

TESTING PROGRAM

The Terrebonne Parish School Board shall take every precaution to assure that all tests administered within the school system shall be conducted in such a manner so as not to compromise in any way the testing results. For criterion-referenced, norm-referenced, alternate assessments and certain other tests administered by or through the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), testing materials and procedures, as well as any electronic data, computer media, or passwords related to student testing, shall be properly supervised in strict compliance with regulations outlined by BESE and the School Board. In addition, all secure tests, answer documents, student log-in information, and supplementary secure materials shall be stored under lock and key in designated areas when not in use.

Employees shall be responsible for reporting irregularities or improprieties in the administration of standardized tests. Although procedures for reporting irregularities to district personnel are listed below, employees may report such information directly to the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE), which shall investigate the allegations. No employee shall make a report of irregularities or improprieties in the administration of standardized tests knowing that the information included is false. No employee shall knowingly obstruct the procedures for receiving and investigating a report of irregularities or improprieties in the administration of standardized tests.

No public school administrator or member of a School Board shall retaliate against an employee who in good faith participates in an investigation of testing administration improprieties or irregularities. Retaliation shall include discharging, demoting, suspending, threatening, harassing, or discriminating of an employee who in good faith reports testing administration improprieties or irregularities.

DEFINITIONS

Access—access to secure test materials means physically handling the materials, not reading, reviewing, or analyzing test items or student responses, either before, during, or after testing, except where providing approved accommodations.

Secure Materials—test materials that contain test items or student responses and to which access is restricted. Secure test materials include:

1. student test booklets;
2. student answer documents;
3. student log-in information; and
4. any other materials that contain test items or student responses.

Testing Irregularity—any incident in test handling or administration that leads to a question regarding the security of the test or the accuracy of the test data.

CELLULAR TELEPHONES

All cell phones or other similar technological devices with imaging or text-messaging capabilities that are the property of students, test administrators, and school test coordinators must be placed in and remain in the off position while secured test materials are in the vicinity. Except for devices required for approved accommodations or online assessments, if a student is in possession of and/or uses a cell phone or electronic device in any manner during the administration of a statewide test, the phone or electronic device will be confiscated until assurance can be evidenced that all traces of information, in print, image, or verbal form, have been removed from all local and cloud storage and that no such traces remain on the device.

If evidence exists on the cell phone or other electronic device that indicates the device was used during the test administration and/or test material was recorded and/or transmitted, the student's score shall be voided.

Violation of the no cell phone or electronic device rule may result in discipline in accordance with School Board policy.

VIOLATIONS OF TEST SECURITY

Any changes made by the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and incorporated into Bulletin 118, *Statewide Assessment Standards and Practices*, Chapter 53, Test Security, will be considered as part of this policy and will be implemented by the School Board.

It shall be a violation of test security for any person to do any of the following:

1. Administer tests in a manner that is inconsistent with the administrative instructions provided by the LDE and the School Board that would give examinees an unfair advantage or disadvantage;
2. Give examinees access to test questions prior to testing;
3. Examine any test item at any time (except for students during the test or test administrators while providing the accommodations Tests Read Aloud or Communication Assistance, Transferred Answers, or Answers Recorded for students determined to be eligible for those accommodations);
4. At any time, copy, reproduce, record, store electronically, discuss, or use in a manner inconsistent with test regulations all or part of any secure test item, test booklet, answer document, or supplementary secure materials;
5. Coach examinees in any manner during testing or alter or interfere with examinees' responses in any manner;

6. Provide answers to students in any manner during the test, including provision of clues, hints, and/or actual answers in any form -- written, printed, verbal or nonverbal;
7. Administer published parallel, previously administered, or current forms of any statewide assessment;
8. Fail to follow security regulations for distribution and return of secure test booklets, answer documents, student log-in information, supplementary secure materials, as well as overages as directed; or fail to account for and secure test materials before, during, or after testing;
9. Conduct testing in environments that differ from the usual classroom environment (excluding computer labs used for online testing) without prior written permission from the LDE except for the purpose of providing accommodations;
10. Fail to report any testing irregularities immediately to the District Test Coordinator, who must report such incidents to the LDE;
11. Participate in, direct, aid, counsel, assist in, encourage, or fail to report any of the acts prohibited in this section.

PROCEDURES FOR TEST SECURITY

Test materials, including all test booklets, answer documents, student log-in information, supplementary secure materials containing secure test questions, videotapes, and completed observation sheets, shall be kept secure and accounted for in accordance with procedures specified in the test administration manuals and other communications provided by the Louisiana Department of Education.

