

Frequently Asked Questions on the *Standardized Test Administration and Testing Ethics Policy*

<http://schools.utah.gov/assessment/Testing-Director-Resources.aspx>

Q: Can teachers look at the tests prior to administering them to students?

No. For computer-based testing or paper-based testing teachers are permitted to read individual test items **only** if instructed to do so in the TAM (Test Administration Manual). It would be preferable for a group of teachers to sit together with the site coordinator to review the TAM prior to administration of the test. This time may be used to address any questions.

Q: What can be posted on classroom walls during test administration?

Teaching materials (e.g., posters, banners) that are generic in nature, have been used for general instruction throughout the year, and do not provide answers to test questions may be left in place. Teaching materials that provide information that is directly linked to the content of the tests should be covered or removed.

Q: Can an LEA or educator ask for a “small group administration,” “extended time,” “change in location,” or other accommodation for a general education child given extreme circumstances?

Although students may receive instruction in smaller groups, the CRT testing cannot be given in these small groups. This is considered an accommodation and is only for students with an IEP, an English Language Learner or a student with a Section 504 plan that includes small group testing as an appropriate accommodation. For example, if a class of 25 students splits into smaller groups for instructional activities as a regular part of their day, the 25 students should be administered the CRT in the same room with all of them together.

Q: What should be done if students reveal a crisis situation on their answer document -- either that they intend to do harm to themselves or others, or that they are in danger themselves?

State Board Rule R277-473-8, “USOE School Responsibilities for Crisis Indicators in State Assessments,” explains how this will be handled:
<http://www.rules.utah.gov/publicat/code/r277/r277-473.htm>

- A. Students participating in state assessments may reveal intentions to harm themselves or others, that the student is at risk of harm from others, or may reveal other indicators that the student is in a crisis situation.
- B. The USOE shall notify the school principal, counselor or other school or school district personnel who the USOE determines have legitimate educational interests, whenever the USOE determines, in its sole

discretion, that a student answer indicates the student may be in a crisis situation.

- C. As soon as practicable, the school district superintendent/charter school director, or designee shall be given the name of the individual contacted at the school regarding a student's potential crisis situation.
- D. The USOE shall provide the school and district with a copy of the relevant written text.
- E. Using their best professional judgment, school personnel contacted by USOE shall notify the student's parent, guardian or law enforcement of the student's expressed intentions as soon as practical under the circumstances.
- F. The text provided by USOE shall not be part of the student's record and the school shall destroy any copies of the text once the school or district personnel involved in resolution of the matter determine the text is no longer necessary. The school principal shall provide notice to the USOE of the date the text is destroyed.
- G. School personnel who contact a parent, guardian or law enforcement agency in response to the USOE's notification of potential harm shall provide the USOE with the name of the person contacted and the date of the contact within three business days from the date of contact.

Q: Who is responsible for appropriate testing practices (paraprofessionals, computer lab aides, etc.)?

Any educator involved in the administration of an assessment is responsible for appropriate testing practices. A paraprofessional who has received the ethics and test administration training under the direction and supervision of a licensed teacher may administer the CRT.

Q: How can test scores be used by teachers?

Proficiency levels and scale scores on assessments are based on strong technical procedures. Raw scores should not be interpreted as having the same strength.

It is recommended that educators work in groups to decide how CRT data should be appropriately incorporated into grading systems locally.

The process of using data from CRTs in considering a student's grade should be transparent and equitable.

Q: What is a scaled score?

Scaling is simply placing scores on a numerical scale intended to reflect a continuum of achievement or ability (Peterson, Kolen, & Hoover, 1989). Scores

are scaled for the majority of standardized tests developed for the State of Utah, including all CRTs (ELA, Math, and Science) in a range from 100 – 200 with the proficiency cut set at 160. Scaled scores offer the advantage of simplifying the reporting of results and of allowing comparability from one academic year to the next.

Q: If there is a discrepancy between CRT scores and other related test scores, is this a sign of cheating?

Not necessarily. Many factors contribute to student learning, and thus high CRT scores for a student who scores significantly lower on another assessment does not guarantee that the student cheated.

Appropriate test proctoring and creating an environment where students do not feel threatened by test scores are the best ways to prevent student cheating.

Q: What if a student has a cell phone during testing?

Students are not allowed to have a cell phone in their possession during testing. Cell phones create both the potential for added distractions due to noise, and the possibility of cheating. Examples of cheating include students entering test information into their cell phones, sending test information to others via text messaging, or taking pictures of the test from a concealed phone or other electronic device.

Proctors should take reasonable steps to ensure that students do not have cell phones or any other electronic devices during testing. If a proctor discovers a cell phone, it should be taken from the student during testing and returned to the student either after testing, or through the school/district's regular protocol.

Q: When can reference sheets be used?

The reference sheets provided for some math and science courses should be used as instructional tools throughout the school year. When students become accustomed to using the reference sheets regularly as an aid to their studies, they will be more comfortable using them during a CRT. Students should not, however, use reference sheets during testing that have additional information added. For instance, a student can not use a reference sheet that has extra formulas or examples of problems during a CRT.

Q: What does good test proctoring look like?

Active test proctoring includes walking around the room to make sure that each student is logged into the correct test and is at the correct workstation. Do this by checking to see whether the name at the top right of the computer screen and on the Student Login ticket matches the name of student sitting at the workstation.

Active proctoring also includes ensuring that information in the test administration manual (TAM) is followed exactly, actively walking around the room, and being aware of student behaviors during testing.

Proctors are an important part of the student's testing experience. During testing, proctors can assist in ensuring that the importance of the test and the good faith efforts of all students are not undermined.

Q: What information should be given to parents to prepare students for tests?

Parents are encouraged to help prepare students for testing. This preparation begins with encouraging students to be engaged in learning throughout the school year, and working to help students master concepts they do not understand.

Immediate preparations for testing should include ensuring that students are aware of the testing, are in attendance to complete testing, and that students receive adequate rest and nutrition prior to testing.