

## Appendix A: Professional Testing Practices and Assessment Standards

Testing and assessment programs continue to proliferate and become and are increasingly relied on to help monitor schooling achievement outcomes. Such approaches to evaluation and accountability require greater standardization of the process and procedures when fair and equitable comparisons are to result. Following is the first writing on this topic intended to impact the Kansas Assessments. Information and guidance that educators are expected to follow is presented. We expect your attention and adherence to these principles, policies and standards. Comments and reaction to better define and focus subsequent statements of such policies are invited.

Topics presented:

1. Test Security
2. Test Preparation Practices
3. Reporting Results of Assessments
4. Test Administration
5. Standardization Policies
6. Consequences for Cheating/Inappropriate Practices

### 1. Test Security

**School personnel are expected to do the following:**

**DO:**

Limit access to assessments

- The district test coordinator should be the district contact person who is responsible for handling all materials prior to testing.
- A designated person for each subject area in each school should be responsible for distributing the testing materials to teachers who are administering the assessment. That person should be responsible for maintaining test security in the building. Schools shall formalize this procedure.
- Examiner's Manuals should be distributed prior to testing so that test administrators may become familiar with testing procedures. However, test booklets should not be distributed or opened by anyone at the district or building level prior to test administration.
- Instruction should be focused at the indicator level. Reviewing tests and analyzing test items is strictly prohibited both before and after the assessment is administered. Information about building performance related to indicators will be furnished.

Attend to test security restrictions

- Test materials shall be stored in a secure, locked area. Although Examiner's Manuals should be distributed to test administrators in advance, test booklets should only be distributed to test administrators immediately prior to the test administration.
- Those who have contact with assessment materials must not violate the "do not copy" warnings on test booklets. Any seals or packaging materials should not be opened before tests are distributed to students. Secure test materials are not to be reproduced in whole, in part, or paraphrased in any way.

- Any breach of security, loss of materials, failure to account for materials, or any other deviation from acceptable security procedures shall be reported immediately to the Kansas State Department of Education.
- All test booklets should be counted and returned to the district test coordinator's office. The district test coordinator will be responsible for destroying booklets. **Note: This is a new procedure.**

The following are considered to be **best practice** with regard to test security. Schools are strongly encouraged to consider using these best practices:

**DO:**

- Administer assessments simultaneously throughout the district.
- Provide opportunities for making up assessments as soon as possible after the test administration. At least two opportunities for make-ups should be provided by schools.
- Provide spaces between seats during the assessment process.
- When using small tables, seat only two students to a table, opposite each other.

## 2. Test Preparation Practices

**School personnel are expected to do the following:**

**DO:**

- Provide students with the opportunity to learn the content included on tests. Use state curriculum standards, benchmarks and indicators as a resource for instruction.
- Assure that students have had prior experience with the testing format being used. The use of multiple-choice, multiple yes-no items and separate answer sheets are skills that need to be taught.
- Train staff in appropriate test preparation and administration procedures, including the use of test accommodations, as described in the Examiner's Manual.

**DO NOT:**

- Use actual test questions for practice. Similar or altered test questions may not be used for practice or for instruction.
- Reveal, copy or otherwise reproduce tests, test questions or student responses in any manner, oral or written.
- Intentionally prime for prior knowledge by giving students readings on the same themes or topics as those on the Kansas Reading Assessment.

The following are considered to be **best practice** with regard to test preparation. Schools are strongly encouraged to consider using these best practices:

**DO:**

Integrate teaching of test taking skills with regular classroom instruction and assessment. Encourage a positive atmosphere for testing.

**DO NOT:**

- Sacrifice large amounts of instructional time to implement canned test preparation programs.
- Allow there to be classroom posters, or materials on display that assist students taking the assessments. All such materials are to be removed prior to testing.

### 3. Reporting Results of Assessments

School personnel are expected to do the following:

**DO:**

- Use data to identify general areas where improvement is needed.
- Caution audiences about improper inferences based on assessment scores.

**DO NOT:**

- Make comparisons which do not account for differences in characteristics of students and disparities in test administration.
- Make a decision on the basis of a single test score.
- Provide assessment results in a manner or for a purpose that has not been validated (e.g., teacher performance evaluations and student promotion, remediation, retention, or graduation decisions).
- Make false, misleading or inappropriate statements and/or unsubstantiated claims that lead to false or misleading conclusions about assessment results.
- Violate confidentiality or provide information which identifies individual students.

