FREE GUIDE FOR PENNSYLVANIA FAMILIES

Pennsylvania homeschool testing, in plain words

If you have a child in grade 3, 5 or 8, Pennsylvania asks for a standardized test in reading/language arts and mathematics. The results go in your portfolio for your evaluator. The law does not set a passing score, and you do not send the scores to your school district.

What is required

- **Only grades 3, 5 and 8.** Other grades do not have this requirement, though you may include tests from other years if you want.
- **Only reading/language arts and mathematics.** If you use the statewide PSSA in grade 8, the science section is optional.
- **You have a choice of test.** You may use the statewide tests (the PSSA) at your school district, at no cost, or a nationally normed test from the Pennsylvania Department of Education's approved list.
- **The child's parent or guardian may not give the test.**
- **There is no opt-out.** Not giving the required test is out of compliance with the home education law.
- If your child covers a required grade's work on a faster path, include that grade's test results in the portfolio for the year the work is done.

What to do

1. **Pick an approved test,** or ask your district about the PSSA. If you want the PSSA, tell the district early in the year so they can order it. The district must let your child take it at the school your child would normally attend, or make another arrangement you both agree on.
2. **Arrange for someone other than the child's parent or guardian to give the test,** and follow the test publisher's rules. PDE's guidance is to have a trained homeschool evaluator give it in a suitable setting.
3. **Keep the official score report in the portfolio.**
4. **Give the portfolio, including the score report, to your evaluator.**
5. **Submit the evaluator's written certification** to your superintendent by June 30. The evaluator interviews your child, reviews the portfolio, and certifies whether an appropriate education is occurring. The portfolio stays with you.

What this does not mean

- The law does not set a pass or fail score. A score by itself does not decide whether you may continue homeschooling. You choose your child's grade level and test level; check with your evaluator if you are unsure.
- Your evaluator certifies whether an appropriate education is occurring: instruction in the required subjects for the required time, and that the student shows sustained progress in the overall program. That certification is based on an interview with your child and a review of the whole portfolio, not on the test score alone.
- You do not send the test scores to the district. Since Act 196 of 2014, the district receives the evaluator's certification, not the portfolio. If you choose the PSSA, the district administers that test, but those scores are not counted in the school's results. You still keep a copy in the portfolio for your evaluator.
- Homeschool rights are not taken away because of a test score. They can be affected only after a formal hearing finds the program out of compliance, which is a separate process. Not giving the required test, or not submitting the evaluator's certification by June 30, can put a program out of compliance.

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Choosing a test, test day, and where to keep the results

Approved tests

PDE has approved the latest and most recent prior version of these nationally normed tests. You only need one, covering reading/language arts and mathematics.

- California Achievement Test (CAT)
- Comprehensive Testing Program (CTPIV)
- Iowa Test of Basic Skills
- Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)
- Metropolitan Achievement Test
- Peabody Achievement Individual Test (Revised/Normative Update)
- Stanford Achievement Test
- Terra Nova (2, 3, and Next)
- Woodcock-Johnson
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test

Check PDE's current Home Education Program list before you order, in case it has changed. Some approved tests, including versions of the CAT, are offered online and can be untimed, including at home. Whoever gives the test still cannot be the child's parent or guardian, and you must follow the publisher's rules. Ask your evaluator if you are unsure about an online or at-home option.

Test day tips

1. Pick a test that fits your child. An untimed online option can be a calmer choice for some children.
2. Confirm who will give the test, and that it is not the parent or guardian.
3. Follow the publisher's rules for the testing space and for any accommodations.
4. Choose a quiet, familiar setting, with a regular bedtime the night before.
5. As soon as the official score report arrives, file it in the portfolio and add the details to your tracker.

Where to record it

On the Assessments & Tests tab of the free Homeschool Year Tracker, write the test name, date and score. Keep the official score report in the portfolio you give your evaluator.

Want a Pennsylvania portfolio that's ready for your evaluator? Evergreen prepares portfolios to meet state and district requirements, with revisions included on every plan. Visit **evergreenhomeschoolrecords.com**.

This guide is general information, not legal advice. Check the current law and PDE's approved test list, and check what your evaluator expects. You review, sign and file everything yourself, and you remain responsible for meeting Pennsylvania's home education requirements. Sources: 24 P.S. § 13-1327.1; PDE Home Education Program Basic Education Circular (approved tests); PDE Home Education and Private Tutoring Guide (May 2026).