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## Division of Student Assessment and Educational Testing

## INTRODUCTION

The following standards and guidelines have been established to ensure the integrity of the testing process and the accuracy and validity of all test scores. These general standards apply to all personnel involved with any aspect of the testing process, and are in effect for district, state, and national assessment programs. Comprehensive test administration procedures that are specific to each program are provided in test administration manuals and/or program guides. If discrepancies exist between the general standards contained herein and the specific test procedures provided for the program, the specific program's standards will apply.

Test administrators, proctors, and any other school or district staff involved in assessment programs are required to abide by state policies established in statute and rule, specifically, the Florida Test Security Statute, section 1008.24, and the Florida Board of Education Administrative Rule, 6A-10.042, as well as in district policies, specifically The School Board of Miami-Dade County Bylaws & Policies 2605 and 2623. Violations of test security provisions shall be subject to the established penalties and/or to administrative actions.

This document is organized into the following sections, which provide standards to be followed with regard to each component of an assessment program:

- Roles and Responsibilities for Implementing Test Programs at School Sites
- Security of Test Content
- Designation of District Assessments
- Training of School Personnel
- Preparing Students for Testing
- Handling and Management of Test Materials
- Testing Exemptions and Accommodations
- Maintaining Standardization and Test Security during Test Administration
- Supervision and Monitoring of Testing
- Invalidating Test Results
- Reporting Testing Irregularities and Security Violations
- Test Auditing Procedures
- Reporting and Communication of Test Results

## **STANDARD: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING TESTING PROGRAMS AT SCHOOL SITES**

School administrators, teachers, and other school staff shall all be made aware of their professional obligations with regard to testing programs. The roles and responsibilities of the principal, school assessment coordinator, technology coordinator, test administrator, and proctor in the implementation of assessment programs are described below.

### **Principal**

The principal is responsible for ensuring that tests are administered in accordance with professional test administration procedures, as outlined in the administration manuals, program guides, and training materials provided by the test publishers, the state, and/or the district, and for ensuring that any violations of test administration and/or security procedures are reported appropriately and in a timely manner. The principal designates a school assessment coordinator, oversees the development of testing plans, and ensures that the school assessment coordinator attends all mandatory district training sessions and follows established procedures. Although the principal may delegate the coordination of specific testing programs to the school assessment coordinator or another designee, the ultimate responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the test administration rests with the principal. The principal must submit a School Procedural Checklist (FM-6927) at the conclusion of each testing program, to certify that the test administration was conducted in accordance with the district's established guidelines and procedures.

### **School Assessment Coordinator (Test Chairperson)**

The school assessment coordinator, or test chairperson, is responsible for organizing and monitoring testing programs at the school level in accordance with the procedures outlined for each program. Primary responsibilities include: attending district training sessions; planning and implementing test administrations; training test administrators and proctors; arranging for testing locations; verifying receipt of test materials; verifying and managing student information; identifying eligible students with documented accommodations and providing allowable and appropriate accommodations to eligible students with disabilities and English Language Learners; scheduling students into test sessions and classes; organizing, and distributing materials to the test administrators; printing paper-based student labels, computer-based testing tickets, and session rosters; maintaining the security of test materials in the schools; supervising test administration; scheduling make-up sessions, invalidating tests, and ensuring accommodations provided and used by students are accurately documented; verifying receipt and management of secure testing materials; maintaining all required records and documentation; coordinating transcription of paper-based tests to online interface; returning test materials for scoring by return deadlines; maintaining the confidentiality of student test records, and distributing score reports. Only certificated administrative or instructional employees (e.g., assistant principals, teachers, counselors, media specialists) who have received appropriate training for a particular test may serve as school assessment coordinators.

## **Technology Coordinator**

The technology coordinator is responsible for assisting the school assessment coordinator in the implementation of the computer-based test administration. Primary responsibilities include: ensuring that all computers meet the minimum system requirements; downloading and installing the computer-based testing platform to student workstations; attending planning meetings to provide input on logistics and resolve any network issues; assisting test administration staff during the administration with any technical difficulties that may develop; and monitoring system usage during the administration.

## **Test Administrator**

The test administrator is responsible for directing and conducting student testing sessions, as specified in the administration manuals or program guides. Only certificated administrative and instructional employees (e.g., teachers, counselors, media specialists) who have received appropriate training for a particular test may serve as test administrators. Primary responsibilities include: attending required training sessions; establishing appropriate conditions in the testing room; distributing and returning student test materials; accounting for all assigned materials; strictly adhering to test scripts and directions; actively monitoring students during the testing session; and following security procedures to ensure a standard administration. Test administrators must not administer tests to their family members. Students related to their assigned test administrator should be reassigned to an alternate test administrator.