Procedures for the security of test materials shall include:

1. The Superintendent shall annually designate one individual in the district as District Test Coordinator who shall be authorized to procure test materials which are utilized in testing programs administered by or through BESE or the Louisiana Department of Education. The name of the individual so designated shall be provided, in writing, to the LDE, and included on the statement of assurance.

If during the academic year the person appointed as District Test Coordinator changes, the Superintendent shall notify the LDE, in writing, within fifteen (15) days of the change of appointment.

The former District Test Coordinator shall inform the new District Test Coordinator of the location of placement tests and other relevant testing materials.

2. All persons involved in the administration of tests or that have access to test materials or student test data shall annually receive proper training and development for handling and securing all testing materials, as well as proper security maintenance, access to electronic data and confidentiality requirements. A record of such activities shall be maintained by the School Board. Such activities shall be coordinated and supervised by the District Test Coordinator. School testing coordinators shall in turn in-service all school level personnel having access to testing materials on security, administration, and confidentiality of individual or aggregated student test data.
3. The District Test Coordinator shall provide for and assure the security of all test materials prior to distribution to the schools and upon return of test materials from the schools.

All test materials, except district and school test coordinator manuals and test administration manuals, shall be kept in a designated, locked secure storage area prior to, during, and after administration of any test; all secure materials, including any parallel forms of a test, shall be kept in locked storage at both the district and school levels; secure materials must never be left in open areas or unattended.

Test administrators shall be given access to the tests and any supplementary secure materials only on the day the test is to be administered, and these are to be retrieved immediately after testing is completed for the day and stored in a designated locked, secure storage area each day of testing.

All test booklets, answer documents, student log-in information, and supplementary secure materials shall be accounted for and written documentation kept by test administrators and proctors for each point at which test materials are distributed and returned.

4. The School Board also shall maintain procedures to code testing materials at no more than two (2) secure central locations and to house the testing materials at the central locations until no more than three (3) working days prior to test administration, to the extent practicable.
5. Any discrepancies noted in the serial numbers of test booklets, answer documents, and any supplementary secure materials, or the quantity received from contractors shall be reported to the (LDE) by the District Test Coordinator prior to the administration of the test.
6. In the event the test booklets, answer documents, student log-in information, or supplementary secure materials are determined to be missing while in the possession of the school district or in the event of any other testing irregularities or breaches of security, the District Test Coordinator shall immediately notify by

telephone the (LDE) and follow the detailed procedures for investigating and reporting specified in BESE's *Test Security Policy*.

7. ***Only personnel trained in test security and administration*** shall be allowed to have access to or administer any statewide assessments.
8. Individuals shall adhere to all procedures specified in all operational manuals that govern the mandated testing programs, as well as ensure the security of individual student test data in electronic formats, including encryption of student demographics in any email correspondence.
9. All test administrators and proctors shall be required to sign the *Oath of Security* and return it to the School Test Coordinator to keep on file for three (3) years. The School Test Coordinator and principal shall be required to sign an *Oath of Security* and return it to the District Test Coordinator to be kept on file at the School Board office for three (3) years.
10. A list of personnel authorized to have access to the locked, secure storage area where all test materials are stored shall be maintained by the School Board. School personnel authorized to have access to the locked secure storage area shall only include the School Test Coordinator, principal, or assistant principal of each school. Additionally, a list of all individuals who have access to student level test data shall be maintained.
11. The School Board shall ensure that individual student test data in electronic and paper formats are protected from unauthorized access and disclosure. The District Test Coordinator and other authorized users of state testing and reporting systems shall be responsible for ensuring the security of all passwords, any disks or CD's with downloaded individual student test data, and student-level data open on a computer screen. Any student information from state testing and reporting systems shall not be disclosed to anyone other than a state, district, or school official, or parent/guardian as defined by the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974* (FERPA). All users who are granted a password to these systems shall abide by FERPA provisions.

School level passwords for access to individual school data shall be provided to school principals by the District Test Coordinator as requested. Principals shall be responsible for distributing the password, as needed, to school personnel and to provide for security and confidentiality of the school level password.

All school users shall be required to sign a confidentiality agreement guaranteeing they will not share any password with unauthorized individuals and maintain the confidentiality of student data. A copy of the confidentiality agreement shall be sent to the District Test Coordinator for safekeeping, or for school users, maintained by the principal of each school. Signed confidentiality agreements

shall be valid until the District Test Coordinator receives notification that the confidentiality agreement available online has been revised. A new confidentiality agreement shall be signed by all users each year after the new password letter for schools and districts has been automatically generated in August of each year. If a breach in security occurs, principals shall immediately contact the District Test Coordinator or his/her backup for a replacement password. Users who have access to these systems and leave their positions at a district or school site shall not use or share any passwords. District Test Coordinators shall send their signed confidentiality agreements to the LDE.

