



## INTRODUCING PENNSYLVANIA'S NEW FIREFLY ASSESSMENTS

### WHY PENNSYLVANIA FIREFLY?

**Pennsylvania schools have a new option for high-quality benchmark assessments: Pennsylvania Firefly Student Progress Indicators (Firefly).**

Firefly is designed to complete Pennsylvania's innovative assessment system by adding benchmark testing to the diagnostic and summative assessment already provided. As a custom benchmark assessment built specifically for Pennsylvania classrooms, Firefly:

- Is strongly aligned to Pennsylvania standards to reflect and measure the same student knowledge and skills as measured by the summative end-of-year and end-of-course assessments
- Is offered as a FREE resource by the state to support Pennsylvania students and educators
- Supports student learning throughout the year and provides feedback relative to on-grade expectations
- Provides predictions for student performance on summative assessments (by 2025–2026)
- Is fully integrated with summative-assessment reporting for the PSSA and Keystone Exam Individual Student Reports (ISRs) (by 2025–2026)

Firefly signals student readiness for Pennsylvania's end-of-year summative exams, and lights the way with high-quality reporting and instructional resources for teachers throughout the year.

# GETTING TO KNOW PENNSYLVANIA FIREFLY



**Firefly Is Aligned to Pennsylvania’s Summative Assessments.** Firefly assesses the same grades and content areas as the PSSA and Keystone Exams. During the initial pilot year (2024–2025), this includes English language arts (reading only) and mathematics for grades 3–8, and Algebra 1 and Literature for high school. Writing (Conventions of Standard English) will be added to the ELA assessment in 2025–2026. Science for grades 5 and 8 and Biology will also be available starting in 2025–2026 (after the new STEELS assessments are field tested this spring).

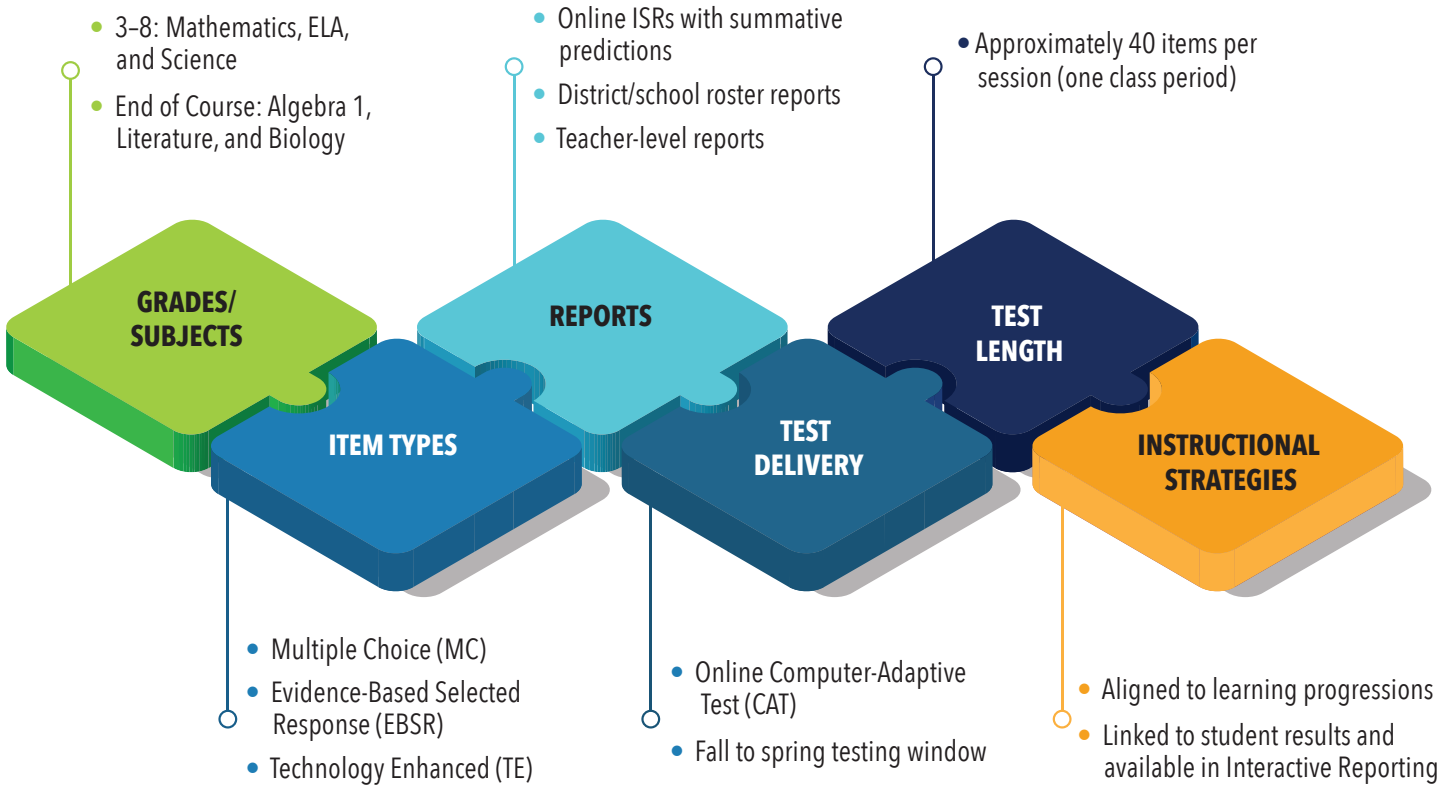
**Firefly Is Flexible and Easy to Administer.** Firefly is a fully online, computer-adaptive assessment designed to be administered as single-session tests on the same DRC INSIGHT platform as Pennsylvania’s summative assessments. Because Firefly uses the same test administration systems already used for the CDT, PSSA, and Keystone Exams, moving from interim/benchmark testing to the summative test is seamless.

