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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
STATE TEST SECURITY GUIDELINES

January 2013

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# DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## STATE TEST SECURITY GUIDELINES

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The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) issues this guidance to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools to provide information regarding the administration of state annual assessments. It does not create or confer any rights for or on any person. This guidance does not impose any requirements beyond those required under applicable law and regulations.

If you are interested in commenting on this guidance, please e-mail us your comment at [OSSE.Assessment@dc.gov](mailto:OSSE.Assessment@dc.gov), using the subject “Test Security Guidelines,” or write to us at the following address:

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Division of Elementary and Secondary Education  
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This document was revised in January 2013.

## INTRODUCTION

The state assessment program, administered by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), is of the utmost importance to the measurement and reporting of the achievement of students and schools in the District of Columbia. Pursuant to the *District of Columbia Public Education Reform Act of 2007 (DC Act 17-38)*, OSSE serves as the State Education Agency (SEA) and performs the functions of an SEA for the District of Columbia under applicable federal law, including grant-making, oversight, and state functions for standards, assessments, and federal accountability requirements for elementary and secondary education. OSSE has developed these *Test Security Guidelines* to ensure that its local educational agencies (LEAs) and school personnel are aware of the importance of maintaining strict security procedures. The goal of OSSE is to ensure that all LEAs and schools administer the District of Columbia Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS) in a standardized format; thereby ensuring an equitable assessment program across the board. In order for assessments to yield fair and equitable results, all stakeholders, to include teachers and administrators, must be trained on acceptable business practices as they pertain to administering the DC CAS. Training on these practices and the consistent communication of such guidelines are supports that OSSE provides to support this endeavor.

The DC CAS covers reading in grades 2 – 10; composition in grades 4,7, and 10; mathematics in grades 2 – 8 and 10; science in grades 5, 8, and high school biology; health in grades 5, 8; and high school end of course health. Please note that while testing for grades 2 and 9 in reading and mathematics is optional, personnel must follow security protocol outlined in this document.

In accordance with federal guidelines whereby all students must be assessed, the District of Columbia Comprehensive Assessment System CAS-Alternate Assessment (DC CAS ALT) is administered to students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The state-level guidelines found in the *DC CAS Alternate Assessment Procedures Handbook*, in conjunction with this document, *Test Security Guidelines*, the *Test Chairperson's Manual* and the *Test Directions Manuals for Grade 2, Grade 3, and Grade 4-10*, provide comprehensive guidance regarding the security measures that must be followed before, during, and after the administration of the DC CAS and all other state mandated assessments. As it is imperative that all personnel administering statewide assessments adhere to test security procedures as outlined in the *District of Columbia State Security Guidelines*, it is the responsibility of each LEA to ensure that all personnel involved in testing are aware of this guidance and the requirements specified herein.

## TEST ADMINISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

The following guidelines apply to **all** tests administered in the statewide system of assessment. Failure to perform the following activities shall constitute a state test security violation. When administering tests in the statewide system of assessment, schools must:

1. Develop a test administration and security plan and submit to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education at least seven days before the start of test administration;

2. Administer state tests as prescribed in the administrative procedures provided in the *Test Chairperson's Manual* and the *Test Directions Manual* (by the appropriate grade and subject);
3. Secure all state test materials prior to, during, and following each test administration and prohibit unauthorized access to secure test questions at all times;
4. Prohibit the copying or reproducing of all or any portion of any secure test book or writing prompt;
5. Prohibit the use of cell phones, electronics, or computer devices by test administrators and proctors during testing;
6. Prohibit the creation, sharing, and or distribution of answer keys to secure tests;
7. Prohibit any form of cheating;
8. Supervise students at all times during testing sessions;
9. Return all secured test materials to the publishing company following procedures outlined in the *Test Chairperson's Manual*;
10. Remove or cover displays related to the content area being tested prior to the administration of the state tests;
11. Prohibit the prompting or assistance of students in any manner with their answers;
12. Prohibit the use of electronic devices, including cell phones, by students while taking the state test;
13. Follow testing guidelines on use of calculators;
14. Return scratch paper (identified with the student's name and grade) used during the mathematics test;
15. Return to the testing company planning and draft pages (identified with the student's name and grade) used during the composition test;
16. Report any observed test violation (to include reports of missing materials) to the OSSE Office of Elementary and Secondary Education and the LEA Assessment Coordinator; and,
17. Uphold the integrity and accuracy of the testing by preventing any dishonest or fraudulent behavior and promoting a fair and equitable testing environment.

The only permitted deviations from these state guidelines are approved accommodation(s) for eligible students that are explicitly identified on a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) developed under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (504 Plan), or the approved accommodations for linguistically and culturally diverse (LCD) students. Any accommodations must be:

- Limited to the eligible student or students;
- Based on explicit direction in an IEP, 504 Plan, or LCD Plan or guideline; and administered strictly as outlined in the *Test Chairperson's Manual* and the *Test Directions Manual*.

For more information regarding accommodations, please visit <http://osse.dc.gov/publication/testing-accommodations-manual-and-policytesting-accommodations-manual> to access the OSSE Testing Accommodations Manual.

