



INSTRUCTION: Research, Testing and Evaluation

Research and Assessment

I. Purpose

To implement Policy 6500 by establishing guidelines for the administration of assessments, assigning responsibilities and outlining consequences for violations of testing procedures in Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS).

II. Definitions

- A. *Accommodations* – Assessment practices and procedures that provide students with disabilities equitable access during assessments.
- B. *Accommodator* – A staff member who has been designated and trained by the school’s test coordinator to view, administer, assist, observe, collect or provide accommodations for students before, during or after the administration of specific state-mandated or systemwide assessments.
- C. *Assessment* – An ongoing process aimed at understanding student learning, which involves making expectations explicit and public; setting appropriate criteria and high standards for learning quality; systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards; and using the resulting information to document, explain and improve performance.
- D. *Local Accountability Coordinator (LAC)* – A staff member appointed by the local superintendent to serve as the liaison between the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the school system for federal and state-mandated assessments.
- E. *Proctor* – An individual who is trained to work under the direction of the test examiner to assist with test administration; proctors do not have to be certificated teachers, but they must be employed by BCPS and have school-based administrator approval. A proctor may not serve as an accommodator on the same assessment.
- F. *School Administrator* – The principal or assistant principal.

- G. *School Test Coordinator (STC)* – A school administrator selected by the school principal who is legally responsible for administering all federally- and state-mandated assessments within a school and adhering to all legal requirements and directives issued by MSDE or BCPS. The STC serves as the liaison between the school and the LAC office.
- H. *Secure Materials* – Test materials in print or online that contain test items or student responses and to which access is restricted. Secure materials include, but are not limited to: test booklets, answer documents, student log-in information (i.e. authorization tickets) and used scrap paper.
- I. *State-Mandated Assessments* – Assessments required by MSDE to be administered statewide at specific grade levels for the purposes of system evaluation, school improvement and evaluation of individual or group student achievement.
- J. *Systemwide Assessments* – Assessments, either purchased or developed by BCPS that are aligned with the school system’s curriculum and administered systemwide to groups of students in identified grades, courses and/or programs.
- K. *Test Administrator/Examiner* – A certificated, full-time staff member who has been trained to administer specific state-mandated or systemwide assessments. Test examiners are responsible for distributing, managing and collecting test materials; delivering appropriate instructions to a group of students; maintaining test security during testing; and providing an appropriate testing environment.
- L. *Test Facilitator* – A staff member; certificated or non-certificated, who has been trained and assigned by the school test coordinator to monitor, report or attempt to resolve technological, logistical and hardware concerns during a given online test session.
- M. *Test Materials* – Any of the documents or supplemental supplies and equipment used for testing, including, but not limited to, student test instruments and other technology.
- N. *Test Security Incident* – An incident occurring at any point during a test administration that leads to a question regarding the security of the assessment or the accuracy of the assessment data.

- O. *Testing Window* – The period of time designated for schools to administer mandated assessments.

III. Scope

- A. The guidelines outlined in this rule shall apply to the following assessments:
 1. *Access For ELLs* – State-mandated assessment used to determine language proficiency in Grades K–12.
 2. *Alt-MSA* – State-mandated assessment for non-diploma bound students with significant cognitive disabilities determined by the IEP eligibility tool administered in science for Grades 5, 8 and 10.
 3. *Curriculum-embedded Assessments* – Assessments that are built into the curriculum being taught in the classroom.
 4. *HSA Biology* – State-mandated biology assessment administered to all students upon completion of a biology course in high school.
 5. *HSA Government* – State-mandated government assessment administered to all students upon completion of an American government course in high school.
 6. *Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)* – Systemwide assessment used as a foundational data point to determine student growth towards achieving college and career readiness and as a starting data point in the school progress planning process.
 7. *MSA Science* – State-mandated science assessment administered to all students in Grades 5 and 8.
 8. *National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)* – Federally-mandated assessment of randomly selected students used to obtain statewide benchmark data to compare achievement amongst states.
 9. *National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC)* – State-mandated assessment for non-diploma bound students with significant cognitive disabilities determined by the IEP eligibility tool administered in reading and math Grades 3-8 and Grade 10.
 10. *Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)* – State-mandated assessment administered to all students in Grades 3 through 8 to assess student achievement and growth in mathematics and English language arts/literacy and is also administered upon completion of Algebra I and English 10 courses.
 11. *Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT)* – Systemwide assessment that provides students with a measure of their college readiness. Results in Grade 11 are used for national merit scholarship consideration.

