

# **Prairie State Achievement Examination**

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**2013–2014**



## **Teacher's Handbook**

Illinois State Board of Education

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### **Additional Online Resources**

Starting in 2011–2012, this handbook became available only online. Additional PSAE resources are available online at [www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm).

Prairie State  
Achievement Examination

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**Information for Teachers**

## General Information

This handbook contains information for high school educators—teachers, curriculum coordinators, counselors, and principals—as they prepare students to take the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE). This introductory section explains the purpose of the PSAE, gives timelines and test day schedules, and shows how the PSAE is constructed. The rest of the handbook provides an overview of each PSAE test (i.e., the reading, mathematics, science, and writing tests) and includes the two test preparation booklets for students in appendices A and B: *Overview and Preparation Guide for PSAE Day 2* and *Preparing for the ACT for PSAE Day 1*. The *Overview and Preparation Guide for PSAE Day 2* contains an overview of the PSAE and sample Day 2 science, ACT WorkKeys® *Applied Mathematics*, and ACT WorkKeys *Reading for Information* test questions and answer keys, and *Preparing for the ACT for PSAE Day 1* contains practice ACT® college readiness assessment English, mathematics, reading, science, and writing tests for Day 1 and the scoring key or rubric for each test.

The PSAE test overviews include keys that give correct answers for the multiple-choice test questions found in the student booklets. The keys also identify the assessment objective(s) each item covers. The Illinois Assessment Frameworks, which contain the assessment objectives (clear and concise statements of testable material at grade 11), are available on the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) website: [www.isbe.net/assessment/IAFIndex.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/IAFIndex.htm).

Additional information about the PSAE is available on the PSAE website: [www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm).

### What is the PSAE?

The PSAE is a two-day state assessment given to grade 11 students and used for accountability.

On Day 1, students take the ACT Plus Writing. The ACT battery comprises four multiple-choice tests: English, mathematics, reading, and science. The ACT Writing Test is a 30-minute essay with a single prompt question.

On Day 2, students take one test developed by ISBE with assistance from Illinois teachers and two ACT WorkKeys tests developed by ACT. The ISBE-developed test is in science. The ACT WorkKeys tests assess mathematics and reading.

In addition, ISBE will be providing the ACT WorkKeys *Locating Information* test. Students have the opportunity to take this test after the PSAE Day 2 tests, but it is not a component of the PSAE and is not required. With qualifying scores on the three ACT WorkKeys tests—*Reading for Information*, *Applied Mathematics*, and *Locating Information*—students are eligible for an ACT National Career Readiness Certificate™ (ACT NCRC™).

### What is the purpose of the PSAE?

The PSAE shows the progress that students in schools, districts, and the state have made toward meeting the Illinois Learning Standards in four subjects: reading, mathematics, science, and writing. In addition, it measures the academic achievement of individual students with respect to the Illinois Learning Standards and provides an opportunity for individual students to receive recognition for excellent performance. Current state law requires that students take the PSAE as a condition for receiving a regular high school diploma, unless a student is exempt. See [www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm) for more information about this requirement.

### What are the Illinois Learning Standards?

The Illinois Learning Standards are statements of the specific knowledge and skills that every public school student should learn in school. Thousands of Illinois citizens—teachers, parents, school administrators, employers, community leaders, and representatives of higher education—identified what they believe students need to know and be able to do after they graduate from high school.

Whether students intend to go directly to a job or plan to attend a vocational or technical school, junior college, or four-year college or university, those who meet the Illinois Learning Standards have the academic background they need to compete successfully.

The complete text of the Illinois Learning Standards is available on the ISBE website: [www.isbe.net/ils/default.htm](http://www.isbe.net/ils/default.htm).

### **How do student scores relate to the Illinois Learning Standards?**

Scores on the PSAE fall into four performance levels: Exceeds Standards, Meets Standards, Below Standards, and Academic Warning. Performance level definitions, which describe what students know and can do at each performance level for reading, mathematics, science, and writing are available online at [www.isbe.net/assessment/htmls/per\\_def.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/htmls/per_def.htm).

### **How were the performance levels set?**

Following the first administration of the PSAE in spring 2001, panels made up of Illinois educators and representatives of the business community and of higher education met for three days to establish the relationship between performance on the PSAE and mastery of the Illinois Learning Standards, a process referred to as standard setting.

The panelists first studied performance level definitions that describe what students know and are able to do at the four performance levels: Exceeds Standards, Meets Standards, Below Standards, and Academic Warning. After studying the performance level definitions, panelists participated in a number of exercises to get a clear understanding of the minimal performance that is required for a student to achieve each level. Panelists then judged what percentage of students who just meet the minimal requirements of a given performance level would get an item correct. Those judgments were used to compute the cut points that define the score range for each performance level.

The cut points for subjects to be assessed in spring 2014 are provided below. A report on the 2001 standard-setting process is available online at [www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/psae/setting\\_standards.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/psae/setting_standards.pdf). Because a new PSAE writing test (comprised of the ACT English Test and the ACT Writing Test) was given for the first time in spring 2007, the cut points set for writing in 2001 had to be revised following the spring 2007 administration of the PSAE.

### **PSAE Scale Score Cut Points (on 120–200 point scale)**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Academic Warning (Level 1)</b>	<b>Below Standards (Level 2)</b>	<b>Meets Standards (Level 3)</b>	<b>Exceeds Standards (Level 4)</b>
Reading	120–134	135–154	155–177	178–200
Mathematics	120–135	136–155	156–178	179–200
Science	120–135	136–157	158–177	178–200
Writing	120–130	131–155	156–182	183–200

### **Do students with disabilities take the PSAE?**

Students with disabilities must take the PSAE unless they have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that identify this assessment as inappropriate for them. Students with disabilities for whom the PSAE is appropriate may take it with or without accommodations, as determined by a student’s IEP team or Section 504 placement team. Students with IEPs who have significant cognitive disabilities and for whom the PSAE is not appropriate, even with accommodations, must participate in the Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA). However, in accordance with state law, these students nevertheless have the option of taking the PSAE and must be allowed to do so with accommodations that address their respective disabilities.

