April 22, 2024

**RE: Keystone Exams**

Dear Parents / Guardians,

On May 13 through May 16, May 20, and May 21, many of our high school students will be participating in the Keystone Exams. These tests are assessments done at the end of particular courses. They are required for students who have Mathematics (Algebra I), Science (Biology),

and Literature (English 10) classes. These tests are designed to assess proficiency in these subject areas. The results give us useful information to help us evaluate curriculum issues, teaching, and student engagement / effort. These tests are also part of the mandated requirements issued by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The test scores will also be reported on student transcripts.

Students will be scored as Advanced, Proficient, Basic, or Below Basic. The passing grades are

Proficient or Advanced. Students who have Biology or English 10 as a second semester class

will be tested. The Algebra I Keystones will also be offered at this time as we are about ready to

complete our full year of Algebra I. Students who previously took the exams and did not score Proficient or Advanced may also be retesting at this time.

May 13 and May 14 will be the Algebra I Keystones. Students taking this particular test will report to school at the regular time. Any student not taking the Algebra I Keystones will have a two-hour delay start and will report to school at 9:30 AM on these two days. Transportation will run on the normal schedule. If your child does not have transportation to get here for the 9:30 AM start, they must use their regular means of transportation for a regular day start. Students not being tested on May 15 and May 16 as well as May 20 and May 21 will report to school at the regular time for a regular school day. The school buses will run at the regular time on these days.

The Literature Keystone test will be held on May 15 and 16. The Biology Keystone test will be offered on May 20 and May 21. The make-up days for these exams are May 17, May 22, and May 23.

As a parent or guardian, you have the right to review the Keystone exams prior to the

examination period. This review must be done from May 2 through May 10. If you review the

tests and believe that there is a conflict with your religious beliefs, you must notify the

Superintendent of Schools in writing outlining the conflict.

Here is her address …

Dr. Jodi Frankelli

Superintendent of Schools

680 Fourth Street

Palmerton, PA 18071

You can also contact her via e-mail: jfrankelli@palmerton.org

During the actual tests, students are not permitted to have any electronic devices. If they enter

the classroom with a device, we are required by the Commonwealth to collect it. We do not have the option of simply telling them to put it in their locker. We are required to collect it. The

device will be returned after the exam is completed. Here is the related statement from the

Pennsylvania Department of Education: “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 easily be compromised. 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.” Please remind your child of this restriction.

We have been identifying ways to ensure that our students have optimal test taking conditions.

You can certainly help us in this area. As a parent, please make sure that your child gets plenty of rest each night before the tests. Also, please make sure that they eat a good breakfast before

coming to school.

As always, students will be able to have bottled water during the testing process. We will also

provide a small snack for the students along with pencils and erasers. The school will be providing calculators to the students for the tests. If a student brings his/her own calculator, it

will have to be approved by a teacher.

And finally, we ask that you make sure that your child is in school on the test days. Make-ups

are not conducive to positive test taking results. Your child will be notified of the testing schedule.

If your child does not score at or above the “Proficient” level, we might have to alter their school schedule as part of a remediation effort when we receive the test scores in July. Please understand that these tests are mandated by the Commonwealth and are also a graduation requirement. This includes eligible Blue Bomber Academy (BBA) students.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Paula A. Husar

Principal

cc: Dr. J. Frankelli - Superintendent of Schools

J. Schuler - Assistant to the Superintendent - Director of Curriculum and Instruction

D. Sodl - Assistant Secondary Level Principal

V. McHugh - Guidance Counselor (Grades 9 and 12)

K. Wertz - Guidance Counselor (Grades 10 and 11)