## **Proctor**

The proctor is responsible for actively monitoring the testing session and for assisting the test administrator in managing the session and maintaining test security. Administrative, instructional, non-instructional, and paraprofessional employees who have received appropriate training for a particular test may serve as proctors. However, non-certificated employees may only assist in distributing and collecting student test materials under the direct supervision of a certificated test administrator, and may not administer the test, read test scripts, or have sole responsibility for the test materials. In addition, parents or other community volunteers who are trained in proctoring and test security may serve as test proctors, but proctors who are not employees may not handle any test materials or be left alone with students or test materials at any time.

Note that proctors may not be assigned to proctor in a family member's classroom or at the same grade level as the family member.

## **Relief Staff**

Relief staff who may serve in classrooms in the temporary absence of the regular test administrator or proctor must meet all of the requirements specified for the applicable role, and must have received appropriate training related to test administration and test security procedures.

## **STANDARD: SECURITY OF TEST CONTENT**

The content of tests and any other specified testing materials must remain secure to ensure the integrity of the testing process and the accuracy and validity of the test scores. All testing activities, including test preparation, test distribution and return, supervision and monitoring of testing, and the use of test results must be conducted in a manner that ensures the security of test content.

The following rules must be followed to maintain the security of test content and individual test items.

1. Secure test materials must be stored in a locked location with strictly limited access. The secure storage location must not be accessible through a master key (or any other key that opens other rooms in the school). Strict accounting of the keys to the secure location must be maintained.
2. Under no circumstances shall any school staff, district employee, or volunteer intentionally examine or review the contents of any secure test materials or divulge test content, other than that specifically required in the directions for test administration. This restriction applies to (1) any passage, prompt, or individual item/question in a test or answer booklet, or in any other secure test materials, and (2) any time period before, during, or after test administration.
3. Parents, volunteers, or other community members shall not be provided access to test content or any secure test materials at any time.
4. Secure test materials shall not be copied, photographed, or reproduced in any manner.
5. Students shall only be allowed access to secure test materials or test content during the actual testing session, and only to their own assigned materials.
6. Schools shall document plans for ensuring the security of test materials and provision of a secure testing environment, including:
  - a. Process for receiving, storing, and distributing secure materials,
  - b. Location of locked storage area(s) and staff with access to it,
  - c. And how testing rooms are set up to ensure that students cannot easily view others' test materials or computers/devices.

## **STANDARD: DESIGNATION OF DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS**

The District may designate assessments to be administered in compliance with state and federal mandates, or in support of the District's own initiatives and instructional programs. Statewide assessment programs, including the Florida Assessments of Student Thinking (FAST), Statewide Science Assessments, the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS), and ACCESS for ELL assessments measure student progress in some, but not all state-approved courses. The District may select to use nationally recognized standardized assessments, industry certification exams, District-developed or District-selected assessments, and/or teacher/principal-selected assessments to monitor student progress and student achievement.

### **Security Considerations**

Administration of District-designated assessments will follow the security procedures outlined in other sections of the *M-DCPS Standards, Guidelines, and Procedures for Test Administration and Test Security*. As per these procedures, all employees are held to professional standards with regard to the security of test content, handling of secure test materials, administration of assessments, and appropriate use of test results. F.S. 1008.24 and State Board of Education Rule 6A-10.042, FAC, govern assessment security and establish penalties for violation of test security rules.

Local development of test items and assessments requires additional precautions to establish and ensure that test content remains secure. Among other considerations, all participants in test development activities are required to sign non-disclosure agreements, and attest to the maintenance of any materials identified as proprietary or confidential by the M-DCPS, in accordance with state and District policies.

## **STANDARD: TRAINING OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

Training for school personnel has two major components: training school assessment coordinators in the coordination of the testing program, and training school staff in proper test administration. School assessment coordinators, teachers, and others who administer or proctor standardized tests must be provided with training to ensure that: (1) all testing procedures are clearly understood and applied to the testing process; (2) all personnel involved in the testing process are aware of the importance of following standardized testing procedures; (3) all personnel involved in the testing process have knowledge of test security, auditing measures being implemented, and the implications of willful violations of test security; and (4) all personnel involved in the testing process have knowledge of appropriate procedures for communicating test results.

### **School Assessment Coordinator Training**

Staff from Student Assessment and Educational Testing, or other appropriate district or contractor staff, are responsible for conducting the training of the school assessment coordinators. If the primary responsibility for different test programs is assigned to different employees, the principal must ensure that each designee completes the appropriate training session(s) for his/her assigned program(s).

### **Test Administrator and Proctor Training**

School assessment coordinators, in turn, are responsible for training all school site test administrators and proctors, including any itinerant or part-time staff or volunteers. Training materials, as well as topics to be covered, will be provided by the district to school assessment coordinators to assist them in conducting their own training. The principal is responsible for ensuring that appropriate training sessions are carried out.