Accommodations requests for the ACT Plus Writing (Day 1 of the PSAE) must be submitted to ACT. Two types of accommodations requests are available: ACT-Approved or State-Allowed.

ACT-Approved accommodations requests may be submitted only for students who need accommodations based on needs documented in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan. Students who are approved for ACT-Approved accommodations are eligible to receive college-reportable ACT scores provided that the tests are administered according to ACT’s guidelines.

State-Allowed accommodations orders may be submitted online for students who do not qualify for ACT-Approved accommodations and only for those who need accommodations based on needs documented in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan or associated with limited English proficiency (LEP). Scores earned by students testing with State-Allowed accommodations are used only to produce PSAE scores and cannot be reported to colleges or universities.

School personnel may use ACT’s approval as a guideline for accommodations to be provided on Day 2 of the PSAE. However, the decision for Day 2 is ultimately a local one based on accommodation determinations documented in a student’s IEP or Section 504 Plan or based on needs associated with LEP. For specific information, check with your school’s PSAE Test Accommodations Coordinator. Also note that some accommodations, if provided for the ACT WorkKeys tests, will render those scores ineligible for ACT WorkKeys reporting and for eligibility for an ACT NCRC.

### **Do students with limited English proficiency take the PSAE?**

In spring 2014, grade 11 students with limited English proficiency (LEP) *must* take the PSAE. This includes students who have been in a state-approved Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) program or Transitional Program of Instruction (TPI) for *more than five academic years* and students who have been in a TBE or TPI program for *five or fewer years*. It also includes LEP students who are not being served in a state-approved bilingual education program. More information about LEP testing may be found in the document *Assessment Accommodations for English Language Learners—Guidance for 2013–2014*, available online at [www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm).

**Please note that you may *not* translate any PSAE test items for students for whom English is a second language.** However, you may use translated verbal test instructions written in a student’s native language as a State-Allowed accommodation. (These scripted instructions will be made available to Test Accommodations Coordinators on the PSAE website.) Also as a State-Allowed accommodation, Spanish video DVDs for mathematics and science are available for Day 1 and Day 2. For more information about this State-Allowed accommodation, please visit [www.isbe.net/assessment/SpDVD.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/SpDVD.htm).

LEP students may receive extended time and oral presentation of the tests (via reader script, audio DVDs, or Spanish video DVDs). For a student to test with any LEP accommodations on Day 1, an order for State-Allowed PSAE Day 1 testing materials must be placed on ACT’s online ordering website by the school where the student is scheduled to test. Please note that if a State-Allowed accommodation is provided, ACT scores from the administration will not be reportable to colleges or universities. The results will be used for PSAE and state accountability purposes only.

### **Why does the PSAE include different kinds of tests?**

The PSAE is designed to measure progress toward meeting the Illinois Learning Standards in four academic subjects and also to provide students with broad achievement information. For these reasons, the PSAE incorporates tests that measure the Illinois Learning Standards and that also measure workplace skills and readiness for college.

The four ACT multiple-choice tests measure what students have learned in English, mathematics, reading, and science. The ACT Writing Test measures what students have learned with regard to making and articulating judgments, developing and sustaining a position, organizing and presenting ideas logically, and communicating clearly in original, first-draft writing. The two ACT WorkKeys tests add depth and breadth; they also address the “Applications of Learning” that are part of the Standards for every academic area, and they increase the range of skills in reading and mathematics that are assessed. Comprehensive coverage of the Illinois Learning Standards for PSAE subjects is accomplished by the inclusion of an ISBE-developed test in science.

The PSAE score in each subject is based on two tests. For example, PSAE science comprises ACT Science on Day 1 and the ISBE-developed science test on Day 2. The chart on page 14 of this handbook shows how the tests that make up the PSAE fit together to assess each subject.

### **What are ACT WorkKeys tests?**

ACT WorkKeys is a job analysis and assessment system developed by ACT. In recent years, members of the business community as well as the general public have been concerned that American workers, both current and future, lack the workplace skills needed to meet the challenges of rapidly evolving technical advances, organizational restructuring, and global economic competition. ACT designed ACT WorkKeys to solve this problem. In developing the ACT WorkKeys assessments, ACT listened to employers, educators, and experts in employment and training requirements to find out which skills are crucial in most jobs. Each ACT WorkKeys skill scale describes a set of skill levels. For both the ACT WorkKeys reading and mathematics assessments, there are five skill levels, with Level 3 requiring understanding of the least complex concepts and Level 7 requiring understanding of the most complex concepts.

Test items simulate the characteristics of the workplace and are taken from actual workplace materials. Scores reflect the level of skill a student has achieved rather than his or her performance in relation to that of others taking the test. ACT WorkKeys scores help students identify their strengths and weaknesses with respect to their education and career goals.

### **Why are ACT WorkKeys tests included on the PSAE?**

ISBE decided to incorporate two ACT WorkKeys tests, *Reading for Information* and *Applied Mathematics*, into the PSAE for three reasons:

1. ACT WorkKeys tests assess whether students can apply what they have learned in the classroom to non-classroom situations, as required by the “Applications of Learning” sections of the Illinois Learning Standards.
2. ACT WorkKeys tests give students a set of scores that they can use to identify the workplace skills they already have and those they need to acquire.
3. ACT WorkKeys scores are used by many employers as part of the process of determining whether a job applicant is suited for a particular job or training program. ACT WorkKeys skill levels have been used to describe thousands of jobs ranging from entry-level to those requiring postsecondary degrees. Students may include their ACT WorkKeys scores in their portfolio and present them for comparison with the requirements of the job they are seeking. They may also use eligible scores, including those earned on the *Locating Information* test, toward earning an ACT National Career Readiness Certificate.



## PSAE Results and Score Reports

### **Must PSAE scores appear on student transcripts?**

Yes. State law requires students’ PSAE scores to be recorded on their transcripts. Transcripts should also indicate subjects in which students earned a Prairie State Achievement Award.

