

2023-24 Civics Test Information - January 2024

Please review the information below for important details about the Civics test features and policies.

This year's Civics test window is January 16, 2024 - February 23, 2024. This is the main testing window for the year and is for students enrolled in full-year courses. Note that there was an earlier window offered to some schools specifically to accommodate Opportunity Network schools and fall block schedule courses. A separate, additional window only for students in spring block courses will be offered in the Spring (April 22, 2024 - June 14, 2024).

Action Items

- Inform Social Science, Civics, AP US Government and Politics, and IB History teachers of the information in this message so that they can schedule a time for their students to take the test.
- Review the guidance below, and use the contact information at the end of the document to submit any clarifying questions.

Purpose

- The Civics test will be administered to meet the Pennsylvania requirement to assess students in civics knowledge as specified in [Act 35](#).
- Additionally, students' performance on the test will provide information to teachers and school and district leaders to:
 - inform instruction
 - evaluate if adjustments are needed in the curriculum
 - evaluate what additional supports might be needed to increase the effectiveness of the curriculum's implementation.

Testing Population

- Students enrolled in any of the following courses are required to take the Civics test as soon as possible after the Civics material is covered:
 - Social Science
 - Civics
 - AP US Government and Politics
 - IB History
- Only students listed in the above courses need to participate, regardless of their grade.
- Students whose IEP specifies that they are to participate in Alternate Local Assessments can be exempted from taking the Civics test.
 - **Students are required to complete the Civics test once before they graduate.**
 - Students who tested already in the 23-24 school year will not be permitted to take it again this year.

- Students who completed the test in a prior year do not need to test again.

Test Content and Design

- The topics we are required to assess are included as part of the Social Studies curriculum, especially from the [Social Science](#) course.
- Items are aligned to the standards specified in the [Pennsylvania Department of Education Academic Standards for Civics and Government](#).
- The specific standards assessed are:

5.1.12.A	5.3.12.A
5.1.12.B	5.3.12.C
5.1.12.D	5.3.12.D
5.1.12.E	5.3.12.F
5.2.12.C	5.3.12.G
5.2.12.D	5.3.12.H

- The test has 35 multiple-choice items.
- The test is set to randomize the order of the questions, so students will not receive the items in the same order.

Test Window Dates & Times

- The testing window opens on January 16, 2024 and closes on February 23, 2024, in order to accommodate a range of non-traditional graduation windows and course scheduling.
- The online testing system will allow students to take the test only on school days beginning at 7:00 A.M. and ending at 8:00 P.M. Students should test during school hours; they should not test on their own at home. **The evening hours are to accommodate EOP students whose classes occur outside of traditional school hours.**
- The test will not be available on weekends.

Time Limit

- While most students should be able to complete the Civics test in a single class period, students have no set time limit for completing the test.
- Students can start the test one day, save their progress, and continue the test on a later date.
- The test must be completed by the last day of the testing window, February 23.
- Any test that was started but not finished by the end of February 23 will be submitted for scoring so that the student's performance is captured in reporting.

Grading

- We are not recommending you use students' scores on the test as a grade that impacts their marking period grade.
- We do recommend that you give students a participation grade to encourage them to take the test seriously. Use your discretion on how you determine sufficient participation. We recommend that the participation grade is not weighted too heavily to significantly impact a student's grade.
- After test results are analyzed, a cut score will be determined to identify students who passed the exam. This cut score will be used only to communicate the number of students who passed the Civics test, as required by Act 35.

Accessing the Civics Test

- The test is administered directly on Schoolnet, and can be accessed only with a passcode.
- **The Civics passcode is 6635.**
- Students must be rostered in a Social Science, Civics, AP US Government and Politics, or IB History course in order to access the test.
- **If any student cannot access the online test, contact the Schoolnet help desk:** 866-744-5243, philahelp@schoolnet.com.

Taking an Online Benchmark Slide Deck

- This [Taking an Online Benchmark](#) slide deck explains how students access and complete a test on Schoolnet.
- While the slide deck refers to taking a "Benchmark" test on Schoolnet, the process of taking the Civics test is identical to taking a Benchmark.
- The slide deck can be shared with students.

Practice Test

- A "Practice Test" is available now through February 23. **The practice test passcode is 6641.**
- The Practice Test serves two purposes:
 - to ensure the browser and computer settings will work successfully with an online Schoolnet test and
 - to allow students to familiarize themselves with how to take an online test on Schoolnet.
- The Practice Test is three questions and an ELA passage that do NOT serve to review the skills and knowledge that the Civics test will assess.
- A student can complete the Practice Test one time only.
- Completing the Practice Test is optional but recommended for students.

