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Purpose

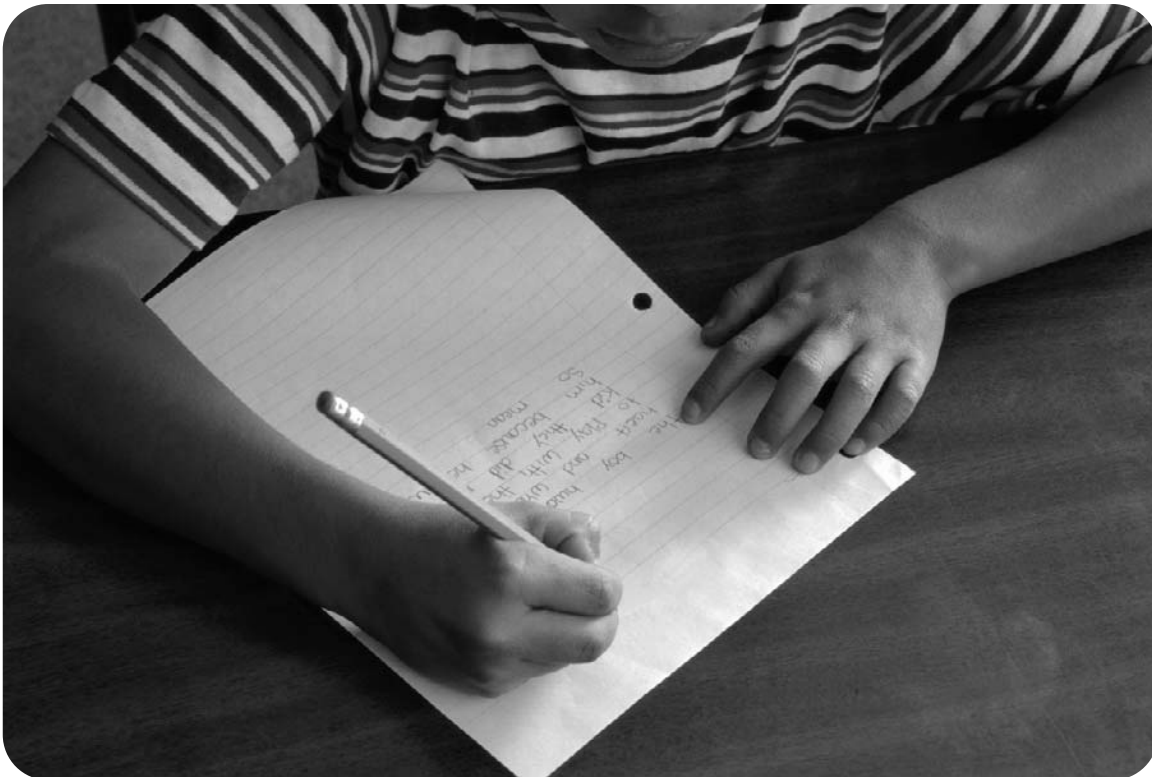
Public School Law 115C-174.10, passed in 1977 by the North Carolina General Assembly states that the North Carolina Testing Program has three purposes: “(i) to assure that all high school graduates possess those minimum skills and that knowledge thought necessary to function as a member of society, (ii) to provide a means of identifying strengths and weaknesses in the education process in order to improve instructional delivery, and (iii) to establish additional means for making the education system at the State, local, and school levels accountable to the public for results.” In order to maintain the integrity of the North Carolina Testing Program it is essential that all individuals understand the importance of uniform policies, procedures, and protocols for establishing and maintaining testing security. Testing security has always been essential and continues to be vital in the age of high stakes testing and accountability, particularly as the State strives to meet the guidelines of No Child Left Behind. Knowledge of policies and procedures surrounding testing security empowers school personnel with the tools to make informed decisions and take preventative steps to maintain the soundness of all state-mandated testing.