In the shipment of PSAE score reports from the spring 2014 administration, ACT’s PSAE subcontractor Pearson will send schools a set of labels for transcripts that list the PSAE score in each subject for each student. These labels also indicate the subjects (if any) in which the student earned a Prairie State Achievement Award. These PSAE scores are the scores that must be recorded on student transcripts.

### **What is a Prairie State Achievement Award?**

Students receive a Prairie State Achievement Award in each PSAE subject by earning a score that is at the Exceeds Standards performance level. Students receive one certificate that lists the subject(s) in which they earned an award.

### **Should ACT scores appear on student transcripts?**

ACT scores generated by taking the PSAE should *not* automatically be placed on student transcripts. These scores will be included on transcripts only with a student’s written permission (or a parent’s or guardian’s written permission if the student is younger than 18 years old).

### **Are ACT scores from state PSAE testing accepted by colleges and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC)?**

Yes. Colleges and universities throughout the United States and ISAC have indicated their willingness to use college-reportable ACT scores reported from state testing. However, ACT scores achieved using State-Allowed accommodations are NOT college-reportable.

### **Are ACT scores from state PSAE testing accepted by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)?**

In 2006, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) implemented rules changes that allow the use of state ACT scores in determining initial eligibility for participation in Division I and Division II sports. These changes were effective January 9, 2006, for Division II and August 1, 2006, for Division I. As a result, students entering college on or after August 1, 2006, can use state ACT scores for both Division I and Division II initial eligibility. Questions may be directed to the NCAA Eligibility Center at 877.262.1492.

### **Are the ACT WorkKeys scores from Day 2 testing accepted for the ACT National Career Readiness Certificate (ACT NCRC)?**

Yes, if the tests are taken under standard conditions or with approved accommodations, ACT WorkKeys scores may be used toward an ACT National Career Readiness Certificate (ACT NCRC). However, scores earned for ACT WorkKeys *Applied Mathematics* and *Locating Information* using the Spanish DVD format will not be applicable for the ACT NCRC.

**How and when are scores distributed?**

A schedule for the return of scores from the spring 2014 administration is provided below.

<b>Test</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Date Sent</b>	<b>Report(s)</b>
<b>ACT Plus Writing</b>	ACT	Student (home address, as reported by student on Day 1 answer document)	May/June	Individual Student Report
<b>ACT Plus Writing</b>	ACT	High School Director of Counseling	May/June	High School Report <sup>1, 4, 5</sup> (paper) and two score labels for each student, High School List Report <sup>2, 3, 4, 5</sup>
<b>ACT Plus Writing</b>	ACT	Colleges, as listed by student on Day 1 answer document	May/June	College Report for each student who listed that college to receive ACT scores
<b>PS&amp;E</b>	Pearson	Home High School Principal	August/September	School Performance Profile School Roster Individual Student Reports (2 copies; 1 additional copy is sent to Testing School principal if different from Home School) Data CD Transcript Labels
<b>PS&amp;E</b>	Pearson	Home District Superintendent	August/September	District Performance Profile District Roster Data CD (if more than one high school in district)
<b>PS&amp;E</b>	ACT	Home High School Principal	August/September	Illinois State Goals School Report Illinois State Goals Individual Student Reports (2 copies)
<b>ACT WorkKeys Reading for Information and Applied Mathematics</b>	ACT	Home High School Principal	August/September	Rosters Individual Student Reports
<b>ACT WorkKeys Locating Information<sup>6</sup></b>	ACT	Testing School Principal	August/September	Rosters Individual Student Reports
<b>Notification of Day 1 (ACT Plus Writing) State-Allowed Results</b>	ACT	Home High School Principal	September/October	Individual Student Reports <sup>4, 5</sup>
<b>ACT Plus Writing</b>	ACT	Home High School Principal	October	Grade 11 ACT High School Profile Report <sup>4, 5</sup> Grade 11 ACT College and Career Readiness Standards Report <sup>4, 5</sup> Data CD
<b>ACT Plus Writing</b>	ACT	Home District Superintendent	October	A copy of the Grade 11 ACT High School Profile Report(s) for school(s) in the district Data CD

<sup>1</sup> ACT mails reports as they become available for reporting. Most schools receive more than one group of results, usually one group from the initial test date followed by smaller groups of results for students from the makeup testing and students tested with accommodations.

<sup>2</sup> Lists students included in the group for which results are being reported.

<sup>3</sup> If a school or district has ordered electronic reporting of ACT results on CD-ROM as an extra-cost service from ACT, the scores from state testing are included on the CD-ROM generated after the June national test date.

<sup>4</sup> Based solely on the ACT state testing results from spring 2014.

<sup>5</sup> ACT scores are reported to the PS&E testing high school unless a different ACT High School Code is gridded in Block K of the PS&E Day 1 answer document.

<sup>6</sup> The ACT WorkKeys *Locating Information* test is optional and is not part of the PS&E. For more details about this test and the ACT NCRC, see [www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm).

## Schedules: Test Dates and Test Administration

### When do students take the PSAE?

In 2014, grade 11 students take the PSAE on a Wednesday and Thursday in late April. Makeup tests are given two weeks later for students who are not in school on one or both of the initial test dates in April. Dates that have been set for spring 2014 are as follows:

Initial Test Dates	Makeup Test Dates
April 23–24, 2014	May 7–8, 2014

### What should schools do if their spring break dates conflict with the test dates?

If a school’s 2014 spring break dates conflict with the initial PSAE test dates in April—and changing those spring break dates would violate a teacher’s contract or deny a community tradition—the school will be allowed to test all students on the makeup test dates in May. The school will *not* have an opportunity to conduct additional makeup testing in the spring.