Documentation regarding the school-site training, including agendas, copies of training materials, records of attendance, and any training verification and/or compliance forms specific to each test program must be maintained at the school site for one calendar year and must be readily available for review.

## **STANDARD: PREPARING STUDENTS FOR TESTING**

Students should be provided with instruction on test-taking strategies, formats, and procedures to help them perform optimally on standardized tests. The following guidelines identify appropriate and inappropriate practices that must be adhered to in the preparation of students for testing.

1. All students, including students classified as limited English proficient (LEP) (also referred to as English Language Learners, or ELL) and Exceptional Student Education (ESE) students who may be exempt from participation in the actual assessment, should be included in general test preparation activities that are offered to standard curriculum students as part of the instructional program. However, students who are exempt from a testing program must not take a practice test that is integrated into the test administration.
2. All students must participate in any state-mandated practice tests that are required for statewide assessments (computer-based or paper-based administration).
3. Individual schools and district staff shall not purchase directly from the publisher any test booklets, answer keys, or other test materials that are part of a district, state, or national testing program, including parallel forms, other editions, or other levels of a test.
4. Under no circumstances shall questions or items on the tests be “reviewed” or examined in order to construct a practice test or preparatory material.
5. Under no circumstances shall actual test items, or paraphrased or modified items based on actual test items, be provided to students in any format.
6. No person should provide students with answer keys or correct responses to the actual test.
7. Unless otherwise stated, all test materials are copyrighted and are not to be duplicated. This includes practice tests, test booklets, answer sheets, test manuals, and other supporting materials.
8. Parallel forms, other editions, or other levels of a test that are used as part of a district, state, or national testing program may not be reviewed, examined, administered to students, or used in any way to construct practice tests or instructional and/or preparatory materials, with the exception of materials explicitly released for that purpose.
9. Individuals involved in any aspect of the test administration and/or test security process must exercise caution to ensure that secure test content is not divulged to their own students, children, or the children of family members or friends.



## **STANDARD: HANDLING AND MANAGEMENT OF PAPER-BASED AND COMPUTER-BASED TESTS**

Each principal is responsible for supervising the precise accounting of all testing materials at the school site. The school assessment coordinator, or the principal's designee, is responsible for verifying receipt of test materials and ensuring secure storage of materials; verifying and managing student information; scheduling students into test sessions and classes; preparing, distributing and collecting materials for the testing sessions; scheduling make-up sessions, invalidating tests, and recording accommodations used by the students; maintaining all required records and documentation; and returning the testing materials for scoring following administration. Specific instructions for the handling and management of paper-based and computer-based testing materials are found in the administration manual and/or program guide for each testing program.

Adherence to these procedures for the handling and management of test materials before, during, and after testing will ensure that:

- Students do not have access to any materials prior to or following the actual exam time;
- Professional staff have access to the test booklets, test folders, questions, and/or reading passages only at the time necessary for administration purposes; and
- Nothing has occurred in the school to allow unauthorized access to any test materials at any time.

The following test preparation procedures must be carried out in the handling of secure test materials, before, during, and after test administration.

1. When materials are received at the school, the principal or school assessment coordinator must document receipt of the materials and confirm the accuracy of the shipment by completing and signing the packing list.
  - a. If any discrepancies are noted, Student Assessment and Educational Testing must be notified immediately, and documentation provided as directed.
  - b. Any secure materials missing from shipments that are not reported within five (5) days of receipt will be considered "unaccounted for" and subject to being reported as a security violation.
2. Only person(s) designated by the principal may prepare test materials (e.g., placement of labels, organizing class sets, etc.) for student use or for return, with all such preparation carried out under the direct supervision of the principal or school assessment coordinator.
  - a. Non-designated persons may not be present in the room when secure test materials are being processed.
  - b. Students, regardless of grade level, may not be present in the room where secure test materials are being processed, nor may preparation of test materials be carried out in a location that is accessible to students.

3. Secure test materials, including test booklets and computer-based test tickets, must be stored in a locked, limited access location, and may not be distributed to the test administrator until immediately prior to the scheduled testing session on the day of the test and must be returned immediately at the end of each testing session.
  - a. Written documentation must be maintained of the quantities of test tickets and test booklets, with the range of security numbers (if applicable), that are assigned to each test administrator.
  - b. The test administrator and school assessment coordinator must sign for materials distributed and returned for each testing session.
  - c. Any missing materials must be reported immediately as specified in procedures for Reporting Testing Irregularities and Security Violations.
4. If an extended break occurs during the testing session (e.g., lunch), secure test materials must be collected and returned to secure locked storage.
  - a. Computer-based test must be paused to ensure that test content is not available.
5. Test booklets must be handed to each student individually by the test administrator or proctor, not handed out in groups and passed along from student to student.
  - a. Written documentation of the security numbers (if applicable) assigned to each student must be maintained.
6. Any secure test materials present in a testing session that are not actively being used by a student (for example, test booklets intended for absentees, or a booklet for a student in the restroom) must be secured out of reach of any student.
7. At the conclusion of each testing session, the test administrator and/or proctor(s) must collect secure materials individually from each student. No student shall be permitted to leave the testing room until it has been verified and documented that his/her test materials have been returned to the test administrator.
8. Any materials found to be damaged or containing defects upon receipt, or any materials damaged at the school site must be reported immediately to Student Assessment and Educational Testing, with documentation provided as directed.
9. Under no circumstances may test materials or student answer documents be taken outside the school. Any required transport of secure test materials between the school and the Test Distribution Center must be direct; and materials may not be held outside of the school overnight.

