



## Performance Evaluation for Alaska Schools (PEAKS) Calculator Policy

*The following policy has changed for spring 2021 to include the new PEAKS Science Assessment.*

Students taking the computer-based assessments have access to a calculator appropriate for the grade level and content within the DRC INSIGHT test engine. Students taking the computer-based assessments cannot use handheld calculators in lieu of the calculators within the test engine; only the calculators within the test engine are allowed during the computer-based assessments. Students taking the paper-based assessments have access to handheld calculators (four function, scientific, and graphing). The specific type of calculator depends on grade level, as shown in the tables below.

### Mathematics

The Alaska Mathematics Standards were developed with a strong focus on building foundational skills and fluency in arithmetic, specifically in kindergarten through grade 5. Arithmetic is a foundational skill that requires fluency as well as the building of conceptual understanding, which is a precursor for algebraic concepts. The standards were developed to help students gain a deeper understanding of mathematics and to use a variety of strategies to come to mathematical solutions. The mathematics standards focus on the students' ability to become fluent on grade specific concepts in grades kindergarten through sixth grade. In order for students to demonstrate fluency, calculators are **NOT** allowed for grades 3, 4, and 5 on the PEAKS mathematics assessment *even if the student has an accommodation to use a calculator on other assessments or in their daily work.*

**Calculators are allowed for Part 2 of the mathematics assessment in grades 6 through 8. Calculators are allowed for both parts of the mathematics assessment in grade 9.**

The specific type of calculator depends on grade level, as shown in the table below. Calculator and non-calculator items are separated by test parts to prevent students from using the tool inappropriately. Use of a calculator during a part of the assessment where calculators are not allowed will result in an invalidation.

**Calculator Use by Grade Level for the PEAKS Mathematics Assessments**

Grades	Basic (Four-Function)	Scientific	Graphing
Grades 3, 4, and 5	Not available	Not available	Not available
Grade 6 (part 2 only)	Available	Not available	Not available
Grades 7 and 8 (part 2 only)	Available	Available	Not available
Grade 9 (all parts)	Available	Available	Available

## Science

According to the K-12 Science Standards for Alaska, adopted in 2019, students are expected to use mathematics to represent physical variables and their relationships, and to make quantitative predictions. Mathematics is a tool that is key to understanding science and classroom instruction should enhance all of science through the use of quality mathematical and computational thinking. Therefore, specific types of calculators are allowable on the PEAKS Science Assessment according to the grade level chart below.

**Calculator Use by Grade Level for the PEAKS Science Assessments**

Grades	Basic (Four-Function)	Scientific	Graphing
Grade 5 (all parts)	Available	Not available	Not available
Grade 8 (all parts)	Available	Available	Not available
Grade 10 (all parts)	Available	Available	Available*

\*Graphing calculators may be used on the grade 10 paper-based PEAKS Science Assessment in lieu of a scientific or basic four function calculator.

### Requirements

- Calculators must be available to students on specified parts of the mathematics and science assessments, but students are not required to use them.
- Students taking the paper-based assessment should be provided with a grade-appropriate calculator for testing.
- FOR MATHEMATICS: Students in grade 9 may use any of the three types of calculators; students in grades 7 & 8 may use a scientific or basic four-function calculator; students in grade 6 may only use a basic four-function calculator.
- FOR SCIENCE: Students in grade 10 may use any of the three types of calculators; students in grade 8 may use a scientific or basic four-function calculator; students in grade 5 may only use a basic four-function calculator.
- Handheld calculators are not allowable for students taking the computer-based assessment.
- Students may not use the calculator functions of cell phones, smart phones, PDAs, laptops, tablets, pocket organizers, etc. in place of a handheld calculator.
- Students may not use calculators with infrared, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, or other transmitting capabilities.
- Students may not use calculators with QWERTY keyboards, typewriter-like keyboards, or keypads (e.g., Dvorak).
- Students may not use calculators with built-in Computer Algebra Systems (CAS) such as, but not limited to:
  - Casio: Algebra fx 2.0, ClassPad 300, and all model numbers that begin with CFX-9970G
  - Texas Instruments: All model numbers that begin with TI-89 or TI-92, TI-Nspire CAS
  - Hewlett-Packard: HP-48GII and all model numbers that begin with HP-40G or HP-49G
- Students may not use calculators that make noise, use paper tape, need to be plugged in, or talk.
- Students may not share calculators during a test session.
- Students may not use any and all non-factory programs or information stored in the calculator.
- Students may not send communications from one calculator to another.
- In order to maintain test security, **the memory of every calculator used during testing must be cleared by a building test coordinator (BTC) or test administrator (TA) before and after testing to clear all**

**applications and programs.** Some calculators have special features such as Test Guard and Press-to-Test which disable applications and programs during test administration. A TA may activate such features on these calculators instead of clearing the memory. Information is available from the manufacturers.

In the PEAKS assessment parts where a calculator is permitted, students must adhere to the guidelines above. It is incumbent upon the Building Test Coordinator and Test Administrators to ensure that all calculator policies are implemented and followed. Not adhering to these policies will result in a test irregularity, a breach of test security, and/or invalidation of the student's assessment.

This calculator policy is intended to be a general description of what is not allowed. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list of specific calculators, devices, or technologies that cannot be used on the PEAKS assessments. Please note that as assessments and technology change, this policy may also change.