12. *Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)* – Systemwide assessment that provides students with a measure of their college readiness. Results are reported to colleges as a required entry criterion. BCPS provides students in Grade 11 an opportunity to take this assessment in the spring at no cost to the student.
13. *Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)* – Federally-mandated international assessment used to obtain countrywide benchmark data to compare achievement in math and science amongst countries.

IV. Roles and Responsibilities

- A. The Superintendent shall annually designate a school system administrator to serve as the local accountability coordinator (LAC).
- B. Local Accountability Coordinator (LAC)

The Local Accountability Coordinator shall be responsible for:

1. Oversight of the administration of all federally- and state-mandated assessments;
2. Security of all federally- and state-mandated assessments; and
3. Reporting and investigating of all allegations of test security violations on federally- or state-mandated tests.

- C. Principals

The school principal shall be responsible for:

1. Designating an administrator in his/her school to serve as the school test coordinator (STC) or designating a certificated staff member as the STC in conjunction with the LAC in the event that the principal is the sole school administrator before the beginning of each school year; designating another certificated staff member to serve as alternate STC before the beginning of each year; notifying the LAC of any changes in appointments;
2. Providing the proper and ethical administration of all assessments and the security of all assessments;
3. Identifying a secure, locked location to house all assessment materials in their schools;
4. Maintaining the security of all assessment materials in their schools;
5. Advising students of behavior expectations during testing;
6. Distributing assessment results as appropriate, and

7. Following test security procedures as directed by MSDE and the LAC.

E. School Test Coordinators (STC)

The STC shall be responsible for:

1. Coordinating the administration of federally- and state-mandated assessments in their schools;
2. Maintaining the security of all federally- and state-mandated assessments in their schools;
3. Training test examiners, proctors, accommodators, test facilitators and other staff members regarding the proper and ethical administration of each federally- and state-mandated assessment administered in their schools;
4. Training staff members on the proper handling of test materials;
5. Ensuring that qualified staff serve as test examiners, proctors, accommodators and test facilitators;
6. Attending all required training sessions;
7. Ensuring that students receive their accommodations in accordance with IEP, 504 or ELL plans;
8. Overseeing the delivery of accommodations during testing sessions;
9. Ensuring that students have the proper testing environment;
10. Retaining the names and student identification numbers of all students assessed, as well as the names of all test examiners and proctors, for six school years following each MSDE mandated assessment administration;
11. Attending each required training meeting, sign a certification of training and/or a non-disclosure agreement; and
12. Reporting all testing violations immediately to the school principal and to the LAC.

F. Test Examiner (TE)/Test Administrator (TA)

The test examiner/test administrator shall be responsible for:

1. Distributing and collecting secure test materials to a group or groups of students;
2. Delivering appropriate and required directions to a group or groups of students;
3. Maintaining the security of the test and testing materials throughout testing;
4. Providing students with an appropriate testing environment; and

5. Attending each required training meeting, signing a certification of training and/or a non-disclosure agreement.

V. Ethical Administration of Assessments

- A. Each employee is expected to participate in his/her assessment duties with honesty while ensuring the integrity of the assessment process.
- B. Employees and students shall follow security procedures promulgated by MSDE and/or the Board, as published in test administration manuals, Board policy and other locally developed and approved documents for mandated tests. This includes the reporting and investigation of any violations related to testing.

VI. Training

- A. The local accountability coordinator (LAC) will be trained by MSDE prior to each state-mandated test administration.
- B. Prior to each test administration, the LAC office will provide training to the school test coordinators (STC).
 1. The training will include:
 - a. A comprehensive overview of the process and procedures related to a specific test administration (e.g. PARCC, Access for ELLs); and
 - b. A review of test security procedures will also be reviewed at every training session.
 2. All training materials and manuals will be posted to the office of assessment Wiki site.
 3. Training sessions for all STCs are mandatory. Attendance at these sessions will be taken and all attendees will be required to sign the certification of training/non-disclosure form.
- C. The STC is responsible for training all personnel who will be included in testing within their schools. This must include training on all test procedures and test security.
 1. The STC is also responsible for providing specific training for any school personnel who administer assessments to students who require accommodations.
 2. The STC shall ensure that all accommodations are administered in accordance with all of the guidelines set forth by MSDE.

3. Attendance at these sessions must be documented and all attendees will be required to sign the certification of training/non-disclosure form.

