



Dear Parent/Guardian:

In an era of cell phones, smartphones and other electronic devices which can easily photograph and instantly share photographs, confidential and secure test materials can be easily compromised. Not only is it expensive to replace a compromised test item, the material contained in the PSSA and Keystone Exams is copyrighted property of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Copying or duplicating the material from the assessment, including the taking of a photograph, is a violation of the federal Copyright Act. Penalties for violations of the Copyright Act may include the cost of replacing the compromised test item(s) or fines of no less than \$750 up to \$30,000 for a single violation. 17 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.*

In order to ensure reliable test results and to avoid the cost of replacing test items, the Department of Education requires schools to set rules and take certain steps to protect test materials. One step or rule required in all schools is that electronic devices are not permitted at test sites. Electronic devices include cell phones, smartphones, E-readers, Nooks, Kindles, iPads, iPods, tablets, camera-ready devices, and any other electronic device which can be used to photograph or duplicate test materials, access the internet and/or communicate with others during the administration of the PSSA or Keystone Exams. Please speak with your child and let him or her know that the possession and/or use of a cell phone or other electronic device during the administration of the PSSA or Keystone Exams will result in certain consequences.

If a student is discovered using and/or having a cell phone or other electronic device in his or her possession during the administration of the PSSA or Keystone Exams, you will be contacted by the school. Students that ignore this directive will be subject to the school's discipline policy and the Department of Education's requirement that the student's test will not be scored and the student will be required to retake the entire exam. In addition, the electronic device will be held by school staff and the device's stored photographs will be searched. School staff will also ask for permission to search other functions of the electronic device. If a photograph of the PSSA or Keystone Exam is discovered or if permission to search other functions of the electronic device is refused, the device will be held by the school staff and, because the Pennsylvania Department of Education holds the copyright to all material contained within the PSSA and Keystone Exams, the Pennsylvania Department of Education will be contacted.

If, after testing is complete and test materials have been returned, it is discovered that a student used and/or had a cell phone or other electronic device in his or her possession during the administration of the test, the school's discipline policy will be followed and the student's scores will be invalidated.

## The Use/Possession of Electronic Devices During Keystone Exams

**The security of the test is paramount during the Keystone Exams. The Pennsylvania Department of Education has issued a list of procedures that the administration of DCTS will follow during the Keystone Examination Testing dates.**

1. Any student taking the Keystone Examinations who brings a cell phone, smart phone, iPod, mp3, or other non-approved electronic device into school will be required to turn that device into the proctor who will store it in a sealed envelope and return it to the student at the conclusion of testing.
2. Cell phones and/or the use of electronic devices are not permitted during test administration, this includes headphones.
3. Any student *who uses or possess* an electronic device during test administration will receive a “Do Not Score” on their test.
4. Any student who uses a cell phone or electronic device in any manner during the administration of the test, the phone or electronic device will be confiscated until such time that the parent/guardian can come to the school, and in the presence of the parent/guardian, the cell phone or other electronic device will be viewed to ensure that no information or material regarding the assessment is present.
5. The violation of cell phones and electronic devices rule, will result in a student being suspended from school for at least three days. Suspension days will increase depending on whether test material has been compromised.
6. Any item on an assessment that have been compromised, and can no longer be used will have to be replaced, and the parents and students may be responsible for the cost of replacement.