### What is the 2014 test administration schedule?

<b>Day 1</b> <b>Wednesday,</b> <b>April 23, 2014</b>	ACT English	45 minutes (75 questions)
	ACT Mathematics	60 minutes (60 questions) [required 15-minute break]
	ACT Reading	35 minutes (40 questions)
	ACT Science	35 minutes (40 questions) [required 5-minute break]
	ACT Writing	30 minutes (one prompt question)
<b>Day 2</b> <b>Thursday,</b> <b>April 24, 2014</b>	ISBE-Developed Science	40 minutes (45 questions)
	ACT WorkKeys <i>Applied Mathematics</i>	45 minutes (33 questions) [required 15-minute break]
	ACT WorkKeys <i>Reading for Information</i>	45 minutes (33 questions)
	ACT WorkKeys <i>Locating Information*</i>	45 minutes (38 questions)

\*ACT WorkKeys *Locating Information* scores will not be used in any PSAE score calculation. However, eligible and qualifying scores may be combined with eligible and qualifying *Reading for Information* and *Applied Mathematics* scores to earn the ACT National Career Readiness Certificate (ACT NCRC).

### Note

Standard time makeup testing will follow this schedule and be administered on May 7 (Day 1) and May 8 (Day 2). Students should participate in makeup testing only on the day(s) they miss.

The Day 1 accommodations testing window is April 23–May 7, 2014, followed by the Day 2 accommodations testing window, which is April 24–May 8, 2014.

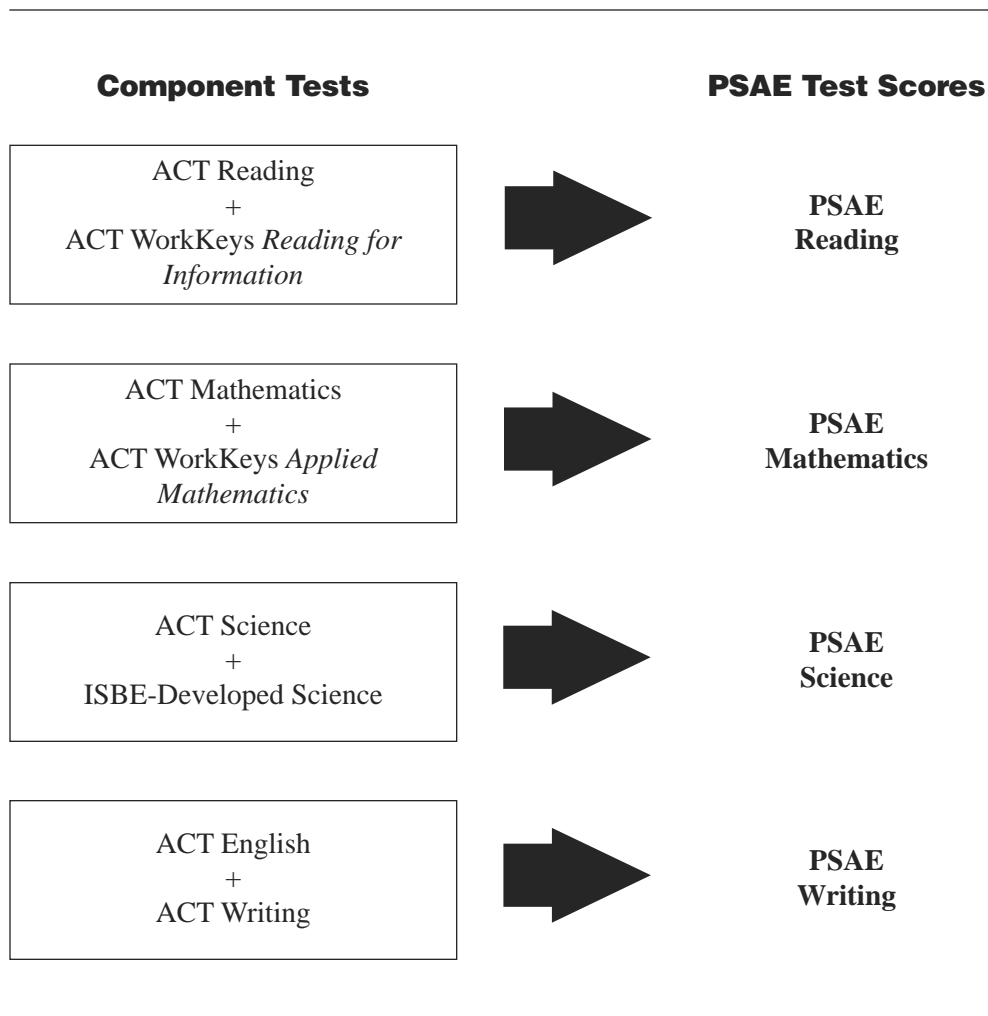
Students testing with accommodations on Day 1 and Day 2 must complete all Day 1 tests in order before completing all Day 2 tests in order.

