Section I: Test Security

Note: It is imperative that all district and school personnel familiarize themselves thoroughly with all test administration and security policies and procedures described in this *Test Administration Manual* to ensure a secure test administration with valid and reliable results.

STATE OF TENNESSEE TEST SECURITY LAW

> **Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) 49-1-607 states:**
>
> Any person found to have not followed security guidelines for administration of the TCAP test, or successor test, including making or distributing unauthorized copies of the test, altering a grade or answer sheet, providing copies of answers or test questions, or otherwise compromising the integrity of the testing process, shall be placed on immediate suspension, and such actions will be grounds for dismissal, including dismissal of tenured employees. Such actions shall be grounds for revocation of state license.
>
> [Acts 1992, Ch. 535, 4.]

STATE TEST SECURITY MEASURES

The State will:

- Establish security guidelines to ensure the integrity of the testing process.

- Implement safeguards to ensure test content security.

- Communicate matters concerning security and test administration through the System Testing Coordinator.

- Provide methods to ensure accurate inventory of test resources and materials at the system and school levels.

- Conduct random visits during testing to ensure test security and consistency of administration.

- Provide Potential Breach of Security Request forms on the department website and in the online Report of Irregularity platform in EdTools to document local test security concerns.

- Review submitted Potential Breach of Security Requests and follow up as needed.

- Release student-specific test data only to authorized personnel.

STATE TEST SECURITY GUIDELINES

All Public School Systems, State Special, and Non-Public Schools MUST:

1) Adopt a locally monitored test security policy that incorporates, at a minimum, State Test Security Guidelines.

   - This policy should include a Testing Code of Ethics for personnel to sign and leave at the system central office for documentation.

2) Train all personnel involved in testing and retain training documentation for system records.

   - State Test Security Law

   - State Test Security Guidelines

   - Local policy

   - Test administration procedures

3) Implement inventory verification procedures for all paper test materials including modified format test forms.

   - Restrict handling of any paper test materials to authorized personnel only.

   - Store test materials in a centrally located locked room that is inaccessible to unauthorized personnel.

   - Establish check-in and check-out processes and ensure inventory control for each testing session as well as at the school and system level during the testing window.

   - Return test materials immediately after each testing session and when the entire testing window is completed.

   - Secure paper test materials printed for homebound students or students with disabilities after the test has been transcribed.

4) Implement policies and procedures to prohibit all personnel from obtaining knowledge of test items or passages before, during, and after testing.

   - Discussion of the test content or specific test items with students, parents, or professional colleagues is prohibited to protect the validity of the test.

5) Create a secure, yet positive, environment for testing.

   - Place appropriate signage outside the test setting to limit interruptions (e.g., Do Not Disturb—Testing in Progress).

   - Electronic communication devices (cell phones, pagers, PDAs, tablets) are **NOT** allowed in the test setting.

   - Ensure proper calculator use as outlined beginning on page 47, making sure that calculators are cleared before and after administration of each test.

6) Require Test Administrators and Proctors to carefully adhere to all test administration and accommodation instructions.

  - Follow appropriate schedules as set by the state, district, and school.

  - Follow appropriate time limits outlined in all test directions.

7) Require Test Administrators and Proctors to remain with students and be observant and non-disruptive throughout the testing session.

  - Train Test Administrators and Proctors on appropriate observation protocol:

    – Be aware of student activity during testing.

    – Do not read or do other activities that take attention away from students.

    – Turn off all electronics, **including cell phones, tablets, etc.**

  - Prohibit the coaching of students in any way during the testing session.

  - Ensure students respond to test items without assistance from anyone.

  - Prohibit the reading of test items and passages by anyone other than the students being tested, unless indicated in the test instructions or accommodations.

  - Secure assessment materials (including pilot or field test materials) so that they may not be read, reviewed, or analyzed at any time before, during, or after test administration.

8) Ensure that test items are not reproduced, duplicated, or paraphrased in any way, for any reason, by any person.

  - Standard copyright laws must be maintained at all times.

  - Test materials shall not be copied (including taking photos with cell phones, tablets, etc.), filed, or used directly in instructional activities.

