

High School Assessments Q & A

PSAT:

- Q. When will the school be notified who is entitled to accommodations for the October PSAT and who will be notified?**
- A. About five weeks prior to the PSAT/NMSQT test dates, your school will receive a Nonstandard Administration Report (NAR) form, pre-filled with all the approved students. This list includes those students who indicated on page 1 of the *Student Eligibility Form*, that they may be taking the PSAT/NMSQT. When students are approved for accommodations, both the student/parent (or guardian) and the school official representative (most often the school's SSD Coordinator) are sent Eligibility Letters. These letters include the student's SSD Eligibility Code, always used when communicating with the College Board regarding the student. Periodically, rosters will be sent to the school's official representative indicating those students approved for accommodations on College Board tests, and their specific accommodations.
- Q. If a student was approved for testing accommodations last year, is it necessary to submit new paperwork or can we just assign the student to a room with the same accommodations as in the past?**
- A. As long as the school verifies annually for the College Board that the student continues to receive the same accommodations, the student will not need to repeat the eligibility process. If, however, the student transfers to a new school, a new Student Eligibility Form must be sent to the College Board, unless the student transfers within the same school district, in which case the receiving school must verify that the student continues to receive the same accommodations.
- Q. Must schools supply calculators to students taking the PSATs, or can the school supply calculators to some students and not to others?**
- A. Schools are encouraged to supply calculators to all students taking the PSAT and students are strongly encouraged to take a calculator to the PSAT/NMSQT, whether or not they plan to use it. Students will not be allowed to share calculators with other students. College Board provides a list of approved calculators at <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/about/calculator.html>
- Q. All 10th and 11th graders must take the PSAT/NMSQT assessment on 10/15; does this mean by the number of years they have been in high school or by credit accumulations?**
- A. Student's grade is determined by his/her ATS Grade Code.

Q. What should a school do if a student refuses a testing accommodation, even though he/she is entitled to it?

A. If a student refuses an entitled accommodation, school staff should explain to the student the reasons for the testing modification and consult with the parent/guardian. If a student continues to refuse, school officials must document the incident and administer the test without the accommodation.

Q. Is it the student's responsibility or the school's responsibility to request accommodations on the PSAT?

A. If a student has a disability that necessitates testing accommodations, has documentation on file at the school that supports the need for requested accommodations, and the requested accommodations are already in place for school-based tests, the school's SSD Coordinator in collaboration with the student may request accommodations on the PSAT.

Q. Is it possible to run a shortened day in the morning, and then have the testing afterward (or vice versa) to accommodate the large number of students at schools?

A. As per the College Board Supervisor's Manual, "All students tested on site must take the test at the same time in the morning".

As you prepare your PSAT schedule, keep in mind that scheduling flexibility is permitted as long as the requirements of Commissioners' Regulation 175.5 (excerpt below) have been met:

"The daily sessions for pupils in grades 7 through 12 shall be a minimum of five and one-half hours including time spent by students in actual instructional or supervised study activities, exclusive of time allowed for lunch, and including hourly units of time spent by all teachers and other instructional staff within a grade level or school building depending upon staff development activities relating to implementation of new high learning standards and assessments as authorized by section 3604(8) of the Education Law."

Q. Are ELLs eligible for extended time? (PSAT)

A. Only students with a documented disability may be eligible for accommodations on College Board tests. Therefore, only ELLs with a documented disability are eligible for accommodations on the PSAT.

Q. Can you provide suggestions as to what schools have done with their 9th and 12th graders during the PSAT exam?

A. The following are two examples from individual high schools.

School ABC : As part of a Grant Partnership, 12th grade students will be at a local College for a full day of activities which will include information on College Advising, College Searches, Financial Aid Advising and a Tour of the College Campus,

School XYZ : 9th graders will have a full day of instruction. on the 4th floor. Students taking the PSATs will occupy the 2nd and 3rd floors. 9th and 12th graders will receive part of the mandated instruction in HIV/AIDS prevention from 8:30-11:30. The 9th and 12th grade will take a practice PSAT or SAT.

Additional suggestions will be attached to the PSAT Assessment Memo which will be posted on the NYC Assessment website.

General Test Administration Questions:

Q. On page 11 of the Test Administration Handbook, it states that “substitute teachers and paraprofessionals may not be assigned as the main classroom proctor.” You must make a distinction between substitute teachers & paraprofessionals. Many substitutes are permanently certified, and highly capable of proctoring. Furthermore, they are legally permitted to be in a classroom alone with students.

