

2022-23 provincial achievement tests

Changes for the 2022-23 school year

In June 2022, the answers to provincial achievement tests (PATs) were posted on social media, meaning students who had not yet taken the tests were able to see the answers, and these kinds of security breaches must be taken seriously. Going forward, all students will write provincial achievement tests at the same time so that we can avoid further security breaches and ensure every student is treated equally and fairly.

Since 2018-19, school authorities have had the flexibility to administer provincial achievement tests to different groups of students over the course of several consecutive days, but the recent breaches necessitate a more secure approach. There were fixed dates for all provincial achievement tests prior to 2018-19, and the government is returning to this approach that has been used in the past. The results of provincial achievement tests help school boards identify where students need more help, and it is a shared responsibility to protect the integrity of these tests for the benefit of our students.

Requests for alternative dates to write PATs

This summer's PAT breaches reinforce the need to ensure test security, and one important way to achieve that is for students to write tests at the same time. Requests for alternate dates will only be considered if one of the following conditions is met:

- the school or school authority follows an alternate calendar where the school year ends before PATs are to be administered;
 - If a school authority calendar has its last operational day with students during the time when PATs are being administered, then at least one or more PATs will not be written and the school authority would need to apply to write those PATs on an alternative date.
- there are extenuating and unforeseen local circumstances preventing the administration of the tests (e.g. wildfires, school building closure due to mechanical failure, etc.).

To help ensure fairness across the province, schools and school authorities will unfortunately not be eligible for alternate dates due to school activities, athletic sporting

events, field trips, professional development days and other such local events. The government has posted a [general information bulletin](#) on alberta.ca, which includes a deadline by which schools and school authorities must submit their request. Schools approved for alternate writing dates will be required to have their students write their PATs online in order to streamline the administration process and increase test security.

Results and data from the June PATs

The breaches occurred near the end of the administration window, which means the government still has viable data from tens of thousands of students. Alberta Education is thoroughly analyzing the data and identifying all of the anomalies that occurred as a result of the security breaches. Alberta Education has identified which test questions were compromised and on which dates, and we are working to separate and remove that data. As a result of the security breaches, more time is needed to analyze the data and the release of results will be delayed.

The Grade 6 and Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Test detailed school and authority reports will be available by October 21, followed by multi-year reports by November 4 on Stakeholder File Exchange (SFX). Individual Student Profiles (ISPs) will be posted to the Provincial Approach to Student Information (PASI) system by October 31.

Key facts

- The test administration schedule will return to pre-set fixed administration dates for all Grade 6 & 9 PATs.
- Schedules will be similar to pre-2017 with a few minor differences (e.g. Mathematics PATs now have two parts, and students now have up to two times the allotted time to write tests).
- Like for diploma exam schedules, drafts for two subsequent school years will be included in the General Information Bulletin.
- Additional test forms will be administered in subjects that were most impacted by security breaches in 2021-22.

Background

- Alberta Education was notified of security breaches on June 17th involving the following Grade 9 PATs: English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.
- The department subsequently completed an analysis of the data using Anomalous Response Patterns (ARP) to

determine the impact of these security breaches on student performance.

- Evidence from the analysis indicates that the student results were most impacted by these security breaches over the last three days of the test administration window: Social Studies over the last three days, ELA and Math over the last two days, and Science on the last day.
- To create clean data sets for these subjects, data collected over these days have been removed from the provincial cohort. It is important to note that provincial results are still representative of the Alberta student population.
- Given the nature of how information is shared on social media, it is impossible to know the exact number of students who may have accessed this information.
 - Test questions that were posted to social media and for which there are anomalous response patterns have been removed from school, school authority, and provincial reporting. This includes one question from ELA, four questions from Math Part A, 3 questions from Math Part B, and three questions from Science.
 - Caution should still be exercised when interpreting school and school authority results for PATs written over the last three days of the June 2022 test administration window.