that may arise.

As a reminder, ship-to-school and other special sites receive both district and school materials.

Shipment I Materials (for each assessment)

DISTRICT - ADMINISTRATIVE MATERIALS

- Copies of School Packing List(s)—one per school
- School Box Range Sheet—indicates the number of boxes packaged for each school in the district for ship-to-district sites

SCHOOL - MANUALS

- *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*—this manual
- Grade-specific *Directions for Administration Manuals*

Shipment II Materials (for each assessment)

DISTRICT - ADMINISTRATIVE MATERIALS

- Materials Receipt Notice—confirms that testing materials have been received (must be faxed to DRC)
- School Box Range Sheet—indicates the number of boxes packaged for each school
- *Supplementary Information for Assessment Coordinators and Administrators*
- DRC Return Shipment Labels
- UPS Return Shipment (RS) Labels

SCHOOL - ADMINISTRATIVE MATERIALS

- Test Security Affidavit
- Materials Accountability Form.
- Security Checklist
- *Supplementary Information for Assessment Coordinators and Administrators*

SCHOOL - SECURE MATERIALS

Secure assessment materials are packaged by school in Shipment II. See the “Specific Guidelines” sections in this handbook for further information pertaining to each assessment’s secure materials.

15. DISTRIBUTING AND COLLECTING ASSESSMENT MATERIALS

All assessment booklets are in shrink-wrapped packages. Where applicable, answer booklets are packaged together with the test booklets. For all assessments, test and answer booklets have been spiraled in a predetermined sequence in each shrink-wrapped pack. The spiraling process ensures an equal distribution opportunity for each form within a classroom. Under no circumstances should you arrange the booklets by form designation prior to distribution.

Each shrink-wrapped package has a range sheet that identifies the quantity and the security range of booklets it contains. These range sheets can be used to inventory the booklets without opening the packages. In most cases, the school assessment coordinator will be responsible for assigning secure ranges of materials for test administrators. It is still vital that district assessment coordinators understand the importance of assigning materials by security range and encourage school assessment coordinators to follow this method.

The shrink-wrapped packages may be broken open to assemble proper quantities for each test administrator. Shrink-wrapped packages should only be opened at the school level and should not be opened until school personnel are ready to affix barcode labels, no more than one week prior to the start of the testing window.

On the days of the assessment, distribute the correct assessment booklets needed for that day’s assessment to each administrator as recorded on the Security Checklist. Booklets should be distributed to test administrators early enough on the days of the assessment to give them ample time to review the layout of the booklets prior to testing. In addition, each test administrator should be given at least one extra assessment booklet to use as a sample, as the *Directions for Administration Manuals* may instruct the administrators to use a sample booklet for demonstration. Do not distribute any assessment materials except the *Directions for Administration Manuals* until the day of each session. All assessment materials should be returned as soon as possible on each day of the assessment.

After all testing is complete for an assessment, be sure test administrators return **all** materials, including used and unused test and answer booklets, the *Directions for Administration Manuals*, and scratch paper to the school assessment coordinator.

16. PROCEDURES FOR ASSIGNING BOOKLETS USING SECURITY NUMBERS

The Security Checklist (see example below) should be used as a tool to account for the secure materials as they are distributed to the test administrators and to monitor the materials as they are returned by the test administrators. Account for any difference between the number of materials distributed and the number returned by noting the reason on the Security Checklist. **Any discrepancies that are not resolved before materials are returned to the district assessment coordinator must be noted on the Materials Accountability Form.** No one is permitted to retain any assessment booklets for any reason after all testing and make-ups are complete.

- The Security Checklist should not be returned to DRC. Instead, keep this list on file after you return materials to DRC. If DRC determines that a site has not returned all materials from one of the assessments, the Security Checklist may help the site locate the missing document(s).

Detailed List of Materials Sent

Grade 04 Answer Booklets			
Secure Numbers	Test Administrator Name	Date(s) Returned	Reason if Item is not Returned
42070687			
42070688			
42070689			
42070690			
42070691			
42070692			
42070693			
42070694			
42070695			
42070696			
42070697			

17. PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE ASSESSMENT

Inform students of the scheduled assessment sessions in advance, perhaps at the time the informational flyers are sent to parents/guardians. Explain to the students why they are being given the assessment and how the results will be used. Usually, students can sense the importance the test administrator places on the assessment and their performance may be affected accordingly. Students should realize that doing their best is important to them as well as to the future of the school and its programs. They may also be informed that their parents/guardians and teachers will be receiving the results. However, no assessment situation should be unduly stressful for students.

Inform students of the following:

- They are permitted to use scratch paper.
- They are **not** permitted to use ink pens.
- They may use their own calculators (or school supplied, if applicable) for most of the mathematics assessment.

Note: Calculators are not allowed on the grade 3 assessment, and the transmitting and memory function (if applicable) must be turned off on any calculator used on the PSSA. See page 5 for more information.

18. PREPARING THE CLASSROOM PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT

Good organization of assessment materials and well-executed procedures will make the administration proceed smoothly.

During the assessment sessions, keep disturbances to a minimum. One way to do this is to put a sign on the door(s) to the classroom to indicate that an assessment session is taking place. A quiet, calm atmosphere is essential for concentration on the task. Extra pencils should be available to students. Do not permit students to sharpen pencils during the assessment sessions.

Remove or cover all classroom instructional materials that may affect the validity of the PSSA. For example, posters about math rules or times tables should be covered or removed from the room on the assessment days. For more information, log on to the PDE website at www.pde.state.pa.us.

DO NOT:

- display vocabulary words and/or definitions
- display examples of problems or answers
- display instructions on how to use a calculator
- display tips on how to write responses and/or solve problems
- display illustrations or drawings of geometric shapes, algebraic equations, graphs, or number lines

19. MANAGING EXTENDED ASSESSMENT SESSIONS

Students should complete all tasks to the best of their ability; however, not all students will finish the assessment sections at the same time. Use the flexibility of the time limits to the students' advantage. Students should not feel rushed while they are taking any assessment section, and no student should be penalized because he or she works slowly. It is equally important, however, that a student not be given an opportunity to waste time. Students should close their booklets when they have finished the section of the assessment in which they were working. Students who finish early may sit quietly or read for pleasure until all students have finished. Students with special requirements (i.e., physical, visual, auditory, or learning disabilities as defined by their IEPs or service contracts) and students who just work slowly may require extended time. Special assessment situations should be arranged for these students. When all students have indicated that they have finished an assessment section, you may end the section and begin the next section or return to regular activities.

When allowing extended assessment sessions for a portion of the student population:

- **Do not** allow students to attend a lunch period with other students if the lunch period occurs between the original session and the extended session.
- **Do not** allow students to attend gym, etc. between the original session and the extended session
- **Do not** allow any overnight extensions.
- **Do not** allow students to return to an unfinished section after indicating they have completed that section.
- **Do not** allow the extended session to be administered without monitoring. It is the responsibility of a test administrator to monitor any extended sessions.

20. MANAGING DAMAGED ANSWER BOOKLETS

If a student receives an answer booklet with damaged or missing pages, replace the booklet with an answer booklet **of the same form designation** and allow the student to continue working. If the student has already begun one or more sections of the assessment, he or she should start working in the new booklet at the point where the defect was discovered and use the new booklet for the remainder of the assessment.

After the assessment has been completed, school personnel must transcribe all of the student's responses from the defective booklet into the undamaged answer booklet. **Do not insert pages from one answer booklet into another.** Multiple documents and loose pages returned for one student will not be scored.

Write "DEFECTIVE" on the damaged answer booklet and apply a Do Not Score Label over the existing label on the front cover of the damaged booklet. Return the damaged booklet with the rest of the school's answer booklets.

21. RETURN OF ASSESSMENT MATERIALS

PACKAGING MATERIALS FOR RETURN TO DISTRICT ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR

As soon as the majority of a school's testing population has completed an assessment, the school's answer booklets should be returned to DRC. If materials are returned to DRC from the district, school assessment coordinators are responsible for initiating the early return of answer booklets via an expedited return-plan established by the district. Clear communication and a predefined process are essential to the success of this initiative. School assessment coordinators should be prepared to box and deliver their school's answer booklets immediately after the majority of the testing population has completed the assessment. If materials are returned to DRC directly from the school, school assessment coordinators are responsible for packaging and shipping the materials directly to DRC.

PDE's policy states that the test must be administered to any student who enrolls during the PDE-established testing windows. Therefore, schools must retain enough testing materials at the school until the end of the testing window to accommodate new enrollments and make-up sessions. This remaining box of answer booklets should be forwarded to the district assessment coordinator (or directly to DRC) on the last day of the testing window. Test booklets are not part of the expedited process and should be returned according to the district's established guidelines.

The following process outline should serve as a guideline for school assessment coordinators when packaging materials for return to their district assessment coordinator. See the "Specific Guidelines" sections in this handbook for further information about specific return instructions for each assessment.

- 1) Verify that all used answer booklets returned to DRC have a barcode label (District/School, Student Precode, or Do Not Score) affixed to the front cover of the answer booklet.

- 2) Verify that all responses for participating students using accommodations have been properly transcribed into the form-appropriate scannable answer booklet.
- 3) Remove all rough drafts and scratch paper from the test and answer booklets. These materials will not be processed or used for scoring.
- 4) Place all answer booklets in the boxes that you saved from DRC's original shipment.

Note: DRC does not require that the answer booklets are sorted by class or grade within the school boxes, only that answer booklets are boxed separately from test booklets.
- 5) Immediately return the boxes of answer booklets to your district assessment coordinator or DRC, retaining enough materials at the school through the end of the testing window to account for make-ups and new enrollments.
- 6) Box all test booklets and unopened packs of shrink-wrapped materials separately from the answer booklets in the remaining boxes that you saved from DRC's original shipment.
- 7) Include the signed Test Security Affidavit and the completed Materials Accountability Form in the last box of answer booklets.
- 8) Return all remaining assessment materials to the district assessment coordinator in accordance with the schedule established by the district.
- 9) Do not return the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*, the *Directions for Administration Manuals*, and scratch paper. Please follow instructions from the district assessment coordinator for the secure destruction of these materials. This procedure is part of test security.

PACKAGING MATERIALS FOR RETURN TO DRC

The following process outline should serve as a guideline for district assessment coordinators when packaging materials for return to DRC. For schools that return materials directly to DRC, the coordinator is also responsible for the packaging steps described in the preceding section. See the "Specific Guidelines" sections in this handbook for further information about specific return instructions for each assessment.

