

Testing Ethics Policy

Adopted by the Utah State Board of Education

January 7, 2016



Purpose of Testing

Standardized administration of state tests provides:

- An opportunity for students to demonstrate their abilities, knowledge, aptitude or skills
- Evidence of what students have learned
- Scores that fairly reflect students' knowledge and skills



Purpose of Tests

Valid and reliable results from uniform assessments provide information used by:

- **Students**, to determine how well they have learned the skills and curriculum they are expected to know.
- **Parents**, to know whether their student is gaining the skills and competencies needed to be competitive and successful.
- **Teachers**, to gauge their students' understanding and identify potential areas of improvement in their teaching.
- **LEAs (districts or charter schools)**, to evaluate programs and provide additional support.
- **The public**, to evaluate schools and districts.

See [R277-404](#).



State Assessments

Educators must adhere to all ethical practices and procedures as outlined in this policy when administering and submitting data for:

Student Assessment of Growth and Excellence (SAGE): Summative and Interim

Computer adaptive tests for English language arts grades 3-11; online writing assessment grades 3-11; mathematics grades 3-8 and Secondary I, II, and III; science grades 4-8, earth science, biology, physics and chemistry.



State Assessments cont.:

Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM)

Required Utah's Alternate Assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities used to map learning throughout the year culminating with summative assessment.

Benchmark reading assessment - DIBELS

Required LEA administered benchmark reading assessment (DIBELS) for grades 1-3 used to assess the acquisition of early literacy skills.

WIDA - ACCESS for ELLs 2.0

Required English language proficiency assessment for K- 12 students who have been identified as English learners.



State Assessments cont.:

ACT

National college admissions examination that consists of subject area tests in English, math, reading and science, administered statewide to all 11th grade students annually.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Informs the public about academic achievement of elementary and secondary students in the United States. The nation's report card compares performance among states, urban districts, public and private schools and student demographic groups. NAEP is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and has been administered since 1969.



Educator Obligation

- Educators **must** provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding.
- Educators **must** conduct testing in a fair and ethical manner (see [Utah Code 53A-1-608](#); [R277-404](#)).
- Educators are accountable to their District/Charter School and to the Utah State Board of Education (USBE).



Appropriate Teaching Practices

Ethical testing begins with ethical teaching.

Licensed Utah Educators should:

- Ensure students are enrolled in appropriate courses and receive appropriate instruction.
- Provide instruction to the intended depth and breadth of the course curriculum.
- Provide accommodations throughout instruction to eligible students as identified by an ELL, IEP, or 504 team.
- Use a variety of assessment methods to inform instructional practices.



Appropriate Teaching Practices

Ethical testing begins with ethical teaching.

Licensed Utah educators should:

- Introduce students to various test-taking strategies throughout the year.
- Use the science reference sheets provided for specific assessments as instructional tools throughout the year.
- Provide students with opportunities to engage with available training tests to ensure that they can successfully navigate online testing systems, and to ensure that local technology configurations can successfully support testing.

Educators may also:

- Use formative assessments throughout the year using high-quality, non-secure test questions aligned to Utah Standards.



Appropriate Testing Practices

During testing, Utah Licensed educators shall ensure that:

- An appropriate environment reflective of an instructional setting is set for testing to limit distractions from surroundings or unnecessary personnel.
- All students who are eligible for testing are tested.
- A student is not discouraged from participating in state assessments, but upon a parent's opt-out request (following LEA procedures), the student is provided with a meaningful educational activity.
- Tests are administered in-person and testing procedures meet all test administration requirements.



Appropriate Testing Practices

During testing, Utah Licensed educators shall ensure that:

- Active test proctoring occurs: walking around the room to make sure that each student has or is logged into the correct test; has appropriate testing materials available to them; and are progressing at an appropriate pace.
- No person is left alone in a test setting with student tests left onscreen or open.
- The importance of the test, test participation, and the good faith efforts of all students are not undermined.
- **All information in the Test Administration Manual (TAMs) for each test administered is reviewed and strictly followed (see 53A-1-608; [R277-404](#)).**



Appropriate Testing Practices

During testing, Utah Licensed educators shall ensure that:

- **Accommodations are provided** for eligible students, as identified by an ELL, IEP, or 504 team. These accommodations should be consistent with accommodations provided during instruction throughout the instructional year.
- Any electronic devices that can be used to access non-test content or to record/distribute test content or materials shall be inaccessible by students (e.g., cell phones, recording devices, internet-capable devices). **Electronic security of tests and student information must not be compromised.**
- **Test materials are secure before, during, and after testing.** When not in use, all materials shall be protected, where students, parents cannot gain access.