## 2013–2014 PSAE Timeline

<b>December 2013</b>	<p><b>December 13:</b> Deadline for ACT to receive completed online requests for off-site testing arrangements from schools. See the PSAE website for the ACT web link to this form: <a href="http://www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/2014/psae/psae-site-options-14.pdf">www.isbe.net/assessment/pdfs/2014/psae/psae-site-options-14.pdf</a>.</p> <p><b>December 13:</b> 2013 PSAE Test Administration Training Webcast recording is available on the PSAE website.</p>
<b>January–February 2014</b>	<p><b>January 9 and 22:</b> Question and Answer Session Webinars hosted by ISBE and ACT.</p> <p><b>January 24:</b> Deadline for ACT to receive requests from schools for Day 1 ACT-approved test accommodations for individual students.</p> <p><b>February 3 and 18:</b> Question and Answer Session Webinars hosted by ISBE and ACT.</p> <p><b>February 21:</b> Deadline for home school districts to verify that all eligible grade 11 students are included in the Assessment Pre-ID file in ISBE’s Student Information System (SIS) and that each student’s Testing School RCDTS code is correctly identified.</p>
<b>March 2014</b>	<p><b>Week of March 17:</b> Test Supervisors receive Day 1 and Day 2 non-secure test materials (supervisor’s manuals, answer documents, pre-ID labels, student pretest materials, and informational brochures for parents). PSAE test-preparation materials, a Spanish version of the parent informational brochure, and the <i>Teacher’s Handbook</i> (this book) are available only online.</p>
<b>March–April 2014</b>	<p><b>Mid-March–April 22:</b> Window for schools to conduct supervised sessions and for all students to complete identifying and nontest portions of the ACT Plus Writing; these may <i>not</i> be completed on or after the test day.</p>
<b>April 2014</b>	<p>Test Supervisor and Back-up Test Supervisor train Room Supervisors and Proctors; Test Accommodations Coordinator trains staff assigned to help with accommodations testing.</p> <p><b>April 2:</b> Deadline for ACT to receive online orders from schools for Day 1 State-Allowed accommodations test materials.</p> <p><b>Week of April 14:</b> Schools receive shipments of secure test materials, including materials for accommodations testing. Day 1 shipment(s) from ACT, Day 2 shipment(s) from Pearson, and <i>Locating Information</i> shipment(s) from ACT. Early shipments to accommodate spring break schedules will be sent to arrive the week of April 7.</p> <p><b>April 22:</b> Teachers remind students to bring acceptable ID, pencils, and approved calculators on test days.</p> <p><b>April 23: PSAE Day 1 (ACT Plus Writing) standard time test date.</b> PSAE Day 1 (ACT Plus Writing) answer documents for students who completed testing and all <i>used and unused</i> test booklets packaged for return to ACT on April 25 pickup. <i>Keep uncompleted answer documents for makeup testing on May 7.</i></p> <p><b>April 24: PSAE Day 2 standard time test date.</b> PSAE Day 2 answer documents for students who completed testing and all <i>used and unused</i> test booklets packaged for return to Pearson on April 25 pickup. <i>Keep uncompleted answer documents for makeup testing on May 8.</i></p> <p><b>April 24: Locating Information standard time test date.</b> <i>Locating Information</i> answer documents for students who completed testing and all <i>used and unused</i> test booklets packaged for return to ACT on April 25 pickup. <i>Keep uncompleted answer documents for makeup testing on May 8.</i></p> <p><b>April 24, 5:00 p.m. (CDT):</b> Deadline for schools to submit orders for PSAE Day 1 (ACT Plus Writing) standard time makeup materials to ACT using Online Services for State Testing.</p>

<b>April 2014</b>	<p><b>April 25, 5:00 p.m. (CDT):</b> Deadline for schools to submit orders for PSAE Day 2 standard time makeup materials to Pearson using <i>PSAE TestSites Online</i>. Note: Orders placed for PSAE Day 2 makeup materials will be used to order <i>Locating Information</i> makeup materials.</p> <p><b>April 25:</b> FedEx picks up PSAE Day 1 (ACT Plus Writing) and <i>Locating Information</i> shipments of standard time test materials and all Day 2 administration forms. UPS picks up PSAE Day 2 shipments of standard time test materials.</p>
<b>April–May 2014</b>	<p><b>Accommodations Testing Windows</b></p> <p><b>April 23–May 7:</b> PSAE Day 1 (ACT Plus Writing) accommodations testing window for each student testing with ACT-Approved accommodations or State-Allowed accommodations. Students testing with ACT-Approved accommodations may use only the materials assigned to them; all materials packaged for return to ACT on May 9 pickup.</p> <p><b>April 24–May 8:</b> PSAE Day 2 accommodations testing window; all test materials packaged for return to Pearson and administrative forms packaged for return to ACT on May 9 pickup.</p> <p><b>April 24–May 8:</b> <i>Locating Information</i> accommodations testing window; all materials packaged for return to ACT on May 9 pickup.</p>
<b>May 2014</b>	<p><b>By May 5:</b> Schools receive standard time makeup test materials by this date, if April 24 and 25 deadlines for submitting orders to ACT and Pearson were met.</p> <p><b>May 7:</b> PSAE Day 1 (ACT Plus Writing) standard time makeup test date for students absent on April 23. All Day 1 makeup materials packaged for return to ACT after testing on May 9 pickup.</p> <p><b>May 8:</b> PSAE Day 2 standard time makeup test date for students absent on April 24. All Day 2 makeup materials packaged for return after testing on May 9 pickup.</p> <p><b>May 9:</b> FedEx picks up PSAE Day 1 (ACT Plus Writing) and <i>Locating Information</i> shipments of standard time makeup test materials and test accommodations materials and all Day 2 administration forms. UPS picks up PSAE Day 2 shipments of standard time makeup test materials and test accommodations materials.</p> <p><b>May 9:</b> Assessment Correction window begins. Districts should verify that all student demographic data are accurate.</p>
<b>May–June 2014</b>	<p>ACT mails ACT score reports from PSAE administration to students at their home addresses, to each home school’s director of counseling, and to college choices, as applicable.</p>
<b>July/August 2014</b>	<p><b>July 10:</b> Preliminary PSAE scores are scheduled to be posted in ISBE’s Student Information System.</p> <p><b>July 17:</b> Assessment Correction window ends. Rescore requests are due to ISBE. Final PSAE scores are scheduled to be posted in ISBE’s Student Information System (anticipated no later than August 1, 2014).</p>
<b>August/September 2014</b>	<p><b>Late August:</b> Pearson mails PSAE score reports, PSAE score labels for student transcripts, and certificates for students who earned a Prairie State Achievement Award in one or more subjects to home high school principals.</p> <p><b>Late August:</b> ACT mails Illinois State Goals reports to home high school principals.</p> <p><b>Late August:</b> ACT mails ACT WorkKeys <i>Reading for Information</i> and <i>Applied Mathematics</i> reports to home high school principals.</p> <p><b>Late August:</b> ACT mails ACT WorkKeys <i>Locating Information</i> reports to testing high school principals.</p> <p><b>Anticipated Mid-September 2014:</b> ACT WorkKeys <i>Locating Information</i> and ACT National Career Readiness Certificate data available in ISBE’s Student Information System.</p>
<b>October 2014</b>	<p>ACT mails Grade 11 ACT High School Profile Reports to home high school principals and home district superintendents.</p>

## How Component Tests Combine to Produce PSAE Scores



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**Overview:**  
**The Reading Test**

## Reading Introduction

### What will be on the test?

The reading section of the Prairie State Achievement Examination consists of two components: ACT Reading, taken on Day 1, and ACT WorkKeys *Reading for Information*, taken on Day 2.