- 1) Condense school boxes whenever possible. DRC does not require that the assessment booklets are sorted by school within the district boxes, only that the answer booklets are boxed separately from the test booklets.
- 2) Seal the boxes.
- 3) Affix a DRC RETURN SHIPMENT LABEL (Answer Booklets or Test Booklets and Unopened Packages) to the side of each box according to its contents.

Note: For the writing assessment, you will only receive DRC Return Shipment Labels for Answer Booklets since the writing booklets are considered answer documents for DRC's processing.
- 4) Affix a UPS RS Label to the top of each box. DRC and district addresses have been preprinted on the label. Use care not to cover the DRC Return Shipment Label.
- 5) Record the UPS Tracking Number for each package, noting the assessment for which they were used. Please keep the number(s) for future reference to document the materials returned to DRC.
- 6) Keep the boxes in a secure location until they are given to the UPS driver.
- 7) Schedule a pick-up with UPS as soon as schools begin the early return of answer booklets.
- 8) Schedule a pick-up with UPS for the test booklets and the remaining (make-up) materials to occur no later than three business days after the close of each assessment window.
 - **Writing**, by February 25, 2009
 - **Reading/Math**, by April 1, 2009
 - **Science**, by May 13, 2009

If the district office does not have a daily, scheduled UPS pickup, call UPS at 1-866-857-1501 to arrange for materials pickup. Specify that you are using pre-paid, UPS 2-day return service labels. You must call at least one day prior to the day on which you will ship your materials. If you need additional labels, please call DRC's Pennsylvania Customer Service Representatives at 1-800-451-7849

PART II – WRITING SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

1. RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS – SHIPMENT II

Shipment II contains the secure assessment booklets. If this shipment is not received by January 26, 2009, district assessment coordinators (or school assessment coordinators at ship-to-school districts) should contact DRC directly by calling a DRC Pennsylvania Customer Service Representative at 1-800-451-7849.

Materials enclosed in Shipment II:

ADMINISTRATIVE MATERIALS

- See page 17.

SECURE MATERIALS

- Writing Booklets—writing booklets are shrink-wrapped in packs of 17
- Shrink-wrapped large-print writing booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Shrink-wrapped Braille booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Shrink-wrapped Large Print and Braille Transcription writing booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Student Precode Labels, District/School Labels, and Do Not Score Labels

School boxes are provided for each participating school; If not inventoried or stored centrally, boxes should be sent to the schools as soon as they have been received.

- Inventory the materials carefully and immediately upon receipt. If more materials are needed:
 - **Ship-to-district sites** should contact their district assessment coordinator immediately. District assessment coordinators must complete and send an Additional Materials Request Form for Writing (found in Appendix C of this handbook) to DRC.
 - **Ship-to-school sites** may complete and send an Additional Materials Request Form for Writing directly to DRC.
- **Be sure to save the box(es) in which the materials were sent.** They will be used to return the materials after the assessments. (If a box is damaged, or if all materials do not fit into the original box(es), a box similar in size and strength from the school may be substituted.)
- After inventorying Shipment II, store all materials in a predetermined, locked, secure storage area.

2. SCHEDULING THE ASSESSMENT

It is important to establish an assessment schedule prior to testing. The first administration date must not be scheduled before February 9, 2009. All assessments, including make-ups, must be completed by February 20, 2009. The first week of the testing window should be used for administering the assessment. The second week should be used for make-up sessions or as a backup if unusual circumstances do not allow testing in the first week.

The writing assessment consists of five passages with four multiple-choice items per passage and three writing prompts. The multiple-choice items and the writing prompts are presented as four separate sections. Each section should be administered separately; however, testing sites can make the final determination whether multiple sections can be administered in the same testing session. In all cases, individual assessment sections must be completed within one school day and the sections must be administered in the sequence in which they are printed in the writing booklets. Any student requesting additional time should be allowed the extra time. *See page 15 for more information concerning accommodations.*

The following chart outlines the assessment schedule guidelines and estimated times for each section for each grade (“MC” refers to multiple-choice items).

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT TIMES FOR WRITING (IN MINUTES)				
Grade		5	8	11
Section 1	Number of Items	20 MC	20 MC	20MC
	Student Testing Time	45 to 55	45 to 55	45 to 55
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20	15 to 20	15 to 20
	Administration Time (Total Time)	60 to 75	60 to 75	60 to 75
Section 2	Number of Items	1 Writing Prompt	1 Writing Prompt	1 Writing Prompt
	Student Testing Time	55 to 65	55 to 65	55 to 65
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20	15 to 20	15 to 20
	Administration Time (Total Time)	70 to 85	70 to 85	70 to 85
Section 3	Number of Items	1 Writing Prompt	1 Writing Prompt	1 Writing Prompt
	Student Testing Time	55 to 65	55 to 65	55 to 65
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20	15 to 20	15 to 20
	Administration Time (Total Time)	70 to 85	70 to 85	70 to 85
Section 4	Number of Items	1 Writing Prompt	1 Writing Prompt	1 Writing Prompt
	Student Testing Time	55 to 65	55 to 65	55 to 65
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20	15 to 20	15 to 20
	Administration Time (Total Time)	70 to 85	70 to 85	70 to 85
Grade		5	8	11

3. BOXING MATERIALS FOR RETURN

As soon as the majority of a school's testing population has completed the assessment, the school's writing booklets should be returned to the district assessment coordinator for early return to DRC. At least one box of writing booklets must be held at the school until the end of the PDE-established testing window (February 20, 2009) to account for make-ups and new enrollments.

The following process outline should serve as a guideline for school assessment coordinators when packaging materials for return to district assessment coordinators. The image that follows displays the booklet-separation process that should occur at the school level.

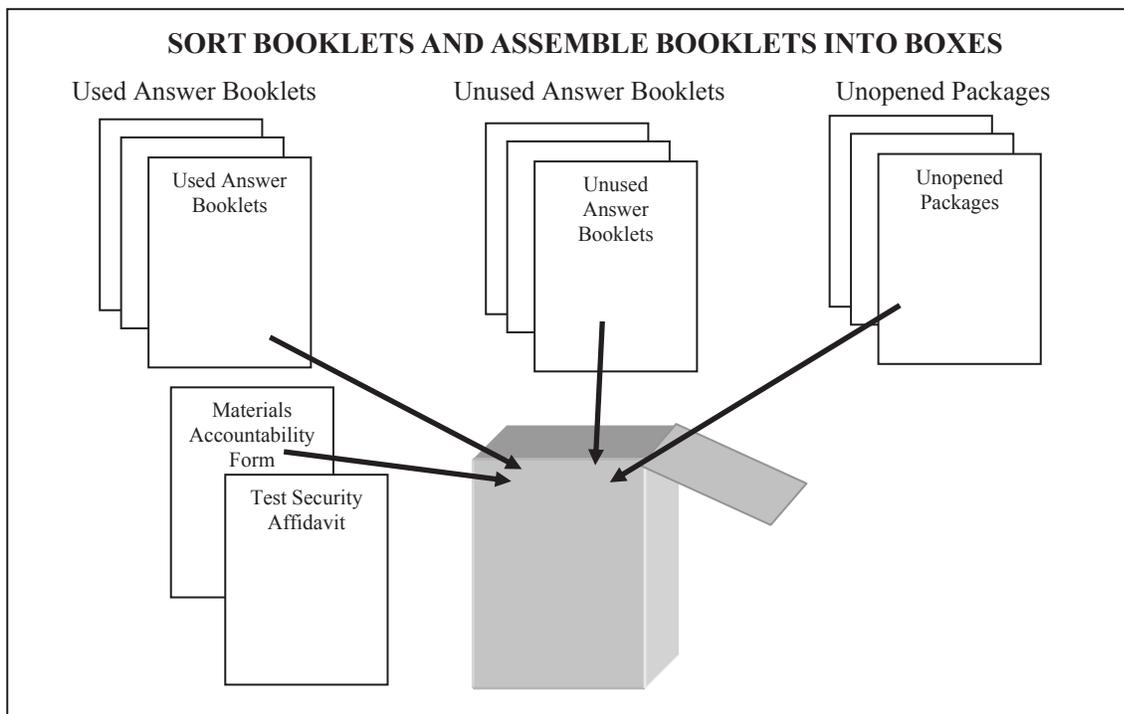
- 1) Verify that all responses for participating students using accommodations have been properly transcribed into scannable writing booklets.
- 2) Remove all rough drafts and scratch paper from the writing booklets. These materials will not be processed or used for scoring.
- 3) Place used and opened unused writing booklets (including booklets for non-assessed students) in the boxes that you saved from DRC's original shipment.

Note: DRC does not require that the writing booklets are sorted by class or grade within the school boxes.

- 4) Immediately return these boxes of writing booklets to the district assessment coordinator, retaining enough materials at the school through the end of the testing window to account for make-ups and new enrollments.
- 5) Box unopened packs of shrink-wrapped writing booklets and the writing booklets retained for make-up testing in the remaining boxes that you saved from DRC’s original shipment.

Note: Used writing booklets and unused writing booklets do not have to be boxed separately. They may be combined in the same box(es), space permitting.
- 6) Include the signed Test Security Affidavit and the completed Materials Accountability Form in the last box of writing booklets (the “make-up” box) in order to document any issues with the writing booklets that are held back through the end of the testing window.
- 7) Return all remaining assessment materials to the district assessment coordinator in accordance with the schedule established by the district.

Do not return the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*, the *Directions for Administration Manuals*, or scratch paper. Please follow instructions from the district assessment coordinator for the secure destruction of these materials. This procedure is part of test security.



4. WRITING CHECKLISTS

The following checklists are general guidelines of critical dates by which an activity should take place. As a reminder, ship-to-school sites should use both checklists.