A. Substitute teachers who are trained and experienced in administering State examinations may be used as classroom proctors. Paraprofessionals may never be the sole classroom proctor. A licensed pedagogue must be in the room.

Q. NYSESLAT: Should they be kept in a vault?

A. The NYSESLAT Exam is a secure test and should be kept in a secure location.

Q. Will schools receive the Test Administration Handbook for all staff? Should every teacher get a copy of the handbook, or only those on the testing committee?

A. The Test Administration Handbook should be distributed to all personnel involved in the testing program prior to the administration of standardized exams and/or a copy can be kept in the Staff Room for staff to review. This handbook should be discussed with appropriate staff members at faculty conferences, department meetings, and on staff development days.

Q. Will there be a component retesting (Math & English) schedule?

A. SED will notify schools of the component retesting schedule prior to the May administration of component retests.

Q. If a student does not use the communications feature of a cell phone, but rather just looks at the time (for example), should the exam be invalidated?

A. Cell phones should not be on or within reach of students during the administration of a State or City assessment. The student should be directed to put the device away immediately and be allowed to complete the examination. The incident must be reported to the school principal who will determine whether it was used as a communication device.

Q. For how many years must student exams be kept?

A. Student exams must be kept in the school for one year. Used and unused test materials will be collected by courier at the end of the school year.

Q. Is there a “Letters to Parents” template on the Assessment website announcing/ alerting upcoming exams?

A. The link below provides information regarding upcoming exams:
http://schools.nyc.gov/daa/test_info/default.asp

Q. What are the different ways ELLs can exit the program?

A. Students are entitled to receive services until they achieve “Proficient” on the NYSESLAT Exam.

REGENTS:

Q. What materials should the testing coordinators provide the teachers who are grading the tests?

A. In the interest of uniform rating standards, all teachers involved in rating State examinations should be thoroughly familiar with the rating instructions provided by SED. Accompanying each examination is a scoring key with directions for rating the multiple-choice and short answer questions and, if applicable, guidelines for rating the essay parts of the examination. Teachers must use red ink or red pencil when rating any State examination papers.

Q. What is the protocol for reporting grades?

A. Schools report grades by entering student grades into HSST.

Q How are Regents blank essay booklets ordered for high schools?

A. Blank essay booklets are included in each examination shipment from SED, based on the number of examination booklets requested by schools.

Q. Can the “electronic devices” rule be included in test booklet deliveries?

A. The statement regarding the electronic device rule is included in the teacher directions and must be read to all students taking secondary level State examinations at the beginning of each test administration.

Q. If a principal is a mathematician, how can he/she serve on a team to produce new Regents?

A. Notify Thomas J. Schoeck, Ed.D, Bureau Chief of Elementary and Secondary Testing Programs @ (518)474-8220.

Q What part of the Regents exam has to be sent back to State or District office? (exam/score sheet)

A. Materials are to be returned to the (SED) in Regents boxes:

Any Regents examination, Regents competency test, occupational education proficiency examination, and second language proficiency examination answer papers indicated by the Department Review Request Form.

White answer papers and identification sheets, as indicated on the green sheet of instructions entitled “Directions for Returning Materials for the Regents Competency Test in Writing.”

All copies, used and unused, of restricted tests

All copies of braille and large-type materials

Deputy and Proctor Certificate

Examination Storage Certificate

Evaluation forms

Padlock keys (Please insert padlock keys into the envelope provided before placing them in the Regents box.)

If possible, pack all materials being returned to SED in one Regents box. Return all

Regents boxes as soon as possible after the examination period.

Answer papers rated 59 and below must be retained on file in the school for one year; do not return these answer papers to SED.

Q. Who is responsible for the return shipping of Regent's boxes? Our budget is very tight this year.

A. Each school must pay for the return shipment of its Regents boxes. The boxes may not be returned collect. All Regents boxes may be returned by United Parcel Service (UPS), which is usually the least expensive and quickest way to return them. Regardless of the method used, the school must call the carrier, make the necessary arrangements, and pay for the return shipment. The Department will refuse to accept delivery of any Regents boxes that are returned collect.

Q. In what link can I get requirements & eligibility for special Regents and RCTs?

A. The link for NYSED high school information is:
<http://emsc32.nysed.gov/osa/hsgen.html>