These components assess the Illinois Learning Standards (ILS) for reading. They test students’ ability to read literary and informational texts with understanding and fluency.

### **ACT Reading (35 minutes, 40 multiple-choice questions)**

This component comprises four 750-word passages, each followed by 10 multiple-choice questions. Two of the passages are literary texts: one fiction and one nonfiction. The other two passages are informational texts: one social science and one natural science.

Across texts, the difficulty ranges from uncomplicated to challenging to complex. Questions assess students’ explicit and inferential understanding and the following reading skills: determining main ideas and significant details, identifying comparative and cause-effect relationships, determining meanings of words, making generalizations and drawing conclusions, and determining author’s tone.

More information about the passages and questions can be found in the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards, available online at [www.act.org/standard](http://www.act.org/standard).

### **ACT WorkKeys *Reading for Information* (45 minutes, 33 multiple-choice questions)**

This component includes 15 reading selections that range in length from about 100 words up to 500 words. Each selection is followed by one, two, or three multiple-choice questions.

The selections include memos, policy statements, procedures, government regulations, and other such business texts and are arranged in five levels of increasing difficulty. Across texts, the questions assess student achievement in identifying main ideas and significant details, understanding word meanings, and applying instructions, information, and reasoning.

More information about the selections and questions can be found online at [www.act.org/workkeys/assess/reading](http://www.act.org/workkeys/assess/reading).

### **Keys and Assessment Framework**

Sample ACT WorkKeys *Reading for Information* questions and a sample ACT Reading Test can be found in the two test preparation booklets: the *Overview and Preparation Guide for PSAE Day 2* and *Preparing for the ACT for PSAE Day 1* (Appendices A and B). Keys that give the correct answer for each multiple-choice item in the student PSAE reading sample materials and identify the assessment objective covered by an item are on pages 17 and 18. The Illinois Reading Assessment Framework for PSAE grade 11, which contains descriptions of assessment objectives, is available on the ISBE website at [www.isbe.net/assessment/IAFIndex.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/IAFIndex.htm).



## Key for ACT Reading Sample Test

<b>Item Number</b>	<b>Assessment Objective</b>	<b>Secondary/ Alternative</b>	<b>Correct Answer</b>
1	1.11.28	1.11.08	D
2	1.11.09		H
3	1.11.18	1.11.08	B
4	1.11.19	1.11.08	G
5	1.11.16	1.11.08	B
6	1.11.16	1.11.08	F
7	1.11.18	1.11.08	C
8	1.11.18	1.11.08	F
9	1.11.18		D
10	1.11.14		H
11	1.11.30	1.11.08	C
12	1.11.18	1.11.08	F
13	1.11.28	1.11.08	C
14	1.11.28	1.11.08	G
15	1.11.28		D
16	1.11.09		H
17	1.11.14		B
18	1.11.09		J
19	1.11.09		A
20	1.11.14		F
21	1.11.28	1.11.08	C
22	1.11.16	1.11.08	J
23	1.11.28	1.11.08	A
24	1.11.09		J
25	1.11.10	1.11.08	C
26	1.11.19	1.11.08	F
27	1.11.18	1.11.08	C
28	1.11.10	1.11.08	J
29	1.11.19	1.11.08	A
30	1.11.16	1.11.08	F
31	1.11.13	1.11.08	B
32	1.11.18	1.11.08	H
33	1.11.28	1.11.08	D
34	1.11.09		J
35	1.11.09		B
36	1.11.02	1.11.08	G
37	1.11.02	1.11.08	B
38	1.11.14		F
39	1.11.14	1.11.08	A
40	1.11.18		F

## Key for ACT WorkKeys *Reading for Information* Sample Items

<b>Item Number</b>	<b>Assessment Objective</b>	<b>Correct Answer</b>
<b>Level 3</b>		
1	1.11.09	A
2	1.11.09	E
3	1.11.16	B
<b>Level 4</b>		
1	1.11.09	D
2	1.11.24	B
3	1.11.24	B
<b>Level 5</b>		
1	1.11.25	A
2	1.11.20	C
3	1.11.02	C
<b>Level 6</b>		
1	1.11.10	D
2	1.11.09	A
3	1.11.19	B
<b>Level 7</b>		
1	1.11.20	D
2	1.11.26	E
3	1.11.16	B

Prairie State  
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**Overview:  
The Mathematics Test**

## Mathematics Introduction

### What will be on the test?

The mathematics section of the Prairie State Achievement Examination consists of two components: ACT Mathematics, taken on Day 1, and ACT WorkKeys *Applied Mathematics*, taken on Day 2.

The items on both components are closely aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards (ILS) for mathematics. The two components assess problem-solving skills and critical thinking in mathematics.

### ACT Mathematics

#### (60 minutes, 60 multiple-choice questions)

Questions require the use of reasoning skills to solve practical problems in mathematics in six areas: pre-algebra (23%), elementary algebra (17%), intermediate algebra (15%), coordinate geometry (15%), plane geometry (23%), and trigonometry (7%).

Though all problems can be solved without using a calculator, certain types of calculators may be used during the test. However, other types of calculators are prohibited, and ACT regularly updates information about which ones are not allowed. For the latest information, visit [www.actstudent.org/faq/answers/calculator.html](http://www.actstudent.org/faq/answers/calculator.html) or call 800.498.6481 for a recorded message.

Computational skills and knowledge of basic formulas are assumed, but extensive computation and knowledge of complex formulas are not required. More detailed information about the problems and questions can be found in the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards, available online at [www.act.org/standard](http://www.act.org/standard).

### ACT WorkKeys *Applied Mathematics*

#### (45 minutes, 33 multiple-choice questions)

This component measures a student’s skill in using mathematical reasoning to solve work-related problems. Students set up and solve problems like those that actually occur in a workplace. Students may use a calculator; a formula sheet is provided. The questions in this component come in five levels of increasing difficulty.