2009 District Assessment Coordinator's Checklist for Writing		
_____	Receive Shipment I from DRC	January 12, 2009
_____	Distribute Shipment I to school assessment coordinators	January 13, 2009
_____	Read the <i>Handbook for Assessment Coordinators</i>	January 16, 2009
_____	Distribute parent/guardian flyers in newsletter or mail	January 26, 2009
_____	Receive Shipment II from DRC	January 26, 2009
_____	Distribute Shipment II to school assessment coordinators	January 27, 2009
_____	Conduct orientation session for school assessment coordinators	January 29, 2009
_____	Request additional materials (if needed)	February 3, 2009
_____	PSSA Writing Assessment Window	February 9-20, 2009
_____	Inventory assessment materials returned by schools	February 24, 2009
_____	Return materials to DRC	February 25, 2009
_____	Destroy handbooks, administration directions, and scratch paper	February 25, 2009

2009 School Assessment Coordinator's Checklist for Writing		
_____	Receive and inventory Shipment I	January 13, 2009
_____	Read the <i>Handbook for Assessment Coordinators</i> and the <i>Directions for Administration Manuals</i>	January 21, 2009
_____	Distribute the <i>Directions for Administration Manuals</i> to appropriate personnel	January 30, 2009
_____	Distribute parent/guardian flyers in newsletter or mail	January 26, 2009
_____	Receive Shipment II	January 27, 2009
_____	Inventory Shipment II; order additional materials (if needed)	February 2, 2009
_____	Attend school assessment coordinator orientation	January 29, 2009
_____	Conduct orientation session for test administrators	February 6, 2009
_____	Assist and supervise test administrators during assessment	February 9-20, 2009
_____	PSSA Writing Assessment Window	February 9-20, 2009
_____	Inventory, package, and return assessment materials to district assessment coordinator	February 20, 2009
_____	Destroy handbooks, administration directions, and scratch paper	February 20, 2009

PART III – READING AND MATHEMATICS SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

1. RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS – SHIPMENT II

Shipment II contains the secure assessment booklets. If this shipment is not received by March 2, 2009, district assessment coordinators (or school assessment coordinators at ship-to-school districts) should contact DRC directly by calling a DRC Pennsylvania Customer Service Representative at 1-800-451-7849.

Materials enclosed in Shipment II:

ADMINISTRATIVE MATERIALS

- See page 17.

SECURE MATERIALS

In each school's original shipment of secure assessment materials (Shipment II), the grades 4 – 8 and 11 test and answer booklets will be shrink-wrapped together and packaged in quantities of 17 with cover sheets indicating the quantity and secure number range of each pack. Grade 3 booklets are presented as combined test/answer booklets and shrink-wrapped in packages of 17. The following materials will be provided:

- Grade 3 Reading and Mathematics booklets
- Grades 4 – 8 and 11 Reading and Mathematics test and answer booklets
 - Note:** The test booklets and answer booklets will be shrink-wrapped together by form designation (i.e., a Form 1 test booklet will always be followed by a Form 1 answer booklet).
- Shrink-wrapped Spanish-translation test and answer booklets and Spanish-translation *Directions for Administration Manuals* (per grade level, if applicable)
- Shrink-wrapped large-print test and answer booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Shrink-wrapped Braille booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Shrink-wrapped Large Print and Braille Transcription test and answer booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Red stickers to seal pages of the test booklet for the mathematics, non-calculator items in Section 1
- Rulers for grade 3, 4, 5, and 6 students to answer questions requiring measurement
- Student Precode Labels, District/School Labels, and Do Not Score Labels

School boxes are provided for each participating school; if not inventoried or stored centrally, the boxes should be sent to the schools as soon as they have been received.

- Inventory the materials carefully and immediately upon receipt. If more materials are needed:
 - **Ship-to-district sites** should contact their district assessment coordinator immediately. District assessment coordinators must complete and send an Additional Materials Request Form for Reading and Math (found in Appendix C of this handbook) to DRC.
 - **Ship-to-school sites** may complete and send an Additional Materials Request Form for Reading and Math directly to DRC.
- **Be sure to save the box(es) in which the materials were sent.** They will be used to return the materials after the assessments. (If a box is damaged, or if all materials do not fit into the original box(es), a box similar in size and strength from the school may be substituted.)
- After inventorying Shipment II, store all materials in a predetermined, locked, secure storage area.

2. SCHEDULING THE ASSESSMENT

It is important to establish an assessment schedule prior to testing. The first administration date must not be scheduled before March 16, 2009. All assessments, including make-ups, must be completed by March 27, 2009. The first week of the testing window should be used for administering the assessment. The second week should be used for make-up sessions or as a backup if unusual circumstances do not allow testing in the first week.

The reading and mathematics assessments consist of a total of six sections. Each section should be scheduled as one assessment session; however, testing sites can make the final determination whether multiple sections can be

administered in the same testing session, as long as the sections are administered in the sequence in which they are printed in the test booklets. In all cases, individual assessment sections must be completed within one school day and the sections must be administered in the sequence in which they are printed in the booklets. Any student requesting additional time should be allowed the extra time. *See page 15 for more information concerning accommodations.*

The following chart outlines the assessment schedule guidelines and estimated times for each section for each grade (“MC” refers to multiple-choice items and “OE” refers to open-ended items).

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT TIMES FOR MATHEMATICS AND READING (IN MINUTES)								
Grade		3	4	5	6	7	8	11
Section 1 Mathematics	Number of Items	24 MC 2 OE						
	Student Testing Time	55 to 65						
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20						
	Administration Time (Total Time)	70 to 85						
Section 2 Reading	Number of Items	24 MC 1 OE	22 MC 2 OE	24 MC 2 OE	22 MC 2 OE	19 MC 2 OE	21 MC 2 OE	24 MC 2 OE
	Student Testing Time	70 to 80	70 to 80	75 to 85	70 to 80	65 to 75	70 to 80	75 to 85
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20						
	Administration Time (Total Time)	85 to 100	85 to 100	90 to 105	85 to 100	80 to 95	85 to 100	90 to 105
Section 3 Mathematics	Number of Items	24 MC 1 OE						
	Student Testing Time	50 to 60						
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20						
	Administration Time (Total Time)	65 to 80						
Section 4 Reading	Number of Items	18 MC 1 OE						
	Student Testing Time	50 to 60						
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20						
	Administration Time (Total Time)	65 to 80						
Section 5 Mathematics	Number of Items	24 MC 1 OE						
	Student Testing Time	50 to 60						
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20						
	Administration Time (Total Time)	65 to 80						
Section 6 Reading	Number of Items	16 MC 1 OE	18 MC 2 OE	16MC 2 OE	18 MC 2 OE	21MC 2 OE	19 MC 2 OE	16MC 2 OE
	Student Testing Time	45 to 55	55 to 65	50 to 60	60 to 70	70 to 80	65 to 75	50 to 60
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20						
	Administration Time (Total Time)	60 to 75	70 to 85	65 to 80	75 to 90	85 to 100	80 to 95	65 to 80
Grade		3	4	5	6	7	8	11

With the exception of grade 3, each student will have one test booklet and one answer booklet; the grade 3 assessment is presented in one combined test and answer booklet. In addition, students in grades 4 – 8 and 11 will receive one red sticker, and one grade-specific ruler will be supplied for each student in grades 3, 4, 5, and 6.

- Answer booklets contain space for recording answers to the multiple-choice and open-ended questions. Each student must use the same test booklet and answer booklet for all sections of the assessment. Because there are multiple forms at each grade level, **it is imperative that students are provided a test booklet and an answer booklet with the same form designation.** For example, if a student is assigned a Form 3 test booklet, that student must be assigned a Form 3 answer booklet.
- **Under no circumstances should you attempt to match forms by the security barcode printed on the back of the booklets.** The only match between test and answer booklets is the form designation printed on the front cover of each booklet. Failure to ensure that students have the same form of the test booklet and answer booklet may adversely affect district and school results.
- At the beginning of Section 1 of the grades 4 – 8 and 11 mathematics assessment, students are NOT permitted to use a calculator. Students will use the red stickers provided to seal the cover page through page 4 of the test booklets upon completion of the mathematics, non-calculator items. For the remaining mathematics sections of the assessment, students are permitted to use their own calculators or ones that the school might provide. *See page 5 for more information concerning allowable calculator use.*

3. BOXING MATERIALS FOR RETURN

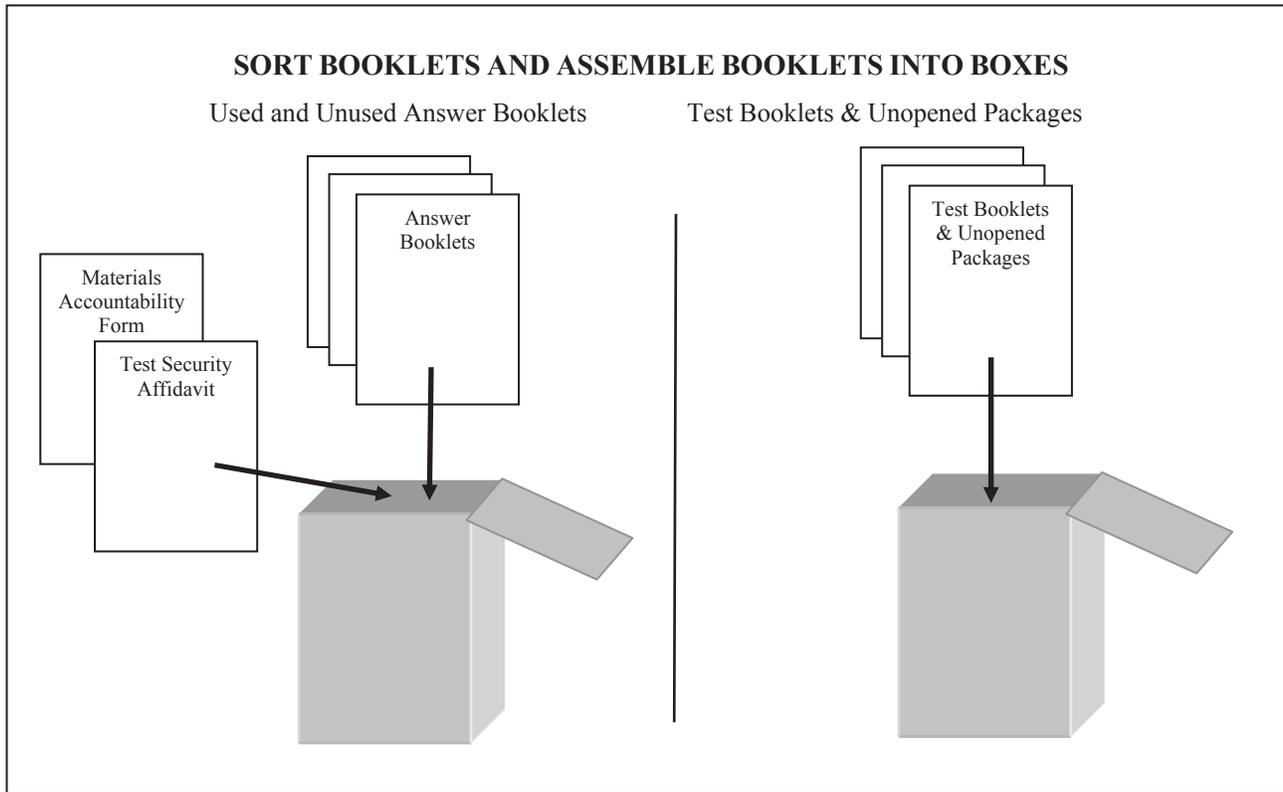
As soon as the majority of a school’s testing population has completed the assessment, the school’s answer booklets should be returned to the district assessment coordinator for early return to DRC. At least one box of answer booklets must be held at the school until the end of the PDE-established testing window (March 27, 2009) to account for make-ups and new enrollments.

