



Illinois State Board of Education

August 27, 2007

2007-08 Guidance Document

GRADUATION AND THE PRAIRIE STATE ACHIEVEMENT EXAMINATION

*This document is intended to provide non-regulatory guidance on the subject matter listed above.
For specific questions, please contact the person(s) identified in the document.*

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Illinois State Board of Education

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State Superintendent of Education

Date: August 27, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: High School District Superintendents
Unit District Superintendents
Regional Superintendents
ISC Executive Directors

FROM: Joyce Zurkowski, Division Administrator,
Student Assessment Division

SUBJECT: 2007-08 Guidance – Graduation and
the Prairie State Achievement Examination

This memorandum provides guidance for implementing Public Act 93-857 – **Prairie State Achievement Examination as a Condition of Graduation** – during the current school year. *Please share this information with building principals and directors of guidance who are responsible for maintaining school student records and helping students register to take the ACT.* As necessary, the Illinois State Board of Education will issue new guidance next summer for the 2008-09 school year and beyond.

In August 2004, Governor Blagojevich signed Senate Bill 2769 (Public Act 93-857) to require all students to take the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) as a condition of receiving a regular high school diploma, unless a student is exempted because

- the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) developed under Article 14 of the School Code identifies the PSAE as inappropriate, even with accommodations—and the student is eligible to take the Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA) instead,
- the student is exempt due to his/her lack of English language proficiency—and the student is eligible to take the accommodated Limited English Proficient (LEP) student academic content assessment instead, or
- the student is enrolled in an Adult and Continuing Education program as defined in the Adult Education Act—and the student is not dually enrolled in his/her local school district.

A regular high school diploma is a diploma awarded by a local school district. The term does not include

- diplomas awarded through any alternative education program pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/2-3.81 and 23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 215,
- high school equivalency certificates, or
- honorary diplomas or certificates of completion issued by local school districts.

For the current school year, a student has taken the PSAE if the student

- was present for at least one day of spring PSAE testing while in grade 11,
- participated in the fall PSAE retake while in grade 12, or
- took the ACT while in grade 10, 11, or 12 (on a national ACT test date or through special testing) and earned reportable scores.

Note: Spring 2008 PSAE testing is for grade 11 students only. Students who are classified as being in grade 12 at the time of spring testing may not participate in that administration of the PSAE.

Acceptable Proof That a Student Has Taken the PSAE

Grade 11 or Grade 12 Retake Testing

For grade 11 testing in the spring or for the grade 12 retake in the fall, a student has taken the PSAE if—for the relevant administration—

The student's name appears on one or more of the following:

- PSAE School Roster
- ACT High School List Report
- ACT High School Report (for the individual student)
- ACT score label (on the student's transcript), or

The student provides a copy of one or both of the following:

- PSAE Student Report
- ACT Student Report.

(Note: A student is also considered to have taken the PSAE if the student's name appears on a PSAE School Roster of best score results OR on a PSAE best score label on the student's transcript.)

A student who is present for at least one day of testing in the spring will be listed on a PSAE School Roster and receive a PSAE Student Report, even if no Day 1 (ACT), Day 2, or PSAE scores are reported for the student.

A student's name will appear on a PSAE School Roster for the grade 12 retake even if no PSAE scores are earned. However, a student must earn at least one PSAE score to receive a PSAE Student Report for the grade 12 retake.

For the retake, only the names of students who had a Day 1 answer folder and/or a Day 2 answer document returned for scoring will appear on a PSAE School Roster. If a student earns no reportable ACT scores when only a Day 1 answer folder is returned for scoring, the student's name will not appear on a PSAE School Roster.

ACT (Day 1) Testing Only

Students who did not take the PSAE while in grade 11 and are not able to participate in the grade 12 retake may receive a regular high school diploma this year by taking just Day 1 of the PSAE (the ACT) on an ACT national test date or through special testing.

A student who uses this option will need to provide a copy of his/her ACT Student Report for the relevant administration if—for that administration—the student's name does not appear on

- an available ACT High School List Report or ACT High School Report (for the individual student) or
- an ACT score label (on the student's transcript).

Students may

- use ACT scores that were previously earned while in grade 10, 11, or 12 or
- register to take the ACT this school year so they can earn ACT scores.

Students who need to take the ACT must register and provide information from a pink *PSAE Day 1 ACT Voucher* (which is different than a *PSAE Grade 12 Retake Voucher*). See "Distribution of PSAE Day 1 Vouchers" below. This voucher may be used for any remaining 2007-08 ACT national test date beyond October (see schedule below) or for special testing this school year, depending on needed accommodations.

<u>ACT National Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u> (voucher pays this fee)	<u>Late Registration</u> (late fee required)
December 8, 2007	November 2, 2007	November 3–15, 2007
February 9, 2008	January 4, 2008	January 5–18, 2008
April 12, 2008	March 7, 2008	March 8–21, 2008
June 14, 2008	May 9, 2008	May 10–23, 2008

Most students will receive their ACT score reports four to six weeks after testing. Students who wait until June to test should be advised that results will not be available until sometime in July.

Exceptions During the 2007-08 School Year

The following students will not be required to take the PSAE to receive a regular high school diploma during the 2007-08 school year:

- Students classified as being in grade 12 who took (or would have been eligible to take) the IAA or the accommodated Limited English Proficient (LEP) student academic content assessment in grade 11.
- Students classified as being in grade 12 who were granted (or would have been eligible for) a medical or homebound exemption from grade 11 PSAE testing.
- Students classified as being in grade 12 who were not tested while in grade 11 because they were in jail or a locked facility or because they resided in or attended a facility located outside the state or outside the country. This includes Illinois students who were in foreign exchange programs.

