

# PA KEYSTONE EXAMS

What is the impact for the  
Otto-Eldred School District?

# PDE Chapter 4 Regulations

*Requirements beginning in the 2014-2015 school year  
(current 8<sup>th</sup> grade class):*

Successful completion of secondary level coursework in English Composition, Literature, Algebra I and Biology in which a Keystone Exam serves as the course final exam. A student's Keystone Exam score shall count as one-third of the final course grade. A school district or AVTS (including a charter school) may, at its discretion, elect to have the Keystone Exam count for more than one-third of the course grade. A school district or AVTS (including a charter school), at its discretion, may allow students who score at the advanced level on a particular Keystone Exam prior to taking the course to be granted course credit for the course without having to complete the course.

# PDE Chapter 4 Regulations

*Requirements beginning in the 2016-2017 school year (current 6<sup>th</sup> grade class):*

Effective with the 2016-2017 school year, History and Civics and Government (Appendix C) are added to the academic standards listed in subsection (b)(1)(iv) regarding requirements beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. Requirements listed in subsection (b)(1)(iv)(A) must include a determination of proficiency in *both* English Composition and Literature; *two of three* Mathematics (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II), *one of two* Sciences (Biology or Chemistry), and *one of three* Social Studies (American History, Civics and Government or World History).

# What does this mean?

For the current 8<sup>th</sup> grade class:

Students must pass (demonstrate proficiency in) Algebra I, Literature, English Composition and Biology.

The final exam for these courses will be a Keystone Exam. The KE will count for 1/3 of the final course average.

# What does this mean?

Starting with the current 6<sup>th</sup> grade class, students will be required to pass (demonstrate proficiency in) the following courses with Keystone Exams counting as 1/3 of final course average:

- Both English Composition & Literature
- 2 of 3 – Algebra, Algebra II and Geometry
- 1 of 2 – Biology and Chemistry
- 1 of 3 – American History, Civics & Government and World History

# Current Requirements at Otto-Eldred Jr Sr HS

- Final Exams count as  $\frac{1}{9}$  of final course average
- Students must earn 4 credits in each of the 4 core areas
- Students must demonstrate proficiency (through PSSA's) in Reading, Math and Writing or take a PSSA recovery course.

# Keystone Exams

- Administered three times per year (late summer, January, May)
- Scores reported three ways: scaled score, percent score and proficiency level (below basic, basic, proficient, advanced)
- Below basic scores will not count toward 1/3 of final course average – counted as zero
- PDE has provided suggested curriculum that aligns with KE and PA academic standards

# Keystone Exams

- Students may take the KE more than once, and may take only part of the exam on a retake
- Students not able to pass a course by taking the KE may be offered a Bridge Project to replace the KE.
- Keystone Exam for ALGEBRA I will be administered in the Spring of 2011 for any 8<sup>th</sup> grade student taking Algebra I
- Districts must offer remediation in any course in which a KE is offered
- PDE is preparing diagnostic tests to help prepare students for the Keystone Exams

# Scenarios

Assuming a passing grade is 65%:

A student with a 4-nine week average of 80% will need a 12% on the KE to pass the course, but remember *below basic* scores will count as a zero toward final course averages.

So, a student with a 4-nine week average of 100% would still pass the course with at 67% by receiving a zero on the KE.

# Recommendations

- 65% will remain as the passing score
- In 2011, all 8<sup>th</sup> grade will take the KE in Algebra *and* the local final exam
- Students *must* take the KE in any course in which it is offered and the KE will be counted as 1/3 of final grade in all courses
- Until 2015, we may have a few courses with mix of students. Students not eligible to take KE will take local final exams.

# Recommendations

- Starting with students in the class of 2015 and 2016 all KE-eligible courses will have final exams count as 1/3 of final exam. Final course averages will be consistent by graduation class. (Example: next year's biology classes)
- The English Composition KE will be taken after the 9<sup>th</sup> grade year, the Literature KE will be taken after the 10<sup>th</sup> grade year

# Questions

- Will my child still need to take the PSSA as a junior?
- Will AYP calculations be affected?
- What will happen with students that move in from other PA districts or other states as upper classmen?
- How will this affect GPA's and class ranking?
- How will the tests be administered and who will correct them?