The following process outline should serve as a guideline for school assessment coordinators when packaging materials for return to the district assessment coordinator. The image that follows displays the booklet-separation process that should occur at the school level.

- 1) Verify that all responses for participating students using accommodations have been properly transcribed into scannable answer booklets.
- 2) Remove all rough drafts and scratch paper from test and answer booklets. These materials will not be processed or used for scoring.
- 3) Place all used and opened unused answer booklets (including booklets for non-assessed students) in the boxes that you saved from DRC’s original shipment. *Grade 3 test/answer booklets are considered answer booklets for DRC processing and must be included in the box(es) of answer booklets.*
 - Note:** DRC does not require that the assessment booklets are sorted by class or grade within school boxes, only that the answer booklets are boxed separately from test booklets.
- 4) Immediately return the boxes of answer booklets to the district assessment coordinator, retaining enough materials at the school through the end of the testing window to account for make-ups and new enrollments.
- 5) Box all test booklets and unopened packs of shrink-wrapped materials separately from the answer booklets in the remaining boxes that you saved from DRC’s original shipment.
- 6) Include the signed Test Security Affidavit and the completed Materials Accountability Form in the last box of answer booklets (the “make-up” box) in order to document any issues with the answer booklets that are held back through the end of the testing window.
- 7) Return all remaining assessment materials to the district assessment coordinator in accordance with the schedule established by the district.

Do not return the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*, the *Directions for Administration Manuals*, and scratch paper. Please follow instructions from the district assessment coordinator for the secure destruction of these materials. This procedure is part of test security.

The image below displays the booklet-separation process that should occur at the school level.



4. READING AND MATH CHECKLISTS

The following checklists are general guidelines of critical dates by which an activity should take place. As a reminder, ship-to-school sites should use both checklists.

2009 District Assessment Coordinator's Checklist for Reading and Mathematics		
_____	Receive Shipment I from DRC	February 16, 2009
_____	Distribute Shipment I to school assessment coordinators	February 17, 2009
_____	Read the <i>Handbook for Assessment Coordinators</i>	February 20, 2009
_____	Distribute parent/guardian flyers in newsletter or mail	March 2, 2009
_____	Receive Shipment II from DRC	March 2, 2009
_____	Distribute Shipment II to school assessment coordinators	March 3, 2009
_____	Conduct orientation session for school assessment coordinators	March 5, 2009
_____	Request additional materials (if needed)	March 10, 2009
_____	PSSA Reading and Mathematics Assessment Window	March 16-27, 2009
_____	Inventory assessment materials returned by schools	March 31, 2009
_____	Return materials to DRC	April 1, 2009
_____	Destroy handbooks, administration directions, and scratch paper	April 1, 2009

2009 School Assessment Coordinator's Checklist for Reading and Mathematics

_____	Receive and inventory Shipment I	February 17, 2009
_____	Read the <i>Handbook for Assessment Coordinators</i> and the <i>Directions for Administration Manuals</i>	February 25, 2009
_____	Distribute the <i>Directions for Administration Manuals</i> to appropriate personnel	March 6, 2009
_____	Distribute parent/guardian flyers in newsletter or mail	March 2, 2009
_____	Receive Shipment II	March 3, 2009
_____	Inventory Shipment II; order additional materials (if needed)	March 9, 2009
_____	Attend school assessment coordinator orientation	March 5, 2009
_____	Conduct orientation session for test administrators	March 13, 2009
_____	Assist and supervise test administrators during assessment	March 16-27, 2009
_____	PSSA Mathematics and Reading Assessment Window	March 16-27, 2009
_____	Inventory, package, and return assessment materials to district assessment coordinator	March 27, 2009
_____	Destroy handbooks, administration directions, and scratch paper	March 27, 2009

PART IV – SCIENCE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

1. RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS – SHIPMENT II

Shipment II contains the secure assessment booklets. If this shipment is not received by April 13, 2009, district assessment coordinators (or school assessment coordinators at ship-to-school districts) should contact DRC directly by calling a DRC Pennsylvania Customer Service Representative at 1-800-451-7849.

Materials enclosed in Shipment II:

ADMINISTRATIVE MATERIALS

- See page 17.

SECURE MATERIALS

In each school's original shipment of secure assessment materials (Shipment II), the grades 4 and 8 test and answer booklets will be shrink-wrapped together and packaged in quantities of 17 with cover sheets indicating the quantity and secure number range of each pack. Grade 11 booklets are presented as combined test/answer booklets and shrink-wrapped in packages of 17. The following materials will be provided:

- Grade 11 Science booklets
- Grades 4 and 8 Science test and answer booklets
 - Note:** The test booklets and answer booklets will be shrink-wrapped together by form designation (i.e., a Form 1 test booklet will always be followed by a Form 1 answer booklet).
- Shrink-wrapped Spanish-translation test and answer booklets and Spanish-translation *Directions for Administration Manuals* (per grade level, if applicable)
- Shrink-wrapped large-print test and answer booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Shrink-wrapped Braille booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Shrink-wrapped Large Print and Braille Transcription test and answer booklets (per grade level, if applicable)
- Student Precode Labels, District/School Labels, and Do Not Score Labels

School boxes are provided for each participating school; if not inventoried or stored centrally, boxes should be sent to the schools as soon as they have been received.

- Inventory the materials carefully and immediately upon receipt. If more materials are needed:
 - **Ship-to-district sites** should contact the district assessment coordinator immediately. District assessment coordinators must complete and send an Additional Materials Request Form for Science (found in Appendix C of this handbook) to DRC.
 - **Ship-to-school sites** may complete and send an Additional Materials Request Form for Science directly to DRC.
- **Be sure to save the box(es) in which the materials were sent.** These will be used to return the materials after the assessments. (If a box is damaged, or if all materials do not fit into the original box(es), a box similar in size and strength from the school may be substituted.)
- After inventorying Shipment II, store all materials in a predetermined, locked, secure storage area.

2. SCHEDULING THE ASSESSMENT

It is important to establish an assessment schedule prior to testing. The first administration date should not be scheduled before April 27, 2009. All assessments, including make-ups, must be completed by May 8, 2009. The first week of the testing window should be used for administering the assessment. The second week should be used for make-up sessions or as a backup if unusual circumstances do not allow testing in the first week.

The science assessment consists of two sections at grades 4 and 8 and three sections at grade 11. Each section should be scheduled as one assessment session; however, testing sites can make the final determination whether multiple sections can be administered in the same testing session, as long as the sections are administered in the sequence in which they are printed in the test booklets.

In all cases, individual assessment sections must be completed within one school day and the sections must be administered in the sequence in which they are printed in the booklets. Any student requesting additional time should be allowed the extra time. *See page 15 for more information concerning accommodations.*

The following chart outlines the assessment schedule guidelines and estimated times for each section for each grade. (“MC” refers to multiple-choice items and “OE” refers to open-ended items.)

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT TIMES FOR SCIENCE (IN MINUTES)				
Grade		4	8	11
Section 1	Number of Items	34 MC 3 OE	35 MC 3 OE	22 MC 3 OE
	Student Testing Time	45 to 55	50 to 60	55 to 65
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20	15 to 20	15 to 20
	Administration Time (Total Time)	60 to 75	65 to 80	70 to 85
Section 2	Number of Items	34 MC 3 OE	35 MC 3 OE	20 MC 4 OE
	Student Testing Time	45 to 55	50 to 60	45 to 55
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	15 to 20	15 to 20	15 to 20
	Administration Time (Total Time)	60 to 75	65 to 80	60 to 75
Section 3	Number of Items	N/A	N/A	20 MC 4 OE
	Student Testing Time	N/A	N/A	45 to 55
	Administrative Time (Pre-test & Post-test)	N/A	N/A	15 to 20
	Administration Time (Total Time)	N/A	N/A	60 to 75
Grade		4	8	11

With the exception of grade 11, each student will have one test booklet and one answer booklet; the grade 11 assessment is presented in one combined test and answer booklet.

- Answer booklets contain space for recording answers to the multiple-choice and open-ended questions. Each student must use the same test booklet and answer booklet for all sections of the assessment. Because there are multiple forms at each grade level, **it is imperative that students are provided a test booklet and an answer booklet with the same form designation.** For example, if a student is assigned a Form 3 test booklet, that student must be assigned a Form 3 answer booklet.
- **Under no circumstances should you attempt to match forms by the security barcode printed on the back of the booklets.** The only match between test and answer booklets is the form designation printed on the front cover of each booklet. Failure to ensure that students have the same form of the test booklet and answer booklet may adversely affect the district and school results.

3. BOXING MATERIALS FOR RETURN

As soon as the majority of a school’s testing population has completed the assessment, the school’s answer booklets should be returned to the district assessment coordinator for early return to DRC. At least one box of answer booklets must be held at the school until the end of the PDE-established testing window (May 8, 2009) to account for make-ups and new enrollments.

The following process outline should serve as a guideline for school assessment coordinators when packaging materials for return to the district assessment coordinator. The image that follows displays the booklet-separation process that should occur at the school level.