12. Any testing irregularities, including anonymous complaints, access to electronic data, missing test materials, or instances of plagiarism or excessive wrong-to-right erasures on a test, or breaches in test security, including access to electronic data, shall be reported, in writing, to the District Test Coordinator, who will conduct an investigation and report the findings to the Superintendent.
13. The District Test Coordinator shall initiate the investigation of all reports of testing irregularities, including anonymous complaints, in accordance with procedures outlined by the LDE in Bulletin 118, *Statewide Assessment Standards and Practices*, and/or the School Board. The District Test Coordinator may elicit the assistance of school district administrative personnel as well as other persons deemed appropriate to assist in any investigation. Once the investigation has been completed, a report of the results of the investigation shall be submitted to the *Division of Assessments and Accountability*, LDE, and the Superintendent.

Investigation Process

Procedures for investigating **any** testing irregularity (including cheating), and any employees accused of improprieties shall follow the procedures outlined in Bulletin 118, *Statewide Assessment Standards and Practices*, but shall include the following:

- A. In instances where any testing irregularities may have occurred, an initial written report of the alleged irregularity shall be prepared by the site administrator where the instance occurred. Said documentation shall then be forwarded to the building principal, school test coordinator, the District Test Coordinator, and the Superintendent.
- B. The District Test Coordinator shall review the allegation of test security violation and conduct an investigation of any such allegations, documenting all investigative activities. The formal investigation will include, but not be limited to:
 - (1) The location of the designated, locked, secure area for storage of materials shall be examined, and the individuals with access to

secure materials shall be identified;

- (2) Interviews regarding testing administration and security procedures shall be conducted with the principal, school test coordinator(s), test administrator(s), and proctor(s) at the identified schools. All individuals who had access to the test materials at any time shall be interviewed, when necessary;
- (3) Interviews shall be conducted with students in the identified classes regarding testing procedures, layout of the classroom, access to test materials before the test, and access to unauthorized materials during testing;
- (4) Compilation of any documents to support or to refute allegations made. All individuals who had access to the test materials at any time must be interviewed.

A written summary of the findings of the investigation shall be provided the Superintendent.

- C. If the investigation conducted provides evidence to indicate that a breach of test security did indeed occur, individuals involved in such security breach shall be identified, and depending upon the nature of the violation, appropriate corrective and/or punitive action may be pursued.
 - (1) Students found to have purposefully violated test security shall have test results voided and will be referred to the site administrator for appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with provisions of the Terrebonne Parish School Board *Policy Manual*.
 - (2) Any teacher or other school personnel found to have purposefully violated test security shall be charged with violation of state and/or School Board policy and disciplinary action shall be pursued in accordance with the provisions of state statutes, with direction from the Terrebonne Parish School Board.
- D. After completion of the investigation, the School Board shall provide a report of the investigation *and* a written plan of action to the State Superintendent within thirty (30) calendar days of the initiation of the investigation. At a minimum, the report shall include the nature of the situation, the time and place of occurrence, and the names of the persons involved in or witness to the occurrence.
- E. In accordance with provisions of BESE's *Test Security Policy*, it is understood that the Louisiana Department of Education may conduct its

own investigation into allegations of test security violations. In such instances, the District Test Coordinator and Superintendent shall aid and assist state department officials in the conduction of their investigation and provide documentation of information obtained in local investigative efforts.

TEST ENVIRONMENT

Testing shall be conducted in class-sized groups. Bulletin 741, *Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators*, (§913A) states that K-3 classroom enrollment should be no more than 26 students, and in grades 4-12, no more than 33, except in certain activity types of classes in which the teaching approach and the material and equipment are appropriate for large groups. For grades K-8, the maximum class size for health and physical education classes may be no more than 40. Class size for exceptional students is generally smaller [Bulletin 741, *Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators* (§915)]. Permission for testing in environments that differ from the usual classroom environment (excluding computer labs used for online testing) shall be obtained, in writing, from LDE at least thirty (30) days **prior** to testing. If testing outside the usual classroom setting is approved by the LDE, the School Board shall provide at least one proctor for every thirty (30) students.

To the extent practicable, the School Board shall maintain administrative procedures to assign a different test administrator for a class than the teacher of record for the class, except for teachers testing students with accommodations and younger students, grades 3 through 8.

The School Board shall also maintain administrative procedures for the monitoring of test sites to ensure appropriate test security procedures are being followed and to observe test administration procedures.

