

Test Administration Guidance and Best Practices

I. Florida Statewide Assessments Policy Revisions

As announced in the summer of 2020, certain new policies from the 2019–2020 school year were removed or revised for the 2020–2021 school year and beyond. The following prohibited activities were removed from the test administration manuals:

- Instructing individual students to check their work after they have indicated that they have completed testing.
- Instructing students to “brain dump” formulas or strategies once they receive materials but before testing begins.

Offering incentives or using checklists to monitor students for use of test-taking strategies during testing remains a prohibited activity. The revised language of this policy reads:

- *While you may prepare students for testing using strategies, such as underlining key words in passages or items, you may not actively monitor them to ensure they are using certain strategies. You may not offer incentives or rewards for using strategies during testing. Once testing begins, students must work on their own with the understanding that they are being monitored for **independent work only**.*

Please ensure that school staff in your district are aware of this change in policy, and that any outdated information, such as prior year manuals, training materials, or FAQs (including the one distributed by FDOE on February 27, 2020) are not posted or used in trainings.

II. Local Policy Decisions

Because the policies referenced in Section I. generated many questions about specific scenarios and activities that they were not intended to address, the department issued the afore referenced FAQ. Many school and district staff may still have questions about these situations. Any specific policy guidance regarding the following scenarios and activities should be determined at the district level:

- Redirecting students who are not actively engaged in testing
- Good behavior incentives
- Attendance incentives
- Parties or pep rallies before or after testing
- Providing mints or snacks during testing
- Rereading or posting portions of the scripts for students during testing

Some noted examples of situations that may warrant TA interactions during testing include:

- Students need help with their test materials, such as breaking a seal, completing the boxes on the front cover, requiring a new pencil or extra work folder, or logging into or submitting a computer-based test
- Students wish to report an item they believe is defective (see the *TA Responsibilities During Testing* section in the test administrator manuals)
- A student reports feeling ill or upset
- A student is being disruptive
- A student asks how much time is left in the session
- A student requests a restroom break

III. Best Practices

This section is not intended to provide districts and schools with requirements but, rather, considerations in making local decisions to optimize standardization and the validity of results. You may ask the following questions when making decisions, whether to determine policy or know how to best respond when a situation arises during testing.

- Does it give a student or group of students a possible advantage over other students? Disadvantage?
- Is it necessary?
- Could it be disruptive to a student’s testing experience? Disruptive to other students?
- Might it interfere with a student’s independent test taking?
- Does it put pressure on a student for an expected behavior unrelated to actually taking the test?

IV. Prohibited Activities

In addition to the *Test Administration and Security Agreement*, test administrators are required to read and sign a *Test Administrator Prohibited Activities Agreement*. While many items on the list are self-explanatory, the table below provides additional context for each activity. Test administrator (TA) actions that result in test invalidations or actions that may require further investigation should be reported to FDOE as soon as possible.

The following key can be used for the “Consequence” column:

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| 1 | May result in local disciplinary action | 2 | May result in test invalidation |
| 3 | Will result in test invalidation | 4 | May result in consequences from FDOE, up to and including loss of teaching certification or legal action |

Prohibited Activity	Description	Consequence
BEFORE TESTING		
Leave materials unattended	Once secure materials are in the TA’s possession, they should not be left alone at any time, even for a short break or to step outside to talk to a colleague.	1
Remove test materials from the school’s campus	This would be allowed in the case of a Hospital/Homebound administration only.	1
Open and check through test books	Per State Board Rule 6A-10.042, F.A.C., test content is secure and must not be accessed or viewed by anyone other than students taking the assessments.	1 4
Read test items and passages		
Copy, photocopy, scan, photograph, or record test content		

Prohibited Activity	Description	Consequence
DURING TESTING		
Read test items while monitoring the room (except when providing allowable accommodations, as described in Appendix A)	It is not appropriate for a TA to stop at student desks or workstations and read test content as he or she walks around the room.	1
Read student responses or materials (e.g., CBT Work Folders, CBT Worksheets) while monitoring the room	Similarly, it is not appropriate for a TA to read student writing responses or notes/work written on work folders, worksheets, or planning sheets.	1
Monitor students for use of testing strategies	It is not appropriate for a TA to look for use of certain strategies while walking around the room, such as underlining key words or numbering paragraphs in reading passages.	1
Coach students during testing regarding test-taking strategies	For instance, during testing, it is not appropriate for a TA to say to the class, “remember to number your paragraphs” or “don’t forget to use your calculator.”	1 2
Assist students in answering test items	This refers to helping students find the correct answer to an item. In addition to directing the student to a specific response, it could include giving a definition to a word or term or helping a student interpret a graphic within an item. For ELA Writing, it could include making a suggestion, such as “don’t forget your transition words.”	3 4
Give students verbal cues (“you may want to re-check number 7”) or non-verbal cues (pointing at a specific item)	As noted above, it is prohibited for TAs to read test content and student responses as they monitor the room. However, this behavior involves interfering with student testing and offering assistance that may cause a student to change an answer (regardless of whether they change it to the correct answer).	3 4
Give students more time than is allotted for the session (except when providing allowable accommodations, as described in Appendix A)	TAs must make sure they know the exact amount of time for each test session, particularly if they will administer different assessments with different timing during the test window. Even if a student says they are not finished, students must never be given additional time.	1 2
Encourage students to finish early	This applies particularly to an “untimed” test session, such as an EOC or Retake. Students should never feel rushed or pressured to work faster by a TA.	1 2
Display or fail to cover visual aids (e.g., charts, rulers, multiplication tables) that may help students	Instructional materials must be removed or covered, including but not limited to information that might assist students in answering questions that is displayed on bulletin boards, chalkboards or dry-erase boards, or on charts or posters (e.g., wall charts that contain literary definitions, maps, mathematics formulas). TAs must carefully inspect their testing rooms prior to testing to make sure no aids are visible.	1 2

