



PASA: The Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment

What is the PASA?

The Individuals with Disabilities Act of 2004 (IDEA) requires that states and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) ensure that all children with disabilities are included in all general state and district-wide assessment programs. The Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) was developed in accordance with this allowance to meet the needs of students with the most

What does it mean to be Emerging, Approaching Target, At Target, or Advanced?

The performance levels are defined as follows:

- **Emerging:** The student demonstrates emerging understanding of and ability to apply content knowledge and skills represented by the Essential Elements.
- **Approaching Target:** The student's understanding of and ability to apply targeted content knowledge and skills represented by the Essential Elements is approaching the target.
- **At Target:** The student's understanding of and ability to apply content knowledge and skills represented by the Essential Elements is at target.
- **Advanced:** The student demonstrates advanced understanding of and ability to apply targeted content knowledge and skills represented by the [ELA](#), [Math](#), and [Science](#) Essential Elements.

significant cognitive disabilities who are not able to participate in the general assessment even with accommodations. The Pennsylvania Department of Education has partnered with [Dynamic Learning Maps](#) to develop the latest version of the PASA.

What does the PASA measure?

The PASA measures the attainment of knowledge and skills of children with significant cognitive disabilities through performance tasks. This assessment is aligned with Pennsylvania's academic content standards with a reduction in depth and breadth. Like the state-wide standardized test (the Pennsylvania System of Assessment or PSSA), the purpose of the PASA is to provide information to school districts and other educational service providers that will aid them in improving instruction for children. The PASA is administered in Grades 3-8 and 11 in both ELA and Math, and in Grades 4, 8, and 11 in Science. **For a deeper look at the content covered on the ELA, Math, and Science PASA exams, consult the [Blueprint documents](#) for each subject area.**

How is eligibility for the PASA determined?

This decision is ultimately made by the IEP team at your child's school. IEP teams utilize the [PASA Eligibility Criteria Companion Tool](#) to determine whether students meet all six requirements. The IEP team must answer *yes* to all six criteria in order for your child to participate in the PASA.

When will my child take the PASA?

The PASA is administered on an annual basis, with testing windows typically open in the spring months of March, April, and May. You should consult [SDP's Assessment Calendar](#) as well your child's school calendar for specific dates when the PASA will be administered at their school.

What do teachers do with my child's PASA results?

Individual student scores, provided only to your child's school, can be used to assist teachers in identifying your child's strengths and weaknesses. This then allows teachers to personalize your child's instruction to best support their growth. PASA scores also provide information to schools and districts that can support improvement and planning discussions around curriculum and instruction.

What types of scores are reported on the PASA?

Each student's score report includes two parts. The first part of the score report is the Performance Profile, which provides broad information about what the student knows and can do in the subject overall. The second part of the score report is the Learning Profile, which provides specific information about the skills the student mastered. For further information on this topic, you can consult the [PASA Score Report Guide](#).

Is the PASA timed?

The PASA is not timed, but students cannot complete a section - referred to as testlet - over multiple days. For example, if a student starts a testlet on a Monday, they cannot finish the testlet on Tuesday.

Does the PASA affect my child's grade?

This test does not affect students' grades.

How does my child take the PASA?

The PASA is administered via computer; however, students must always take the test in person at their school.

Where can I find the results from the PASA?

Schools receive copies of Individual Student Reports each year a couple of months after the testing window closes. You can ask your child's school for a copy of their Individual Student Report. Results are also posted in the Parent Portal under the Standardized Test section of the Student Profile.

Who can I contact with further questions about the PASA?

If you have further questions about the PASA, it is recommended that you reach out to your child's school. The contact information for your child's school can be obtained from SDP's [School Profiles website](#).

Where can I find additional information on the PASA?

School District of Philadelphia's Office of Assessment: <https://www.philasd.org/era/assessment/>

Dynamic Learning Maps (PASA Vendor): <https://dynamiclearningmaps.org/pennsylvania>

Pennsylvania Department of Education's PASA Homepage: [https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Special%20Education/Assessments/Pages/Pennsylvania-Alternate-System-of-Assessment-\(PASA\).aspx](https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Special%20Education/Assessments/Pages/Pennsylvania-Alternate-System-of-Assessment-(PASA).aspx)