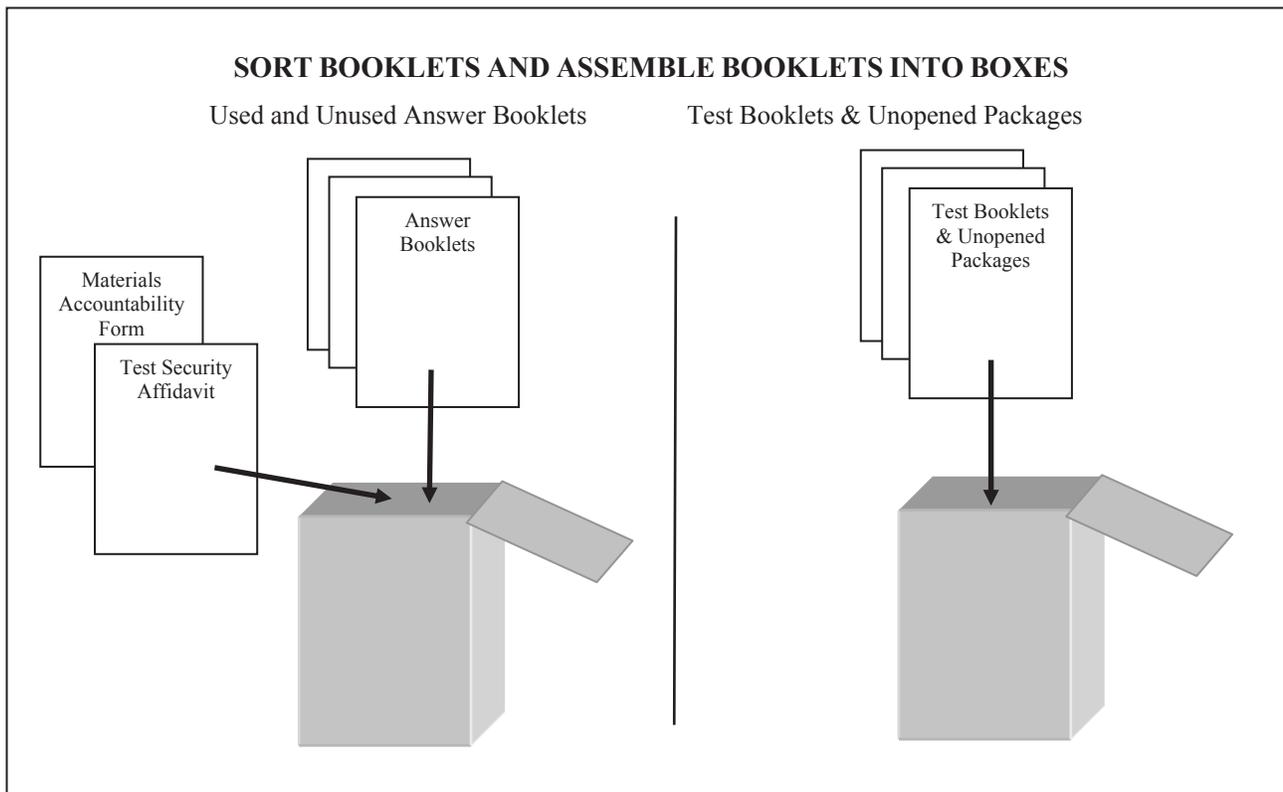
- 1) Verify that all responses for participating students using accommodations have been properly transcribed into scannable answer booklets.
- 2) Remove all rough drafts and scratch paper from test and answer booklets. These materials will not be processed or used for scoring.
- 3) Place all used and opened unused answer booklets (including booklets for non-assessed students) in the boxes that you saved from DRC's original shipment. *Grade 11 test/answer booklets are considered answer booklets for DRC processing and must be included in the box(es) of answer booklets.*

Note: DRC does not require that the assessment booklets are sorted by class or grade within school boxes, only that answer booklets are boxed separately from test booklets.

- 4) Immediately return the boxes of answer booklets to the district assessment coordinator, retaining enough materials at the school through the end of the testing window to account for make-ups and new enrollments.
- 5) Box all test booklets and unopened packs of shrink-wrapped materials separately from the answer booklets in the remaining boxes that you saved from DRC's original shipment.
- 6) Include the signed Test Security Affidavit and the completed Materials Accountability Form in the last box of answer booklets in order to document any issues with the answer booklets that are held back through the end of the testing window.
- 7) Return all remaining assessment materials to the district assessment coordinator in accordance with the schedule established by the district.

Do not return the *Handbook for Assessment Coordinators*, the *Directions for Administration Manuals*, and scratch paper. Please follow instructions from the district assessment coordinator for the secure destruction of these materials. This procedure is part of test security.

The image below displays the booklet-separation process that should occur at the school level.



4. SCIENCE CHECKLISTS

The following checklists are general guidelines of critical dates by which an activity should take place. As a reminder, ship-to-school sites should use both checklists.

2009 District Assessment Coordinator's Checklist for Science		
_____	Receive Shipment I from DRC	March 30, 2009
_____	Distribute Shipment I to school assessment coordinators	March 31, 2009
_____	Read the <i>Handbook for Assessment Coordinators</i>	April 3, 2009
_____	Distribute parent/guardian flyers in newsletter or mail	April 13, 2009
_____	Receive Shipment II from DRC	April 13, 2009
_____	Distribute Shipment II to school assessment coordinators	April 14, 2009
_____	Conduct orientation session for school assessment coordinators	April 16, 2009
_____	Request additional materials (if needed)	April 21, 2009
_____	PSSA Science Assessment Window	April 27-May 8, 2009
_____	Inventory assessment materials returned by schools	May 12, 2009
_____	Return materials to DRC	May 13, 2009
_____	Destroy handbooks, administration directions, and scratch paper	May 13, 2006

2009 School Assessment Coordinator's Checklist for Science		
_____	Receive and inventory Shipment I	March 31, 2009
_____	Read the <i>Handbook for Assessment Coordinators</i> and the <i>Directions for Administration Manuals</i>	April 8, 2009
_____	Distribute the <i>Directions for Administration Manuals</i> to appropriate personnel	April 17, 2009
_____	Distribute parent/guardian flyers in newsletter or mail	April 13, 2009
_____	Receive Shipment II	April 14, 2009
_____	Inventory Shipment II; order additional materials (if needed)	April 20, 2009
_____	Attend school assessment coordinator orientation	April 16, 2009
_____	Conduct orientation session for test administrators	April 24, 2009
_____	Assist and supervise test administrators during assessment	April 27-May 8, 2009
_____	PSSA Science Assessment Window	April 27-May 8, 2009
_____	Inventory, package, and return assessment materials to district assessment coordinator	May 8, 2009
_____	Destroy handbooks, administration directions, and scratch paper	May 8, 2009

Appendix A

Sample Parent/Guardian Flyers

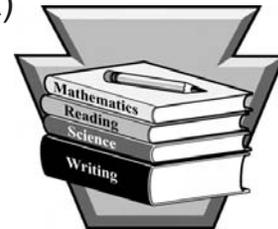
Frequently
Asked
Questions

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

Writing Assessment

Grades 5, 8, and 11— February 2009

Information for Parents or Guardians



Which schools participate?

All school districts participate in the writing assessment. Nonpublic and private schools may also participate on a voluntary basis.

Which students take the assessment?

All students in grades 5, 8, and 11 are included in the assessment (except for a few students who meet specific criteria).

When does the assessment occur?

The assessment is scheduled by the school district to take place during the testing window of February 9 through February 20, 2009.

How long does the assessment take?

The entire writing assessment takes approximately four to six hours to complete. Your school district should inform you about the assessment schedule.

What does the assessment include?

The assessment consists of twenty multiple-choice revising and editing questions and three writing prompts. Some portions of the assessment will be the same for all students, and some will consist of different groups of items. All items were written to align with Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Writing.

What is assessed in writing?

The writing assessment provides a direct performance measure of students' abilities to develop, organize, and express their ideas in a variety of writing situations. The writing assessment is intended to evaluate performances of individual students, to provide comparative data about the school's writing program, and to serve as a validity check of the school's local assessment of writing.

Who decided what the assessment should measure?

Groups of educators from all levels of education in Pennsylvania chose the areas of knowledge on which the assessment is based. The groups included teachers, supervisors, curriculum directors, and college specialists. These groups also reviewed, edited, and approved the test items.

Who administers the assessment?

Each school chooses the person(s) who will administer the assessment. In most cases, these are the students' teachers, who are often helped by the principal or a guidance counselor.

How are the written responses scored?

Evaluators trained in applying a holistic scoring system will score the written responses to the writing prompts. The holistic system includes a mode-specific scoring guideline which addresses the student's composition for the effective application of focus, content development, organization, and style. The system also includes a conventions scoring guideline which addresses the student's use of conventions (sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation). Composition and conventions are scored separately on 4-point scales to indicate the writer's level of proficiency.

How are the results reported?

Two copies of the individual student report for writing will be sent to the school districts for distribution to parents, teachers, guidance counselors, and/or principals. The state will not receive any report with individual names included.

School-level reports will be used for curricular and planning purposes. School districts may publish the results of PSSA testing for each school. The state will also release school-by-school assessment data.

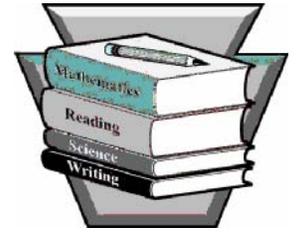
May parents see the assessment?

Parents and guardians may review the writing assessment by making arrangements with the school assessment coordinator once the assessment arrives at the school. Confidentiality agreements must be signed, and no copies of the assessment or notes about assessment items will be permitted to leave the school.

If, after reviewing the assessment, parents do not want their child to participate in the writing assessment due to a conflict with their religious beliefs, they may write to the school district superintendent prior to the beginning of the assessment to request to excuse their child from the assessment.

Frequently
Asked
Questions

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)
Reading and
Mathematics Assessment
Grades 3 – 8 and 11— March 2009
Information for Parents or Guardians



Which schools participate?

All school districts participate in the reading and mathematics assessments. Nonpublic and private schools may also participate on a voluntary basis.

Which students take the assessments?

All students in grades 3 – 8 and 11 are included in the assessments (except for a few students who meet specific criteria).

When do the assessments occur?

The assessments are scheduled by the school district to take place during the testing window of March 16 through March 27, 2009.

How long do the assessments take?

The entire reading and mathematics assessments take approximately six to seven hours to complete. Your school district should inform you about the assessment schedule.

What do the assessments include?

Each student completes three sections of items for each of the reading and mathematics assessments. Some sections will be the same for all students and some sections will consist of different groups of items.

What types of questions are on the assessments?

Students respond to two types of questions: multiple-choice and open-ended. In a multiple-choice question, the correct answer is chosen from the four presented options, while open-ended questions require students to compose their responses.

