



Montgomery Area Junior/Senior High School Pathways to Graduation

What are Keystone Exams?

Keystone Exams are end-of-course assessments designed to evaluate proficiency in academic content. Under PA state law, **students must demonstrate proficiency in Literature, Algebra I, and Biology in order to graduate**. Unsuccessful attempts at the keystones will result in students being assigned to remediation courses, district re-testing, and/or the required completion of one of the alternative pathways detailed in Act 158.

When are the exams?

Winter Keystone Testing Window ---- January 3-17, 2024

Spring Keystone Testing Window ---- May 13-24, 2024

What if a student does not score proficient?

Act 158 of 2018 (Act 158), signed into law by Governor Tom Wolf on October 24, 2018, provides alternative pathways to Pennsylvania's statewide requirement of attaining proficiency on the three end-of-course Keystone Exams (Algebra I, Literature, and Biology) for a student to meet the statewide graduation requirements. These state mandated requirements that are now fully in effect are an addition to the Montgomery Area School District's local graduation requirements.

Act 158 (Alternative Pathways)

Effective with the graduating class of 2023, students have the option to demonstrate postsecondary preparedness through one of four additional pathways that more fully illustrate college, career, and community readiness. Keystone Exams will continue as the statewide assessment Pennsylvania uses to comply with accountability requirements set forth in the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Students must take the Keystone Exams for purposes of federal accountability. Failure to do so will affect a Local Education Agency (LEA) and school's participation rate. If a student does not achieve proficiency on the Keystone Exams, an alternative pathway (below) exists for meeting state high school graduation requirements:

- Keystone Composite
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) Concentrator
- Alternative Assessment
- Evidence-Based

Each of the pathways and their options are detailed on page 2.

Montgomery Area Junior/Senior High School

Pathways to Graduation



Pathway 1: Keystone Proficiency

- Achieve proficient or advanced scoring on each Keystone Exam - Algebra I, Biology & Literature



Pathway 2: Keystone Composite

- Achieve at least 1 proficient or advanced Keystone Exam score and none of the three scores are below basic
- Composite Keystone score must be **4452** or greater



Pathway 3: Career and Technical Education

One of the following:

- Industry-based competency certification
- Likelihood of industry-based competency assessment success
- Readiness for continued engagement in Career and Technical Education (CTE) Concentrator program of study



Pathway 4: Alternative Assessment

One of the following:

- Meet or exceed any one of the established scores on one alternative assessment identified below:
ACT (21)
ASVAB AFQT (31)
PSAT/NMSQT (970)
SAT (1010)



Pathway 4: (continued) Alternative Assessment

...or **One** of the following:

- Attainment of 3 or higher on AP Exams related to each Keystone content area in which less than proficient
- Successful completion of dual enrollment course(s) related to each Keystone content area in which less than proficient
- Successful completion of a [pre-apprenticeship program](#)
- Acceptance into a four-year Institution of Higher Education (IHE) for college-level coursework



Pathway 5: Evidence-Based

One or more of these four bulleted items:

- Attainment of 3 or higher on any AP Exam
- Attainment of 630 or better on any SAT subject test
- Successful completion of any dual enrollment or postsecondary course
- [Industry-recognized credentialization](#)
- Acceptance into an other-than-four-year Institution of Higher Education (IHE) for college-level coursework

AND, no more than two of the following:

- Attainment of proficient or advanced on any Keystone Exam
- Successful completion of a [service-learning project](#)
 - Letter guaranteeing full-time employment or military enlistment
 - Completion of an internship, externship, or cooperative education program
 - Compliance with [NCAA Division II academic requirements](#)

Beginning with the Class of 2023, students must meet Act 158 Keystone graduation requirements through one of the five pathways listed above.

**For pathways 3, 4, and 5, in addition to the bulleted requirements, students must attain a grade of 70% or higher in the course corresponding to the Keystone Exam in which they were less than proficient.*