Appropriate Testing Practices

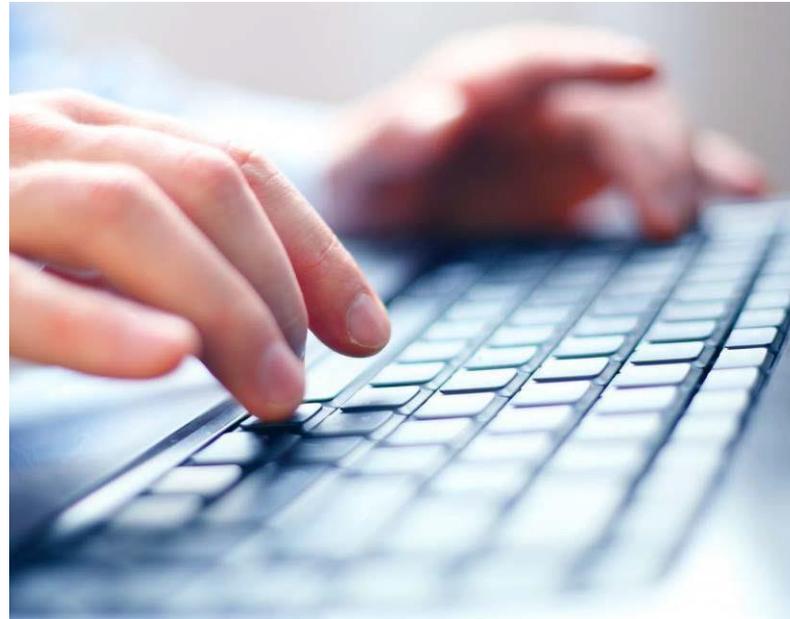
Test security ensures that:

- Test materials are secure before, during, and after testing.
- When not in use, all materials must be locked where students, parents or the public cannot gain access.
- Electronic security of tests and student information should not be compromised.

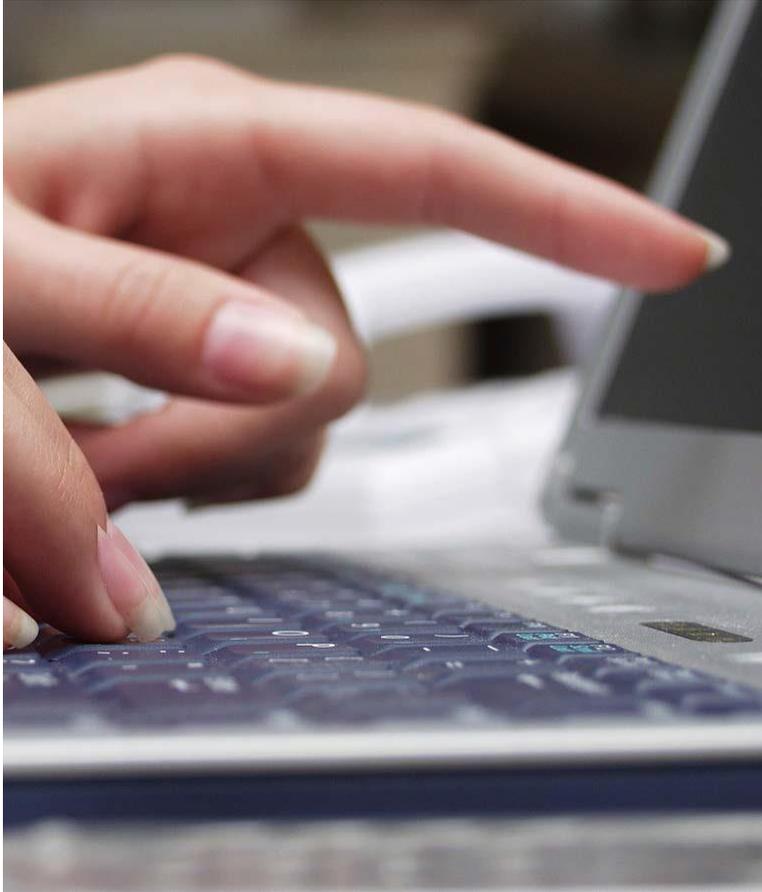


Appropriate Testing Practices

- Educators should not be left alone in a computer lab with student tests that are open.
- Educators must not enter a student's computer-based test for any reason.
- Educators must not copy, in whole or in part, specific items appearing on a test.



Appropriate Testing Practices



No one may enter a student's computer-based test to examine content or alter a student's response in any way either on the computer or a paper answer document for any reason.



Accommodations

- Eligibility for testing accommodations is determined through an ELL, IEP, or 504 team decision.
- Accommodations should be used during instruction, not just during testing.
- For more information, see the Utah State Board of Education-approved *U-PASS Assessment Participation and Accommodations Policy*:
<http://www.schools.utah.gov/sars/Assessment.aspx>



After Testing is Complete

Utah licensed educators shall ensure:

- Test administration manual (TAMs) instructions for ending testing sessions are followed.
- Make-up and test completion sessions are provided for students who miss all or part of the test, as appropriate for and according to the policies and procedures of each assessment.