How are the written responses to open-ended items scored?

The written responses for reading and mathematics open-ended items are scored by evaluators trained in applying a pre-determined scoring system. In reading and mathematics, scores are based on content only. Spelling and punctuation are not included as part of the scoring process.

Who decided what the assessments should measure?

Groups of educators from all levels of education in Pennsylvania chose the areas of knowledge on which the assessments are based. The groups included teachers, supervisors, curriculum directors, and college specialists. These same groups also reviewed, edited, and approved items that were written to align with Pennsylvania's assessment anchors.

Who administers the assessments?

Each school chooses the person(s) who will administer the assessments. In most cases, these are the students' teachers, who are often helped by the principal or a guidance counselor.

What is assessed in reading?

The reading assessment addresses two major reporting categories that encompass the reading process. Students read a number of passages from both fictional and nonfictional genres and respond to questions about these passages. By answering these questions, students indicate both their comprehension and reading skills and their analysis and interpretation of fictional and nonfictional text.

What is assessed in mathematics?

The mathematics assessment addresses five major reporting categories. The proportion of items devoted to each reporting category varies by grade level. As a part of the assessment of Reporting Category A, *Numbers and Operations*, students respond to a special section of items in which the use of a calculator is not permitted. Open-ended items within the assessment require the students to show all of their mathematical work (calculations, graphs, drawings, etc.) and to explain in writing how they solved the problems.

How are the results reported?

Reports for reading and mathematics are sent to the school districts for distribution to parents, teachers, and guidance counselors and/or principals. The state does not receive any reports with individual names included.

Results are reported by school for curricular and planning purposes. School districts publish the PSSA testing results for each school. The state also releases school-by-school assessment data.

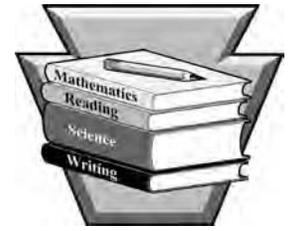
May parents see the assessments?

Parents and guardians may review the assessments by making arrangements with the school assessment coordinator once the assessments arrive at the school. No copies of the assessments or notes about items are permitted to leave the school and confidentiality agreements must be signed.

If, after reviewing the assessments, parents do not want their child to participate in the mathematics or reading assessments due to a conflict with their religious beliefs, they may write a note to the school district superintendent prior to the beginning of the assessments to excuse their child from the assessments.

Frequently
Asked
Questions

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)
Science Assessment
Grades 4, 8, and 11—April/May 2009
Information for Parents or Guardians



Which schools participate?

All school districts participate in the science assessment. Nonpublic and private schools may also participate on a voluntary basis.

Which students take the assessment?

All students in grades 4, 8, and 11 are included in the assessment (except for a few students who meet specific criteria).

When does the assessment occur?

The assessment is scheduled by the school district to take place during the testing window of April 27 through May 8, 2009.

How long does the assessment take?

The entire science assessment takes approximately two to four hours to complete. Your school district should inform you about the assessment schedule.

What does the assessment include?

Students in grades 4 and 8 complete two sections of items for the science assessment; grade 11 students complete three sections. Some items will be the same for all students and some portions of the assessment will consist of different groups of items.

Who administers the assessment?

Each school chooses the person(s) who will administer the assessment. In most cases, these are the students' teachers, who are often helped by the principal or a guidance counselor.

What types of questions are on the assessment?

Students respond to two types of questions: multiple-choice and open-ended. In a multiple-choice question, the correct answer is chosen from the four presented options, while open-ended questions require students to compose their responses. At grades 8 and 11, the science assessment also includes science scenarios.

What is a science scenario?

A science scenario contains text, graphics, charts, and/or tables, and uses these elements to describe the results of a class project, an experiment, or other similar research. Students use the information found in a science scenario to answer both multiple-choice and open-ended questions. Science scenarios are used at grade 8 and grade 11 only.

How are the written responses to open-ended items scored?

The written responses for science open-ended items are scored by evaluators trained in applying a pre-determined scoring system. In science, scores are based on content only. Spelling and punctuation are not included as part of the scoring process.

Who decided what the assessments should measure?

Groups of educators from all levels of education in Pennsylvania chose the areas of knowledge on which the assessment is based. The groups included teachers, supervisors, curriculum directors, and college specialists. These educators also reviewed, edited, and approved items that were written to align with Pennsylvania's assessment anchors.

What is assessed in science?

The science assessment addresses the four major reporting categories: The Nature of Science, Biological Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Earth and Space Sciences. The proportion of items devoted to each reporting category varies within a grade level. Each reporting category includes certain Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content.

How are the results reported?

Reports for science are sent to the school districts for distribution to parents, teachers, and guidance counselors and/or principals. The state does not receive any reports with individual names included.

Results are reported by school for curricular and planning purposes. School districts publish the PSSA testing results for each school. The state also releases school-by-school assessment data.

May parents see the assessment?

Parents and guardians may review the assessment by making arrangements with the school assessment coordinator once the assessment arrives at the school. No copies of the assessment or notes about items are permitted to leave the school and confidentiality agreements must be signed.

If, after reviewing the assessment, parents do not want their child to participate in the science assessment due to a conflict with their religious beliefs, they may write a note to the school district superintendent prior to the beginning of the assessment to excuse their child from the assessment.

Appendix B

PSSA General Description of Scoring Guidelines

**Reading, Mathematics, Science
and**

**Writing – Narrative
Writing – Informational
Writing – Persuasive
Writing – Conventions**

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PSSA

Pennsylvania Reading Assessment General Description of Scoring Guidelines

3 Points

- The response provides a complete answer to the task, e.g., a statement that offers a correct answer as well as text-based support.
- The response provides specific, appropriate and accurate details (e.g., naming, describing, explaining, or comparing) or examples.

2 Points

- The response provides a partial answer to the task, e.g., indicates some awareness of the task and at least one text-based detail.
- The response attempts to provide sufficient, appropriate details (e.g., naming, describing, explaining, or comparing) or examples; may contain minor inaccuracies.

1 Point

- The response provides an incomplete answer to the task, e.g., indicating either a misunderstanding of the task or no text-based details.
- The response provides insufficient or inappropriate details or examples that have a major effect on accuracy.
- The response consists entirely of relevant copied text.

0 Points

- The response provides insufficient material for scoring.
- The response is inaccurate in all aspects.

Categories within zero reported separately:

BLK (blank)...No response or written refusal to respond or too brief to determine response
OT Off task/topic
LOE Response in a language other than English
IL Illegible

This document is available on the PDE website.

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PSSA

General Description of Mathematics Scoring Guidelines

- 4 – The response demonstrates a *thorough* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.**

The response provides correct answer(s) with clear and complete mathematical procedures shown and a correct explanation, as required by the task. Response may contain a minor “blemish” (e.g., missing \$) or omission in work or explanation that does not detract from demonstrating a *thorough* understanding.

- 3 – The response demonstrates a *general* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.**

The response and explanation (as required by the task) are mostly complete and correct. The response may have minor errors or omissions that do not detract from demonstrating a *general* understanding.

- 2 – The response demonstrates a *partial* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.**

The response is somewhat correct with *partial* understanding of the required mathematical concepts and/or procedures demonstrated and/or explained. The response may contain some work that is incomplete or unclear.

- 1 – The response demonstrates a *minimal* understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task.**

- 0 – The response has no correct answer and *insufficient* evidence to demonstrate any understanding of the mathematical concepts and procedures required by the task for that grade level.**

Response may show only information copied from the question.

Special Categories within zero reported separately:

BLK (blank)..... Blank, entirely erased, or written refusal to respond

OT Off task

IL Illegible

LOE Response in a language other than English

This document is available on the PDE website.

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PSSA

DESCRIPTION OF SCORING GUIDELINES FOR 4-POINT OPEN-ENDED ITEMS:

General Description of Science Scoring Guidelines:

- 4 – The response demonstrates a *thorough* understanding of the scientific content, concepts, and procedures required by the task/s.**

The response provides a clear, complete, and correct response as required by the task/s. Response may contain a minor blemish (e.g., misspelled words) or omission in work or explanation that does not detract from demonstrating a thorough understanding.

- 3 – The response demonstrates a general understanding of the scientific content, concepts, and procedures required by the task/s.**

The responses, as required by the task, are mostly complete and correct. The response may have minor errors or omissions that do not detract from demonstrating a general understanding.

- 2 – The response demonstrates a partial understanding of the scientific content, concepts, and procedures required by the task/s.**

The response is somewhat correct with partial understanding of the required scientific content, concepts, and/or procedures demonstrated and/or explained. The response may contain some work that is incomplete or unclear.

- 1 – The response demonstrates a *minimal* understanding of the scientific content, concepts, and procedures as required by the task/s.**

- 0 – The response provides insufficient evidence to demonstrate any understanding of the scientific content, concepts, and procedures as required by the task/s for that grade level.**

Response may show only information copied or rephrased from the question or insufficient correct information to receive a score of 1.

Special Categories within zero reported separately:

BLK – Blank, entirely erased or written refusal to respond

OT – Off Task

IL – Illegible

LOE – Response in a language other than English

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PSSA

DESCRIPTION OF SCORING GUIDELINES FOR 2-POINT OPEN-ENDED ITEMS:

General Description of Science Scoring Guidelines:

- 2 – The response demonstrates a *thorough* understanding of the scientific content, concepts, and procedures required by the task/s.**

The response provides a clear, complete, and correct response as required by the task/s. Response may contain a minor blemish (e.g., misspelled words) or omission in work or explanation that does not detract from demonstrating a thorough understanding.

- 1 – The response demonstrates a *partial* understanding of the scientific content, concepts, and procedures required by the task/s.**

The response is somewhat correct with partial understanding of the required scientific content, concepts, and/or procedures demonstrated and/or explained. The response may contain some work that is incomplete or unclear.

- 0 – The response provides *insufficient* evidence to demonstrate any understanding of the scientific content, concepts, and procedures as required by the task/s for that grade level.**

Response may show only information copied or rephrased from the question or insufficient correct information to receive a score of 1.