VII. Acquisition, Storage, Accounting and Access to Test Materials

- A. The LAC is responsible for the acquisition of assessments and coordinates the shipment of test materials to and from schools.
- B. Secure test materials must be accounted for at all times, from the time they are received at the school until they are returned to the testing contractor. When test materials arrive in the school, the STC is required to inventory materials to ensure all materials have been received, complete the acknowledgement of receipt form in each shipment and notify the LAC of any discrepancies or shortages.
- C. Except for the actual times of administration within the classrooms, all test materials must be stored under lock and key in a central location that is accessible to only the principal, STC and alternate STC.
- D. During times of test administration, the STC must document the distribution and receipt of materials on each day of testing.
- E. Labels may be affixed to secure test booklets prior to testing. Additional support staff may help with this task but only under the direct supervision of the STC.
- F. At the conclusion of each testing session, the TE must account for all materials prior to dismissing students. All materials must be returned to the STC at the end of each testing session.
- G. STCs must maintain written documentation to show the handling of all secure materials throughout the testing administration.

VIII. Testing Violations

A. Staff Member Violations

It is a violation for any staff member to knowingly or willingly:

1. Give unauthorized individuals or examinees access to secure test items or materials before testing;

2. Copy, reproduce, use or otherwise disclose any portion of secure test materials, administrator's manual or both;
3. Provide answer keys or answers orally, in writing or by any other means, to examinees;
4. Provide accommodations not specified on a student's individualized education program (IEP), Section 504 Plan or English Language Learners (ELL) plan;
5. Coach examinees during testing by giving them answers to test questions or otherwise directing or guiding their responses or altering or interfering with examinee's responses in any way;
6. Fail to properly monitor test administration, including permitting inappropriate collaboration between or among individuals;
7. Allow a student to take a test for someone else;
8. Fail to follow security regulations and procedures for the distribution and return of secure test materials in accordance with MSDE regulations, or fail to account for all secure test materials before, during or after testing;
9. Administer federally- or state-mandated assessments on dates other than those specified in guides, manuals or on the systemwide testing calendar without the prior approval of the LAC office; or
10. Operate a cell phone, wireless handheld device, personal digital assistant (PDA) or any electronic device that enables the transmission of text, voice messages or photo images during an assessment.

B. Data Collection and Reporting Violations

It is a violation of data collection and reporting for an individual or school to:

1. Participate in, direct, aid, counsel, assist in, encourage or fail to report any of the acts prohibited by this rule;
2. Fail to report test scores, numbers of students tested or other required indicators of test performance on mandated tests administered by or through MSDE, as well as other data elements reported to MSDE;
3. Report incorrect or otherwise inaccurate test scores, numbers of students tested, other indicators of test performance and participation on mandated tests administered by or through MSDE, as well as other requested data elements to MSDE; or
4. Exclude a student or students from participation in federally- or state-mandated tests except in accordance with MSDE-approved procedures.

C. Student Violations

It is a violation for any student to knowingly and willingly:

1. Obtain improper access to the test, secure test items or materials before, during or after testing or assist other students in doing so;
2. Provide answers verbally, in writing or by any other means to other students;
3. Use prohibited aids;
4. Attempt to or take a test for someone else; or
5. Operate a cell phone, wireless handheld device, PDA or any electronic devices that enables the transmission of text, voice messages or photo images during assessment.

D. Reporting Violations

All allegations of testing behavior violations and test security shall be reported to the LAC for investigation.

E. Investigations

1. The LAC shall investigate all allegations of testing behavior violations and work in conjunction with appropriate personnel and issue a report. The report shall be directed to the appropriate Assistant Superintendent for action.
2. All staff and students shall cooperate fully in all investigations relating to violations of Board Policy 6500 and this rule.

IX. Consequences

A. Employees

1. Any employee who violates Board Policy 6500 or this rule shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
2. Testing violations by a certificated employee during state-mandated assessments may also result in the suspension and/or revocation of the employee's certificate by the State Superintendent of Schools.

B. Students

1. A student who violates Board Policy 6500 or this rule shall be subject to discipline in accordance with Board Policy 5550, *Disruptive Behavior*.

2. A student who engages in any activities during testing, which results in invalidation of scores, may be ineligible to retake the test until the next official testing opportunity.

Legal References: *Annotated Code of Maryland*, Education Article §7-203, *Education Accountability Program*
COMAR 13A.03.04, *Test Administration and Data-Reporting Policies and Procedures*
COMAR 13A.12.05, *Suspension and Revocation*

Related Policies: Board of Education Policy 4002, *Obligations of Employees of the Board of Education of Baltimore County*
Board of Education Policy 4008, *Data Governance*
Board of Education 5210, *Grading and Reporting*
Board of Education Policy 5250, *Graduation Requirements*
Board of Education Policy 5550, *Disruptive Behavior*

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