This publication has been prepared to assist principals, teachers, and other school personnel with the information required to implement a secure, uniform administration of the assessments in the North Carolina Testing Program. For specific policies and procedures for each of the assessments in the North Carolina Testing Program, please refer to the appropriate North Carolina Test Administrator’s Manual. This publication is an available reference for school personnel that may be kept in the schools. Additional copies may be downloaded from the NCDPI website at www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/

Test Security

State Board of Education policy specifies that secure tests, including all test materials and test questions, are not to be reproduced in any manner. School personnel and proctors are not to disclose the contents of secure tests by discussing specific test questions or information contained within the tests with each other or with students. In addition, excerpts from the tests must not be used at any time during classroom instruction or in resource materials such as study guides. Access to the tests shall be limited to school personnel who have a legitimate need. According to Title 16, North Carolina Administrative Code Chapter 6D, Section .0306, persons who have access to secure test materials shall not use their access to those materials for personal gain.

Secure state tests, including all field tests, shall not be copied, filed, or used directly in instructional activities. No person may copy, reproduce, or paraphrase in any manner or for any reason the test materials without the prior written consent of the test publisher (i.e., the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program). Copying, reproducing, or paraphrasing test materials represents a breach of test security and is a violation of federal copyright laws, North Carolina Administrative Code, State Board of Education policy, and the North Carolina *Testing Code of Ethics*.



Testing Code of Ethics

The North Carolina *Testing Code of Ethics* addresses appropriate professional practices for central office and school administrators, test coordinators, teachers (test administrators), and proctors in the areas of securing tests, administering tests, scoring, reporting, and interpreting test results.

Ethical practices for administering North Carolina tests include but are not limited to:

1. informing students about the tests and why the tests are important;
2. informing students and parents on how the tests and test results will be used;
3. ensuring that all eligible students take the tests;
4. encouraging students to attempt to respond to all test items and do their very best;
5. preparing students to take the tests; and
6. sharing the results of the tests along with any available interpretation of the scores with students and parents within the allotted timelines.

In addition, the importance of maintaining test security at all times must be stressed. Ethical practices ensure validity of the test results.

In order to ensure test security, discussing information related to the content of specific test items or test forms is prohibited and a direct violation of the Testing Code of Ethics. This includes teachers who serve on item or test review committees and teachers, who as test administrators, review items on field tests. It is not permissible to discuss items with anyone, including professional colleagues, parents, and/or students. In abiding by this guideline educators ensure that the integrity of the tests is maintained, which helps minimize the cost of resources used when test security has been compromised.

A copy of the Testing Code of Ethics is included in this publication and each North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual. The Testing Code of Ethics must be reviewed and must be discussed during the training session for the test administrator and proctor. The *Testing Code of Ethics* is part of Title 16 of the Administrative Code and must not be removed from the test administrator's manual. (A copy may be requested from the school system test coordinator for reference.) The sanctions for violations are included in the *Testing Code of Ethics* and are applicable to the administration of all secure state-mandated tests and all field tests.

Testing Code of Ethics

INTRODUCTION

In North Carolina, standardized testing is an integral part of the educational experience of all students. When properly administered and interpreted, test results provide an independent, uniform source of reliable and valid information, which enables:

- *students* to know the extent to which they have mastered expected knowledge and skills and how they compare to others;
- *parents* to know if their children are acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in a highly competitive job market;
- *teachers* to know if their students have mastered grade-level knowledge and skills in the curriculum and, if not, what weaknesses need to be addressed;
- *community* leaders and lawmakers to know if students in North Carolina schools are improving their performance over time and how the students compare with students from other states or the nation; and
- *citizens* to assess the performance of the public schools.

Testing should be conducted in a fair and ethical manner, which includes:

Security

- assuring adequate security of the testing materials before, during, and after testing and during scoring
- assuring student confidentiality

Preparation

- teaching the tested curriculum and test-preparation skills
- training staff in appropriate testing practices and procedures
- providing an appropriate atmosphere

Administration

- developing a local policy for the implementation of fair and ethical testing practices and for resolving questions concerning those practices
- assuring that all students who should be tested are tested
- utilizing tests which are developmentally appropriate
- utilizing tests only for the purposes for which they were designed

Scoring, Analysis and Reporting

- interpreting test results to the appropriate audience
- providing adequate data analyses to guide curriculum implementation and improvement

Because standardized tests provide only one valuable piece of information, such information should be used in conjunction with all other available information known about a student to assist in improving student learning. The administration of tests required by applicable statutes and the use of student data for personnel/program decisions shall comply with the *Testing Code of Ethics* (16 NCAC 6D .0306), which is printed on the next three pages.

