

April 12, 2021

Dear Middle School Parents/Guardians:

The U.S. Department of Education issued new guidance regarding assessment administration for the 2020-2021 school year. The South Park School District will administer the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) during the dates listed below:

SOUTH PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL		
<i>Tests will be administered in the morning until approximately 10:15 a.m. The remainder of the day will operate on the building's 2-hour delay schedule. All Cyber Academy students will follow the remote 2-hour delay schedule provided by their team of teachers.</i>		
May 3, 4, 5, 2021	English Language Arts	Grades 5, 6, 7, and 8
May 10, 11, 2021	Mathematics	Grades 5, 6, 7, and 8
May 17 and 19, 2021	Science	Grade 8 only

The administration of the PSSA this spring will provide the district with crucial data on student performance as we head into the summer and prepare for the 2021-2022 school year.

All students in grades 5-8 will take the English Language Arts assessment that consists of three sections ranging from 50 to 80 minutes in length. All students in grades 5-8 will take the Mathematics assessment that consists of two sections ranging from 45 to 95 minutes in length. Science assessments will be given to all students in grade 8 and consist of two sections ranging from 50 to 80 minutes.

All students, in-person or South Park Cyber Academy, will be required to attend in-person on the scheduled testing days to take the PSSA. If your child is currently a cyber academy student, please be advised that they will take the tests with their cyber academy classmates. Transportation will be the responsibility of parents/guardians during testing for remote learners.

SPMS Report Times for Cyber Students Testing <i>(Students will enter and depart from FRONT office entrance)</i>			
Dates	Grades	Arrival Time	Anticipated Pickup Time
5/3-5/5	5-8	8:05-8:10 a.m.	11:00 a.m.
5/10-5/11	5-8	8:05-8:10 a.m.	11:00 a.m.
5/17 & 5/19	8	8:05-8:10 a.m.	11:00 a.m.

*Cyber students will report to the classroom of their assigned homeroom teacher and test in the designated room with other cyber students and a cyber homeroom teacher.

Students can only be excluded (opt-out) from the PSSAs for religious reasons, which would require a written request to the Superintendent's office. The written request must be received by **Friday, April 16, 2021** and you must also reply [using this online form](#) by **Friday, April 16** so the school can account for any opt-out students. Appointments can be scheduled to review the test per Pennsylvania Department of Education guidelines on Friday, April 23, 2021, by contacting the school counselor. All students are strongly encouraged to participate in the PSSA and to put forth their best effort.

In-person students opting out of PSSA testing may report at the regular arrival time by car or by bus, but will be required to work silently in a designated area for the duration of the daily test sessions (approximately **2.5** hours each test day). If alternate transportation arrangements can be provided by the family, in-person students should register attendance virtually and then report to school on testing days at the end of the testing window. **Arrival should be 10:50-11:00 a.m.**, and students will continue the academic day with their peers.

As mandated by the state, during assessments, students are prohibited from having cell phones, smartphones, and other electronic devices. These devices will be collected as students enter the testing site. If there is a breach with possession and/or use of an electronic device, disciplinary action will be taken.

If you have any further questions, please contact your child's school counselor, Mr. Stoicovy, (chris.stoicovy@sparksd.org or ext. 3005) or the middle school principal, Mrs. Como (lynn.como@sparksd.org or ext. 3003).

As always, thank you for your continued support.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynn C. Como". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L".

Lynn C. Como