Testing is available throughout the year, beginning in the fall and closing with the spring summative assessments. These seasonal test administration windows will allow for more meaningful score interpretation relative to milestones throughout the school year.

**Firefly Provides Timely, Relevant Results.** Firefly’s reporting categories reflect the PSSA and Keystone Exams, and test results are available in Interactive Reporting (IR) within hours of assessment completion. School-level reporting will be provided in the first year (2024–2025), expanding to teacher-level reporting in future years.

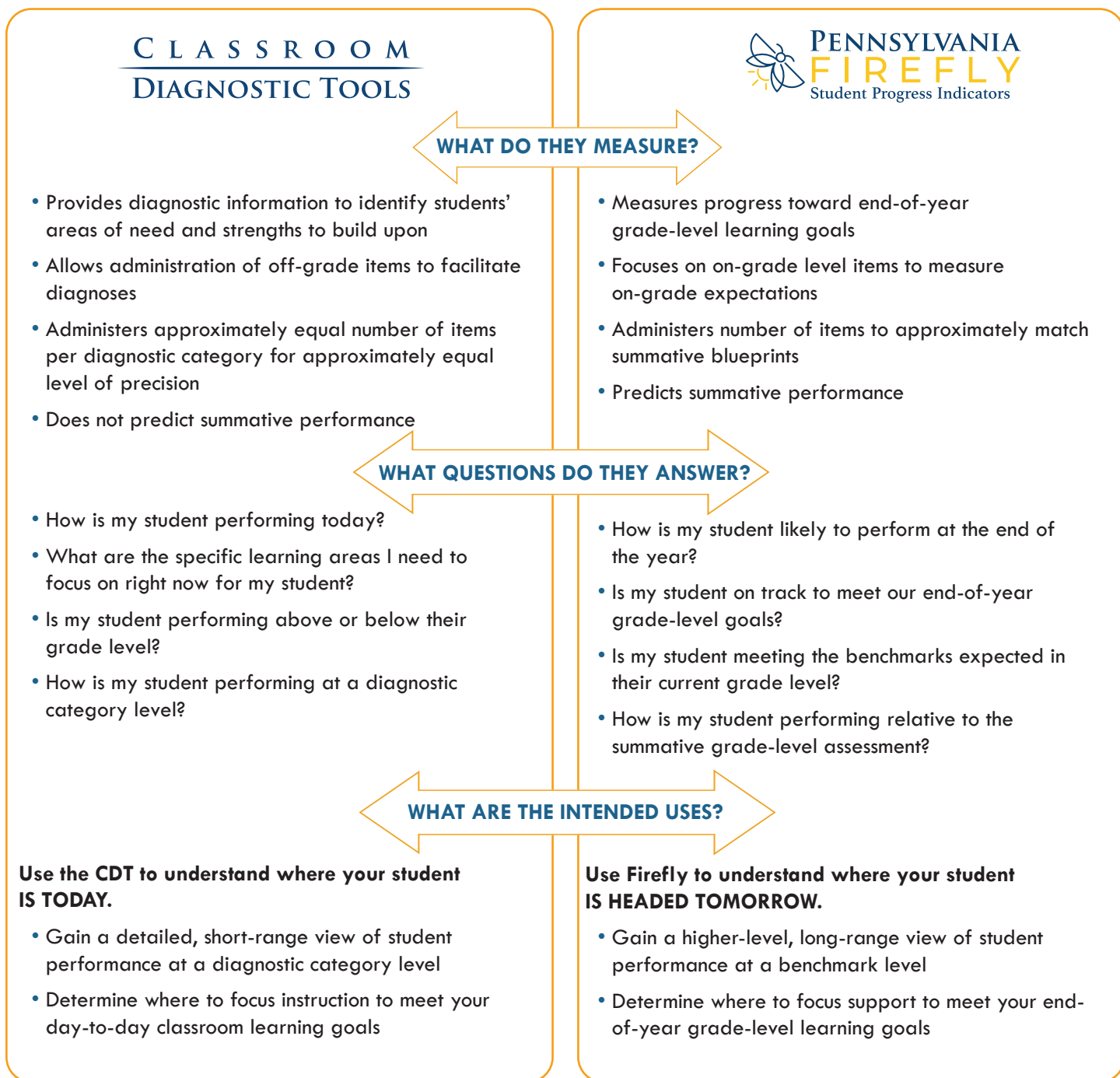
**Firefly Supports Student Readiness for End-of-Year Exams.** Starting in 2025–2026, Firefly will provide summative-assessment predictions on the benchmark ISRs as well as benchmark scores on the summative ISRs. Instructional Strategies aligned to learning progressions will also be available with the 2025–2026 administration.