## **STANDARD: TESTING EXEMPTIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS**

It is the responsibility of the principal (or designee) to ensure that all students who are eligible to be tested are indeed tested, and that students eligible for accommodations receive the appropriate accommodations (i.e., limited English proficient students, students with disabilities, or students otherwise eligible for accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973). Specific guidelines regarding eligibility for accommodations are provided in the administration manual or program guide for each testing program and take precedence over the general guidelines stated below.

1. All eligible students must be administered the test during the District's designated testing date(s) or period(s). Schools should maintain a testing schedule to include, at a minimum:
  - a. Testing days and time testing sessions are scheduled to begin,
  - b. Room assignments and number of students in each testing room,
  - c. Name of test administrator (and proctors, if applicable) assigned to each room.
2. Students who are absent on the day of the test or miss a section/subtest of a test battery must participate in scheduled make-up test session(s).
3. All students, including eligible retained students, will be assessed at the grade level to which they are assigned on the District Student Information System (DSIS) during the testing period. Students' grade level classification may not be changed solely for purposes of exclusion from assessments.
  - a. Students' taking accelerated coursework may test above grade level, as appropriate.
4. Accommodations are changes in how the test is given; changes in what is tested are not allowed.
  - a. Examples of testing accommodations and conditions include: flexible setting, flexible scheduling, assistance in marking or recording responses, revised test formats (e.g., Braille), and revised test presentation (e.g., sign language or translation into native language).
  - b. The exact combination of accommodations to be offered to any particular student must be individually determined, considering the needs of the student.
5. Determination of a student's eligibility for exemption or accommodations during testing must be made on an individual basis and must be supported by appropriate documentation.
  - a. An Exceptional Student Education (ESE) student allowed accommodations during testing or exempted from participation must be officially classified as an ESE student, and have the accommodation(s) or exemption documented in a current Individual Educational Plan (IEP).

- i. Decisions regarding exemptions from statewide testing programs are recommended by the IEP team and subject to approval by the Superintendent and/or Commissioner, as established in Florida Statutes.
  - b. A student classified as handicapped under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 may be allowed accommodations during testing, documented on a current Section 504 Accommodation Plan.
  - c. English Language Learners (ELLs) classified in ESOL Levels 1 – 4 are allowed accommodations during testing and should have the accommodation(s) documented in a current ELL Plan.
  - d. ELLs exited from the ESOL program within two years may also be provided accommodations during testing.
6. Test administrators must be provided opportunities to become familiar with allowable accommodations and to participate in planning the test administration processes for students who require special test conditions.
7. Students who require special test conditions should receive instruction in testing procedures and have multiple opportunities to practice test-taking strategies. Additionally, prior to test administration, these students should have the opportunity to practice using their accommodations in instructional and testing situations, so they will be comfortable with them.
8. Students eligible for CBT accommodations must participate in accommodated practice test sessions, as available.
9. Coding of exceptions and accommodations must be completed as specified in the test program's administration manual or program guide.
10. A record of exemptions and accommodations must be maintained at the school site for one calendar year from the date of the test administration.
11. Schools shall document plans for ensuring the provision of appropriate accommodations, including the following:
  - a. Who is responsible and what is the process for verifying that accommodations are documented on the students' IEPs or 504 Plans,
  - b. How appropriate accommodations are communicated to test administrators,
  - c. And how the school monitors the provision of applicable accommodations.

## **STANDARD: MAINTAINING STANDARDIZATION AND TEST SECURITY DURING TEST ADMINISTRATION**

All standardized tests shall be administered in accordance with established test administration and test security procedures, as outlined in state and district rules and statutes, and in the test administration manuals or program guides for each testing program. The principal must advise all personnel involved in any aspect of the preparation, administration, or handling of test materials, of the rules relating to test security, and of the importance of complete adherence to those rules. School procedures must incorporate the following general guidelines.

