

FAIRFIELD UNION LOCAL SCHOOLS

Ohio's State Tests

www.ohiostatetests.org



Test Security Plan 2024-2025

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Purpose

- Ohio Law states that the Ohio Testing Program’s purpose is to: “ensure that each student who receives a high school diploma is able to demonstrate at least high school levels of achievement in these areas -- English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.”
- In order to maintain the integrity of the Ohio Testing Program it is essential that all individuals understand the importance of uniform policies, procedures, and protocols for establishing and maintaining testing security. Testing security has always been essential and continues to be vital in the age of high stakes testing and accountability, particularly as the State strives to meet the guidelines set forth in federal and state policy. Knowledge of policies and procedures surrounding testing security empowers school personnel with the tools to make informed decisions and take preventative steps to maintain the soundness of all state mandated testing.
- The Fairfield Union Local School District provides training for all employees directly involved in the test administration. Additionally, the Test Security Plan document is distributed at least annually. The test security plan must include procedures on test security which covers many areas that are listed in Ohio lay (Ohio Administrative Code 3301-13-05 (h) and (j)).
- To protect the security of the tests, each district, community school and nonpublic school must establish written procedures that address the following components specified by the rules adopted by the State Board of Education:
 - Identification of personnel authorized to have access to the test;
 - Procedures for handling and tracking test materials before, during and after testing;
 - Procedures for investigating any alleged violation of test security provisions; and
 - Procedures for annually communicating in writing the test security provisions, including but not limited to the department’s electronic device policy and social media policy, and sharing this information with all district employees, families and students.

Test Security- Ohio State Tests

- Sharing an image of a live test item or a description in words on social media or other public platforms is a test item security breach. This is considered cheating and results in an unfair test environment by providing students and teachers with advanced information about test questions.
- The test security plan and the vendor provided test administration manual (TAM) must be presented to all staff who are involved with the state assessments. Any person administering the test or having access to secure items must be an employee of the district and hold a license, certificate or permit issued by ODEW. These personnel will complete the required security training as required by state and local policies.
- State Board of Education policy specifies that secure tests, including all test materials and test questions, are not to be reproduced in any manner.
- School personnel and proctors are not to disclose the contents of secure tests by discussing specific test questions or information contained within the tests with each other or with students. In addition, excerpts from the tests must not be used at any time during classroom instruction or in resource materials such as study guides. Access to the tests shall be limited to school personnel who have a legitimate need and those persons who have access to secure test materials shall not use their access to materials for personal gain.
- Secure state tests, including all field tests, shall not be copied, filed, or used directly in instructional activities. No person may copy, reproduce, or paraphrase in any manner or for any reason the test materials without the prior written consent of the test publisher (i.e., Cambium, ACT, etc.). Copying, reproducing, or paraphrasing test materials represents a breach of test security and is a violation of federal copyright laws, Ohio Public School Law, and State Board of Education policy.
- Under Ohio law, releasing any test questions or other contents of a test or helping students cheat in any other way may result in an invalidation of test scores, termination of employment, suspension of certificates to teach and/or prosecution.
- Districts must ensure that students are aware of test security requirements and associated consequences.
- Violations of test security provisions in the district's written procedures also may be punishable by penalties specified by the district.
- Any suspected violation of test security will be investigated and reported per the procedure outlined in the Ohio State Testing Rules Book

Test Security- ACT

- Testing staff are expected to report test administration irregularities and security issues to ACT Test Administration by completing an Irregularity Report or calling 800.553.6244 ext. 2800. Immediate reporting to ACT Test Administration is critical to the standardized administration of tests.
- In exceptional situations, testing staff may wish to file an anonymous report about concerns that tests may have been compromised. If you wish to report such concerns anonymously, you may do so at www.act.ethicspoint.com.
- Secure test materials include all test booklets, answer documents with an examinee's identifying information (even if the examinee completed only the demographic portions or only a barcode label was applied), barcode labels, and *MyACT* Non-Test Instructions for Student forms.
- Tests are copyrighted and cannot be photocopied or used for any purpose other than testing. They may not be opened by any person other than the examinee on test day. Testing staff and examinees are prohibited from disclosing test content to anyone. Scores earned by examinees who may have had advance access to test content will be canceled, and scores will not be reported.
- Report a security breach to ACT immediately. If it occurs during testing, do not allow examinees to leave the building before calling ACT for instructions. A security breach constitutes any of the following:
 - Items are missing from your shipment
 - You receive test booklets that do not match the serial numbers on your packing list.
 - Test booklet seals are broken at any time (except by examinees as instructed on test day).
 - A test booklet is lost, stolen, or otherwise missing (even if only temporarily) at any time.
 - The materials appear to have been tampered with in any way.
 - You have reason to believe someone had unauthorized access to the materials.