  - Specific excerpts or paraphrased portions of the test may not be used for classroom examples or instruction.

9) Maintain confidentiality of student-specific accountability demographic information and test results at all times.

10) Document test security concerns on a Potential Breach of Security Request form.

11) Make sure to report any potential breach of security.

Failure to report a potential breach of security compromises the integrity of the testing process and the failure itself should be treated as a breach of testing security.

STATE TEST ADMINISTRATION SECURITY PROTOCOLS

- Do not allow students to take the same subpart of the same TCAP assessment twice.

- If students are found with ANY electronic devices, including but not limited to cell phones, smartphones, iPods, PDAs, etc. **during testing OR during breaks**, their test score will be **nullified**. The best practice would be for students to leave devices at home or in their lockers on the day of testing. Alternatively, Test Administrators should collect electronic communication devices prior to testing and return them when all students have submitted their tests.

- If Test Administrators or Proctors are found with ANY electronic devices, including but not limited to cell phones and smartphones, **during testing OR at any time when test information is accessible**, this violation will be treated as a breach of testing security.

- Students should not be placed in a testing session with a Test Administrator or Proctor who is a family member. In addition, the parent/guardian **may not** be present in the student's testing room.

- An educational environment should be maintained during testing so that students and faculty are comfortable and familiar with their surroundings. It is not necessary to cover the walls. However, it **is not** appropriate to create posters, bulletin boards, student samples, study aids, or other "decorations" that are so content specific as to provide students with possible answers to test questions.

  - Students who are looking at the walls for answers will most likely not have time to complete the test.

  - Students are likely to tell friends, teachers, and parents that there were answers to the test on the wall.

  - Students may use scratch paper, and reference sheets for Math or Chemistry. No other guides or study aids should be given to students during testing.

  - If a teacher has content specific reference material on the wall, an investigation into a potential breach of security is required. If it is determined that the materials were so content specific as to give an unfair advantage to the students and/or that the teacher reminded students of the availability of the materials during testing—the event will be documented as a breach of security and steps will be taken through the State Board.

  - Encourage teachers to look at their motives and remind them that materials posted on their walls are intended to encourage an educational environment. If the teacher would not want the materials posted for a test he/she is administering, then it should not be on the wall during State summative assessments.

BREACH OF SECURITY PROCEDURES

It is the responsibility of the school system to establish a secure testing environment for all assessments. Open lines of communication should be maintained to encourage suggestions for improvements in testing procedures and for reporting any possible testing impropriety. Upon receipt of any information concerning a possible breach of testing security, school and system administration must initiate an immediate and thorough investigation into the circumstances of the event. Examples of potential breaches may be found in the Tennessee Test Security Law, State Test Security Guidelines, and State Testing Administration Security Protocols. The following chart is provided for guidance in handling potential breach of testing security concerns. Questions should be directed to the Office of Assessment Logistics at tned.assessment@tn.gov.

Immediately report a potential breach of test security to the System Testing Coordinator. The System Testing Coordinator will contact the Office of Assessment Logistics to receive guidance for next steps. Complete a Report of Irregularity: Potential Breach of Security Request in EdTools.

Conduct a complete and thorough local investigation of the incident. Results of the investigation should include interviews as appropriate and written documentation.

Contact the Office of Assessment Logistics to review the investigation results. All documentation should be scanned and uploaded with the Report of Irregularity in EdTools.

If NO Breach is found:

If a Breach IS found:

Retrain staff on Test Security Law, Guidelines, Administration Protocols and Local policies.

Consider revision of policies and procedures to avoid future problems.

The State will review investigation documentation and consult with the System Testing Coordinator. A Breach may or may not impact student test

Student test NOT impacted:

Student test IS impacted:

The State will process student test results.

Recommend: Process Normally

Recommend: Nullify

Review local policies and procedures for revisions. Retrain staff on Test Security Law, Guidelines, Administration Protocols and Local Policies.

A Breach may or may not warrant suspension of offending personnel.

Breach does NOT warrant suspension:

No further action required

Breach DOES warrant suspension:

Immediately suspend the offending personnel and report this action to the Director of Teacher Licensure at: (615)532-4885