1. Students are to be closely supervised at all times during testing. A certified, trained test administrator must be present at all times when students are being tested or when test materials are in the room.
2. The student-to-adult ratio specified for each testing program must be followed. When not specifically stated, a 25-to-1 ratio should be implemented. It is strongly suggested that a trained proctor be present in testing rooms with fewer than 25 students, in addition to the test administrator.
3. Each test administrator must have a student roster listing the students who have been assigned to his/her testing room.
  - a. Absences must be recorded on the student roster for each scheduled testing session.
  - b. No student is to be admitted to any testing room unless his/her name is on the student roster for that room.
  - c. The test administrator or proctor must verify students' identification (e.g., school identification card, driver's license) prior to testing and again any time a student enters or exits a testing room, unless the test is being administered by a teacher to his/her intact class.
  - d. Verification of student identification is not required for elementary school students who are being tested in the school in which they are enrolled.
4. All classroom materials that might provide visual or auditory clues to students (e.g., maps, math formulas, multiplication charts, word lists) must be removed from the testing room or covered prior to testing.
5. Seating should be adequately arranged and spaced to discourage cheating. The use of seating charts to plan and record student seat assignments is required for state assessment programs.
6. Computer labs must be set up to ensure that students cannot view the monitors of other students' workstations. Visual barriers may be used to prevent incidental viewing.

7. Procedures must be implemented to contact the school assessment coordinator and/or technology coordinator during a computer-based session in case a student is disconnected from the computer-based session.
8. The test booklets and/or answer documents must not be opened, or the seal broken (if a seal is present) until students are instructed to do so.
9. Test administrators must adhere strictly to the directions provided for test administration.
  - a. Scripts and directions must be read verbatim, exactly as written.
  - b. Reminders (script excerpts) may be displayed or re-read for the whole group during the break.
  - c. For timed tests, test administrators must strictly adhere to the specified time limit for each subtest.
10. Students shall not be assisted in answering test questions by any means or by any person, including individuals administering or proctoring the test.
  - a. Students shall not be coached or provided with any feedback regarding test items or their answers at any time.
  - b. Under no circumstances shall any person change, alter, or otherwise interfere with students' answers to test questions.
11. Students must be closely supervised during any breaks in a testing session (e.g., restroom break; snack/lunch breaks; or accidental disruption to the testing process, such as a fire alarm) to ensure that the security of the test is not compromised.
  - a. All answer books and test documents must be collected by the test administrator or proctor, held, and/or stored securely, and returned individually to the student(s) for completion at the end of the break.
  - b. Supervision during breaks must be sufficient to ensure that students have no opportunity to discuss test content with anyone or to gain access to reference materials or to any other outside information.
12. Test administrators and proctors must actively monitor students to discourage talking or cheating, and to ensure that students are working independently and on the appropriate section.
  - a. Test administrators and proctors must remain attentive throughout the entire testing period, moving about the room as needed to ensure coverage in all areas of the room.
  - b. Test administrators and proctors must refrain from any activities that would distract them from their duties, including, but not limited to, reading, grading papers, engaging in conversations, checking email, using cell phones, or working on a computer.
  - c. Any monitoring software that would allow test content on student computers/devices to be viewed or recorded on another computer or device during testing must be turned off.

13. The test administrator must record any test administration irregularity or breach of test security and notify the school assessment coordinator and principal immediately.
14. Parents, volunteers, or community members, other than those serving as test proctors, are not permitted in the classroom during testing.
15. Trained volunteers (e.g., parents, retired teachers) may help monitor rooms during test administration; however, they may not assist in rooms where their family members are testing.
16. Students must be advised that the possession or use of notes, scratch paper, reference materials, or electronic/technological devices, other than those specifically allowed within the guidelines for that test, will result in dismissal from the test administration and invalidation of their test results.
  - a. Electronic devices are specifically prohibited, including cellphones, smartphones, tablets, wearable electronics (e.g., Apple watches), MP3 players/audio devices (except as listed as an accommodation in a current IEP), and any other device capable of recording, storing, viewing, or playing back audio or visual content.
  - b. For any test administration in which students are permitted to use calculators, students are to use only those calculators specified in the program guide or administration manual, or those specifically provided by the state or district for that test program. Use of calculators other than those specified for the test program will be grounds for invalidation.
17. Schools shall document communication plans to be implemented in case of emergencies during testing (e.g., power failure, fire/tornado alarm, evacuation of building), including:
  - a. Maintaining the security of test materials,
  - b. Maintaining the security of the testing environment,
  - c. Communication flow and assigned responsibility for communications within the school and to the district office.
18. Violations of test security provisions shall be subject to penalties as provided in statute and state board rules.

## **STANDARD: SUPERVISION AND MONITORING OF TESTING**

Test administrations shall be supervised at the school level and monitored by the district to ensure that tests are administered in accordance with the specified procedures and to prevent potential test administration irregularities. Statewide assessment programs may also be monitored by state assessment staff. Adherence to this standard ensures that all students are provided with a fair and equal opportunity to perform optimally on a given test.