The following are considered to be **best practice** with regard to reporting results. Schools are strongly encouraged to consider using these best practices:

**DO:**

- Report with the audience in mind.
- Communicate the purpose of the assessment as well as what the assessment is NOT designed to do.
- Share results with students and their parents.
- Provide staff development which is appropriate and informative in order for personnel to feel competent to respond to questions related to testing, scores and interpretation of results.
- Provide a greater understanding of student performance by using appropriate data analyses, such as:
  - disaggregation of data based upon student demographics, etc.
  - examination of course preparation in relation to test scores.
  - examination of performance trends.
- Report results by relying on statistics like reliability coefficients and standard error of measurement to help the audience understand error in measurement.

**DO NOT:**

- Allow employees or volunteers without the necessary knowledge and skills to interpret the results of an assessment.

## 4. Test Administration

**School personnel are expected to do the following:**

**DO:**

- See Examiner's Manual for test administration procedures. Call CETE (785) 864-3537 with questions.
- Notify the Kansas State Department of Education, (785) 296-3996, of any test administration irregularities.
- Turn in an answer sheet for EVERY student, whether or not the student is tested.
- Mail a list of all students coded as "not tested, other" to the State Department of Education with reasoning for the exemption. Analyses of reasons for student exemptions statewide will be completed later.
- Insist upon student attendance during testing.
- Adhere strictly to standardization requirements of the assessments. (See Examiner's Manual.) Make a reasonable attempt to give assessments to students who were absent on testing day.
- Destroy any and all notes, scratch paper or rough drafts produced by students during testing immediately after each test session.
- Schedule "quiet breaks" during testing, especially for young children.
- Have a building plan for test make-up sessions.

**DO NOT:**

- Coach or cue students in any way during test administration. This includes gestures and facial expressions. Student work is not to be edited.
- Make changes on student answer sheets. This may be done only by the test-taker during the actual test administration. The only exception to this is for ID information errors.
- Reclassify students solely for the purpose of avoiding state testing.
- Respond to questions during testing that would help the student to understand the question, aid them in responding to any item, or advise/encourage them to edit or change a response.
- Do testing in a lunchroom or area that is scheduled for other uses immediately following testing.
- Allow test booklets to be taken out of the testing area.

The following are considered to be **best practice** with regard to test administration. Schools are strongly encouraged to consider using these best practices:

**DO:**

Provide staff development for test administrators.

Have one adult monitor in the room in addition to the test administrator during the assessment. Have the building administrator in the school on the day of testing.

Develop a local testing policy which includes sanctions for cheating/inappropriate practices.

## **5. Standardization Policies**

- No off-grade testing is allowed at grade levels below the regularly assessed grade for any particular test.
- The Kansas Assessments are untimed. All schools are required to allow students as much time as necessary, within reasonable limits, to complete the assessment.
- Should more time be needed by a student, this time must be made available immediately following the initial session.
- The assessments may not be divided for administration in any way that is not written in the Examiner's Manual. If school schedules do not fit with the recommended timing for the assessment, administrators are asked to alter the schedule during the testing process.
- It is imperative that test administrators strictly adhere to the test administration guidelines regarding calculators and formula sheets in the mathematics assessments and regarding dictionaries, thesauruses and word processors for the reading and writing assessments.
- Building administrators or test administrators must contact KSDE (785-296-0916) before making any change not listed on the Accommodation Worksheet. They will advise whether the anticipated change is an accommodation or a modification, or if it is not allowed.

## **6. Consequences for Cheating/Inappropriate Practices**

School personnel **MUST** report all incidents of cheating or inappropriate testing practices to the Kansas State Department of Education. It is the policy of the KSDE to leave consequences to persons involved in such incidents to the local district.

Consequences to the school, however, will be handled as they have been in the past. Upon receiving the report, the KSDE will consult with the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation (785-864-3537). If it is determined that the cheating or inappropriate testing practice was severe enough to affect test scores, the affected scores will not be used in either the Building Report Card or for Quality Performance Accreditation. This will result in the loss of a year's data. There will be no opportunity to retest.