

School Schedule and Site Options for Administration of the 2014 Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE)

September 2013

This document suggests ways schools might be able to adjust their schedules to meet PSAE Standard Testing Requirements. Options 1 – 5 may be used to address challenges that arise because a school typically conducts mixed-grade classes. Option 6 allows school districts and other eligible applicants to modify the required five clock-hours of instruction or study halls for all grade levels in a school, provided that they have banked sufficient time in advance of the PSAE testing days. Option 7 allows the PSAE to be administered at an authorized off-site location. Option 8 addresses how PSAE testing can be accomplished if a school's spring break dates conflict with the April test dates. Option 9 addresses procedures for testing students who attend locations other than the established PSAE test site (e.g., charter school campuses, serving schools that have chosen not to be a PSAE test site).

Options 1 – 5 (Schedule Adjustments)

1. Conduct PSAE testing in a large, isolated area of the school building and maintain classes for non-testing students in other areas of the building.
2. Conduct PSAE testing at the school and arrange for either study halls at the school or activities off site (e.g., a work-study experience or field trip) for non-testing students.
3. For districts with multiple high schools, conduct PSAE testing in one building and a full schedule for non-testing students in another building. (A school planning to test at another school's building would need to submit a proposal for off-site testing, as described in Option 7.)
4. Hold a teachers' institute on PSAE testing days, with teachers who are involved in testing join institute activities after completing their PSAE duties.
5. Change (or rearrange the schedule of) local assessments conducted by the school or district so all students are being tested in the school on PSAE testing days.

Option 6 (Modification of the Five-Clock-Hour Requirement)

Eligible applicants previously had to submit a request under the "waiver law" (Section 2-3.25g of the School Code) asking for a modification of the five-clock-hour requirement on PSAE testing days. (Eligible applicants are: school districts; independent authorities established under Section 2-3.25f of the School Code; joint agreements made up of school districts (i.e., special or vocational education cooperatives); Regional Superintendents of Schools applying on behalf of schools and programs operated by them; and Intermediate Service Centers (ISCs) applying on behalf of alternative schools established pursuant to Article 13A of the School Code.) However, Public Act 94-438, effective August 4, 2005, made the following change to Section 18-8.05 of the School Code:

"(i) On the days when the Prairie State Achievement Examination is administered under subsection (c) of Section 2-3.64 of this Code, the day of attendance for a pupil whose school day must be shortened to accommodate required testing procedures may be less than 5 clock hours and shall be counted towards the 176 days of actual pupil attendance required under Section 10-19 of this Code, **provided that a sufficient number of minutes of school work in excess of 5 clock hours are first completed on other school days to compensate for the loss of school work on the examination days."**

Therefore, districts and other applicants who need to modify the five-clock-hour requirement on PSAE testing days to accommodate required testing procedures may now do so **without going through the waiver process**, provided that they have banked sufficient time in advance of the PSAE testing days.

Option 7 (Off-Site Testing)

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) expects that nearly all high schools will be able to make arrangements to administer the PSAE in their buildings. However, a school with exceptional circumstances that cannot meet all PSAE Standard Testing Requirements may submit a proposal for off-site testing to ACT State Testing by **Friday, December 13, 2013**. *The established PSAE test site must receive written authorization from ACT before off-site locations may be used.* ACT emails written authorization to the PSAE Test Supervisor with a cc to the school principal and Test Accommodations Coordinator if applicable.

A proposal for Off-Site Administration of the PSAE must be completed online at ACT's website: <http://www.act.org/offsite>. Please contact ACT at <http://www.act.org/aap/state/contact.html> or by calling 800/553-6244 x2800 if you need assistance.

After testing is completed, a school will need to either return students to their school building for the afternoon session or provide an appropriate activity at the approved off-site location that allows the five-clock-hour requirement for students to be met. (This would not be necessary if the five-clock-hour requirement is modified under Option 6.)

Option 8 (Testing All Students on the May Makeup Test Dates)

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

Schools scheduled to be closed for spring break during the initial PSAE test dates (April 23 and/or 24, 2014) will be allowed to test all students on the makeup test dates (May 7 and/or 8, 2014). Principals will be asked by PSAE contractors to indicate whether their spring break dates conflict with the initial test dates and confirm that they need standard time testing materials for the makeup test dates only.

Option 9 (Testing Students Who Attend a Facility that is Not an Established PSAE Test Site)

In *most* cases, serving schools (e.g., IL School for the Deaf, IL School for the Visually Impaired) either (1) agree to be an established PSAE test site and test the grade 11 students they serve or (2) make arrangements for the grade 11 students they serve to return to their home schools for PSAE testing.

In some cases, however, a serving school is not established as a PSAE test site, even when it is neither feasible nor appropriate for some students they serve to return to their home schools to test. In order to arrange PSAE testing for these students at an agreed upon location, the student's home school must contact ACT at 800/553-6244 x1678 or via email at psae@act.org for assistance. *The established PSAE test site must receive written authorization from ACT before this option may be used.* ACT emails written authorization to the PSAE Test Supervisor with a cc to the school principal and Test Accommodations Coordinator if applicable.