



Joel I. Klein
Chancellor

DATE: September 22, 2008

TO: PRINCIPALS OF ALL SCHOOLS WITH GRADES 10 AND 11

FROM: Grace Pepe, Director of Assessment Operations *GP*
Office of Accountability (OA)

SUBJECT: PSAT/NMQST CITYWIDE ADMINISTRATION

OVERVIEW

This year will be the third citywide administration of the PSAT/NMSQ (Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test) for all Grade 10 and 11 students. The PSAT/NMSQT assesses critical reading, mathematics, and writing skills that are important for success in college.

The PSAT/NMSQT encourages students to start planning for life after high school by either jump-starting their college search process or, for some, introducing them to the concept of attending college. The PSAT/NMSQT Score Report gives students personalized feedback on their test performance, including suggestions on how to improve specific academic skills. Students who take the test also receive a personalized College Planning Package that includes an online SAT study plan and MyRoad, a web-based college and career planning tool. By taking the test, eleventh-graders may be eligible to enter National Merit Scholarship Corporation’s scholarship competitions.

Schools will receive School Summary Reports, AP Potential (a tool that uses correlations between PSAT/NMSQT scores and Advanced Placement Program Exam results to identify students who may be successful in specific AP Program courses), and the Summary of Answers and Skills (SOAS) report (an analysis of aggregate test question information and skills feedback to identify specific skill areas where their students are having difficulty).

TESTS TO BE GIVEN

PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test)

DATE	TEST	TESTING TIME	PREPARATION TIME	QUESTIONS
October 15	PSAT/NMSQT	2 hours and 20 minutes Starting no later than 9:30am	10 minutes for material distribution 30 minutes to complete pages 1-4 (Schools may use the pre-admin option)	Multiple Choice

ALL TEST BOOKLETS MUST BE PLACED IN A SECURE, LOCKED FACILITY BEFORE THE EXAM IS ADMINISTERED. ONCE THE PSAT SCORE REPORTS HAVE BEEN SENT TO SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS IN DECEMBER, THE BOOKLETS MAY BE USED FOR INSTRUCTION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Student Cheating: Do not permit students to obtain information from or give information to other students in any way during the test. If you suspect that such an attempt has occurred, warn the students that any further attempts will result in the termination of their tests. If necessary, move the students to another location. If these steps fail to end attempts to obtain or give information, notify the principal immediately and terminate the students' tests. At the conclusion of the test, all suspected cheating must be reported to the principal. If, in the judgment of the principal, a student has given aid to or obtained aid from another person during the test, the principal must follow the school's disciplinary procedure for student cheating and invalidate the student's test. In addition, the principal must report the incident to the State Education Department (SED) by fax to (518) 402-5596. Invalidated tests may not be scored.

PRE -TEST ACTIVITIES

NYC shipments of the PSAT/NMSQT are ESTIMATED to ship via UPS by October 8, 2008. It may take several days before ALL schools receive shipment. When your materials arrive schools should immediately:

Make sure that you have received all cartons. If more than one carton was used for your shipment, each will show its number and the total number of cartons sent (e.g., 1 of 3, 2 of 3, 3 of 3).

Without opening the plastic bags, check the cover of your test books to verify that they are for the Wednesday test date.

Check the answer sheets to make sure that they are for the correct test date.

Count the tests (keeping them in the plastic bags) and answer sheets to make sure you have received the correct quantity (bagged in quantities of 5 or 25).

Call the PSAT/NMSQT office (888-477-7728) immediately if there are any discrepancies (e.g., wrong test form, incorrect number of materials received).

Use the checklist on the cover of the Supervisor's Manual to verify that you have all materials. Contact the PSAT/NMSQT office (888-477-7728) if any materials are missing.

Reseal the boxes and place all test materials in locked storage in an area at your school where only you and designated assistants have access. No one is to open the bags of test booklets until distribution to room supervisors on test day.

Schools have the option of arranging for students to fill in pages 1 and 4 of the answer sheet **under supervision** during the week before the test. If you choose this option, follow the instructions on PAGE 19 of the PSAT/NMSQT Supervisor's Manual. Suggested ways to conduct the Pre-Administration option:

- Select a designated date for homeroom to be extended by 30 minutes to facilitate the Pre-Administration Option.
- Select a designated date for English 10 & 11 or Social Studies 10 & 11 to facilitate the Pre-Administration Option.

For completing the biographical side of the answer document and/or for the day of the test, students will need:

- Social Security Number (recommended but not required)
- Two #2 Pencils (REQUIRED)
- Calculator (recommended but not required)

TEST ACCOMMODATIONS

Any student with an IEP or 504 Plan that recommends test accommodations must have completed a Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) form and submitted it to the College Board with a parent signature by September 12th, 2008.

ELLs do not get test accommodations for the PSAT/NMSQT.

