



Assessment of Civic Knowledge (Act 35) Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Act 35?

[Act 35 of 2018 \(section 1605.1 of the Pennsylvania School Code\)](#) requires school entities to administer at least once to students during grades 7-12 a locally developed assessment of United States history, government and civics that includes the nature, purpose, principles and structure of United States constitutional democracy, the principles, operations and documents of United States government and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

The Act defines a “school entity” as a school district, area career and technical center, intermediate unit, charter school, cyber charter school or regional charter school.

2. What are the Act 35 assessment requirements?

Each school entity is required to determine the form of the assessment and the manner in which the assessment shall be administered. The school entity must administer the assessment at the conclusion of the course of study required under section 1605 of the Pennsylvania School Code (24 P.S. § 16-1605) or at the conclusion of another related course or instructional unit. The school entity may use the [United States Citizenship and Immigration Services Test](#) to satisfy the requirements.

Students who achieve a perfect score on the assessment should be awarded a [certificate of recognition](#), developed by the Department of Education (PDE) and available on the [PDE website](#).

3. Can the assessment be a Project-Based Assessment (PBA)?

Yes. A school entity may meet the Act 35 requirement utilizing a locally developed PBA that is aligned to Pennsylvania’s Civics standards, which can be found [here](#). Once on the page, click on “PA Academic Standards” off to the left and scroll down.

4. Who establishes the passing score? What happens if students do not pass the civics assessment?

While the official U.S. Citizenship test requires a passing score of 60%, Act 35 allows the school entity to establish the passing score for purposes of complying with Act 35.

Act 35 does not require students to pass the exam; however, the school entity may, but is not required to, re-test a failing student.

5. Are English Learners required to take the Act 35 assessment?

Yes. English Learners are required to take the assessment. The only exemption is for students with an individualized education program (IEP). A student with an IEP is not required to take the assessment if the provisions of the student’s IEP indicate otherwise.



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6. May a school entity translate the Act 35 assessment to another language and/or offer accommodations for English Learners?

Whether a school entity offers a translated assessment is a local decision. School entities are encouraged to use any/all the accommodations students receive in their classroom instruction for other local assessments.

7. What data must school entities submit to PDE relative to their local Act 35 assessments?

PDE requires reporting from each school entity at the conclusion of each school year via the Future Ready Comprehensive Planning Portal (FRCPP). The reporting requirements include:

- Type of the assessment administered;
- Total number of students who took the assessment;
- Total number of students who attained a passing grade on the assessment;
- Grade level or levels in which the assessment was administered;
- Course or courses in which the assessment was administered; and
- Number of students scoring 100% on the assessment.

School entities report prior year Act 35 data in the Future Ready Comprehensive Planning Portal (FRCPP) each fall.

8. Are Career and Technical Centers (CTC) and Intermediate Units (IU) required to comply with Act 35?

Comprehensive CTCs must comply with Act 35 since they provide civics instruction to their students; part time CTCs that do not provide civics instruction are exempt from Act 35 assessment and reporting.

Likewise, if an IU provides civics instruction to its students, the IU would need to administer an assessment and report data to PDE.

9. How does a school entity address students who, for various reasons, did not take the assessment?

Act 35 of 2018 requires *all* students to take the assessment. The only exemption is for students with an IEP, if the provisions of the student's IEP indicate otherwise. For students who did not participate during the regularly scheduled time, school entities should offer a make-up exam before the conclusion of the school year.



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10. What reporting requirements exist for transfer students?

School entities only report students who were enrolled in and took the test in their school entity at the time of the assessment.

11. What requirements exist for charter schools and cyber charter schools?

Any charter school or cyber charter school that has a grade 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, or 12 must comply with the requirements of Act 35 of 2018.

12. Is there a reporting requirement if a school entity failed to administer the assessment?

Yes. If a school entity failed to administer the assessment, the school entity still must report Act 35 data to PDE. The school entity should enter zeroes in the appropriate fields in the FRCPP.

13. Are school entities required to post assessment results on their website?

No. A school entity is not required to post results on its website; however, State-wide disaggregated results by LEA will be posted on the SAS website [here](#).

14. If students took the Act 35 civics exam in their respective social studies course (e.g., Economics, Political Systems, or Problems in Democracy), how is this reported?

The school entity will report each course separately. For courses not listed, the option to “add a course” is available.

15. Why can't I update the Chief School Administrator information on the Profile page?

The Chief School Administrator information that appears on the Profile page is pulled directly from EdNA. If the information is incorrect or out of date, the EdNAV2 updater will need to update the information along with any required paperwork in the EdNAV2 system. Once the corrected information appears on the public side of EdNA, you can refresh the Profile Data by clicking on the “Refresh Profile Data” button at the top of that page. More information can be found [here](#).

16. Why is the Chief School Administrator unable to sign-off?

The Civic Knowledge Survey pulls its profile information from EdNA. If the email address listed in EdNA is different from the email address the user has in MyPDESuite, the system will not allow the Chief School Administrator to sign-off. The plan also will need to be assigned to the Chief School Administrator in the ADMIN area of the FRCPP along with Viewer, Writer, Sign-off, and Submitter permission. For more information [click here](#).



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17. Why am I unable to submit the plan?

To submit any plan or report in the Future Ready Comprehensive Planning Portal, the plan must be assigned to you in the ADMIN area of the FRCPP along with the submitter permission. Plans should only be submitted by the Chief School Administrator. More information on accessing the Future Ready Comprehensive Planning Portal can be found [here](#).

If you have further questions please reach out to Don McCrone at dmccrone@pa.gov or 717.783.6902.