## PENNSYLVANIA FIREFLY ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW



## PENNSYLVANIA FIREFLY AND CDT: HOW ARE THEY DIFFERENT?

The Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT) and the Firefly Student Progress Indicators are not interchangeable: each has its own uses and purposes, and each provides unique benefits for students and educators. When used together, the CDT and Firefly provide a comprehensive view of student learning to help teachers meet day-to-day goals as well as end-of-year targets.



## How Are They the Same?

While Firefly and the CDT have different uses and purposes, they have two important things in common: both use the same test administration systems as the PSSA and Keystone Exams, providing a smooth and unified testing experience for students and teachers, and both are offered as FREE resources by the state, saving schools money and time.



*“We are allowing the [Firefly] fieldtest as an optional assessment because we want our children represented. Having a diverse pool of testers provides for a more reliable and valid assessment for all student groups. Additionally, the exposure helps our children, particularly those in lower grades, become more familiar with the mechanics of online testing, which will be necessary when all state assessments are administered entirely online. It is also helpful for teachers to see predictive data in enough time to adjust instruction for success in the classroom and on the state assessments.”*

- Pennsylvania Educator

## User-Friendly Test Administration

Firefly is delivered by DRC and uses the same systems and processes that you already have in place for the CDT, Keystone Exams, and PSSA:

- Same DRC INSIGHT test platform used for other Pennsylvania assessments—familiar system and tools for both students and educators
- Same DRC INSIGHT Portal for managing students/test sessions and accessing reports as other Pennsylvania assessments—familiar system for test coordinators
- Test experience mirrors the summative assessments wherever possible
  - Single-session administration—test tickets lock overnight
  - No public browser—proctored sessions only
  - Calculators available per summative assessment policies
- Standard suite of online accommodations and tools
  - Magnification, color choices, highlighting, cross-out, etc.
  - Text to Speech (audio) for math and science tests
- Firefly-specific Online Tools Training (OTTs) and Student Tutorials provided

During the 2024–2025 school year, Firefly will be available as a field test from November 18, 2024, through April 18, 2025. PDE encourages as many schools as possible to participate in this initial field test year so that Firefly represents all Pennsylvania students. In future years, Firefly will be available from early fall to spring.

**Once you are ready to begin testing with Pennsylvania Firefly, simply follow the same test-setup processes already in place for the Pennsylvania assessments and start gaining the benefits of meaningful benchmark assessment results.**

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