More information about the problems and questions can be found online at [www.act.org/workkeys/assess/math](http://www.act.org/workkeys/assess/math).

### Keys and Assessment Framework

Sample ACT WorkKeys *Applied Mathematics* questions and a sample ACT Mathematics Test can be found in the two test preparation booklets: the *Overview and Preparation Guide for PSAE Day 2* and *Preparing for the ACT for PSAE Day 1* (Appendices A and B). Keys that give the correct answer for each multiple-choice item in the student PSAE mathematics sample materials and identify the assessment objective(s) covered by an item are on pages 21 through 23. The Illinois Mathematics Assessment Framework for PSAE grade 11, which contains descriptions of assessment objectives, is available on the ISBE website at [www.isbe.net/assessment/IAFIndex.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/IAFIndex.htm).

## Key for ACT Mathematics Sample Test

<b>Item Number</b>	<b>Assessment Objective</b>	<b>Secondary/ Alternative</b>	<b>Correct Answer</b>
1	8.11.14		A
2	8.11.06		F
3	6.11.17		E
4	10.11.04		J
5	6.11.17		C
6	8.11.02		K
7	8.11.16		E
8	6.11.13		H
9	8.11.01		A
10	7.11.03		J
11	9.11.05		D
12	10.11.10		K
13	8.11.16		B
14	8.11.06		F
15	8.11.19		C
16	6.11.06		J
17	7.11.03		B
18	9.11.15		J
19	8.11.06		D
20	7.11.04		J
21	8.11.01		E
22	9.11.22		G
23	8.11.04		B
24	8.11.09		H
25	8.11.01		A
26	6.11.16	6.11.02	G
27	9.11.12		B
28	8.11.07		H
29	8.11.16		E
30	9.11.09		K

**Key for ACT Mathematics Sample Test (continued)**

<b>Item Number</b>	<b>Assessment Objective</b>	<b>Secondary/ Alternative</b>	<b>Correct Answer</b>
31	9.11.01		E
32	10.11.07		G
33	8.11.08		D
34	8.11.18		F
35	6.11.17		D
36	8.11.20		F
37	7.11.03		B
38	7.11.06	7.11.03	G
39	9.11.09		C
40	7.11.03		G
41	8.11.15		B
42	9.11.19		F
43	10.11.01	10.11.07	D
44	9.11.02		H
45	7.11.03		A
46	6.11.18		J
47	9.11.05		C
48	9.11.10		H
49	8.11.17		B
50	8.11.15		F
51	6.11.18	8.11.06	C
52	8.11.06		J
53	8.11.18		E
54	8.11.22		K
55	8.11.21		C
56	9.11.19	7.11.03	J
57	9.11.19		E
58	8.11.04		G
59	8.11.18		C
60	8.11.19		F

## Key for ACT WorkKeys *Applied Mathematics* Sample Items

Item Number	Assessment Objective	Correct Answer
<b>Level 3</b>		
1	6.11.10	A
2	6.11.02	D
3	6.11.13	B
<b>Level 4</b>		
1	6.11.13	E
2	7.11.01	B
3	7.11.07	E
<b>Level 5</b>		
1	6.11.18	E
2	7.11.04	A
3	7.11.01	C
<b>Level 6</b>		
1	7.11.03	A
2	7.11.02	D
3	7.11.07	C
<b>Level 7</b>		
1	7.11.01	D
2	6.11.18	D
3	6.11.14	C

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**Overview:**  
**The Science Test**



## Science Introduction

### What will be on the test?

The science section of the Prairie State Achievement Examination consists of two components: ACT Science, taken on Day 1, and an ISBE-developed science test, taken on Day 2.

Test questions are distributed equally across the Illinois Learning Standards that cover science inquiry; the life, physical, and Earth and space sciences; and the relationship among science, technology, and society. Both components measure critical thinking skills—including interpretation, analysis, evaluation, reasoning, and problem solving—required in the natural sciences.

*The use of calculators is not permitted on either of the science tests administered as part of the PSAE.*

### **ACT Science**

#### **(35 minutes, 40 multiple-choice questions)**

The ACT Science Test presents seven sets of scientific information in the form of reading passages and data summaries, each followed by a series of multiple-choice questions. The content includes biology, chemistry, physics, and Earth and space sciences. More information about the passages and questions can be found in the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards, available online at [www.act.org/standard](http://www.act.org/standard).

### **ISBE-Developed Science**

#### **(40 minutes, 45 multiple-choice questions)**

The ISBE-developed science test presents scientific information in the form of short prompts, with each followed by one multiple-choice question. Test questions are distributed across the Illinois Learning Standards.

### **Keys and Assessment Framework**

Sample ISBE-developed science questions and a sample ACT Science Test can be found in the two test preparation booklets: the *Overview and Preparation Guide for PSAE Day 2* and *Preparing for the ACT* for PSAE Day 1 (Appendices A and B). Keys that give the correct answer for each multiple-choice item in the student PSAE science sample materials and identify the assessment objective covered by an item are on pages 26 and 27. The Illinois Science Assessment Framework for PSAE grade 11, which contains descriptions of assessment objectives, is available on the ISBE website at [www.isbe.net/assessment/IAFIndex.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/IAFIndex.htm).

