

Standard Test Administration and Testing Ethics Policy For Utah Educators



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Purpose of Testing

When administered properly, state assessments allow students to demonstrate what they know and can do. Valid and reliable results from state assessments provide the public, the Legislature, the board, local education agencies (LEA), and teachers under [Utah Code 53E-4-301.5](#) with:

- Information about students' proficiency, so that they may have an additional tool to plan, measure, and evaluate the effectiveness of school programs
- Information to:
 - Recognize excellence
 - Identify need for additional resources or reallocation of educational resources in a manner to ensure educational opportunities for all students
 - Improve existing programs

Educators are obligated to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills fairly and accurately. Educators involved with state assessments must conduct testing in a fair and ethical manner ([Utah State Board R277-515-4\(A-D\)](#)).

Assessments

State assessments require that educators adhere to all ethical practices and procedures as outlined in this policy ([Utah State Board R277-404-8](#)). Information about these assessments can be found at the [Assessment and Accountability](#) website (<http://www.schools.utah.gov/assessment>)

State assessments are defined as assessments that are federally mandated, state mandated, and/or require the use of a state assessment system or software that is provided or paid for by the state ([Utah Code 53G-6-803.9a](#))

Before Testing: Teaching Practices

Licensed Utah educators are expected to:

- Provide instruction aligned to Utah Core State Standards using appropriate, locally adopted curriculum
- Provide accommodations throughout instruction to eligible students as identified by an EL, IEP, or 504 team
- Use a variety of assessment methods, including the formative assessment process, throughout the year to assess student competency and inform instructional practices
- Provide students with a variety of assessment experiences, including feedback on their performance and

progress, throughout the year

- Use the reference sheets provided for specific assessments as instructional tools throughout the year
- Use the resources provided for each assessment, as applicable, to familiarize students with the testing tools and question types

During Testing

Utah LEAs shall ensure that:

- Students are enrolled in appropriate courses
- Curriculum and instruction in all courses are aligned with the Utah Core State Standards
- Parents are provided with clarifications and procedures regarding student participation in state testing
 - An LEA shall honor parent requests to excuse a student from taking an assessment in accordance with the requirements of [Utah Code 53G-6-803](#) and [Utah State Board R277-404](#).
 - An LEA shall reasonably accommodate a parent or guardian's request to allow a student's demonstration of proficiency on a state assessment to fulfill a requirement in a course ([Utah State Board R277-404-6](#); [Utah Code 53G-6-803](#))
- All tests are proctored under the supervision of a licensed educator
- Educators and school employees who administer and/or proctor tests, complete annual testing ethics training provided by the LEA
- Educators review preparation guidelines and test administration manuals (TAM) for the assessment prior to test administration
- Hardware, software, and network specifications can successfully support test administration
- All school testing coordinators, administrators, and teachers administering tests are aware of their role in the assessment administration

Licensed Utah educators shall ensure that:

- An appropriate environment is set for testing to limit distractions
- All students who are eligible to test are tested or recorded as to why they didn't participate
- A student is not discouraged from participating in testing
- Students aren't penalized who have been opted-out of a state assessment ([Utah State Board R277-404-7-3b](#))
- Students aren't rewarded for participating in or performing well on a state assessment ([Board Rule R277-404-7-8](#); [Utah Code 53G-6-803-9c\(iii\)](#))
- Students are provided an alternative learning activity if they are opted-out of a state assessment ([Utah State Board R277-404-7-9](#))
- A proctor is present, and active proctoring takes place throughout the test session
- At least two assigned proctors are actively involved in each testing session
- Test administrators and proctors review and follow test preparation guidelines and the test administration manuals (TAM) for each assessment
- Accommodations are provided to eligible students, as identified by the EL, IEP, and/or 504 teams, and are consistent with those provided during instruction
- Any electronic devices shall be inaccessible by students, if they can be used to
 - access non-test content
 - distribute test content and materials
- Make-up and test completion sessions are provided for students according to the policies and procedures of the assessment

After Testing

Utah LEAs shall ensure that the test results are:

- Provided to students and parents within three weeks of the LEA receiving them with information on how to appropriately interpret scores and reports
- Made available to educators for use in improving their instruction
- Maintained according to LEA policies and procedures

Licensed Utah educators shall ensure that:

- All by-products (e.g. scratch paper, notes, student test tickets) of student testing are collected and secured after each test session, and destroyed when testing is completed, as appropriate
- All test materials are returned to the test coordinator, as appropriate

Utah LEAs and Licensed Utah educators may NOT:

- Use a student's score on a state required assessment to determine the student's academic grade, or a portion of the student's academic grade, for the appropriate course; or whether the student may advance to the next grade level ([Utah State Board R277-404-6](#)).
- Prohibit a student from enrolling in an honors, advanced placement, or International Baccalaureate course based on a student's score on a state required assessment or because the student was exempted from taking the state required assessment ([Utah State Board R277-404-6](#)).

Unethical Testing Practices

Unethical practices include, but are not limited to:

- Provide students with questions from the test to review before taking the test
- Change instruction to include specific test content
- Reword or clarify questions, or use inflection or gestures to help students answer test questions
- Allow students to use unauthorized resources during testing (e.g. dictionaries, thesauruses, mathematics tables, online references, graphic organizers)
- Display materials on walls or other high visibility surfaces that provide answers to specific test items (e.g. posters, word walls, formula charts)
- Reclassify students to alter subgroup reports
- Allow parents to assist with the proctoring of a test their child is taking
- Use students to supervise other students taking a test
- Allow the public to view secure test items or observe testing sessions
- Review a student's response and instruct the student to, or suggest that the student should, rethink his/her answers
- Reproduce, or distribute, in whole or in part, secure test content (e.g. taking pictures, copying, writing, posting in a classroom, posting publicly, emailing)
- Explicitly or implicitly encourage students to engage in dishonest testing behavior
- Administer assessment(s) outside of the prescribed testing window for each assessment
- Explicitly or implicitly encourage parents to opt-out their students from participating in a state assessment [Utah Code 53E-4-312](#)

If your actions will cause students to not receive a valid and reliable score that accurately reflects what they know and can do, don't do it!

Testing Ethics Violations

Testing ethics violations are to be reported to the supervisor of the person who may be investigated, the school administrator, the LEA assessment director, or the USBE Assessment department.

Protocol:

- Each LEA must determine local policies and procedures regarding ethics violations
- In most cases, an initial investigation should be conducted at the school level
- The LEA assessment director will review the initial investigation and determine findings
- If the violation is of sufficient concern, the incident may also be forwarded to the Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission (UPPAC) for review
- If inappropriate practices are substantiated, educators or other staff may receive further training or a reprimand, be subject to disciplinary action, be terminated, and/or lose their Utah teaching license

For more information about the processes in place concerning the investigation of testing ethics violations contact your LEA assessment director.

Resources

[Utah State Board of Education](http://www.schools.utah.gov) (<http://www.schools.utah.gov>)

[Assessment, Utah State Board of Education](http://www.schools.utah.gov/assessment) (<http://www.schools.utah.gov/assessment>)

[Utah State Law – Chapter 53E](https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title53E/53E.html) (<https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title53E/53E.html>)

[Utah Board of Education – RULES](https://rules.utah.gov/publicat/code/r277/r277-404.htm) (<https://rules.utah.gov/publicat/code/r277/r277-404.htm>)

[Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission](https://www.schools.utah.gov/policy/uppac) (<https://www.schools.utah.gov/policy/uppac>)