1. At the school level, the principal must oversee procedures and the testing schedule to ensure that established procedures are being followed.
  - a. The principal, school assessment coordinator, and/or designee should visit selected testing rooms prior to and during administration to ensure that proper testing conditions are maintained.
  - b. Test administrators and proctors must always keep their attention on the students, maintaining active and continuous supervision.
2. District monitoring of the testing process shall be conducted at randomly selected schools.
  - a. Three major components of the testing process must be monitored:
    - i. Maintenance of test security before testing;
    - ii. Test administration procedures; and
    - iii. Maintenance of test security after testing.
  - b. District test monitors shall be trained by Student Assessment and Educational Testing staff to ensure a standardized monitoring process and may perform one or more of the monitoring activities.
  - c. Schools must be prepared to receive a district test monitor, unannounced, at any time prior to, during, or immediately following the scheduled test dates.
  - d. Monitors are not to discuss their observations, or “debrief” with school staff or administrators.
3. Monitoring of statewide assessments by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) may be conducted at District schools, either in person or via desk audit procedures.
  - a. Schools must be prepared to receive a state test monitor at any time during the scheduled test dates.
  - b. FDOE staff will not provide administrative guidance or feedback to schools.
  - c. Desk audit procedures will require submission of all documentation of the school’s test administration and security procedures.



## **STANDARD: INVALIDATING TEST RESULTS**

Test results may be invalidated for an individual or for a group of students if the results are not believed to be a valid representation of what students know. Invalidations are commonly due to irregularities in the test administration process or to violations of test security procedures. If an individual student becomes ill during testing or must be removed from the test setting for some reason, the student's test booklet, answer document, and materials must be collected by the test administrator. The individual student's results may be invalidated for that test or portion of the test being administered during that testing session.

Test results may also be invalidated for a group of students for administration irregularities, such as the test administrator's failure to observe time limits or to adhere to the test script/directions; or due to a disturbance or disruption during the testing session that could compromise the standardized testing conditions and affect students' scores. The principal and school assessment coordinator must be notified immediately; if any question arises as to whether a particular situation should result in invalidation, consult the administration manuals, or program guides and seek guidance from Student Assessment and Educational Testing staff.

Test results for one or more students may also be invalidated because of student cheating, for such reasons as talking during the test; looking at another person's booklet or answer sheet or computer screen; use of electronic devices or unapproved calculators; accessing electronic or web-based resources outside of the testing platform during computer-based testing; or possession of scratch paper or notes containing test questions and/or answers, even if they were not used. The student(s) test should be invalidated for the portion of the test being administered during that testing session.

In the event of paper-based invalidations, the student(s) answer document(s) must be coded appropriately and specific procedures must be followed for reporting invalidations and handling/packing test materials, as delineated in the administration manuals and/or program guides for the specific testing program. Test invalidations for computer-based tests are processed in the testing platform. The student's FLEID number and the reason for invalidation is required to invalidate a state assessment. In addition, invalidations stemming from irregularities in the administration process and/or security violations must be reported as described in the Procedures for Reporting Testing Irregularities and Security Violations section of this document.

## STANDARD: REPORTING TESTING IRREGULARITIES AND SECURITY VIOLATIONS

A testing irregularity is any event or circumstance occurring before, during, or after the actual testing session that could impact the security of the test content or the validity of student results. Irregularities may regard materials (e.g., missing or damaged materials, improper handling of secure materials), test administration (e.g., an error in timing, fire alarm during administration, coaching/providing feedback to students), or student incidents (e.g., talking during administration, possession of unauthorized electronic devices or cheat sheet). Irregularities that involve breaches in test security or potentially jeopardize students' opportunities to receive valid scores must be reported immediately via telephone to Student Assessment and Educational Testing (SAET) to safeguard students' test results. For all state testing programs, a written report describing the incident and its resolution must be submitted by the school principal to SAET within five (5) working days, with copies to the appropriate Regional or District administrative office (i.e., Regional Center, Charter School Operations, or Alternative Education). This report will be forwarded, as required, to the Florida Department of Education. Serious irregularities also must be reported for investigation in accordance with the district's Personnel Investigative Model (PIM)<sup>1</sup>, as outlined below. See Table 1 for reporting guidelines for typical types of testing irregularities.

The PIM calls for all criminal and all serious non-criminal incidents to be reported directly to the Miami-Dade School Police (M-DSP)<sup>2</sup>. The principal must report all such incidents to M-DSP by completing an Allegation Reporting Form (FM-7039) and emailing it to [pimreporting@dadeschools.net](mailto:pimreporting@dadeschools.net). M-DSP will review all reports, conduct all criminal investigations, and forward other reports to the Allegation Review Team for referral to the appropriate investigative unit. Serious incidents that involve potential criminal interference with state assessment programs may be reported directly to the school police to expedite the investigation, if necessary.