## TESTING STUDENTS IN NON-PUBLIC SETTINGS

To ensure that OSSE DC CAS testing protocols are followed per the *DC State Security Guidelines*, a full-time staff member is required to serve as an Assessment Coordinator for all mandated statewide assessments. LEA Assessment Coordinators must ensure that they are testing 100% of the students with disabilities. This would be across schools and campuses to include the administration of the District of Columbia standardized tests to students enrolled in in-state and out-of-state non-public entities. In addition to the general guidelines provided in this document, specific requirements relating to the testing of students in non-public settings follows:

- Submit to OSSE all testing plans and schedules for review and approval. The timely submission of testing plans are expected for all LEA schools, campuses and non-public affiliated sites to include non-publics that are situated out of state.
- Appoint a school-based Test Chairperson and/or Test Coordinator for each of its sites to include non-public affiliated sites in and out of state and inform OSSE of the name, school location, email, phone and address.
- Work with OSSE to ensure that the contact names, school location, email, phone and address are current and up to date.
- Confirm that all personnel involved with testing have signed a Non-Disclosure Agreement. Please refer to Appendix B for a copy of the agreement.
- Conduct Test Chairperson and/or Test Coordinator training. In the event that the LEA affiliated non-public site is located out-of-state, the LEA must ensure that LEA-approved training materials, webinars, and PowerPoint slides have been provided and they must ensure that training has taken place.
- The LEA must confirm that each LEA affiliated site (to include non-publics in and out-of-state) has received test materials, inventoried, secured and stored items, administered the standardized test, and shipped the test materials (scoreable and non-scoreables) to the testing company.
- At the request of OSSE or an OSSE third party investigator, the LEA has the ability to make available documents for each of the schools of which it is affiliated pertaining to the administration of state assessments.

## TESTING STUDENTS IN ALTERNATIVE SETTINGS

All public school students receiving temporary instruction at a program (or alternative school) other than the school to which they are regularly enrolled, as provided by the LEA, are to be assessed at the schools in which the students are enrolled, their home, or at alternate testing sites approved by the LEA assessment coordinator. A student temporarily in another state is deemed reasonably unable to attend the home school site and shall either be tested at the home site upon return or approved alternate plans made in advance. Use of an alternate testing site is to occur only in the case of emergency or situation where the student is deemed reasonably unable to attend the school site. This population includes students that are homebound, in a hospital, detained in juvenile centers, or incarcerated.

For students tested at home or other alternate testing sites, the coordinator will directly communicate with the test coordinator or principal of the local school to make arrangements for

pick up and return of test materials. These materials must be signed in by the proctor each day upon receipt and return to the school. Proctors will also sign the security forms.

### MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

All participating educators and students shall be required to follow all testing guidelines and security procedures set forth in the OSSE test security policy. If a student has a medical emergency, as documented by a physician, the *Medical Emergency Form* (see Appendix A) must be completed in full and submitted by the school to DCPS or the DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB) for review and approval prior to the beginning of the testing window for the student to be exempted from testing. See appendix A for additional details.

### USE OF EXTERNAL DEVICES

The DC CAS stipulates which grades and sections of the mathematics assessment may be completed with the aid of a calculator. In these instances only, general education students may use a calculator. For students receiving special education services and hold a current IEP stipulating the use of a calculator, a calculator will be allowed in accordance with the testing directions provided by the test publisher. While OSSE prefers that students use a standard four-function calculator, graphing calculators are permitted. Any programs and information that are not factory-installed on the calculator are not permitted on graphing calculators during test administration. Therefore, it is imperative that teachers make sure that the memory on the scientific calculators is cleared before testing begins. The following items are not allowed for use as a calculator:

- Laptop or portable/handheld computer;
- Calculator that has QWERTY (typewriter-like) keypad, uses an electrical outlet, makes noise, or has a paper tape;
- Electronic writing pad or pen-input/stylus-driven device;
- Pocket organizer; and
- Cell phone calculator.

Cell phones and other electronic handheld devices are NOT allowed in the testing environment during testing; therefore, students, test administrators, and proctors are prohibited from using cell phones and electronic handheld devices during test administrations. Further, cell phones, electronic handheld devices, tablets or other computer systems are not to be used by staff in the location where the distribution and collection of copyrighted test materials takes place.

## ETHICS IN TESTING

The most important aspect of state-wide standardized test administration is to ensure that the test score best represents what a student knows and is able to do. For this reason, ethical testing practices, including pre-test activities and instruction, are paramount in making inferences about student ability and instructional quality. Therefore, if students are coached or taught only the content specific to a certain test, their test scores may not be valid indicators of their level of mastery for a specific content area.

The DC CAS is an untimed test. As a result, all students should be encouraged to thoroughly review their answers before completing each section of the test. School personnel should not discourage students from reviewing and changing answers.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER TESTING**

The following list, although not exhaustive, details the activities required by staff at all levels involved in the test administration of the DC CAS. For additional details and other activities, see the *Test Chairperson's Manual* and the *Test Directions Manual*.

#### LEA ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR

##### Before Testing:

1. Develop and submit the LEA Test Administration and Test Security Plan to OSSE for approval (see page 14);
2. Distribute test security plan to Test Chairpersons; and
3. Work closely with the Test Chairpersons to ensure security of the state test administration.

