

Personal Calculators and Test Requirements

South Carolina recently adopted a new state testing system known as the ACT Aspire. One of the major changes is that, beginning in 6th grade, any student can use a calculator on the test. Many of the math questions are application style questions. Basic calculations will only be a small part of the solution. The ACT Aspire is a timed test and though calculator use is not required, it is very much necessary. This is also true in every day math instruction. Though students still work on calculation, the learning always extends to understanding concepts and application.

Every student in the school will take the ACT Aspire Math test at the same time on April 30. Each of our math classrooms has a set of calculators, but we do not own an adequate number of these to provide one to each student during the test or to regularly use one across the curriculum during the day.

To make sure that each student has a calculator for the ACT Aspire test, the school will purchase a number of very basic 4 function calculators. These will not be of the quality or capability of those recommended below.

It is helpful when students have their own calculator. There are many models available, but some are not allowed on the ACT Aspire. We want your child to be familiar with the device they will use on the test, so we ask you to consider purchasing an allowable calculator. This is not a requirement. The models below are recommended and allowable (per SC Dept. of Education and ACT).

TI-83 Graphing Calculator



Cost approximately \$85- \$120

This model is acceptable to be used through college. Many algebra classes require the use of this calculator in class on a daily basis. (available at Walmart, Amazon, or other retailers)

Remember that students may continue to use other models in class, but for testing purposes, they must use an approved device (see list on back).

TI-30X Scientific Calculator



Cost approximately \$12-\$20.00

This is a less expensive model that will work for all of our classes and assist the student in math class. (available at Walmart or other retailers)

The ACT Calculator Policy (effective September 1, 2014)

The ACT calculator policy is designed to ensure fairness for all examinees, avoid disturbances in the testing room, and protect the security of the test materials.

- A permitted calculator may be used on the ACT Mathematics Test only.
- **It is the examinee's responsibility** to know whether their calculator is permitted.
- Accessible calculators (such as audio/"talking," or Braille calculators) may be allowed under the [accessibility policies](#) for the ACT.

The following types of calculators **are prohibited**:

- Calculators with built-in or downloaded [computer algebra system functionality](#)
Prohibited calculators in this category include:
 - Texas Instruments:
 - All model numbers that begin with **TI-89** or **TI-92**
 - **TI-Nspire CAS**—Note: The TI-Nspire (non-CAS) is permitted.
 - Hewlett-Packard:
 - HP Prime
 - HP 48GII
 - All model numbers that begin with HP 40G, HP 49G, or HP 50G
 - Casio:
 - fx-CP400 (ClassPad 400)
 - ClassPad 300
 - ClassPad 330
 - Algebra fx 2.0
 - All model numbers that begin with CFX-9970G
- Handheld, tablet, or laptop computers, including PDAs
- Electronic writing pads or pen-input devices—Note: The Sharp EL 9600 is permitted.
- Calculators built into cell phones or any other electronic communication devices
- Calculators with a typewriter keypad (letter keys in QWERTY format)—Note: Letter keys *not* in QWERTY format are permitted.

The following types of calculators are **permitted, but only after they are modified as noted**:

- Calculators that can hold programs or documents—[remove all documents and remove all programs that have computer algebra system functionality](#).
- Calculators with paper tape—Remove the tape.
- Calculators that make noise—Turn off the sound.
- Calculators with an infrared data port—Completely cover the infrared data port with heavy opaque material such as duct tape or electrician's tape (includes Hewlett-Packard HP 38G series, HP 39G series, and HP 48G).
- Calculators that have power cords—Remove all power/electrical cords.

NOTE:

- Examinees may bring any 4-function, scientific, or graphing calculator as long as it is a permitted calculator modified if needed as described above.
- In a computer based testing environment, an on-screen calculator may be provided.
- Sharing calculators during the test is not permitted, and the test proctor will not provide a calculator.
- Examinees are responsible for ensuring that their calculator works properly. If their calculator uses batteries, the batteries should be strong enough to last throughout the testing session.
- Examinees may bring a spare calculator and extra batteries.