.0306 TESTING CODE OF ETHICS

- (a) This Rule shall apply to all public school employees who are involved in the state testing program.
- (b) The superintendent or superintendent's designee shall develop local policies and procedures to ensure maximum test security in coordination with the policies and procedures developed by the test publisher. The principal shall ensure test security within the school building.
 - (1) The principal shall store test materials in a secure, locked area. The principal shall allow test materials to be distributed immediately prior to the test administration. Before each test administration, the building level test coordinator shall accurately count and distribute test materials. Immediately after each test administration, the building level test coordinator shall collect, count, and return all test materials to the secure, locked storage area.
 - (2) "Access" to test materials by school personnel means handling the materials but does not include reviewing tests or analyzing test items. The superintendent or superintendent's designee shall designate the personnel who are authorized to have access to test materials.
 - (3) Persons who have access to secure test materials shall not use those materials for personal gain.
 - (4) No person may copy, reproduce, or paraphrase in any manner or for any reason the test materials without the express written consent of the test publisher.
 - (5) The superintendent or superintendent's designee shall instruct personnel who are responsible for the testing program in testing administration procedures. This instruction shall include test administrations that require procedural modifications and shall emphasize the need to follow the directions outlined by the test publisher.
 - (6) Any person who learns of any breach of security, loss of materials, failure to account for materials, or any other deviation from required security procedures shall immediately report that information to the principal, building level test coordinator, school system test coordinator, and state level test coordinator.
- (c) Preparation for testing.
 - (1) The superintendent shall ensure that school system test coordinators:
 - (A) secure necessary materials;
 - (B) plan and implement training for building level test coordinators, test administrators, and proctors;
 - (C) ensure that each building level test coordinator and test administrator is trained in the implementation of procedural modifications used during test administrations; and
 - (D) in conjunction with program administrators, ensure that the need for test modifications is documented and that modifications are limited to the specific need.
 - (2) The principal shall ensure that the building level test coordinators:
 - (A) maintain test security and accountability of test materials;
 - (B) identify and train personnel, proctors, and backup personnel for test administrations; and
 - (C) encourage a positive atmosphere for testing.
 - (3) Test administrators shall be school personnel who have professional training in education and the state testing program.

- (4) Teachers shall provide instruction that meets or exceeds the standard course of study to meet the needs of the specific students in the class. Teachers may help students improve test-taking skills by:
 - (A) helping students become familiar with test formats using curricular content;
 - (B) teaching students test-taking strategies and providing practice sessions;
 - (C) helping students learn ways of preparing to take tests; and
 - (D) using resource materials such as test questions from test item banks, testlets and linking documents in instruction and test preparation.
- (d) Test administration.
 - (1) The superintendent or superintendent's designee shall:
 - (A) assure that each school establishes procedures to ensure that all test administrators comply with test publisher guidelines;
 - (B) inform the local board of education of any breach of this code of ethics; and
 - (C) inform building level administrators of their responsibilities.
 - (2) The principal shall:
 - (A) assure that school personnel know the content of state and local testing policies;
 - (B) implement the school system's testing policies and procedures and establish any needed school policies and procedures to assure that all eligible students are tested fairly;
 - (C) assign trained proctors to test administrations; and
 - (D) report all testing irregularities to the school system test coordinator.
 - (3) Test administrators shall:
 - (A) administer tests according to the directions in the administration manual and any subsequent updates developed by the test publisher;
 - (B) administer tests to all eligible students;
 - (C) report all testing irregularities to the school system test coordinator; and
 - (D) provide a positive test-taking climate.
 - (4) Proctors shall serve as additional monitors to help the test administrator assure that testing occurs fairly.
- (e) Scoring. The school system test coordinator shall:
 - (1) ensure that each test is scored according to the procedures and guidelines defined for the test by the test publisher;
 - (2) maintain quality control during the entire scoring process, which consists of handling and editing documents, scanning answer documents, and producing electronic files and reports. Quality control shall address at a minimum accuracy and scoring consistency.
 - (3) maintain security of tests and data files at all times, including:
 - (A) protecting the confidentiality of students at all times when publicizing test results; and
 - (B) maintaining test security of answer keys and item-specific scoring rubrics.
- (f) Analysis and reporting. Educators shall use test scores appropriately. This means that the educator recognizes that a test score is only one piece of information and must be interpreted together with other scores and indicators. Test data help educators understand educational

patterns and practices. The superintendent shall ensure that school personnel analyze and report test data ethically and within the limitations described in this paragraph.