Online Test Tools

- The following features are available in online Schoolnet tests:
 - Highlighter/Eraser – allows student to highlight selected text
 - Answer Eliminator – allows student to put a red “X” over any answer choice
 - Magnifier – allows student to magnify any section of the screen
 - Line Reader – allows student to view a line or set of lines and block other text
- Directions on how to use these tools are included in the [Taking an Online Benchmark](#) slide deck.

Saving and Finishing the Civics Test

- In Schoolnet, after the last item on the test, there is a page with a “Submit Final Answers” button. (See the [Taking an Online Benchmark](#) slide deck for a visual.)
- Students should finish the test and submit it for scoring after completing all 35 multiple choice questions.
- **Tests that were prematurely submitted for scoring can be reset by contacting the Schoolnet help desk (866-744-5243, philahelp@schoolnet.com). Resetting a test will erase all previous answers and allow a student to complete the online test again.**

Usernames/Passwords

- To access the Civics test, students must first login to the School District website and then link to StudentNet via Infinite Campus. (More detail is provided in the [Taking an Online Benchmark](#) slide deck)
- Usernames are students’ seven/eight-digit local ID numbers.
- Students who forget their password can click on the *Forgot Password?* prompt on the login screen to reset their password. If students cannot remember their answers to their security questions, teachers can reset passwords through the Password Lookup Application, which school staff can access through the Master Login page.
- More detail on passwords and the Student Password Lookup Application is provided in this [StudentNet Access Stepper](#).

Technology Updates

- Note that the Civics test is not using a secure browser version of TestNav, meaning students can access other webpages and applications while taking the test. Teachers should actively monitor students during testing to make sure they are not accessing outside resources to help them with the test.
- Please ensure that students’ devices meet the minimum requirements by reviewing the specifications listed in the “System Requirements” document on Schoolnet.

- Click on the words “System Requirements” on the bottom of any page on Schoolnet to see the requirements.
- The Civics test is designed to be administered online. **The District strongly encourages that students use District Chromebooks to take the test.**
 - Please ensure that Chromebooks used for testing are enrolled in the District network and have received all recent updates. Updates to Chromebooks require the device to be turned off and restarted while connected to the District network, for the operating system updates to take effect.
- **Pop-up blockers must be disabled for Civics testing.**
- As best practice, the following actions are recommended:
 - Chrome is the preferred platform
 - Apply any outstanding Operating System updates
 - Update any necessary plugins that the testing station can support
 - Update your browser, if applicable
- For any technology support, please contact (or have students contact) the IT Help Desk at 215-400-5555 or helpdesk@philasd.org.

Accommodations

- In general, accommodations that students are provided for the Keystones should be provided for the Civics test when available.
- There is no text-to-speech option, so students who need this accommodation will have to have a teacher read items aloud.
- When available and appropriate, translators can provide word-to-word translations for the Civics test.
- Contrast settings, a Magnifier, a Line Reader, and Answer Masking are all available in the online test. (See the Test Aids slide in the [Taking an Online Benchmark](#) slide deck)

Reports and Scoring

- Students will not have access to score reports in StudentNet until after the testing window closes on February 23. However, immediately upon submitting their answers for scoring in the online test, their percent correct score will display to provide immediate feedback for the students.
- Administrators and Teachers will have access to reports in Schoolnet. Score reports will be available in Schoolnet the same day the tests are completed.
- Teachers will have the following reports available to them: Item Analysis, Standards Analysis, and Standards Mastery.
- Administrators will have the Aggregate Item Analysis and Anchor Analysis reports.
- Civics scores will be reported as raw scores and percent correct only. There will be no proficiency levels or growth scores, and there is no “passing” score.

District IT Help Desk – 215-400-5555, helpdesk@philasd.org

- Contact the SDP help desk for:
 - problems with usernames and passwords or the Student Password Lookup Application
 - logging into the District website
 - internet connectivity, browser issues, operating systems, hardware, site slowness, etc.
 - questions about Infinite Campus.

Schoolnet Help Desk – 866-744-5243, philahelp@schoolnet.com

- Contact the Schoolnet help desk for:
 - problems accessing StudentNet after students have successfully logged into the District website and clicked on the StudentNet icon
 - questions about locating the passcode
 - problems accessing TestNav after students have successfully accessed StudentNet and entered a passcode
 - questions about online test functionality
 - requests to reset Civics tests submitted for scoring prematurely
 - questions about Schoolnet reports.

Office of Curriculum and Instruction – socialstudies@philasd.org

Contact the Social Studies team in the Curriculum and Instruction Office for questions about the content of the Civics test.

Office of Assessment – assessment@philasd.org

- Contact the Assessment Office for any other Civics questions.
- T: 215-400-5365 (Jeff)
T: 215-400-6054 (Nina)
T: 215-400-6332 (Michelle)
T: 215-400-6090 (Faye)