##### During Testing:

1. Monitor the test administration (in at least a random sample of schools and classrooms within the LEA) to ensure that school personnel involved in the test administration adhere to test security and test administration guidelines;
2. Be available to answer questions related to testing guidelines and security protocols;
3. Review any reports of missing secured materials or breaches of state test security; and
4. Submit any reports of missing secured materials or breaches of state test security to OSSE within 24 hours.

##### After Testing:

1. Confirm that each school submitted all materials to CTB-McGraw Hill by the date specified by the contractor; and
2. Review all reports of missing secured materials or breaches of state test security; and

3. If a violation of test security occurred, submit the *Test Security Violation LEA Plan of Action* to the Assistant Superintendent for Elementary and Secondary Education (see Appendix D).

**Note:** Each LEA must have an assessment coordinator who is responsible for developing the LEA Test Administration and Test Security Plan (see page 14). In LEAs with only one campus, the LEA Assessment Coordinator may be the Test Chairperson. In LEAs with multiple schools or campuses, the LEA Assessment Coordinator may serve as the Test Chairperson for one of the schools or campuses, but the individual is also responsible for directing the overall LEA security plan at the other schools or campuses (to include non-public schools located in the District of Columbia and out-of-state).

### PRINCIPAL

Before Testing:

1. Attend the state, LEA, or school test administration training session prior to the test administration as outlined by their respective LEA;
2. Provide training on test administration to the Test Chairperson and anyone handling test materials prior to the test administration as outlined by their respective LEA;
3. Ensure that all individuals involved in the state testing system in any way; read, sign, and return to the LEA Assessment Coordinator the *State Test Security and Non-Disclosure Agreement* (see Appendix B).
4. Ensure that the Test Chairperson, Administrator and Test Proctors are aware of any assessment accommodations prescribed in Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), Section 504 Plans and instructional practices for English Language Learners;
5. Notify parents about the state test and testing window;
6. Develop an organized test material distribution process;
7. Develop and oversee the student transition plan for test-takers who finish early or require extra time;
8. Offer clear direction to staff to remind students to erase any stray marks and darken any faint bubbles prior to handing in their completed assessments as staff are not allowed to do so;
9. Identify a secured locked location to store all state test materials;
10. Ensure that state test materials are placed in a secured and locked area;
11. Ensure that the security numbers on the wrapped state test book packages match those listed on the *School Packing List*;
12. Report, within twenty four (24) hours, discrepancies or material shortages to the testing company, CTB/McGraw Hill (Customer Services Division at 800-994-8579), the LEA Assessment Coordinator, and the OSSE Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (Email: [OSSE.Assessment@dc.gov](mailto:OSSE.Assessment@dc.gov)); and
13. Adhere to procedures for distributing retrieving, and securing state test materials for school wide testing, make-ups, and small group sessions.
14. For any school previously identified for a more thorough review by third party, independent investigations into alleged violations or testing irregularities, two trained adults for each classroom or test administration groupings is mandated.

#### During Testing:

1. Implement and supervise the outlined state test security procedures.
2. The assignment of two trained adults for each classroom or test administration groupings (test administrator and test proctor) is required for any school previously identified for a more thorough review or third party, independent investigation into alleged violations or testing irregularities. For all other schools, OSSE recommends that more than one person per class administer the DC CAS, although it is not mandated.
2. Immediately document and report to the LEA and the OSSE Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (Email: [OSSE.Assessment@dc.gov](mailto:OSSE.Assessment@dc.gov)) any materials that are lost, misplaced, damaged, or destroyed during the administration of the test.
3. Report immediately upon discovery any breach in or violation of state test security to the LEA Assessment Coordinator and the OSSE Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (Email: [OSSE.Assessment@dc.gov](mailto:OSSE.Assessment@dc.gov)). (See Appendix C).

#### After Testing:

1. Ensure that all staff involved in any aspect of the test process, follow all test security guidelines and procedures outlined by the state;
2. Ensure that any scratch paper used during mathematics has the student's name and grade and is returned to the testing company; and
3. Ensure that each planning and draft page used for the composition test has the student's name and grade and is returned to the testing company.
4. Ensure that all test materials are returned to the testing company.

#### TEST CHAIRPERSON

##### Before Testing:

1. Attend state test administration training session(s);
2. Read, sign, and return to the principal the *State Test Security and Non-Disclosure Agreement* (see Appendix B);
3. Review and follow directions of all testing manuals;
4. Oversee the development of a Testing Plan for students testing with accommodations;
5. Implement the student transition plan for test-takers who finish early or require extra time;
6. Attend and/or host a test administration training session;
7. Remind all testing personnel the importance student self-responsibility in the erasure of stray marks and the necessity of darkening faint bubbles on answer sheets as adults are not permitted to do so;
8. Open test boxes within 24 hours of receiving testing materials;
9. Develop a distribution process for state test materials;
10. Create a security file (please refer to *Definitions* in the appendix);
11. Account for the quantity of state test books distributed to each Test Administrator;
12. Work closely with the principal to ensure security of the state test administration;
13. Establish and adhere to state and school security guidelines;
14. Report discrepancies or materials shortages to the principal;
15. Maintain state test materials in a secured place;

16. Maintain the confidentiality of student information;
17. Verify the beginning and ending serial numbers for bar-coded materials;
18. Outline instructions and conduct training sessions for Test Administrators and helpers;  
and
19. Ensure the existence of a positive testing environment.

