

Testing Ethics Policy FAQ

Who is my district assessment director?

- Jordan District's Assessment Director: Ben Jameson
 - Department: [Assessment, Research & Accountability](#)
 - Contact Information: ben.jameson@jordandistrict.org
- The Assessment Director leads the work related to statewide assessment administration within the district.
- The assessment director should be able to answer most statewide assessment-related questions for your district.
- It is important to know who your district assessment director is and their contact information within your district or charter school.
- If USBE is contacted, the assessment director is included in all communications to keep them informed about assessment-related questions within your district.

What is a standardized test administration?

- Standardized tests require specific rules and standardized procedures for administering assessments.
- If the guidance, testing tool, or instructions aren't provided to every student who will complete the test, it isn't allowed (unless provided in an IEP/504 plan).
- Consult the test administration manual for the specific statewide assessment for allowed materials, embedded tools, and proper administration procedures.
- A standardized administration of an assessment ensures that every student has an equitable opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do. It also means that every educator can confidently rely on the assessment results to inform instruction, identify students for extra support or enrichment, and compare their results across similar groups.

What is active proctoring during testing?

Active proctoring means the test administrator is:

- Maintaining a positive test environment while students are testing.
- Ensuring students cannot access internet-capable electronic devices during testing.
- Walking around the room to monitor student testing.
- Using proximity control to keep students engaged.
- Glancing at the students' computer screens and scratch paper to ensure students are accessing test content and engaged while they are answering test questions.
- Providing support for students who need assistance with the technology used to answer questions.
- Following local school policies for proctoring.

Do schools need to follow the same standardized testing procedures for make-up sessions?

- Schools must follow all test administration policies and procedures during make-up sessions.

- This includes providing an appropriate environment that limits distractions, reading all scripts, and providing active proctoring throughout the make-up sessions.

Am I required to remove or cover the posters and/or word walls hanging on my classroom walls? What about multiplication charts taped to student desks?

- If the information provided on the posters or desks provides hints to answers or guidance on answering questions, the information must be covered up or removed during testing.
- It doesn't matter if the information has been on the wall or available all year long. It must be covered up or removed.
- One of the purposes of statewide assessments is to allow students to demonstrate what they know and can do without scaffolding or instructional supports (except as allowed for on an IEP, 504 plan, or ML plan).

Can I use Acadience Reading or Acadience Math benchmark and/or progress monitoring materials as part of instruction to help my students prepare for testing?

- No. These materials should be secure. The assessment loses its validity and reliability if students have been exposed to testing materials beforehand.
- The idea behind both of these assessments is to ascertain what students know and can do without teacher scaffolding.
- Using testing materials as part of instruction can artificially elevate student scores, which may prevent them from getting the additional instructional support they need.
- Using statewide testing materials as part of instruction is a violation of the state's testing ethics policy.

How many proctors are required in each testing session?

- Two assigned proctors are actively involved in each testing session.
- A proctor/test administrator is always present in the room during standardized testing and is actively proctoring.
- A second, roving proctor supports the needs of one or more active proctors by actively overseeing multiple testing rooms and sessions.
- Proctoring plans must include procedures for both expected and unexpected contingencies that could include student emergencies, test administrator guidance, or reporting technical issues.
- Consult the assessment test administration manual for any guidance on proctoring a specific assessment.
- Minimizing disruptions and providing a quiet, positive environment for students completing standardized assessments is required.

Are headphones required for every student during statewide assessments?

- For RISE, Utah Aspire Plus and WIDA Access, the answer is yes. Text-to-speech and embedded testing scripts require the use of wired headphones/earbuds by students.

- Wired headphones/earbuds should be provided at each testing station. Students should not need to request headphones/earbuds.
- For WIDA Access, you'll need headphones/earbuds for the listening, reading and writing subtests. For the speaking test, you'll need a headset, which includes a microphone.
- For other assessments, please refer to the test administration manual for the assessment that will be administered.

**Does the scratch paper/graph paper have to be a certain color or specific size?
Does it have to be paper?**

- The scratch/graph paper needs to be blank
- Lined notebook paper or commercially-printed graph paper without coordinate lines is allowed.
- There is no limitation about the color or size of the scratch/graph paper.
- The level of distraction that the size and/or color of the paper could provide to students should be considered.
- Providing students multiple sheets of different colored paper, to be used as a graphic organizer, is not allowed.
- The lack of standardization and level of distraction that is caused by using whiteboards, sticky notes, multiple sheets of colored paper to be used as a graphic organizer, or other alternative forms of scratch/graph paper is the reason these are not allowed.
- Teachers may not provide a graphic organizer to be used as scratch paper, but they may teach students as part of regular instruction how to create their own graphic organizers.

Can students create their own graphic organizer prior to testing and bring it to the testing session?