Testing Code of Ethics – OST TAM

The Testing Code of Ethics addresses appropriate professional practices for school administrators, test coordinators, teachers (test administrators), and proctors in the areas of securing tests, administering tests, scoring, reporting, and interpreting test results.

Ethical practices for administering Federal, State and Local tests include but are not limited to:

1. informing students about the tests and why the tests are important;
2. informing students and parents on how the tests and test results will be used;
3. ensuring that all eligible students take the tests;
4. encouraging students to attempt to respond to all test items and do their very best;
5. preparing students to take the tests; and
6. sharing the results of the tests along with any available interpretation of the scores with students and parents within the allotted timelines.

Testing Environment

- The principal shall designate an area for the test administration that provides an environment that minimizes distractions and disruptions for students. All rooms used for test administrations must be quiet, orderly, comfortable, and have adequate lighting.
- Seating must be arranged to discourage students from sharing responses. If testing is to take place in a facility other than a classroom (e.g., cafeteria or library), special effort may be required to establish and maintain a proper testing atmosphere. The principal is encouraged to designate areas for testing that are similar to their classroom environment and familiar to students. The test administrator must remain in the room at all times.
- General visitors to the classroom are prohibited during the test administration except under extreme circumstances (i.e. emergency situations).
- For all administrations of Federal, State and Local tests, any information regarding the content being measured or tested--strategies displayed in the room in any manner or form during a test administration results in a breach in testing security. These displays must be covered or removed.

- Examples include, but are not limited to the following:
 - “Tips for Taking Tests”
 - word lists
 - definitions
 - multiplication tables
 - displays
 - word walls
 - writing formulas
 - mathematical formulas/theorems
- Test administrators must contact the district test coordinator prior to the test administration if they have questions related to the testing environment. Failure to cover or remove such displays during a test administration may be considered a breach in security.

Actions and Behaviors of Test Administrators and Proctors

- The behavior of the test administrators and proctors during testing can have a significant impact on the overall testing environment.
- Test administrators and proctors are encouraged to frequently move throughout the room and scan the students’ work area during testing.
- While seated the test administrator and proctor should position himself or herself so he or she have an unobstructed view of and easy access to students. Monitoring student progress must be the priority of the test administrator and the proctor. To perform this function successfully, and to maintain test security, the test administrator and proctor should grant their full attention to the testing site at all times.
- The test administrators and proctors must avoid the following distracting behaviors:
 - holding extended conversations with one another
 - reading newspapers or novels
 - eating
 - working on a computer, tablet or phone, for anything outside of the administration of the assessment
 - carrying out other professional duties
 - tending to unrelated professional duties