During Testing:

1. Monitor the test administration to ensure that all school personnel involved in the test administration adhere to test security and test administration guidelines;
2. Complete the *School Security Checklist* each day for each Test Administrator receiving materials;
3. Ensure that all secured materials are signed in and signed out daily;
4. Be available to answer questions related to testing guidelines;
5. Document and report any missing secured materials to the principal; and
6. Document and report any breach of state test security to the principal.
7. Supervise the transposing of information (by a test administrator or proctor) in the event that a test booklet has been contaminated.

After Testing:

1. Confirm receipt of all testing materials;
2. Review the school security checklist for each Test Administrator;
3. Check the *Group Information Sheet* and follow instructions stated on the *Test Chairperson's Manual*;
4. Complete the *School/Group List* form;
5. Ensure that all used and unused test books are accounted for and returned to the testing company;
6. Ensure that any scratch paper used during mathematics has the student's name, grade, and page number and is returned to the testing company;
7. Ensure that each planning and draft page used for the composition test has the student's name, grade, and page number and is returned to the testing company; and
8. Schedule the return of all testing materials within **one business day** of the completion of all tests, following all procedures outlined in the *Test Chairperson's Manual* for returning test materials to the testing company.
9. Ensure that an adult signature, count of the testing materials returned, number of boxes, arrival and departure time of the vendor, and the date in which the materials were returned to the testing company by the distribution vendor is indicated on the Distribution Pick Up Receipt.

TEST ADMINISTRATOR

Before Testing:

1. Be familiar with the *Test Directions Manual*;
2. Attend a test administration training session;
3. Read, sign, and return to the principal the *State Test Security and Non-Disclosure Agreement* (see Appendix B);

4. Ensure that you have received the appropriate materials and correct quantity;
5. Immediately report missing materials to Test Chairperson; and
6. Ensure that displays related to test content are removed or covered;
7. Direct students to erase any stray marks and darken faint bubbles prior to handing in their completed assessments as adults are not permitted to do so.

During Testing:

1. Observe the schedule provided by the Test Chairperson;
2. Use standardized testing procedures outlined in the *Test Directions Manual*;
3. Read test directions verbatim as written in the *Test Directions Manual*;
4. Ensure that students with disabilities and linguistically and culturally diverse students receive the approved test accommodations;
5. Ensure that students receive the appropriate punch-out tools for the mathematics content area section;
6. Direct students to erase any stray marks and darken faint bubbles prior to handing in their completed assessments as adults are not permitted to do so;
7. Ensure that the student's name and grade are included on all scratch paper used during the mathematics assessment;
8. Ensure that the student's name and grade are included on each planning and draft page used for the composition test;
9. Ensure that the testing session is completed at the time of administration; and
10. Do not leave students or testing materials unattended at any time.

After Testing:

1. Prepare all test materials to be returned to the Test Chairperson;
2. If necessary, transcribe responses only under the supervision of the Test Chairperson;
3. Ensure that the student's name and grade are included on any scratch paper used during the mathematics assessment and it is returned to the Test Chairperson; and
4. Ensure that the student's name and grade are included on all planning and draft page(s) used for the composition test and that all pages are returned to the Test Chairperson.

TEST PROCTOR OR MONITOR

Before Testing:

1. Attend state test administration training session at the school;
2. Read, sign, and return to the principal the *State Test Security and Non-Disclosure Agreement* (see Appendix B);
3. Assist Test Administrator with completing student identification information on the back of test books (grades 2 and 3) or answer booklets (grades 4–10); and
4. Punch out mathematics manipulatives (punch-out tools) for the mathematics assessment.

### During Testing:

1. Check to ensure that students receive the appropriate test book and answer booklet;
2. Check to ensure that students receive the appropriate punch-out tools and scratch paper for the mathematics assessment;
3. Ensure that each student has two sheets of planning and draft paper, with their name and grade level written on the top left-hand corner for the composition tests (grades 4, 7, and 10);
4. Walk around the room quietly and frequently to ensure that:
  - a) Students receive additional sharpened pencils when needed;
  - b) Students follow instructions;
  - c) Students are working on the appropriate content-area section of the assessment;
  - d) Students in grade 2 and 3 mark their responses in the appropriate area of the test book;
  - e) Students in grades 4-10 mark their responses in the answer booklet;
  - f) Students use only allowable materials;
  - g) Students do not offer help to or receive help from other students;
  - h) Students are not using a calculator except on approved sections of the Mathematics test; and
5. Refer all students' questions to the Test Administrator.

### After Testing:

1. Make sure students (grades 4-10) have not left answer booklets inside test books;
2. Check test books (grade 3) or answer booklets (grades 4- 10) and remove any extraneous materials (e.g., make sure there are no sticky notes, staples, pins, paper clips, tape of any kind on any page);

**Note:** Test proctors or monitors should not be reviewing answer documents for completeness or accuracy of marks. They should not be cleaning up student erasure marks. They should only be reviewing the documents for physical items that may impede electronic scoring (such as those listed above).
3. Ensure no punch-out tools or scratch paper were left inside the test books or answer booklets;
4. Ensure that any scratch paper used during the mathematics assessment includes the student's name and grade;
5. Ensure that any planning and draft paper used for the composition test includes the student's name and grade; and
6. Ensure that no planning or draft papers have been left in the composition test book.