Prohibited Activity	Description	Consequence
DURING TESTING		
Use cell phone or other electronic device (except to monitor student progress or to contact the school assessment coordinator or technology coordinator in case of a technical issue or emergency), check email, grade papers, or engage in other activities that will result in attention not being on students at all times	Behavior that distracts a TA from actively monitoring students, such as texting or doing other work, can be distracting to students and may allow students to cheat or share information during testing. If an incident occurs in a testing room and it is discovered that the TA was engaged in distracting activities and not monitoring the room, test invalidation is more likely.	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid orange; padding: 2px 5px; margin-right: 10px;">1</div> <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid orange; padding: 2px 5px;">2</div>
Leave the room unattended for any period of time	Leaving students unattended may allow students to cheat or share information during testing. If an incident occurs in a testing room and it is discovered that the TA was absent for any period of time, even a short restroom break, test invalidation is more likely.	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid orange; padding: 2px 5px; margin-right: 10px;">1</div> <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid orange; padding: 2px 5px;">2</div>
Allow students to talk or cause disturbances	Allowing students to talk during testing may result in cheating or disturbing other students who are completing testing. Even if students have completed testing, they must remain quiet to not disturb others who have not.	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid orange; padding: 2px 5px; margin-right: 10px;">1</div> <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid orange; padding: 2px 5px;">2</div>
Allow students to use cell phones or other electronic devices, even if they have already finished their tests	Students may not access electronic devices during testing or during breaks. Even if students have completed testing, having access to devices, such as cell phones, may be disruptive to other students. In some cases, it could result in the student with the electronic device assisting another student who is still working.	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid orange; padding: 2px 5px; margin-right: 10px;">1</div> <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid orange; padding: 2px 5px;">2</div>
Instruct students to test in a session other than the one designated for that day/allotted testing time (going on to Session 2 during Session 1, reviewing work in Session 1 during Session 2)	Care must be taken to ensure students are working in the correct session and students must never be instructed to go back and change responses from a previous session or work ahead if they finish a session early. Even if a TA notices or a student reports unfinished items from a previous session, the student is prohibited from returning to that session.	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid orange; padding: 2px 5px; margin-right: 10px;">1</div> <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid orange; padding: 2px 5px;">2</div>
Administer the assessment to family members	TAs who have been assigned to a testing room with a family member present should request a re-assignment.	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid orange; padding: 2px 5px; margin-right: 10px;">1</div> <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid orange; padding: 2px 5px;">2</div>

Prohibited Activity	Description	Consequence
AFTER TESTING		
Leave test materials unattended	This includes time between sessions. For instance, if lunch takes place between sessions 1 and 2, materials must be returned to the SAC and placed locked storage, not left in the classroom during the break.	1
Read through student test documents or responses	As stated above, TAs may not read through test documents at any time, even after testing is completed. While a TA may be curious about what a student wrote or to see if the student responded to all items, this activity is prohibited and could cause the appearance of other improprieties.	1
Change student answers	Student responses may never be altered by TAs after testing. This includes looking through test books for stray marks or other anomalies.	3 4
Discuss the content of the test with anyone, including students or other school personnel	Even after testing is completed, TAs may not compromise test security by discussing test content with students or colleagues. Students may be curious about the answer to an item that they found difficult and ask his or her TA about it; while general concepts may be discussed (e.g., adding fractions), specific items must not be discussed or displayed.	1
Reveal the content of the test via electronic communication, including but not limited to email, text, or posting to social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram)	Discussion of test content before, during, and after testing is not limited to in-person discussions. Even once testing is complete at a school, other students in the district or state may have not yet tested and revealing any content compromises the validity of those assessments. This is particularly important for ELA Writing where individuals wish to share the “topic” but must refrain from doing so. In addition, publishing test content to a social media site is in violation of s. 1008.24, F.S. and will result in investigation.	1 4