- Students can create their own graphic organizer during the testing session, using the blank scratch/graph paper that should be provided to every student, but they cannot bring it to the testing session already prepared (unless it is another session of the *same assessment* and the student had created the graphic organizer during their first testing session)
- Scratch paper should be provided at every testing station. Students should not have to request scratch paper.
- The test administration manual for each assessment provides guidance about scratch/graph paper.
- All scratch/graph paper must be collected, stored, and disposed of securely once students have completed their assessment.
- Teachers may not provide a graphic organizer to be used as scratch paper, but they may teach students as part of regular instruction how to create their own graphic organizers.

Are pre-programmed calculators allowed during the math and/or science tests?

- Pre-programming calculators violates the construct of the assessment because there is no standardization in the administration of the assessment.

- Embedded calculators are provided within the test platform for RISE and Utah Aspire Plus.
- For the RISE math assessment in grades 3-5, calculators are not allowed. For part of the RISE math 6th grade assessment and all of the RISE math 7-8th grade assessment, calculators are allowed.
- Most importantly, this violates the Standardized Test Administration and Testing Ethics policy because the teacher is providing unauthorized resources during testing.
- See this [guidance document](#) for more information about the use of calculators.

Can students have access to their electronic, internet-capable devices, including cell phones or smart watches during testing?

- Unless the device is required by an IEP/504 for the student's health and safety, no student should have access to an electronic, internet-capable device during testing.
- The devices should be turned off and stored away from the student.
- Bluetooth devices will interfere with the secure browser of the tests and should not be accessible.
- It is recommended that schools adopt a consistent procedure for ensuring students do not have access to an electronic device during testing.
- Active proctoring includes monitoring to ensure students are not accessing electronic devices during testing.

Can I play music for my class while they are testing? Can students listen to music with their headphones while testing?

- Music can be distracting to students and violates the standardization procedures for statewide assessments.
- No headphones/earbuds may be used to listen to music due to provided and embedded text-to-speech in statewide assessments.
- Earbuds/Bluetooth headphones will interfere with and prevent the RISE, Utah Aspire Plus, WIDA Access, and ACT secure browser from opening.
- Students with a "listen to music during testing" accommodation will test in a separate location with provided music on a separate device.

Am I required to follow the specific procedures and read the scripts verbatim every testing session?

- Yes. The test administration manual scripts provide standardized instructions and procedures for the assessment and must be read to all students, including those who arrive late to class.
- Embedded scripting is provided for RISE and Utah Aspire Plus that students must listen to before proceeding to the active test session. Wired headphones are required for every student.
- [R277-404-8](#) requires that all test administrators follow the specific administrative procedures specified in the test administration manual. This includes reading the scripts verbatim.

- Paraphrasing, changing, or not reading the scripts in every testing session removes the standardization from the assessment and could violate the construct of the test.

Who is allowed to be in the room during testing?

- Students who have been excluded by a parent from a statewide assessment may be allowed to be physically present in the room during a statewide test administration. Testing policies and procedures, including maintaining test security, should be followed. This includes limiting distractions from students who are not completing a statewide assessment.
- No parents/guardians can proctor a test their student is completing.
- The public, including parents, are not permitted in the room when testing is occurring.

Can a proctor limit the number of question items students complete on an untimed assessment like RISE or the WIDA Access to pace or guide how the assessment should be completed?

- Unless specific guidance or instructions are included in the test administration manual that says students should only complete a certain amount of questions in one sitting, pacing the test is not permitted.
- Pacing a statewide assessment may alter the construct, reliability, and validity of student scores.
- Reviewing a student's response and instructing the students to rethink answers or slow down during testing is not permitted.
- Testing proctors may encourage students to take their time and do their best.

What if a student is taking an excessively long time to complete an assessment?

- Review the test administration manual for guidance on expected testing times.
- All students should be allotted the appropriate amount of time they need to complete the assessment, but unlimited time is not appropriate or feasible for any student.
- Monitor the student's progress to ensure the student is actively engaged in completing the assessment.
- When IEP, 504 plan, or ML teams are determining the appropriate amount of extended time for a student, it should be based on the amount of extended time a student uses during instruction, and during classroom and district assessments.
 - For example, if a student typically takes twice the amount of time to complete an assignment or classroom test, then that should be the amount of extended time the student could take for a statewide assessment.
- In general, no more than twice the typical time should be allowed for regular students to complete testing. Testing proctors should consult with the district assessment director for extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

Can I provide a treat or snack to students during testing?

- If all students receive the snack, this is not considered a nonacademic reward.

- The timing of the snack should be considered since passing out snacks or treats during a testing session could be distracting to students.
- The type of snack should be considered if it is sticky, noisy, or messy or could potentially damage testing devices if spilled.

Can students who have been opted out of the test by their parents stay in the room during testing?