Note: A test proctor is a professional or paraprofessional who has been trained on state test procedures and works under the direction of the test administrator. Test monitors are non-employees, such as parents, who have been trained on state test procedures and work under the direction of the test administrator. All monitors must have been thoroughly screened by the school or LEA consistent with the LEA policy related to school volunteers (e.g., background checks) and may not be used in their child's classroom.

## SCHOOL PERSONNEL TEST SECURITY VIOLATIONS

Any person who violates, assists in the violation of, or solicits another to violate or assist in the violation of test security or confidential integrity, and any person who fails to report such a violation may be subject to any of the consequences for test security violations noted in this guidance, including the suspension or revocation of teacher certification credentials by the OSSE.

As further explained below, a breach of test security may cause the invalidation of test results or other data and invalidate any graduation, programmatic, or evaluative criteria dependent upon these data or test results. Any violation of the guidelines listed above by school personnel shall constitute a test security violation and must be reported; such violations include but are not limited to the following:

1. Refusal to sign the *State Test Security and Non-Disclosure Agreement*;
2. Administering state tests in a manner that is inconsistent with the administrative procedures provided by the DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education in the *Test Chairperson's Manual*;
3. Engaging in discussions, instruction, or reviews of any contents of any portion of a state test before, during or after the testing period;
4. Making a false certification on the test security form established by the DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education;
5. Aiding or assisting an examinee with a response or answer to a secure test item or prompt;
6. Editing a student's response to a constructed response item or written prompt when transcribing the student's response;
7. Providing unapproved test accommodations to a student;
8. Failing to read test administration scripts verbatim as required by the *Test Administrator's Manual*;
9. Allowing students in grades 3-6 the use of calculators in the mathematics test;
10. Administering a state test on dates other than specified without prior approval of the LEA and OSSE;
11. Scoring student responses;
12. Making statements regarding the accuracy of the student's responses on the state test;
13. Failure to return and account for all testing materials as soon as the testing session has terminated;
14. Reproduction in any form of the test items;
15. Failure to collect all students test materials;
16. Using a cell phone during test administration;
17. Failure to report any state test security breach; or
18. Allowing anyone to review the secure state test.
19. Divulging confidential test item information on social networking sites and discussion boards.

## STUDENT TEST SECURITY VIOLATIONS

Any student who is found to have engaged in an act that is a breach of state test security shall be disciplined in accordance with the provisions of the *DC Municipal Regulation Title 5, Chapter A25* and the LEA's code of discipline. This shall be in effect for all students in District of Columbia Public Schools and District of Columbia Public Charter Schools.

Any violation of the guidelines listed above by a student shall constitute a test security violation and must be reported following the procedures outlined below (see page 10). Such violations include, but are not limited to, the following practices:

1. Sharing test answers with another student through written, electronic, verbal, or gestured means;
2. Copying another student's answers, or requesting or accepting any help from another person;
3. Using any materials or equipment that is not expressly permitted by the *Test Administrator's Manual*;
4. Answering a test question or providing assistance to another student either before or while that student is taking the test;
5. Returning to a previously administered section of a test after that test section is completed;
6. Engaging in any other practice to artificially affect the student's score or the score of another student;
7. Using a cell phone or other unapproved electronic or computer device during testing;
8. Attempting to or taking a test or portion of a test on behalf of another student; or
9. Disrupting the state testing process.

LEAs are encouraged to supply information to parents and students prior to the administration of the DC CAS on expectations for students regarding test security and the consequences for any violations.

## MONITORING AND AUDITING

The LEA must develop a plan to monitor the administration of the DC CAS in its schools as one component of the *LEA Test Administration and Test Security Plan* (see page 14). In addition, OSSE may observe any school's assessment administration activities without prior notice. OSSE observers will arrive with a letter of introduction to the principal or head of the school from the Assistant Superintendent for Elementary and Secondary Education.

OSSE may also contact any school without prior notice following the completion of the test window to request documentation that all test security policies and guidelines were implemented as prescribed. OSSE may also conduct post-assessment analyses to detect possible irregularities that may lead to the invalidation of test scores.

An intensive monitoring process for schools who have had reported irregularities in the previous year has been established. Intensive monitoring involves on-site state-level observations during the first four days of the testing window to ensure compliance with test administration. It should be noted that additional observations will take place as warranted. In regards to the

aforementioned, the intensive monitoring process will include the following components (non-exhaustive):

- Test administration (i.e. reading test directions verbatim),
- Test environment (i.e. seating arrangement, removal of curriculum material from walls),
- On-site supervision of the handling of secure and non-secure test materials,
- Inventory/distribution of secure and non-secure materials,
- Collection of scorable documents, and
- Test packaging and shipment of secure and non-secure materials.

In addition to schools selected for intensive monitoring, schools will be observed by OSSE monitors to ensure compliance per the *District of Columbia State Test Security Guidelines*.

### COMMUNICATING AN ALLEGED TEST SECURITY VIOLATION

LEAs are responsible for ensuring all personnel whose duties involve either test administration or data collection and reporting are trained in these guidelines.