Special Categories within zero reported separately:

BLK – Blank, entirely erased or written refusal to respond

OT – Off Task

IL – Illegible

LOE – Response in a language other than English

PSSA NARRATIVE SCORING GUIDELINE

4	FOCUS	Sharp, distinct controlling point or theme with evident awareness of the narrative.
	CONTENT DEVELOPMENT	Strong story line with illustrative details that addresses a complex idea or examines a complex experience. Thoroughly elaborated narrative sequence that employs narrative elements as appropriate.
	ORGANIZATION	Skillful narrative pattern with clear and consistent sequencing of events, employing a beginning, a middle, and an end. Minor interruptions to the sequence may occur.
	STYLE	Precise control of language, literary devices, and sentence structures that creates a consistent and effective point of view and tone.

3	FOCUS	Clear controlling point or theme with general awareness of the narrative.
	CONTENT DEVELOPMENT	Story line with details that addresses an idea or examines an experience. Sufficiently elaborated narrative sequence that employs narrative elements as appropriate.
	ORGANIZATION	Narrative pattern with generally consistent sequencing of events, employing a beginning, a middle, and an end. Interruptions to the sequence may occur.
	STYLE	Appropriate control of language, literary devices, and sentence structures that creates a consistent point of view and tone.

2	FOCUS	Vague evidence of a controlling point or theme with inconsistent awareness of the narrative.
	CONTENT DEVELOPMENT	Inconsistent story line that inadequately addresses an idea or examines an experience. Insufficiently elaborated narrative sequence that may employ narrative elements.
	ORGANIZATION	Narrative pattern with generally inconsistent sequencing of events that may employ a beginning, a middle, and an end. Interruptions to the sequence may interfere with meaning.
	STYLE	Limited control of language and sentence structures that creates interference with point of view and tone.

1	FOCUS	Little or no evidence of a controlling point or theme with minimal awareness of the narrative.
	CONTENT DEVELOPMENT	Insufficient story line that minimally addresses an idea or examines an experience. Unelaborated narrative that may employ narrative elements.
	ORGANIZATION	Narrative pattern with little or no sequencing of events. Interruptions to the sequence interfere with meaning.
	STYLE	Minimal control of language and sentence structures that creates an inconsistent point of view and tone.

PSSA INFORMATIONAL SCORING GUIDELINE

4	FOCUS	Sharp, distinct controlling point made about a single topic with evident awareness of task and audience.
	CONTENT DEVELOPMENT	Substantial, relevant, and illustrative content that demonstrates a clear understanding of the purpose. Thorough elaboration with effectively presented information consistently supported with well-chosen details.
	ORGANIZATION	Effective organizational strategies and structures, such as logical order and transitions, which develop a controlling idea.
	STYLE	Precise control of language, stylistic techniques, and sentence structures that creates a consistent and effective tone.

3	FOCUS	Clear controlling point made about a single topic with general awareness of task and audience.
	CONTENT DEVELOPMENT	Adequate, specific, and/or illustrative content that demonstrates an understanding of the purpose. Sufficient elaboration with clearly presented information supported with well-chosen details.
	ORGANIZATION	Organizational strategies and structures, such as logical order and transitions, which develop a controlling idea.
	STYLE	Appropriate control of language, stylistic techniques, and sentence structures that creates a consistent tone.

2	FOCUS	Vague evidence of a controlling point made about a single topic with an inconsistent awareness of task and audience.
	CONTENT DEVELOPMENT	Inadequate, vague content that demonstrates a weak understanding of the purpose. Underdeveloped and/or repetitive elaboration with inconsistently supported information. May be an extended list.
	ORGANIZATION	Inconsistent organizational strategies and structures, such as logical order and transitions, which ineffectively develop a controlling idea.
	STYLE	Limited control of language and sentence structures that creates interference with tone.

1	FOCUS	Little or no evidence of a controlling point made about a single topic with a minimal awareness of task and audience.
	CONTENT DEVELOPMENT	Minimal evidence of content that demonstrates a lack of understanding of the purpose. Superficial, undeveloped writing with little or no support. May be a bare list.
	ORGANIZATION	Little or no evidence of organizational strategies and structures, such as logical order and transitions, which inadequately develop a controlling idea.
	STYLE	Minimal control of language and sentence structures that creates an inconsistent tone.

PSSA PERSUASIVE SCORING GUIDELINE

4

FOCUS	Sharp, distinct controlling point presented as a position and made convincing through a clear, thoughtful, and substantiated argument with evident awareness of task and audience.
CONTENT DEVELOPMENT	Substantial, relevant, and illustrative content that demonstrates a clear understanding of the purpose. Thoroughly elaborated argument that includes a clear position consistently supported with precise and relevant evidence. Rhetorical (persuasive) strategies are evident.
ORGANIZATION	Effective organizational strategies and structures, such as logical order and transitions, to develop a position supported with a purposeful presentation of content.
STYLE	Precise control of language, stylistic techniques, and sentence structures that creates a consistent and effective tone.

3

FOCUS	Clear controlling point presented as a position and made convincing through a credible and substantiated argument with general awareness of task and audience.
CONTENT DEVELOPMENT	Adequate, specific and/or illustrative content that demonstrates an understanding of the purpose. Sufficiently elaborated argument that includes a clear position supported with some relevant evidence. Rhetorical (persuasive) strategies may be evident.
ORGANIZATION	Organizational strategies and structures, such as logical order and transitions, to develop a position supported with sufficient presentation of content.
STYLE	Appropriate control of language, stylistic techniques, and sentence structures that creates a consistent tone.

2

FOCUS	Vague evidence of a controlling point presented as a position that may lack a credible and/or substantiated argument with an inconsistent awareness of task and audience.
CONTENT DEVELOPMENT	Inadequate, vague content that demonstrates a weak understanding of the purpose. Insufficiently elaborated argument that includes an underdeveloped position supported with little evidence.
ORGANIZATION	Inconsistent organizational strategies and structures, such as logical order and transitions, to develop a position with inadequate presentation of content.
STYLE	Limited control of language and sentence structures that creates interference with tone.

1

FOCUS	Little or no evidence of a controlling point presented as a position that lacks a credible and/or substantiated argument with minimal awareness of task and audience.
CONTENT DEVELOPMENT	Minimal evidence of content that demonstrates a lack of understanding of the purpose. Unelaborated argument that includes an undeveloped position supported with minimal or no evidence.
ORGANIZATION	Little or no evidence of organizational strategies and structures, such as logical order and transitions, to develop a position with insufficient presentation of content.
STYLE	Minimal control of language and sentence structures that creates an inconsistent tone.

PSSA CONVENTIONS SCORING GUIDELINE

4

Thorough control of sentence formation.

Few errors, if any, are present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation, but the errors that are present do not interfere with meaning.

3

Adequate control of sentence formation.

Some errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation, but few, if any, of the errors that are present may interfere with meaning.

2

Limited and/or inconsistent control of sentence formation. Some sentences may be awkward or fragmented.

Many errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation, and some of those errors may interfere with meaning.

1

Minimal control of sentence formation. Many sentences are awkward and fragmented.

Many errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation, and many of those errors may interfere with meaning.

Appendix C

Additional Materials Request Forms

**2009 Grades 5, 8, and 11 Writing PSSA
Additional Materials Request Form
Test Dates: February 9 – 20, 2009**

Complete Section 1 and indicate the quantity of additional materials needed in Section 2.

SECTION 1

Person Requesting: _____ Today's Date: _____
 Phone: _____ Date Needed: _____
 Fax: _____
 Email: _____
 District Code (AUN): _____ District Name: _____
 School Code (AUN): _____ School Name: _____
 Shipping Address: _____

SECTION 2

Quantity:	Description
_____	Grade 5 Writing Booklets
_____	Grade 8 Writing Booklets
_____	Grade 11 Writing Booklets
_____	Grade 5 <i>Directions for Administration Manual</i>
_____	Grade 8 <i>Directions for Administration Manual</i>
_____	Grade 11 <i>Directions for Administration Manual</i>
_____	<i>Supplementary Information for Assessment Coordinators and Administrators</i>
_____	Materials Accountability Form
_____	Test Security Affidavit
_____	DRC Return Shipment Labels
_____	UPS RS (Return Service) Labels
_____	District/School Labels
_____	Do Not Score Labels

➤ **If you need additional Braille or large-print booklets, please call a DRC Pennsylvania Customer Service Representative at 1-800-451-7849.**

FAX this form to DRC by February 3, 2009, to ensure delivery prior to the testing window.
1-763-268-3008 or 1-763-268-3031

2009 Grades 3 – 8 & 11 Reading and Mathematics PSSA

Additional Materials Request Form

Test Dates: March 16 – 27, 2009

Complete Section 1 and indicate the quantity of additional materials needed in Section 2.

SECTION 1

Person Requesting: _____ Today's Date: _____

Phone: _____ Date Needed: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

District Code (AUN): _____ District Name: _____

School Code (AUN): _____ School Name: _____

Shipping Address: _____

SECTION 2

Quantity: Description:

- _____ Grade 3 Test/Answer Booklets
- _____ Grade 4 Test and Answer Booklets
- _____ Grade 5 Test and Answer Booklets
- _____ Grade 6 Test and Answer Booklets
- _____ Grade 7 Test and Answer Booklets
- _____ Grade 8 Test and Answer Booklets
- _____ Grade 11 Test and Answer Booklets
- _____ Grade 3 *Directions for Administration Manual*
- _____ Grade 4 *Directions for Administration Manual*
- _____ Grade 5 *Directions for Administration Manual*
- _____ Grade 6 *Directions for Administration Manual*
- _____ Grade 7 *Directions for Administration Manual*
- _____ Grade 8 *Directions for Administration Manual*
- _____ Grade 11 *Directions for Administration Manual*
- _____ *Supplementary Information for Assessment Coordinators and Administrators*
- _____ Materials Accountability Form
- _____ Test Security Affidavit
- _____ District/School Labels
- _____ Do Not Score Labels
- _____ DRC Return Shipment Labels for Answer Booklets
- _____ DRC Return Shipment Labels for Test Booklets and Unopened Packages
- _____ UPS RS (Return Service) Labels
- _____ Rulers (packs of 25) - indicate amount/grade: 3rd _____ 4th _____ 5th _____ 6th _____
- _____ Red Stickers (sheets of 32)

Quantity: Spanish-translation Materials:

- _____ Grade 3 Spanish Test/Answer Booklets
- _____ Grade 4 Spanish Test and Answer Booklets
- _____ Grade 5 Spanish Test and Answer Booklets
- _____ Grade 6 Spanish Test and Answer Booklets
- _____ Grade 7 Spanish Test and Answer Booklets
- _____ Grade 8 Spanish Test and Answer Booklets
- _____ Grade 11 Spanish Test and Answer Booklets
- _____ Gr. 3 *Spanish Directions for Administration Manual*
- _____ Gr. 4 *Spanish Directions for Administration Manual*
- _____ Gr. 5 *Spanish Directions for Administration Manual*
- _____ Gr. 6 *Spanish Directions for Administration Manual*
- _____ Gr. 7 *Spanish Directions for Administration Manual*
- _____ Gr. 8 *Spanish Directions for Administration Manual*
- _____ Gr. 11 *Spanish Directions for Administration Manual*

➤ If you need additional Braille or large-print booklets, please call a DRC Pennsylvania Customer Service Representative at 1-800-451-7849.