- Yes. Test security and preventing student distractions for those students who are testing should be considered when providing a place for students who will not be completing the statewide assessment.
- Students who are excluded from testing and present during testing should be provided with an alternate learning experience that does not distract students who are testing.

Can schools require students who have been opted out of testing to complete a district-, school- or teacher-created assessment?

- Yes. A district-, school- or teacher-created assessment is an acceptable alternate activity for students whose parents have opted them out of the statewide assessment.
- The alternate assessment should be of a length and rigor level that is comparable to other assessments administered throughout the school year in the classroom.
- The same parameters used for the statewide assessment (i.e., positive impact on the student's grade, opportunity to retake to demonstrate mastery, etc.) would also apply.
- Please see this [guidance document](#) for more information.

How do I notify parents that they have the option to opt their student out of statewide testing?

- The state's testing ethics policy does not allow educators to volunteer information about opting their students out of testing. It is not the educator's responsibility to notify parents of their opt out options unless the parent requests the information first.
- Educators must wait for a parent to ask for more information. Once this happens, an educator can then provide the additional information a parent is requesting, including the process for opting their student out of a test.
- For instance, a parent may ask the following: "I'm not sure I want my child to participate in this test. Is there anything I can do?" The educator would then provide the information about parent exclusion.
- Here's an example of a testing ethics violation: A teacher knows they have parents who want to opt their students out of testing. In anticipation of this, the teacher emails parents the opt out form and explains the process, but none of the parents have actually solicited the information. As helpful as it might be to parents, this is still a testing ethics violation. In addition, a parent could legitimately take the information as a lack of belief on the teacher's part that their student can do well on the assessment. For a student with a disability, it could even be seen by the parent as a denial of FAPE.

A test administrator has a question about an item on a statewide assessment. How can this concern be shared without being unethical since it's a secure test item?

- The school test coordinator, district test coordinator or district assessment director should be contacted to communicate the concern with USBE and/or the assessment vendor help desk.
- Note the content area of the assessment or subtest, question number, and observed issue.
- DO NOT take a photograph or email the content of a question to USBE or to the help desk.
- Call the [USBE Assessment content specialist](#) and/or the specific assessment help desk with the specifics about the question.

If I have a question about a specific student or multiple students, how do I share information with others without violating student data privacy?

- Do not email student names.
- Be careful and aware with email threads that contain private student information. ONLY SSID or Skyward numbers should appear in email.

Can schools have class parties, give out treats, or provide other nonacademic rewards to celebrate the completion of statewide testing?

- Using nonacademic rewards in connection with statewide testing is not permitted.
- No student should be excluded from a nonacademic activity or party based on their participation in statewide tests or their scores earned on the test.
- Student data privacy must be considered when presenting awards based on student participation and scores earned after completing statewide tests.
- Essentially, don't make the nonacademic reward about the statewide test. Make it about something else like their hard work throughout the school year and ensure that all students, even those who have been excluded by their parents from an assessment, have the opportunity to earn the reward.

Can teachers use statewide assessment scores as an academic incentive to improve a student's grade?

- [53E-4-303\(4b\)](#) states that "a teacher may use a student's score on the standards assessment to improve the student's academic grade for or demonstrate the student's competency within a relevant course."
- [R277-404-7](#) specifically states that an "LEA shall allow an educator to provide an academic incentive for a student's performance on a statewide assessment..."
- The score cannot lower a student's grade; it can only help it.
- Please see this [guidance document](#) for further information on using statewide assessment scores as part of students' grades.

Can schools use statewide assessment scores as a prerequisite for course entry?

- Schools cannot prohibit a student from enrolling in an honors, advanced placement, or International Baccalaureate course based on a student's score on a statewide assessment or because the student was exempted by a parent from taking the statewide assessment.

Can administrators use statewide assessment scores as part of a teacher's annual evaluation or to RIS/RIF a teacher?

- [53G-11-507](#) states that an educator's annual evaluation "may not use end-of-level assessment scores in educator evaluation."
- It is recommended that the results from statewide assessments not be used to make reduction in staff or reduction in force decisions.
- There are too many ways scores may be impacted from one teacher to another, depending on the number of students with disabilities, English learners, chronically absent students, gifted and talented students, etc. in a classroom for a statewide assessment to adequately be used to determine a teacher's RIS/RIF status.

Where can I find my students' score reports?

- Use the reporting guide for the specific test. These will assist you in finding, reviewing, and interpreting the score reports.
- Information about each statewide assessment, including the reporting guide for each assessment, may be found [here](#).

How do I report a suspected testing ethics violation?

You can contact whomever you feel most comfortable:

- School Administration
- District Administration
- Your district [assessment director](#)
- Utah State Board of Education (USBE) [Assessment & Accountability section](#)
- USBE Public Education Hotline Internal Audit webpage
- Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission (UPPAC)

If you have other questions that don't appear on this FAQ document, please contact Jordan School District's [Assessment, Research & Accountability Department](#).