

Linking School and Family



THE LINK

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Helping Your Child toward Success on the PSSA and Beyond

P-S-S-A...four letters that can sometimes spell anxiety for both parents and students. PSSA stands for **Pennsylvania System of School Assessment**. The annual PSSA are standards-based assessments used to indicate what your child has learned based upon Pennsylvania standards and if your child is proficient in the subject area.

Tips to Help Your Child Prepare for the State Assessments

Throughout the Year:

- ✓ Make sure your child gets plenty of sleep, eats properly, and arrives to school on time.
- ✓ Encourage your child to Read! Read! Read! Reading is a major link to academic success!
- ✓ Keep the school calendar handy and check the district portal to plan family trips and avoid the dates scheduled for the assessments in Warwick.
- ✓ Talk with your child's teacher often to see what you can do at home to support the work in school.
- ✓ Praise your child for working hard and for things they do well.
- ✓ Set times each day for study and homework.
- ✓ Ask about homework and check to see that it is complete.
- ✓ Give your child a quiet, well-lit, comfortable place to study.

The Day of the Assessment:

- ✓ Make sure that your child is well rested and eats breakfast.
- ✓ See that your child arrives at school on time and is relaxed.
- ✓ Comfort counts! Send in a sweater if it is a cool day. Dress in layers for a warmer day.
- ✓ Encourage your child to do the best work possible and to keep a positive attitude.
- ✓ Encourage your child to listen and read carefully to all test-taking directions and to always ask questions if the directions are unclear.
- ✓ Remind your child not to spend too much time on any one item.

Resources for PSSA:

http://www.pde.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/pennsylvania_system_of_school_assessment_%28pssa%29/8757/resource_materials/507610

FYI...Important PSSA Testing Dates:

Reading & Math Administration Window (Grades 3-8, & 11): April 7 - April 16, 2010

Writing Administration Window (Grades 5, 8, & 11): April 19 - 23, 2010

Science Administration Window (Grades 4, 8, & 11): April 26 - April 30, 2010

4-Sight Window:

Reading and Math Administration and Scoring Window (Grades 3-6):

February 22-March 5 and May 10-May 21

Homework is Valuable!!

Checklist for Helping Your Child with Homework ... Show That You Think Education and Homework Are Important

- ✓ *Do you set a regular time every day for homework?*
- ✓ *Does your child have the papers, books, pencils, and other things needed to do assignments?*
- ✓ *Does your child have a fairly quiet place to study with lots of light?*
- ✓ *Do you set a good example by reading and writing yourself?*
- ✓ *Do you stay in touch with your child's teachers?*

The value of homework extends beyond school. Completing homework can help children develop wholesome habits and attitudes. Homework can help parents learn about their children's education and communicate both with their children and the school. It can teach children to work independently; encourage self-discipline and responsibility; and encourage a love of learning. Homework allows students to review and practice what they've learned; get ready for the next day's class; learn to use resources such as libraries and reference materials; and explore subjects more fully than time may permit in the classroom. Homework can bring parents and educators closer together. Parents, who supervise homework and work with their children on assignments, learn about their children's education and about the school. Homework should be a positive experience and encourage children to learn.

~How to Help: Show You Think Education and Homework Are Important~

Children need to know that their parents and adults close to them feel homework has value. If they know their parents care, children have a reason to finish assignments and turn them in on time. There is much that you can do to show that you support education and homework.

~Set a Regular Time~

Finding a regular time for homework helps children complete assignments. The best schedule is one that works for your child and your family. What works well in one household may not work in another. Of course, a good schedule depends in part on your child's age, as well as individual needs. For instance, one youngster may work best in the afternoon after an hour of play, and another may be more efficient after dinner (although late at night, when children are tired, is seldom a good time).

~Pick a Place~

A study area should have lots of light; supplies close by, and be fairly quiet. A study area doesn't have to be fancy. A desk in the bedroom is nice, but for many youngsters the kitchen table or a corner of the living room works just fine. Your child may enjoy decorating a special study corner. A plant, a brightly colored container to hold pencils, and some favorite artwork taped to the walls can make study time more pleasant.

~Remove Distractions~

Turn off the television and discourage social telephone calls during homework time. (A call to a classmate about an assignment may, however, be helpful.) Some youngsters work well with quiet background music, but loud noise from the stereo is not OK.

~Provide Supplies and Identify Resources~

For starters, collect pencils, pens, erasers, writing paper, an assignment book, and a dictionary. Other things that might be helpful include glue, a stapler, paper clips, maps, a calculator, a pencil sharpener, tape, scissors, a ruler, index cards, a thesaurus, and an almanac. Keep these items together in one place if possible. If you can't provide your child with needed supplies, check with the teacher, school guidance counselor, or principal about possible sources of assistance. For books and other information resources, check with the school library or local public library. Some libraries have homework centers designed especially to assist children with school assignments (there may even be tutors and other kinds of individual assistance).

~Set a Good Example~

Children are more likely to study if they see you reading, writing, and doing things that require thought and effort on your part. Talk with your child about what you're reading and writing even if it's something as simple as making the grocery list. Tell them about what you do at work.

~Show an Interest~

Make time to take your child to the library to check out materials needed for homework (and for fun too), and read with your child as often as you can. Talk about school and learning activities in family conversations. Ask your child what was discussed in class that day. If he doesn't have much to say, try another approach. For example, ask your child to read aloud a story he wrote or discuss the results of a science experiment.