The principal (or designee) must be prepared to provide the following preliminary information to the office of SAET with regard to testing irregularities:

1. School name and location number
2. Date and time of occurrence
3. Name of testing program and subtest
4. Type of irregularity or security incident (i.e., problem with materials, administration irregularity, student incident, or other irregularity)
5. Students impacted, if applicable
  - a. Number of students

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<sup>1</sup> For additional information about procedures required under the Personnel Investigative Model, refer to the PIM User's Guide at [https://www.hrdadeschools.net/ourpages/auto/2019/10/1/59756458/PIM\\_user\\_guide.pdf](https://www.hrdadeschools.net/ourpages/auto/2019/10/1/59756458/PIM_user_guide.pdf). Allegation Reporting Forms may be accessed at <http://forms.dadeschools.net/webpdf/7039.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Note that Charter Schools must report criminal incidents to the local police authority, rather than the M-DSP.

- b. Grade level
- c. Class, room number, and/or test group code/session ID
- 6. Number and role of school staff involved, if applicable
- 7. Brief description of the nature of the incident

Schools should contact their Region or District administrative office (i.e., Region Office, Charter School Operations, or Alternative Education) for assistance in determining whether minor incidents are clearly administrative and non-criminal in nature, and may be resolved at the school site, or if they must be reported to the M-DSP as per the PIM.

Requests for investigations may also be generated as a result of scoring irregularities identified during the scoring and auditing process by the state. The school principal is responsible for submitting additional reports and/or documentation as part of such investigations, as requested.

School personnel must be prepared to provide additional documentation and information in support of subsequent investigations of a testing incident by the M-DSP and/or FDOE. Requested information may include, but is not limited to:

- Written documentation of the school's test security protocol and procedures;
- Testing location of students, including a list of students tested in the same room, seating assignment, test group code or Session ID;
- Academic history of students;
- Written statements from students, test administrator, and proctor(s);
- Documentation of test administrator training;
- Follow-up actions or resolution of the incident;
- Recommendations regarding validity of students' work sample produced during the test session in question, and
- Steps implemented to avoid future incidents.

**Table 1**  
**Reporting Guidelines for Sample Testing Irregularities**

<b>Type of Incident</b>		<b>Reporting Response</b>	<b>Documentation</b>
<b>Materials</b>	Materials missing from shipment on receipt at school	Inform SAET within five (5) days of receipt	Provide list of materials not in shipment
	Loss of secure materials during administration	Inform SAET, PIM <sup>1</sup> reporting	PIM <sup>1</sup> FM-7039, report to SAET, other as requested
	Materials listed in state/vendor Missing Materials Report	Conduct thorough search	Return materials and/or provide documentation, as directed
	Test materials soiled/damaged	Inform SAET if materials are unusable	Documentation of secure disposal, if necessary
	Unauthorized access to test content	Inform SAET; PIM <sup>1</sup> reporting	PIM <sup>1</sup> FM-7039, report to SAET, other as requested
	Duplicating, recording, or electronically capturing secure test content	Inform SAET; PIM <sup>1</sup> reporting	PIM <sup>1</sup> FM-7039, report to SAET, other as requested
	Tampering with student answer documents after test administration	Inform SAET; PIM <sup>1</sup> reporting	PIM <sup>1</sup> FM-7039, report to SAET, other as requested
<b>Test Administration</b>	Mis- administration, e.g., mis-timing of subtest(s) or provision of inappropriate accommodations	Call SAET immediately for guidance, confer with Region/District regarding PIM <sup>1</sup>	Report to SAET, other as requested
	Coaching or interfering with student responses	Inform SAET; PIM <sup>1</sup> reporting	PIM <sup>1</sup> FM-7039, report to SAET, other as requested
	Reconstructing test items through memorization or from transcribing items	Inform SAET; PIM <sup>1</sup> reporting	PIM <sup>1</sup> FM-7039, report to SAET, other as requested
	Accidental disruption during the testing process, e.g., fire alarm, power outage	Call SAET immediately for guidance; implement plan to salvage session	As required
<b>Student Incident</b>	Communication between students during test	Confer with Region/District regarding PIM <sup>1</sup> , inform SAET if reported	Invalidate student answer document(s), include on list of invalidations; report to SAET, other as required
	Possession of prohibited materials, e.g., answer key, notes, electronic device	Inform SAET if more than one student is implicated	Invalidate student answer document(s), include on list of invalidations, report to SAET if N>1
	Use of electronic device to take photo of test and/or share via texting, emailing, or posting to social media or online	Inform SAET, report student incident to M-DSP, confer with Region/District regarding PIM <sup>1</sup>	Report to SAET, other as requested
	Looking on another student's answer document	Inform SAET if more than one student is implicated	Invalidate student answer document(s), include on list of invalidations, report to SAET if N>1

	Removal of a test document from the testing room	Inform SAET, report student incident to M-DSP, confer with Region/District regarding PIM <sup>1</sup>	As required
<b>Audit Report</b>	Anomaly identified during scanning/scoring by district, state, or vendor	PIM <sup>1</sup> reporting (on notification)	As required

<sup>1</sup> A student incident may require Personnel Investigative Model (PIM) reporting if the incident resulted from improper administration procedures or inadequate monitoring during testing.