**Key for ACT Science Sample Test**

<b>Item Number</b>	<b>Assessment Objective</b>	<b>Correct Answer</b>
1	11.11.01	D
2	11.11.01	J
3	11.11.01	B
4	11.11.01	J
5	11.11.01	C
6	11.11.01	F
7	11.11.01	D
8	11.11.01	G
9	11.11.01	A
10	11.11.01	H
11	11.11.01	C
12	11.11.01	F
13	11.11.01	B
14	11.11.01	H
15	11.11.01	A
16	11.11.01	G
17	12.11.47	D
18	11.11.01	F
19	11.11.01	B
20	11.11.01	J
21	11.11.01	C
22	12.7.52	J
23	11.11.01	A
24	12.11.78	H
25	11.11.01	B
26	11.11.01	G
27	11.11.01	C
28	12.11.80	G
29	11.11.01	B
30	11.11.01	H
31	11.11.01	C
32	11.11.01	G
33	11.11.01	A
34	12.11.58	J
35	12.11.50	A
36	11.11.01	G
37	11.11.01	A
38	11.11.01	F
39	11.11.01	C
40	11.11.01	J

## Key for ISBE-Developed Science Sample Items

Item Number	Assessment Objective	Correct Answer
1	12.11.21	A
2	12.11.36	A
3	12.11.09	D
4	12.11.23	B
5	12.11.92	D
6	12.11.12	B
7	12.11.15	B
8	12.11.31	D
9	12.7.34	A
10	12.11.33	D
11	12.11.50	A
12	12.11.39	B
13	12.11.47	D
14	12.11.58	C
15	12.11.57	B
16	12.11.62	C
17	12.11.87	D
18	12.7.72	B
19	12.11.83	B
20	12.11.102	B
21	12.11.77	B
22	12.7.79	A
23	12.7.79	B

Item Number	Assessment Objective	Correct Answer
24	12.11.106	B
25	12.11.79	B
26	13.4.08	C
27	13.11.04	B
28	12.11.78	A
29	12.11.102	A
30	12.11.62	B
31	12.11.81	B
32	12.11.79	B
33	12.11.102	C
34	12.11.76	B
35	13.11.01	D
36	12.11.97	D
37	12.11.28	A
38	12.11.103	B
39	13.11.09	A
40	11.11.06	A
41	12.11.95	D
42	13.11.01	C
43	12.11.56	A
44	13.11.09	A
45	12.11.36	C

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**Overview:  
The Writing Test**

## Writing Introduction

### What will be on the test?

The writing section of the Prairie State Achievement Examination consists of two components, both of which are taken on Day 1: ACT English and ACT Writing. ACT Writing requires students to produce an essay in response to a prompt question.

These components assess the Illinois Learning Standards (ILS) for writing, including the use of correct punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure and the ability to compose coherent writing and communicate for a variety of purposes.

### ACT English

#### (45 minutes, 75 multiple-choice questions)

The ACT English Test measures two aspects of standard written English:

1. 40 questions test conventions (punctuation, grammar and usage, and sentence structure)
2. 35 questions test rhetorical skills (strategy, organization, and style)

The test comprises five prose passages, each followed by several multiple-choice questions. Different types of passages are included so that a variety of skills are assessed. More information about the passages and questions can be found in the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards, available online at [www.act.org/standard](http://www.act.org/standard).

### ACT Writing

#### (30 minutes, one prompt question)

The ACT Writing Test consists of one writing prompt that briefly states an issue and describes two points of view on the issue. Students respond to a question about their position on the issue. (Students’ essay scores are not affected by the point of view they take on the issue.) More information about the ACT Writing test may be found in the *Educator’s Guide to the ACT Writing Test*, available online at [www.act.org/aap/writing/pdf/educator\\_guide.pdf](http://www.act.org/aap/writing/pdf/educator_guide.pdf).

### Key and Assessment Framework

A sample ACT English Test and sample ACT Writing Test can be found in the Day 1 test preparation booklet provided for students this year: *Preparing for the ACT* for PSAE Day 1 (Appendix B). A key that gives the correct answer for each multiple-choice item in the student PSAE writing sample materials and identifies the assessment objective covered by an item is on page 30. The assessment objective covered by the constructed-response portion of the PSAE writing test (i.e., the ACT Writing Test) is given at the bottom of page 30. The Illinois Writing Assessment Framework for PSAE grade 11, which contains descriptions of assessment objectives, is available on the ISBE website at [www.isbe.net/assessment/IAFIndex.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/IAFIndex.htm).

## Key for ACT English Sample Test

Item Number	Assessment Objective	Correct Answer
1	3.11.20	B
2	3.11.29	J
3	3.11.09	D
4	3.11.23	F
5	3.11.33	B
6	3.11.12	J
7	3.11.34	D
8	3.11.14	F
9	3.11.27	A
10	3.11.20	H
11	3.11.29	A
12	3.11.12	H
13	3.11.20	D
14	3.11.22	G
15	3.11.34	B
16	3.11.20	G
17	3.11.20	C
18	3.11.33	G
19	3.11.27	D
20	3.11.32	F
21	3.11.09	B
22	3.11.20	J
23	3.11.06	C
24	3.11.27	F
25	3.11.20	C
26	3.11.09	G
27	3.11.29	A
28	3.11.30	G
29	3.11.28	C
30	3.11.35	J
31	3.11.02	B
32	3.11.13	J
33	3.11.27	D
34	3.11.04	H
35	3.11.09	B
36	3.11.12	H
37	3.11.01	C
38	3.11.20	F

Item Number	Assessment Objective	Correct Answer
39	3.11.33	C
40	3.11.02	J
41	3.11.16	B
42	3.11.32	F
43	3.11.02	B
44	3.11.29	J
45	3.11.23	A
46	3.11.12	J
47	3.11.29	C
48	3.11.34	F
49	3.11.09	B
50	3.11.09	F
51	3.11.28	B
52	3.11.27	J
53	3.11.01	D
54	3.11.33	H
55	3.11.11	A
56	3.11.13	H
57	3.11.34	B
58	3.11.04	H
59	3.11.30	A
60	3.11.28	G
61	3.11.27	A
62	3.11.12	H
63	3.11.23	A
64	3.11.35	H
65	3.11.35	D
66	3.11.34	G
67	3.11.35	A
68	3.11.34	J
69	3.11.29	A
70	3.11.01	G
71	3.11.20	D
72	3.11.02	J
73	3.11.08	C
74	3.11.12	G
75	3.11.31	D

**The ACT Writing Test covers assessment objective 3.11.36.**

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**Appendices**

# Appendix A

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## ***Overview and Preparation Guide for PSAE Day 2***



## Appendix B

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# ***Preparing for the ACT*** **for PSAE Day 1**