

# *HUNTINGDON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT*

## *Administrative Office*



2400 Cassady Avenue, Suite 2, Huntingdon, PA 16652-2602

Phone (814) 643-4140 Fax (814) 643-6244



**Jennifer Mitchell**  
Superintendent

**Matthew R. Gibson**  
Business Manager

March 17, 2023

Dear Parents and Guardians:

As we enter the third marking period of the school year, we will begin to prepare for our **required state level testing requirements**. Students in third grade through eighth grade will be taking the PSSA exams for English Language Arts and Mathematics. Students in fourth grade also take the science assessment. Students in the secondary schools, at various times in their coursework, will be taking the Keystone Biology, Literature, or Algebra exams. These assessments are a requirement for one pathway to graduation.

The district will be using the following testing window for these required assessments.

- Standing Stone and Southside Elementary Schools PSSA Testing Grades 3-5 on April 24-28 and May 1-5, 2023
- Huntingdon Area Middle School PSSA Testing Grades 6-8 on April 24-28 and May 1-5, 2023
- Huntingdon Area Middle School Keystone Testing for students applicable for Algebra Keystone on May 15-16, 2023.
- Huntingdon Area High School Keystone Testing for students applicable in Algebra, Literature, and Biology on May 15-19, 2023

Please be sure to mark your calendars for these dates and try to avoid scheduling appointments and or time out of school to aid the process. Building level principals will be sending more detailed information in regards to specific schedules closer to the testing time. If required, make-up testing dates will be provided for any needs.

It is critical that we have all eligible students taking the assessments as they are a requirement for public schools and we are monitored for participation rates. The requirement is to have at least 95% of students participating yearly. We have had great support with this in the past and we appreciate your support. Of course, as students move through the grades teenagers are less excited about participating and this is the area where we see challenges in our participation rates.

The state only allows one exemption for not participating in the State level testing and that is due to religious objections. As per the Pennsylvania Keystone Assessment and PSSA testing handbooks, the protocol for parental request for exclusion from the assessment is as follows:

- **Prior to each testing window**, assessments will be available for review by parents and guardians. The assessment must be reviewed on district property and district personnel must be present at all times. Districts must provide a convenient time for the review.
- Parents and guardians must sign the Parent Confidentiality Agreement. Parents and guardians may not photocopy, write down, or in any other manner record any portion of the assessments, including directions.
- If after reviewing the test, parents/guardians find the test to be in conflict with their religious beliefs and wish their student(s) to be excused from the test, the parents/guardians must provide a written request that states the objection to the Superintendent
- If the student is excused from the assessment due to parental or guardian request, school personnel must provide an alternative learning environment for the student during the assessment.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Mitchell  
Superintendent