EMERGENCIES DURING TESTING

For emergencies that require evacuation of the classroom during administration of statewide assessments, test administrators shall follow the procedures outlined in Bulletin 118, *Statewide Assessment Standards and Practices*. If test security has been compromised, the District Test Coordinator shall notify the LDE, *Division of Assessments and Accountability*, as soon as possible.

The School Board, through the Superintendent and staff, shall develop an emergency plan and procedures that include steps to be followed in the event of an emergency that results in disruption of online testing. If online testing is disrupted by emergencies, lost internet connections, lost power, or computer crashes and students are unable to continue testing on the same day, the school test coordinator should document what occurred as a testing irregularity and notify the District Test Coordinator. If the student will be unable to return to testing by the end of the day after the disruption, the District Test Coordinator must immediately notify the LDE, *Division of Assessments and*

*Accountability.*CONDITIONS AND PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS

The State Superintendent of Education may disallow test results which may have been achieved in a manner which is in violation of test security. In addition:

1. In cases where the Louisiana Department of Education, any programmatic, evaluative, or graduation criteria dependent upon the data does not accept test results because of breach of test security or action shall be deemed not to have been met.
2. Anyone known to be involved in the presentation of forged, counterfeit, or altered identification for the purposes of obtaining admission to a test administration site for any test administered by or through the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education or the Louisiana Department of Education shall have breached test security. Any individual(s) or student who knowingly causes or allows the presentation of forged, counterfeit, or altered identification for the purpose of obtaining admission to any test administration site shall forfeit all test scores and will be allowed to retake the test at the next test administration.
3. Test scores may be voided at the school level in cases of cheating or other violations of test security. When either cheating or the violation of test security is suspected, a committee to include at least the principal, school test coordinator, and test administrator shall be convened to determine whether or not a score should be voided. A written report documenting and describing the incident(s) shall be completed. In the event the decision is made to void scores because of cheating, the student and parents shall be notified and offered an opportunity for a hearing to be conducted by the principal with the test administrator and school test coordinator present. The principal shall make the final decision regarding voiding of test scores or breach of ethics. If the decision is made to void test scores, the school test coordinator must submit a letter on school letterhead with the principal's and school test coordinator's signatures to the District Test Coordinator. Attached to the letter should be the written record of the breach of security or cheating, dates and times of all meetings/hearings relating to the incidents with signatures of all present at these meetings/hearings, and documentation of phone calls to parents. Any witnesses to cheating or breach of security should complete a written statement describing the incident and sign and date the statement. These should be submitted with the written report.
4. Any teacher or other personnel who breaches test security or allows breaches in test security shall be disciplined in accordance with the provisions of School Board policy and regulations adopted by BESE and any applicable state laws. Any violation of test security or breach of ethics on the part of an employee of the Terrebonne Parish School Board before, during, or after testing (including erasure

analysis and/or other evidence that results in the voiding of test scores) shall be investigated by the District Test Coordinator. If the violation occurred at the school level, the building principal shall participate in the investigation. In the event sufficient evidence exists to support a violation in test security or breach of ethics, a written report shall be submitted to the Superintendent. The Superintendent with the employee under investigation, the District Test Coordinator, the building principal, and the Director of Personnel present shall conduct a hearing. If the Superintendent determines that a violation of test security or breach of ethics has occurred, appropriate recommendations for disciplinary action shall be made and action taken in accordance with School Board policy.

5. In the event that an employee has participated in activities to provide answers or otherwise alter test scores, the recommendation will be dismissal. All evidence of violations of test security and breach of ethics reported to the Superintendent by the Louisiana Department of Education shall require a written report from those suspected of violations, the building principal, and the school test coordinator regardless of whether or not the claims are substantiated.
6. Anonymous complaints received by either the Superintendent or the District Test Coordinator regarding violations of test security or breach of ethics shall be investigated by the District Test Coordinator. If evidence exists to support the complaint(s), appropriate action as described above shall be initiated.
7. If the School Board wishes to contest any LDE void determination resulting from LDE data forensic findings or other LDE investigations, the Superintendent shall submit an appeal request, in writing, to the LDE in accordance with Bulletin 118, *Statewide Assessment Standards and Practices*.

Revised: March 1999
 Revised: January 2002
 Revised: August 2003
 Revised: January 2007
 Revised: November 2008

Revised: February 2011
 Revised: November 2011
 Revised: February 2012
 Revised: December 2015
 Revised: June 2020

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:24, 17:81, 17:81.6, 49:953; *Statewide Assessment Standards and Practices*, Bulletin 118, Louisiana Department of Education; Board minutes, 3-16-99, 1-15-02, 8-19-03, 1-16-07, 11-18-08, 02-15-11, 11-15-11, 2-14-12, 12-15-15, 7-7-20.