



MEASURING STUDENT LEARNING IN 2021: What will be Different in Pennsylvania?

Since COVID-19 first led to sudden school closures in 2020, families have stepped up in unprecedented ways to support learning at home as students began learning remotely. Teachers and leaders have worked hard to put plans in place to ensure students are safe, offering students across Pennsylvania different learning models—remote, hybrid and in-person, with some school districts transitioning between them as circumstances demanded. But the unprecedented changes in learning have impacted students in many ways, from their relationships with peers and social emotional growth to academics.

This year, it is more important than ever to measure student learning to understand the impact that COVID-19 and different learning models have had on students. This is especially important for families, who need objective information about how well their child learned grade-level skills so they can better support learning at home. To measure learning, students will take the PSSA and Keystone exams this year. While state tests are only one of many ways to measure student learning, families, schools and leaders need the objective and actionable information the state test provides to identify any learning gaps to best support students and fully recover from the pandemic.

How will State Tests be Different in 2021?

Knowing that the pandemic has deeply affected students, teachers and schools, the state tests will be different than it has been in the past. The results will be used for learning purposes only in 2021. As of March 2021, the following changes have been made:

- **Districts will have the option to give the tests much later, through the summer and until September 30th, since many Pennsylvania students are still learning remotely. This will allow teachers additional time to cover content and for students to more fully return to the classroom before taking the PSSA and Keystone exams.**
- **Though many families will not have their child's state test results before summer, there are other objective measures that can be discussed with teachers to give parents a clearer picture of whether their child is on track for next year.**

For the most recent information on 2021 PSSAs and Keystone exams, visit [Education.Pa.Gov/K-12/Assessment%20and%20Accountability/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Assessment%20and%20Accountability/Pages/default.aspx)