Uniformity of Test Administration

- All tests that are part of the Ohio Testing Program require a standardized process of administration. In order for test results to be valid from a standardized test administration, all procedures located in the vendor provided Test Administrator's Manual must be followed. It is imperative that the test administrator follows and presents the directions in the test administrator's manual as written.
- Thus, the test administrator must study the designated manual prior to the test administration to ensure that uniform test administration procedures are followed throughout Ohio.
- It is a testing violation to omit, rewrite or paraphrase orally or in writing, the instructions presented in the Test Administrator's Manuals without the prior written consent of the Ohio Department of Education.
- Unethical testing practices include, but are not limited to, interpreting, explaining, or paraphrasing the test directions or test items.
- Test administrators may repeat test directions only and are not permitted to provide any specific assistance with answering test questions. For example, test administrators and proctors are not permitted to clarify test directions, read test selections or questions aloud, provide synonyms for unknown words, or rephrase questions.
- It is imperative that each student completes his or her own work without assistance in order for the scores to reflect the student's ability. Therefore, the testing team of test administrator and proctor must ensure that the information collected from students accurately represents the students' current level of academic performance.
- While most test administrators may have conducted similar testing sessions previously, they are required to receive training prior to administering or proctoring any secure state test. Absences from training must be reported to the principal and will require makeup sessions.
- All students must complete the items under the same conditions, unless a student with a current IEP, Section 504 Plan, or limited English proficiency plan has the appropriate documentation in accordance with state policies to receive procedural accommodations. The test administrator must ensure that the appropriate students receive the accommodations and follow all appropriate procedures for providing accommodations to students.

Testing Irregularities

- As a part of test security, all testing irregularities must be reported to the district test coordinator immediately on the day of the test administration. A testing irregularity form must be completed and returned to the test coordinator immediately following the test administration.
- Different incidents must be documented on separate reports of testing irregularities even when the incidents occur during the same administration of a test in the same room.
 - For example, if one student is unable to log into the testing system and another student becomes ill during the administration of a test, two separate reports of testing irregularity must be filed.
- The test administrator, proctor, building test coordinator, or principal may file a report of testing irregularity.
- If the superintendent or district test coordinator declares a breach in security, the school system must contact the Ohio Department of Education's Assessment Office.
- Examples of testing irregularities include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Failing to follow the procedures as described in the Ohio Test Administrator's Manual.
 - Administering the test without properly training test administrators and proctors.
 - Failing to administer the proper testing materials.
 - Failing to follow the test schedule procedures or makeup test schedule designated by the Ohio Department of Education or by the superintendent or district test coordinators.
 - Failing to assess all eligible students.
 - Interpreting, explaining, or paraphrasing the test directions, test items, or answer choices.
 - Leaving students unsupervised.
 - Failing to cover or remove classroom displays that provide information regarding the content being measured by the test or test taking strategies.
 - Paraphrasing, omitting, revising, or rewriting the script or the directions contained in the appropriate test administrator's manual.

- o Providing students with extra test administration time beyond the designated time specified in the Test Administrator’s Manuals (unless a student with a disability or identified as limited English proficient is to receive the accommodation Extended Time).
 - o Cheating.
 - o Illness during testing.
 - o Reading or tampering with (e.g., alters, changes, modifies, erases, or scores) student responses to the test questions by school district personnel.
 - o Failing to follow appropriate procedures for providing testing accommodations.
 - o Failing to provide accommodations to the appropriate students.
 - o Providing accommodations to students who are not eligible to receive them.
 - o Permitting the use of a calculator during the administration of the non-calculator section or the use of inappropriate calculators during the test administration.
 - o Allowing school or district personnel access to the tests that do not have a legitimate need.
- All ACT Test Irregularities, must be reported to the District Test Coordinator (DTC) and Principal.
 - o Submission of irregularity reports is required. The test administrator will work with the DTC to complete the submission of either a paper or electronic report.
 - o Irregularity reports can be made for individuals or groups.
 - o Describe in detail any irregularity, especially those that could affect test scores. Include the names of examinees involved.
 - o Follow the detailed instructions within the ACT Test Administration Manual for each submission.

Investigation and Reporting of Alleged Violations

- Any alleged assessment violation of ORC 3319.151, or any unethical testing practice under OAC 3301-7-01, or any violation of the school's security procedures under OAC 3301-13-05, is to be reported to the Office of Assessment as soon as it becomes known.
- Proctors will notify BTC and/or DTC of possible security violation(s).
- DTC will contact the Office of Assessment by phone for further guidance.
- District will be asked to investigate if the report is deemed warranted.
- Parents must be notified if students are to be interviewed for the investigation.
- District submits a written report to the Office of Assessment within 10 days after the investigation is completed.
- The report may be forwarded to the State Board of Education's Office of Professional Conduct for possible action against personnel.
- Depending on the nature of the incident, students whose tests were invalidated may have the opportunity to retest using a breach form.
- Students who cheat or post test materials online are NOT allowed to retest.