After Testing is Complete

Utah licensed educators shall ensure:

- All test materials are to be organized and returned to the School Testing Coordinator, as appropriate.
- All by-products of student testing are collected and protected between and after testing sessions, and securely destroyed as appropriate. This includes notes, outlines, graphic organizers, student drafts, etc.



Test Results

Test results should be:

- Provided to students and parents, with information on how to appropriately interpret scores and reports
- Educators work in groups to decide how state testing data should be appropriately incorporated into feedback and instruction.
- Schools and educators are encouraged to review state assessment data in a timely manner to identify strengths and weaknesses in student abilities and instruction.
- Maintained according to local policies and procedures
- Kept confidential

Remember that test materials must be kept secure.



Test Results

An LEA, school, or educator **may not** use a student's score on a state required assessment to determine: the student's academic grade, or a portion of the student's academic grade, for the appropriate course; or whether the student may advance to the next grade level.



Accountability for Practices

- LEAs are required to ensure all school testing coordinators, administrators, and teachers administering tests are aware of their role in state-wide assessments, and may include ethical testing practices in educator evaluations.
- LEAs must document professional development ([R277- 404](#)).
- LEAs must document that teachers receive, read, and agree to comply with appropriate testing practices.



Unethical Practices

- It is unethical for educators to jeopardize the integrity of an assessment or the validity of student responses.
- **Unethical practices include:**
 - Providing students with questions from the test to review before taking the test.
 - Changing instruction or reviewing specific concepts because those concepts appear on the test.
 - Rewording or clarifying questions, or using inflection or gestures to help students answer.



Unethical Practices

Unethical practices continued:

- Allowing students to use unauthorized resources to find answers, including dictionaries, thesauruses, mathematics tables, online references, etc.
- Displaying materials on walls or other high visibility surfaces that provide answers to specific test items (e.g. posters, word walls, formula charts, etc.).
- Reclassifying students to alter subgroup reports.



Unethical Practices

Unethical Practices continued:

- Allowing parent volunteers to assist with the proctoring of a test their child is taking or using students to supervise other students taking a test.
- Allowing the public to view secure test items or observe testing sessions.
- Reviewing a student's answers and instructing the student to, or suggesting that the student should, rethink his/her answers.



Unethical Practices

Unethical Practices continued:

- Reproducing, or distributing, in whole or in part, secure test content (e.g., taking pictures, copying, writing, posting in a classroom, posting publically, emailing).
- Explicitly or implicitly encouraging students to engage in dishonest testing behavior.
- Administering tests outside of the prescribed testing window for each assessment.



Is It Appropriate?

To ensure that a practice is appropriate, ask the following questions:

- If my student is to get a valid and reliable score that accurately portrays his/her ability to understand the material, will this action allow the student to answer a question that does not reflect his/her knowledge?
- If the action did not occur, would the student response be different?



Is It Appropriate?

- If my student is to get a valid and reliable score that accurately portrays his/her ability to understand the material, will this action prevent the student and parent from receiving an accurate score that represents the student's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum?
- Would my practice change if I were being monitored?



Ethics Violations

Ethical violations are to be reported to the supervisor of the person who may be investigated, the school administrator, the LEA assessment director, or the state assessment director.

Protocol

- LEA policies and procedures will be followed.
- In most cases, an initial investigation will be conducted at the school level.
- The LEA assessment director will review the initial investigation and determine findings.



Ethics Violations

Protocol (Continued)

- If the violation is of sufficient concern, the incident may also be forwarded to the [Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission \(UPPAC\)](#) for review.
- If inappropriate practices are substantiated, educators or other staff may receive further training or a reprimand, be subject to disciplinary action, be terminated, and/or lose their Utah teaching license (see [53A-1-608](#); [R277-404](#)).



Ethics Violations

The LEA or an individual may also forward the incident to the Utah Professional Practices Advisory Committee (UPPAC) for review.

Report forms may be found at the UPPAC website: <http://www.schools.utah.gov/uppac/>



Ethics Violations

For more information about the processes in place concerning the investigation of ethical violations, contact your local School Testing Coordinator or LEA Assessment Director.



Standard Testing Administration and Testing Ethics

- Know the Utah State Law and Utah State Board Rule:
 - UT State Law:
 - http://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title53A/Chapter1/53A-1.html?v=C53A-1_1800010118000101
 - UT State Board Rule:
 - <http://www.rules.utah.gov/publicat/code/r277/r277-404.htm>
- Demonstrate ethical behavior.
- For questions:
 - Review testing ethics frequently asked questions at <http://schools.utah.gov/assessment/Testing-Director-Resources.aspx>.
 - Contact the LEA Assessment Director.