Note. These represent typical types of irregularities; call Student Assessment and Educational Testing (SAET) for questions regarding reporting other incidents.

## **STANDARD: TEST AUDITING PROCEDURES**

An auditing system is in place for state and district assessment programs to improve the validity of the testing process and of the resulting test scores. The following procedures are used to determine whether irregularities may have occurred during the testing period or scoring process:

1. Procedures for verifying the accuracy of scoring, such as identifying excessive omits, blanks, and other irregular patterns on the actual answer documents.
2. Examination of longitudinal patterns of test performance for possible aberrations in results as compared to expectations (i.e., unusual gains or losses).
3. Verification of the proper use of special test codes and appropriate determination of exemptions.
4. Verification of appropriate participation rates by examination of the number of students tested as compared to the total number of eligible students.
5. Verification of irregular or invalidated tests or test scores by review of proper supporting documentation provided by the test administrator/school.
6. Analysis of test completion rates for a randomly selected sample of schools.

The state's contractor analyzes data to identify highly unusual test results from the statewide assessment programs for two primary groups:

- Students with extremely similar test responses; and
- Schools with improbable levels of similarity, gains and/or erasures.

Consequently, test scores for individual students are flagged and invalidated based on anomalies identified after testing, during the scoring and auditing process by the state. The school or parent can request an appeal on behalf of the student. However, there must be compelling evidence to request the appeal and supporting documentation must be submitted with the appeal. The state will conduct a formal review based on the supporting documentation and make a final decision whether to release individual test results or uphold the invalidation.

School level analyses are also conducted during the scoring and auditing process by the state to identify schools with improbable results on the statewide assessment programs. Consequently, flagged schools will initially be given an "I" (Incomplete) for its accountability outcome pending an internal investigation completed by the District. The state reserves the right to carry out additional investigations, subsequent to submission of the District's report. School principals are responsible for providing information or documentation in support of such investigations so that a determination can be made regarding the validity of the test results in question, as outlined in the Reporting Testing Irregularities and Security Violations section of this document.

## **STANDARD: REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION OF TEST RESULTS**

Guidelines delineating the general principles of appropriate communication about test results and their dissemination have been established. Adherence to appropriate communication and reporting procedures serves to maintain the confidentiality of individual test results and student records while providing for timely and appropriate dissemination of district and school results and relevant public information.

1. Individual test results are confidential information; guidelines for maintaining and safeguarding the privacy of student records must be followed. Individual student results may not be released to, accessed by, or discussed with any unauthorized person. Student results may not be sent via email, unless precautions are taken to ensure confidentiality (e.g., password protected attachments).
2. Student test results provide valuable information about the student's educational progress. These results are part of the student's educational record and are not to be removed, deleted, altered, or expunged without due process.
3. Reports of individual student results are to be distributed to parents/legal guardians and students on a timely basis and in an appropriate language and format. They may be hand-delivered via students or sent home by mail. This information may not be withheld from the appropriate recipients.
4. Classroom educators and other qualified school staff are to assist parents/legal guardians in making appropriate use of test information in understanding the implications for their children's educational progress and for making informed educational decisions. Educators are to assist parents/legal guardians in making valid inferences from test scores and in understanding the limitations of the information provided.
5. It is the responsibility of the school administration to verify the receipt and accuracy of score reports for all students who have been tested. Missing reports and inaccurate or missing scores must be reported immediately, in conformance with the policies and procedures established for the particular assessment program.
6. School and district summary test results are public information.
7. School and district level summary results are to be made readily available to interested members of the public in an understandable format and timely manner.
8. Relevant supporting information regarding interpretation of score reports, clarification of possible misinterpretations, and understanding the implications of the results must be provided for student, school and district reports.
9. Data for a school or other subgroup will not be reported if, because of the small number of students in that population, it would be possible to identify the test scores of an individual student.

### **POLICY REGARDING THE APPROPRIATE USE OF STUDENT TEST RESULTS**

The professional responsibility of those who interpret, use, and communicate assessment results includes the obligation to understand the limitations of a given assessment and the potential consequences of the use of the information, including proper interpretations and likely misinterpretations. While test results may be used as one criterion in providing students access to the most appropriate programs, test scores should not be used in isolation from other relevant information in making educational decisions, particularly if those decisions would limit student access to challenging educational opportunities and/or courses of study.

-Adapted from the Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement (1995), published by the National Council on Measurement in Education.