Any person who witnesses or believes a test security violation occurred, either by school personnel or students, must report it *as soon as possible* but no later than 24 hours after the alleged violation occurred. There are three ways to report a violation:

1. Report directly to the principal or head of the school, using the enclosed *State Test Security Incident* form (see Appendix C). In such cases, the principal is responsible for immediately reporting the alleged violation to the LEA Assessment Coordinator, who in turn shall, within one business day, report it to the OSSE Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.
2. Report directly to the OSSE Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, using the enclosed *State Test Security Incident* form (see Appendix C), if the witness believes reporting such information directly to an administrator may place an informant in jeopardy. In such cases, the forms can be sent by:  
Email: [OSSE.Assessment@dc.gov](mailto:OSSE.Assessment@dc.gov),  
Fax: (202) 724-7656  
Mail: DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education  
Assistant Superintendent for Elementary and Secondary Education  
810 First Street NE, 5th floor  
Washington, DC 20002
3. Anonymous reporting to the OSSE Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. In the event the informant would like to remain anonymous, he or she can report an alleged violation to (202) 564-6100.

To assist in communicating an alleged test security violation, two forms are appended to these guidelines.

- The *State Test Security Incident* form (see Appendix C) should be completed and submitted as required above within 24 hours of the alleged violation. The LEA must report the alleged violation to the OSSE Office of Elementary and Secondary Education within 24 hours of its notification.

- After initial review, OSSE will determine if the alleged violation requires further investigation and will notify the LEA within 48 hours. If so, the *LEA Plan of Action* form (see Appendix D) should be submitted to OSSE by the LEA within seven business days. OSSE will review the documentation provided and determine the appropriate course of action.

## **INVESTIGATING AND RESOLVING ALLEGATIONS OF TEST SECURITY VIOLATIONS**

An allegation of a test security violation may be the product of a reported allegation, OSSE monitoring and auditing, or through OSSE's test integrity review. In the summer and fall following the spring administration, OSSE will conduct analyses of the test results to ensure their integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, an analysis of student erasures, unusual patterns or gains in student performance, student-level multiple choice and constructed response answers, other forensic analyses of data patterns, an analysis of incidents reported, and audits of missing materials.

OSSE will review every allegation of test security violation to determine the appropriate course of action. In determining the severity of a violation, there are three overriding questions: 1) did the violation lead to a breach of test item(s) security; 2) did the violation affect the validity of any student performance and resulting scores; and 3) was the violation deliberate; is there evidence of academic fraud? OSSE will categorize the testing irregularity or security violation into one of three violation categories (i.e., minor/ no findings, moderate, or critical) according to the severity of the violation and its possible consequences. The classification of findings are grouped in the following manner.

### **No Findings**

No evidence of test security violations, wrongdoing, or error.

### **Minor**

Minor misadministration errors (e.g., incomplete or missing test documents, inconsistencies in the application of administration procedures).

### **Moderate**

Defined violations: not test tampering or academic fraud (e.g., failure to report certain types of incidents, failure to distribute, collect or refusal to sign Non-Disclosure Agreements, use by administrators of cell phones and other unapproved electronic devices).

### **Critical**

Definitive test security violations; test tampering or academic fraud (e.g., providing students' answers; allowing student use of calculators or other technology when prohibited).

After an initial review, if it believes further investigation is warranted, OSSE will contact the LEA to share the information it has collected and discuss the plan and timeline for further investigation, including:

1. LEA investigation. For the vast majority of allegations of test security violations, the LEA will be required to investigate or provide additional information regarding the allegation and provide a report to OSSE. OSSE reserves the right to conduct the investigation itself or hire a third-party contractor to conduct the investigation.
2. Independent investigation. For the most serious allegations of test security violations, OSSE may assign an independent investigator to conduct fact finding and provide a report. In such cases, OSSE will provide its rationale for the independent investigation with the LEA and the steps that will be taken during the investigation. The LEA will receive a copy of the investigator's report.

### LEA INVESTIGATION

When conducting its investigation, the LEA may conduct interviews with students about state test administration procedures; classroom seating arrangements; test site supervision, material distribution, and retrieval; and state test booklet security, prior to, during, and after testing, as appropriate.

The LEA report must include a description of the situation, the time and place of occurrence, the names of the individual(s) involved in or witness to the occurrence, a review of the evidence, a summary of actions taken during the investigation, findings, and a recommended course of action based upon the findings. OSSE may require additional specific information from the LEA.

The report of findings and the LEA plan of action should be sent to:

DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education  
Director of Assessments and Accountability  
810 First Street NE, 5<sup>th</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20002

Following receipt of all required reports, OSSE will review the findings and, if applicable, recommended course of action, and make a final determination regarding the alleged violation. If it is found that a violation occurred, the Assistant Superintendent for Elementary and Secondary Education will share this finding with the LEA, the reason for this finding, and the corrective actions required by OSSE.

### APPEAL

Once the LEA has received the Assistant Superintendent's findings, it will have two weeks to respond to the findings, indicating whether it accepts the Assistant Superintendent's findings or it requests an appeal of this decision to the State Superintendent of Education.

The State Superintendent of Education will schedule a hearing with LEA officials and the OSSE Office of Elementary and Secondary Education to review the evidence and determine whether

the Assistant Superintendent's findings are valid and whether the corrective actions are warranted.

