

In order to maintain the validity of the tests administered in the statewide assessment system, security of the test items is absolutely necessary. When security is breached, the tests no longer contain the important element of validity. If one student, school, or district has advantages to another, the test is no longer standardized and loses the important distinction of being appropriate for program accountability. The measures outlined within this policy are required in order to help preserve the security of the statewide testing system.

## **I. SECURITY OF TEST MATERIALS**

State-adopted standardized assessments, and all materials associated with those tests, are secure materials. As such, all State test materials at any given school site shall be stored at a single location under lock and key. The location will be determined by the district test coordinator and subject to the approval of the superintendent.

It is important not to provide an opportunity for any students to have access to the tests prior to their administration. This exposure would invalidate the data results for the tests. Secure materials shall not be delivered to individual schools more than one week in advance of test administration. With the exception of the school test coordinator, who shall receive the materials into the school, teachers and other school staff may not have access to secure materials more than 24 hours in advance of test administration.

It is inappropriate to use the contents of any standardized assessment as a component of any instruction to, or discussion with, students at any time, whether before or after testing occurs. Answers to test items may not be altered in any way by anyone except the student taking the test. Reading test items aloud to students, except in instances specified by particular portions of some assessments, is not allowable. State-determined allowable special accommodations are the only exceptions permitted.

All administrations of standardized assessments must be conducted under standardized procedures described in the materials accompanying the assessments. Student assessments shall be returned to the school test coordinator on a daily basis during administration and shall not remain in the custody of teachers and other school staff overnight. Any additional security requirements provided by the assessment contractor must also be followed.

The district's testing coordinator is responsible for ensuring the training of all staff involved in administering standardized assessments prior to their doing so.

## **II. REPORTING A BREACH OF SECURITY**

Individual irregularities, such as suspicions of cheating, should be reported to the district testing coordinator and the building principal immediately. The test administrator, subject to approval by the building principal and district test coordinator, must determine the proper action at this time.

Any breach of security must be reported in writing to the district test coordinator by the person(s) making the observation. In turn, the district test coordinator must follow up with a report to the Public Education Department. While anonymity in the reporting cannot occur, the name of the person initiating the report may be held in confidence if the building principal and the superintendent feel it is best to do so.

## **III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

For purposes of standardized assessments and test security, the following roles and responsibilities are identified.

### **A. District Test Coordinator**

- 1. Main contact for contract agency**
- 2. Responsible for coordinating the administration of assessments among all the involved schools within the district, including:**
  - a. ordering of materials**
  - b. distributing and collecting all test materials to and from schools**
  - c. returning all test materials to contracting company**
  - d. tracking secure materials**
- 3. Must be familiar with all of the information in the Test Coordinator and Test Administrator materials**
- 4. Is knowledgeable regarding proper test administration and test security**
- 5. Ensures that all personnel assigned to testing are adequately trained in the areas of proper test administration and test security**
- 6. Is the only person who can approve the invalidation of a test**
- 7. Must report any breaches of test security to the building principal, to the superintendent, and to the Public Education Department**

### **B. School Test Coordinator**

- 1. Must be the school principal, counselor, or other designated licensed professional staff member**
- 2. Is responsible for receiving the testing materials from the district test coordinator**
- 3. Is responsible for distributing testing materials to test administrators and ensuring test security during test administration periods**
- 4. Is responsible for preparing testing materials for shipment following test administration and returning all materials to the district test coordinator**

5. Is knowledgeable regarding proper test administration and test security
  6. Ensures building compliance with developed testing schedule
- C. Test Administrator**
1. Can only be a trained, licensed school instructor, counselor, related service provider, instructional assistant, or administrator
  2. If a substitute teacher, must be both long-term and licensed
  3. Personnel requirements may be more particularly determined by the Public Education Department for any given assessment.
  4. Is responsible for the actual administration of the assessment
  5. Must be familiar with the Test Administrator materials
  6. Is knowledgeable regarding proper test administration and test security
  7. Must report any testing irregularities to the building principal and to the district test coordinator

**Failure to comply with these requirements or others as required by New Mexico law or regulation shall be considered cause for discipline, including but not limited to suspension, termination, or discharge. All violations of this policy shall be reported to the Public Education Department in accord with law and/or regulation.**