Procedures for Handling and Tracking Test Materials

Before:

- Upon delivery of test materials, the District Test Coordinator (DTC) will inventory the materials and ensure they are secured (locked location). During the allotted time before tests (48 hours), the Building Test Coordinator/school Principal will access the test materials for test administration organizational purposes.
- All Test Administration Manual directions will be followed as outlined by the testing company.

During:

- All test materials will be distributed and returned to the Building Test Coordinator (BTC) each day of testing.
- Overnight, test materials will be stored in a double locked location.
- Upon pick up from the BTC, Test Administrators will never leave the test materials unattended.
- All Test Administration Manual directions will be followed as outlined by the testing company.

After:

- All test materials are inventoried by the BTC and then returned to the secure locked location established by the DTC.
- All Test Administration Manual directions will be followed as outlined by the testing company.

Safety and Wellness

- Safety protocols will be shared prior to any testing session.
- Students and guardians must not send students who have a fever to school for a testing session.
- Students and guardians must know the symptoms of Covid-19.
- Instructors and students must notify administration of any examinee who is at the testing session and is ill. The building administration, along with the DTC and when necessary the school nurse will determine if the student should be removed from the testing session.
- Any student who is absent due to illness or leaves the testing session due to illness will be provided another testing date as long as the testing window is open and both the student and the testing administrator can be present.

Electronic Device Policy for Testing OST

- The use of all electronic devices, with the exception of those necessary for testing, are prohibited during and after test sessions. Once a student is dismissed from the testing location, electronic devices may be used per school policy. Silent work may be allowed after completion of a test session before the student is dismissed.
- Accessing an electronic device during testing can be grounds for invalidation.
- If a student was observed having a cell phone out during or after the test session, it is important to determine if any test questions, passage or prompt was photographed, texted or in any way compromised. In extreme cases where test questions, passages or prompts have been posted on any social medium, the DTC must immediately contact the Ohio Department of Education.
- Test administrators must put their cell phone in a secure location and should not be on them during the testing session. Test administrators should be reminded to never take photographs of students, test, computers, or the testing room during testing.

ACT

- Cell phones, smart watches, fitness bands, and any other devices with recording, internet, or communication capabilities are prohibited.
- All devices must be powered off and placed out of sight. Examinees may not handle or access such devices until they leave the test site.
- If the examinee has a cell phone or electronic device and can store it in a car, locker or somewhere outside of the test room before they have checked in, that should be done.
- Test administrators must put their cell phone and/or smart watch in a secure location and should not be on them during the testing session. Test Administrators must not use cell phones for timing the test, but can use a wall clock, stop watch, etc.
- Test administrators should be reminded to never take photographs of students, test, computers, or the testing room during testing.

Social Media Policy for Testing

- Staff must refrain from discussing or posting information about specific test content, preparation materials, or strategies on any social media platform.
- No electronic devices, including smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, or any other device capable of accessing the internet or capturing images, are allowed in the testing environment unless specifically approved for testing purposes (e.g., accessibility accommodations).
- If devices are brought to the testing location, they must be turned off and stored in a designated area until the test is completed.
- Taking photos or screenshots of test materials or testing environments is strictly prohibited.
- Staff members, including test proctors and administrators, are prohibited from using social media during the administration of a test session.
- Students are prohibited from posting about the test during or immediately after the test session, as this can lead to unintended leaks of test content.
- If a student is found to have posted content related to the test, disciplinary action may follow according to district policy and his/her test may be invalidated.
- Discussing or posting specific questions, content, or answers from district assessments on social media is prohibited. This applies to students, staff, and any other individual involved in the testing process.
- General comments about the testing experience (e.g., "The test was hard") are permissible but must not include specific content or confidential information.
- Staff members may only reference the testing process or procedures in general terms on social media. Specifics about test content or student performance should never be shared.
- No photos or details of students in the testing environment may be posted on personal or professional social media accounts, except for general promotional material approved by the district.