SCHEDULING

The PSAT/NMSQT is a two and a half hour test. The preparation of answer documents may be done prior to the test day in homeroom, or content area class. Testing must begin by 9:30am. All high schools should complete the Scheduling Plan on Attachment # 1 and submit it to their Assessment Implementation Director (AID) by September 26th, 2008. Suggestions for rescheduling the school day or classes along with best practices used by schools that have administered the PSAT/NMSQT can be found in Attachment #2. The plan must include 5 ½ hours of instructional time for all grades.

Schools that may have exceptional challenges to meeting the scheduling for this day should submit a request for exemption with an explanation to an AID by email to Rita Magier at RMagier@schools.nyc.gov.

MAKE-UP TESTING

The data sent to schools by the College Board will only be from the Wednesday, October 15th, 2008 form.

Any 11th grader who is absent on that day and would like to take the exam to qualify for National Merit, may use the Spring 07 SAT scores in lieu of the PSAT. They must inform the College Board of this.

For 10th graders this is a practice SAT so schools may use the October 15th, 2008 test for practice with their students who were absent BUT only after the score reports are released in December. Schools interested in having information AP Potential for 10th graders may administer a PSAT sometime between January and February. These details will be available after the fall test administration.

Students who are absent on October 15th may be a "walk in" for the Saturday exam at any NYC non-public school or any NYS public high school outside of NYC which may be administering the exam on Saturday. These arrangements should be done by the individual school communication with the testing site.

POST TEST ACTIVITIES

Follow the directions in the Supervisor's Manual:

Collect all answer sheets first and then collect all test booklets.

No one, except the student taking the test, is to have the opportunity to examine any test book, at any time.

Confirm that students wrote their names on their test books; store test books in a locked location until student score reports are received in December.

Confirm that all students bubbled their grade level correctly on their answer sheets to ensure accurate billing and reporting for your school.

Count the materials to make sure you have one answer sheet and one test book from every student. Do not dismiss the students until this is verified.

Call UPS to make arrangements for answer sheets to be picked up at your school for delivery to the College Board.

For questions, concerns or other information in this memo please contact:

- Assessment Implementation Director (AID)
- The PSAT/NMSQT Office:
 - 888-477-7728
 - psat@info.collegeboard.org

This memorandum is available at:
<http://schools.nyc.gov/daa/>

GP: am
Attachments

c: Marcia Lyles Bonnie Brown
 James Liebman Arthur VanderVeen

SCHEDULING PLAN FOR PSAT/NMSQT OCTOBER 15, 2008

SSO/ NEWTWORK	SCHOOL NAME	TESTING START TIME (both grades must start at the same time)	# OF 10TH & 11TH GRADERS	# OF STUDENTS WITH ACCOMMODATIONS	# OF 9TH AND 12TH GRADERS	PLAN FOR 9TH AND 12TH GRADERS

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TEST DAY RESCHEDULING IDEAS

The Department has partnered with the College Board to administer the PSAT/NMSQT to all NYC 10th and 11th grade high school students on October 15, 2008. This unprecedented event will require that high school principals prepare for a full day of instruction for 9th and 12th grade students while simultaneously preparing for the administration of the PSAT/NMSQT to 10th and 11th grade students.

Scheduling flexibility (e.g., start and end times) is allowed for all students as long as Commissioners' Regulation 175.5 (excerpt below) is adhered to. Questions those should be addressed to Grace Pepe at GPepe@schools.nyc.gov.

“The daily sessions for pupils in grades seven 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 attending upon staff development activities relating to implementation of new high learning standards and assessments as authorized by section 3604(8) of the Education Law.” (NYS Commissioners' Regulation 175.5)

How will you structure your school day to accommodate the testing?

- Plan an assembly for 9th and 12th grade students. Potential topics include thinking about college for 9th graders and planning for college for the 12th graders.
- Plan a field trip for 9th and 12th grade students.
- 12th graders can take a previous SAT
- 9th grade students may take a mock test to learn about or practice test taking strategies.

Practice questions and approaches to the test are available here:

<http://collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/prep.html>.

It is important to remember that PSAT/NMSQT testing does not require more space than is typically used in your school. Students can take the exam in any configuration that fits into your normal class program.

For Attendance purposes it may make sense to begin your day with your normal attendance period (typically 2nd or 3rd period in high schools) and use that configuration for the remainder of the 2 ½ hour testing period. Students who arrive late can be marked as such by the late room facilitator. All tests must start at the same time in a building. There is no late start testing for the PSAT/NMSQT.

How will you configure students? Homeroom? English Classes? Large Group Area?

- Homeroom (if homerooms are done alphabetically, this configuration will also make passing out score rosters easier.)
- By student advisors.

What are your plans for assigning associate supervisors and proctors?

- If a proctor fails to show up, a substitute can be sent in to cover a teacher's class so that the teacher may serve as a proctor.
- A “floating” proctor can ensure that all proctors and teachers receive necessary breaks.

What are your plans for Freshman and Seniors since these students must attend regular school hours on test day?

- 9th and 12th grade “teams” (12th grade students can share their college planning experiences with 9th grade students and give them advice based on their own personal experiences.)
- See first question.