OSSE will maintain a record of all allegations of state test security violations in the District of Columbia, including those reported by state test contractors, reports related to those allegations, final determinations, and corrective actions taken as a result of violations.

## CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS

Any person who violates, assists in the violation of, or solicits another to violate or assist in the violation of test security or confidential integrity, and any person who fails to report such a violation, may be subject to OSSE- and LEA-imposed sanctions. Sanctions include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Re-testing within the test cycle period (potential costs to LEAs);
2. Invalidation of scores with no opportunity for re-testing;
3. Placed on monitoring list for future years;
4. LEA or OSSE assumes responsibility of Test Chairperson to hold test booklets in abeyance and delivered on day of testing (potential costs to LEAs or schools);
5. Placement of restrictions on the issuance, renewal, or holding of a District of Columbia teaching or administrative credential/teacher certificate, either indefinitely or for a set term by OSSE;
6. Suspension, revocation, or cancellation of a District of Columbia teaching or administrative credential/teacher certificate without opportunity for reapplication, either indefinitely or for a set term by OSSE; or
7. Payment of any expenses incurred by the LEA or SEA as a result of the security breach.

When determining what sanctions to impose, OSSE may take into account the seriousness of the violation, the extent of the violation (e.g., on-going for multiple years, involving numerous individuals), the school leadership's involvement, how and when the violation was reported to OSSE, and the LEA or school actions since the violation was reported to OSSE.

OSSE expects that LEAs will handle any personnel issues, other than related to licensure or credential actions noted above, in relation to an irregularity in accordance with their professional conduct policies.

## INVALIDATION OF TEST SCORES

### STANDARD FOR INVALIDATION

As noted above, a substantiated state test security violation may result in the invalidation of student test results, thus impacting the school and LEA's Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) determination. This will be done only in cases where OSSE determines that the breach or violation affected the validity or reliability of the test results in question.

### CONSEQUENCES OF INVALIDATION

In cases where test scores are invalidated by OSSE, the students in question will be counted as non-participants for federal reporting purposes; these students will be excluded from the performance results (i.e., they will be excluded from both the numerator and denominator for proficiency calculations).

The invalidation of test results or other data because of a breach of test security, or related action taken by OSSE, also invalidate any graduation, programmatic, or evaluative criteria dependent upon these data or test results.

In cases where OSSE invalidates the test results of a student who causes, allows, or is otherwise involved in the presentation of forged or altered identification for the purpose of obtaining admission to a test administration site for any of the state-mandated tests, the student may be ineligible to retake the test until the next official testing opportunity.

## **LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY ADMINISTRATION AND TEST SECURITY PLAN**

Each LEA must develop, maintain, or adopt a test administration and test security plan to ensure that administrative and school personnel, as well as the community, are aware of the importance of test security. The *LEA Test Administration and Test Security Plan* must adhere to the state security procedures outlined above. Of particular importance is the scheduling of the testing sessions. While the DC CAS is an untimed test, during the first week of testing, all Reading and Mathematics tests for all tested grades must be completed.

The LEA may adopt the state security guidelines or it may develop its own plan. If the LEA develops its own plan, it must submit its plan for review and approval to the OSSE Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. If the LEA makes any changes to its plan, it must submit those to OSSE for review and approval before they may be used.

Notification of each *LEA Test Administration and Test Security Plan* must be done following the state test training sessions and no later than seven (7) days before the starting of the test administration. The State Test Director is responsible for establishing guidelines to assist LEAs in developing their test administration and test security plans and for monitoring test security.

At a minimum, the *LEA Test Administration and Security Plan* must include:

1. The names and positions of the individuals designated by the Chancellor or chartering authority as individuals responsible for test security and confidentiality of test data for the state assessment program, including the LEA Assessment Coordinator;
2. A system to record training the LEA's schools on:
  - a) State test administration guidelines;
  - b) State test security; and
  - c) Security and confidentiality of individual test data;
3. An outline of procedures for monitoring schools during the administration of the state assessments;
4. A compilation of the school-level testing administration plans to include the staff assignments, student test administration grouping and procedures for testing (during the testing window) in response to disasters and other major emergencies,
5. A compilation of the school-level accommodations plan for students with special needs;
6. A process for distributing to schools and school personnel lists of key personnel involved in testing, with title and contact information, for the LEA and each school;
7. An outline of procedures for investigating allegations of state test administration violations against an LEA or school employee(s), including the flow of communication;
8. An outline of procedures for investigating any students accused of state test violations including the flow of communications;
9. An outline of procedures and guidelines for ensuring the security and confidentiality of individual student test data in electronic and paper formats; and
10. An outline of procedures for ensuring the delivery of students test reports to schools and student test results to parents or legal guardians.

## DEFINITIONS

**DC CAS**– The District of Columbia Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS) is the statewide system of assessment. It consists of reading/language arts and mathematics assessments in grades 3-8 and 10; science assessments in grades 5 and 8; a biology assessment in high school; and composition assessments in grades 4, 7, and 10. As an option, LEAs and schools may choose to administer the DC CAS in grades 2 and 9.

**DC CAS Alternate Assessment (DC CAS-Alt)**–The DC CAS-Alt is a portfolio system that measures the academic progress of students with severe physical and/or cognitive disabilities which inhibit their participation in the general assessment. The DC CAS-ALT system is administered in reading/language arts in grades 3-8 and 10, mathematics in grades 3-8 and 10, science in grades 5 and 8, biology in high school, and composition in grades 4, 7, and 10.