- Students classified as being in grade 12 who enroll in a public school district on or after May 1, 2007, and transferred in from another country or state or, just prior to enrolling, were home schooled or attended a private/parochial school.

Note: Students who did not take the PSAE in grade 11 because they were hospitalized or homebound *and whose districts did not indicate they were medically or homebound exempt*, were suspended from a public school, or were attending a school that was not approved to serve as a PSAE test site at the time the PSAE was given are not excused from taking the PSAE for the purpose of receiving a regular high school diploma this school year.

Students Who Attend Alternative Programs and Schools

Students who are administratively transferred to an alternative school program created under Article 13A of the School Code (the Safe Schools Law) or who participate in a program funded under Article 13B of the School Code (the Alternative Learning Opportunities Law) must take the PSAE. The PSAE scores these students earn are to be reported to and counted at the home high school they attended (or would have attended) had they not been transferred to a safe school program or, in the case of students attending an alternative learning opportunities program, the home school they attended (or would have attended or still do attend).

Students who attend an alternative school created and operated by a Regional Superintendent of Schools under Section 18-8.05 of the School Code must take the PSAE if they 1) are dually enrolled in a local school district and an alternative school and 2) will be receiving a regular high school diploma from the district. The PSAE scores these students earn are to be reported to and counted at an identified home school in the district.

Distribution of PSAE Day 1 Vouchers

High school and unit district superintendents will receive the pink PSAE Day 1 ACT Vouchers that grade 12 students may use to register to take the ACT if they have not previously earned ACT scores while in grade 10, 11, or 12. In mid October 2007, ACT will send an initial supply of vouchers in a mailing addressed to each superintendent by name (see attached sample voucher). A reorder form that can be used to request additional quantities of vouchers will be included in the mailing. The vouchers for City of Chicago School District 299 students will be sent to that district's Chief Officer of Research, Evaluation, and Accountability.

District superintendents are responsible for determining whether students have taken the PSAE, informing students of the voucher program, and distributing vouchers to eligible students. District superintendents are also responsible for monitoring the one-time use of vouchers by grade 12 students.

Questions

Questions about this guidance should be directed to Gayle Johnson of my staff at 217/782-4823 or gjohnson@isbe.net. This memorandum will be posted on the ISBE Web site at www.isbe.net/assessment/psae.htm.

Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) Day 1 Voucher
For a National Test Date:
December 8, 2007; February 9, 2008; April 12, 2008; or June 14, 2008

This one-time PSAE Day 1 ACT Voucher is available to grade 12 Illinois public school students whose districts determine they have not previously taken the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) and need to take Day 1 (the ACT) to receive a regular high school diploma.

The following conditions apply to using this voucher:

- You may REGISTER ONLY ONCE with a voucher for the December 8, 2007; February 9, 2008; April 12, 2008; or June 14, 2008, National Test Date.
- The voucher covers the cost of **basic registration** for the ACT (\$30.00 basic fee), including reports to your high school and up to four college choices (if valid codes are provided when you register).
- This voucher may NOT be used to pay any of the following fees: ACT Writing Test, the late registration fee, additional college code choices, other services, test date change, test center change, or the standby testing fee. If payment of the late or standby fee is required, scores will not be reported until ACT receives payment from the student.
- If you choose the ACT Plus Writing test option, you must pay the additional \$14.50 for the ACT Writing Test.
- You have used the voucher once you register, even if you do not test. If you wish to move your registration to a different test date, you must pay all required fees (e.g., test date change, late registration).
- No refunds will be made to students who have already paid the registration fee, even though they would have been eligible for a voucher.
- Altered or photocopied vouchers are not valid.

STUDENT DIRECTIONS:

- **If registering on the Web**, enter the serial number from the upper right corner of this voucher on the payment screen. To complete your registration, mail the completed and signed voucher to:
ACT Waiver/Voucher Confirmation, PO Box 4073, Iowa City, IA 52243.
- **If registering by mail**, enter the serial number from the upper right corner of this voucher in Block W of the registration folder. You must return the completed and signed voucher WITH your completed registration folder.
- **If requesting Special Testing**, return the completed and signed voucher WITH your completed request.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENT: Print the information below and **personally** sign the certification statement.

PLEASE PRINT

Student's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT: *I have gridded my home high school code in Block L on the registration folder. I understand that ACT is authorized to change the code to match the high school designated by the local school district authorizing my use of this voucher and will report ACT scores to that school. I understand and agree to all stated conditions for the use of this voucher.*

Student's Signature _____
(Do NOT print)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DISTRICT OFFICIAL: Print the information below and **personally** sign the certification statement. Use the correct ACT high school code for the student's home high school. This code must also be provided on the student's registration.

Home High School Code

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(Required)

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT: *I certify that the student named on this form is enrolled at the home high school whose code is listed above and, to the best of my knowledge, is eligible for a voucher.*

District Official's Signature _____

District Official's Title _____

School Name _____

Official's Phone _____ / _____ ext. _____

This voucher is provided by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to grade 12 public school students for the purpose of meeting the requirements of Illinois Public Act 93-857.

(Valid for the December 2007, February 2008, April 2008, and June 2008 test dates only.)

This voucher is valid ONLY if properly completed, personally signed by both the student and district official, and returned to ACT. All published deadlines apply.