FAX this form to DRC by March 10, 2009, to ensure delivery prior to the testing window.

1-763-268-3008 or 1-763-268-3031

2009 Grades 4, 8, and 11 Science PSSA

Additional Materials Request Form Test Dates: April 27, 2009 to May 8, 2009

Complete Section 1 and indicate the quantity of additional materials needed in Section 2.

SECTION 1

Person Requesting: _____ Today's Date: _____
Phone: _____ Date Needed: _____
Fax: _____
Email: _____
District Code (AUN): _____ District Name: _____
School Code (AUN): _____ School Name: _____
Shipping Address: _____

SECTION 2

Quantity: Description:	Quantity: Spanish-translation Materials:
_____ Grade 4 Test and Answer Booklets	_____ Grade 4 Spanish Test and Answer Booklets
_____ Grade 8 Test and Answer Booklets	_____ Grade 8 Spanish Test and Answer Booklets
_____ Grade 11 Test/Answer Booklets	_____ Grade 11 Spanish Test/Answer Booklets
_____ Grade 4 <i>Directions for Administration Manual</i>	_____ Gr. 4 <i>Spanish Directions for Administration Manual</i>
_____ Grade 8 <i>Directions for Administration Manual</i>	_____ Gr. 8 <i>Spanish Directions for Administration Manual</i>
_____ Grade 11 <i>Directions for Administration Manual</i>	_____ Gr. 11 <i>Spanish Directions for Administration Manual</i>
_____ <i>Supplementary Information for Assessment Coordinators and Administrators</i>	
_____ Materials Accountability Form	
_____ Test Security Affidavit	
_____ District/School Labels	
_____ Do Not Score Labels	
_____ DRC Return Shipment Labels for Answer Booklets	
_____ DRC Return Shipment Labels for Test Booklets and Unopened Packages	
_____ UPS RS (Return Shipment) Labels	

➤ **If you need additional Braille or large-print booklets, please call a DRC Pennsylvania Customer Service Representative at 1-800-451-7849.**

FAX this form to DRC by April 21, 2009, to ensure delivery prior to the testing window.
1-763-268-3008 or 1-763-268-3031

Appendix D

Index

A	
Absent Without Make-Up.....	15
Accommodations	5, 8, 15
<i>Accommodations Guidelines</i>	15
Assistive Devices	15
Extended Time	6, 20
Modified Test Format.....	15
Presentation	15
Response	15
Setting	15
Timing.....	15
Additional Materials Request	5, 22, 26, 31
Additional Materials Request Form	48, 49, 50, 51
Administration Manuals	2, 4, 17
Assessment Section Times.....	22, 27, 32
Assigning Booklets.....	18
Attributions.....	4, 7, 11
Audio Version.....	17

B	
Barcode Labels	10, 22, 26, 31
Blank Barcodes	10
District/School Labels	10, 11, 12, 22, 26, 31
Do Not Score Labels	10, 11, 12, 22, 26, 31
General Instructions	11
Student Precode Labels	10, 11, 12, 22, 26, 31
Birth Date Grid.....	12, 15
Braille/Large Print	2, 8, 15, 17, 22, 26, 31

C	
Calculators.....	2, 5, 19, 28
Cell Phones	5
Classroom Preparation.....	19
Computer Files	17
Court/Agency Placed Students	10, 13

D	
Damaged/Defective Booklet.....	12, 20
Demographics.....	12
Completing the Answer Booklet	12
Court/Agency Placed Students	13
Economically Disadvantaged Students.....	14
ELL Enrollment Status.....	14
Enrollment Date	12, 13
Ethnicity	12
Exited IEP	13
Gender.....	12
Home-Schooled Students	14
IEP Students (Not Gifted)	13
Migrant Education.....	14
Title I.....	13
Title III Status.....	14
Destroyed Precode Label	11
Destroying Secure Accommodated Materials.....	2, 17
Dictionaries.....	6
Directions for Administration Manual	2, 4, 5, 17
Distribution of Materials School Level.....	18
District Administrative Materials.....	17, 18
District of Residence.....	4, 13
District/School Labels.....	10, 11, 12, 22, 26, 31
Do Not Score Labels.....	10, 11, 12, 20, 22, 26, 31

E	
Economically Disadvantaged Students	14
ELL Enrollment Status.....	10, 14
ELL Students.....	10, 14
Enrollment Date	7, 12, 13
Enrollment During the Testing Window	7
Ethnicity	12
Exited IEP	13
Extended Absence	9
Extended Time	6, 20

F	
Form Designation.....	18, 26, 28, 31, 32
Foster Care	10, 13

G	
Gender.....	12
Gifted Students.....	13
Grade Advancement - 10th Grade to 12th Grade	7

H	
Handbook for Assessment Coordinators	2, 17
Home-Schooled Students	14

I	
IEP Students (Not Gifted)	10, 13, 20
Inventory	4, 22, 26, 31

L	
Large Print.....	2, 8, 15, 17, 22, 26, 31
Local Student ID Grid.....	16

M	
Make-Up Sessions.....	6, 9, 22, 26, 31
Material Discrepancies.....	18
Materials Accountability Form.....	12, 18, 21, 24, 28, 33
Materials Receipt Notice.....	18
Mathematics Scoring Guideline	41
Medical Emergency.....	9
Migrant Education.....	14
Modified Test Format.....	15

N	
No. 2 Pencil.....	6, 19
Non-Assessed Students	8, 9, 12, 16
Court/Agency Placed Students.....	10, 13
ELL Students	10, 14
Extended Absence.....	9
Medical Emergency	9
Other	10
Parental Request for Exclusion	9
PASA	2, 7, 8
Refusal to Test	10

O

Optional Data Field.....	16
Orientation.....	5
Overnight Extensions.....	20

P

Packaging Materials for Return.....	20, 21, 23, 28, 32
Packing List.....	17
Parent/Guardian Flyer.....	5, 8, 19, 35
Parental Request for Exclusion.....	9
Parental Review of the Assessment.....	9
Participation.....	7
PASA.....	2, 7, 8
PAsecureID.....	10, 12, 15
Personal Data Assistants.....	6
PIMS.....	10, 11
Precode Labels.....	10, 11, 12, 22, 26, 31
Preparing the Classroom.....	19
Presentation Accommodations.....	15
Procedures for Completing Answer Booklets.....	11

R

Range Sheets.....	18
Reading Scoring Guideline.....	40
Red Stickers.....	26, 28
Refusal to Test.....	10
Response Accommodations.....	15
Return Shipment Labels.....	18, 21
Returning Materials	
Returning to District Assessment Coordinator.....	2, 23, 28, 32
Shipping to DRC.....	2, 21
Returning Secure Accommodated Materials.....	2, 17
Rough Drafts.....	21, 23, 28, 33
Rulers.....	26, 28

S

Scheduling the Assessment.....	6, 22, 26, 31
Extended Time.....	6, 20
Make-Up Sessions.....	6, 22, 26, 31
Test Section Information.....	22, 27, 32
Test Section Times.....	22, 27, 32
Testing Dates.....	4
School Box Range Sheet.....	17, 18
School of Residence.....	4, 12, 13
Science Scoring Guideline.....	42, 43
Score Attributions.....	4, 7, 11
Scoring Guidelines.....	2, 6, 19, 39
Mathematics.....	41
Reading.....	40
Science.....	42, 43
Writing.....	44, 45, 46, 47
Scratch Paper.....	6, 19, 21, 23, 28, 33
Section Times.....	22, 27, 32
Secure Destruction.....	2, 17, 21, 24, 28, 33
Secure Storage.....	17, 22, 26, 31

Security Barcodes.....	18, 28, 32
Security Checklist.....	18
Security Ranges.....	18
Separate Handwritten Pages.....	15
Shipment I Materials.....	17
Shipment II Materials.....	18, 22, 26, 31
Shrink-Wrapped Packs.....	18, 21, 22, 24, 26, 28, 31, 33
Soiled Booklet.....	12, 20
Spanish Translation.....	26, 31
Spell or Grammar-Checkers.....	6
Student Enrollment.....	7, 12, 13
Student Participation.....	9
Student Precode Labels.....	10, 11, 12, 22, 26, 31
Student Withdrawal.....	7, 12
Students with Special Needs.....	5, 8, 20
Supplemental Data Field.....	16
Supplementary Information for Assessment Coordinators and Administrators.....	18

T

Test Security.....	16
Destroying Secure Accommodated Materials.....	17
Returning Secure Accommodated Materials.....	17
Secure Storage.....	17, 22, 26, 31
Test Security Affidavit.....	17, 18, 21, 24, 28, 33
Test Security Affidavit.....	17, 18, 21, 24, 28, 33
Testing Dates.....	4
Testing Timeline.....	4
Thesauri.....	6
Time to Complete the Assessment.....	22, 27, 32
Timing Accommodations.....	6, 15
Title I.....	13
Title III Status.....	14
Torn, Soiled or Defective Booklet.....	12, 20
Transcribing Answer Booklets.....	8, 12, 15, 20, 21, 23, 28, 33
Transferred Student.....	7, 12, 15
Typewritten Pages.....	15

U

Unfinished Sections.....	20
Unopened Packs.....	21, 28, 33
UPS Phone Number.....	21
UPS RS Label.....	18, 21
UPS Tracking Numbers.....	21

V

Visual Impairment.....	2, 8, 15, 17
------------------------	--------------

W

Withdrawn Student.....	7, 12
Writing Scoring Guidelines.....	44, 45, 46, 47
Conventions.....	47
Informational.....	45
Narrative.....	44
Persuasive.....	46

2008-2009
HANDBOOK FOR ASSESSMENT COORDINATORS



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