**LEA Assessment Coordinator** – The individual responsible for ensuring that the LEA Test Security Plan is faithfully implemented during testing. This individual coordinates security across all schools or campuses in the LEA.

**Principal or Head of School**–The principal or the head of school is an educational leader who has the contract authority and responsibility of managing the academic program and functioning of the school.

**Secured Area**–A locked room inaccessible to unauthorized persons where state tests and secured materials are stored.

**Security File**–File with documentation of testing disruptions, copies of *School Security Checklists*, explanations of any security breach, and any other pertinent information.

**Test Administrator**–A test administrator is a certified professional employee of the District of Columbia Public School or public charter school (e.g., teacher, guidance counselor, school administrator, librarian, or other District or school employee).

**Test Chairperson**–The person identified by the principal to organize and facilitate the school’s testing program.

**Test Monitor** – Test monitors are non-employees, such as parents, who have been trained on state test procedures and work under the direction of the test administrator. All monitors must have been thoroughly screened by the school or LEA consistent with the LEA policy related to school volunteers (e.g., background checks) and may not be used in their child’s classroom.

**Test Proctor** – A test proctor is a professional or paraprofessional who has been trained on state test procedures and works under the direction of the test administrator.

**Test Security Violation**–A state test security violation is defined as a situation which occurs before, during, or after testing in which the testing regulations are violated and the violation compromises the validity of the testing program or the state test administration process.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: MEDICAL EMERGENCY TESTING EXEMPTION FORM

This form is to be used to verify, document, and approve the exemption of students during the DC CAS assessment due to a medical emergency. The following medical conditions must be met in order for the student to be excused from the state assessment.

Medical emergency exemptions from testing shall be granted on a case-by-case basis only. The definition of medical emergency is designed to exempt only those students whose conditions results in the student being too ill to be tested.

Medical emergencies are limited to student with life-threatening or severe illnesses or injuries. It does not provide a categorical exclusion for all home- or hospital-bound students; it applies solely to a student for whom a physician confirms is too ill at the time of testing to participate in the test.

A request for exemption from testing on these grounds must complete the attached form and must be accompanied by a signed statement from the student's treating physician. The statement must:

1. Describe the nature of the condition or extraordinary treatment; and
2. Confirm that the condition or extraordinary treatment has substantially prevented the student from accessing educational services since its inception or are too physically fragile to participate in the test.

Completed forms must be submitted to the LEA Assessment Coordinator before the first day of testing. LEA Assessment Coordinators in charter school LEAs must submit all completed forms to the DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB) before the first day of testing. Upon receiving the form, DCPS and PCSB must review the information each receives, issue a final determination, and return a copy of the package to the school. DCPS and PCSB are required to keep the information on file for at least three years. DCPS and PCSB must submit, at the conclusion of the test window, the total number of students exempted from testing and the name, student identification number, and school of each exempted student. The information must be submitted to:

DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education,  
Director of Assessments and Accountability  
ATTN: DC CAS Medical Exemptions  
810 First Street NE, 5th floor, Washington, DC 20002

OSSE may request documentation from DCPS or PCSB regarding exempted students.

Exempted students will not be included in a school's or LEA's Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) calculations. Exemptions are valid only for the year in which they are requested; exemption status must be confirmed by DCPS or PCSB no later than the first day of testing.

**MEDICAL EMERGENCY TESTING EXEMPTION FORM**

**Section 1. Student information**

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
Identification number: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 2. Explanation of absence**

To be completed by the student's parent or legal guardian.

Date of injury/illness: \_\_\_\_\_  
Description of injury/illness: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 3. Physician diagnosis**

To be completed and signed by a licensed physician.

Physician name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Practice name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Primary diagnosis: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician's statement:

I hereby confirm that the absence of \_\_\_\_\_ (student name) is physician-advised due to a life-threatening illness or medical emergency. My signature certifies that I have examined the student named herein and I certify that the student is unable to participate in testing. The student should be excused for the following dates:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Physician signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 4. Principal verification**

To be completed by the student's principal in order to verify that the form has been completed and also to verify the DC CAS absence dates. Once Sections 1-4 have been completed, the entire form should be faxed to (202) \_\_\_\_\_ Attention: \_\_\_\_\_. Keep the original on file at the school site.

Principal name: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 5. Data & accountability confirmation**

To be completed by DCPS or PCSB.

Status:

Approved:  Denied:

Justification for denial: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Assessment director signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX B: STATE TEST SECURITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

This form must be signed by each person involved in the administration of the state test.

Each local education agency (LEA) is responsible for ensuring that **all** staff involved in the administration of the state test have signed this form.

The LEA shall retain in file the signed forms for a period of four years.

I have been trained in the District of Columbia State Test Security Guidelines and testing protocols. I understand the guidelines and protocols. It is my understanding that:

1. The state test materials are secure and confidential documents and must be secured at all times;
2. No part of the test should be reproduced in any form; and
3. Contents of the test shall not be discussed, reviewed, or shared.

I agree to abide by all state test security guidelines and I understand the sanctions and penalties for violations of state security guidelines.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

LEA: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Revised January 2013**