- (1) Educators shall release test scores to students, parents, legal guardians, teachers, and the media with interpretive materials as needed.
 - (2) Staff development relating to testing must enable personnel to respond knowledgeably to questions related to testing, including the tests, scores, scoring procedures, and other interpretive materials.
 - (3) Items and associated materials on a secure test shall not be in the public domain. Only items that are within the public domain may be used for item analysis.
 - (4) Educators shall maintain the confidentiality of individual students. Publicizing test scores that contain the names of individual students is unethical.
 - (5) Data analysis of test scores for decision-making purposes shall be based upon:
 - (A) disaggregation of data based upon student demographics and other collected variables;
 - (B) examination of grading practices in relation to test scores; and
 - (C) examination of growth trends and goal summary reports for state-mandated tests.
- (g) Unethical testing practices include, but are not limited to, the following practices:
- (1) encouraging students to be absent the day of testing;
 - (2) encouraging students not to do their best because of the purposes of the test;
 - (3) using secure test items or modified secure test items for instruction;
 - (4) changing student responses at any time;
 - (5) interpreting, explaining, or paraphrasing the test directions or the test items;
 - (6) reclassifying students solely for the purpose of avoiding state testing;
 - (7) not testing all eligible students;
 - (8) failing to provide needed modifications during testing, if available;
 - (9) modifying scoring programs including answer keys, equating files, and lookup tables;
 - (10) modifying student records solely for the purpose of raising test scores;
 - (11) using a single test score to make individual decisions; and
 - (12) misleading the public concerning the results and interpretations of test data.
- (h) In the event of a violation of this Rule, the SBE may, in accordance with the contested case provisions of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, impose any one or more of the following sanctions:
- (1) withhold ABCs incentive awards from individuals or from all eligible staff in a school;
 - (2) file a civil action against the person or persons responsible for the violation for copyright infringement or for any other available cause of action;
 - (3) seek criminal prosecution of the person or persons responsible for the violation; and
 - (4) in accordance with the provisions of 16 NCAC 6C .0312, suspend or revoke the professional license of the person or persons responsible for the violation.

History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-12(9)c.; 115C-81(b)(4);

Eff. November 1, 1997;

Amended Eff. August 1, 2000.



State Board of Education Policy for Use of Secure State Tests

According to State Board of Education policy HSP-A-004, secure tests developed by the State of North Carolina may not be used for purposes other than those approved by the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services and the State Board of Education unless written permission is granted prior to use.

General Statute 14-118.2: Assisting, etc., in Obtaining Academic Credit by Fraudulent Means

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, corporation or association to assist any student, or advertise, offer or attempt to assist any student, in obtaining or in attempting to obtain, by fraudulent means, any academic credit, or any diploma, certificate or other instrument purporting to confer any literary, scientific, professional, technical or other degree in any course of study in any university, college, academy or other educational institution. The activity prohibited by this subsection includes, but is not limited to, preparing or advertising, offering, or attempting to prepare a term paper, thesis, or dissertation for another and impersonating or advertising, offering or attempting to impersonate another in taking or attempting to take an examination.

Sample Test Items

In an effort to maintain the security of test items, instructional materials that contain sample test questions (whether generated locally or shared from another school system) must be shared with the principal and the school system test coordinator prior to use. The principal must report to the school system test coordinator that such instructional materials exist. All such documents are to be reviewed by the school system test coordinator prior to use in the district. The school system test coordinator must report to the regional accountability coordinator (RAC) that such documents exist. Copies of documents containing sample test items must be submitted to the NCDPI through the regional accountability coordinator (RAC) for clearance prior to use.

For clarification, such instructional materials do not include individual teacher-made tests for use in individual classrooms, ancillary materials provided by textbook publishers, or vendors' test item banks. The intent of this policy is to facilitate a review of sample test questions that may actually contain secure test items. An appropriate guideline for this is any materials of which the origin is not known (for example, a photocopied collection of sample test questions found in a file cabinet). However, the NCDPI will review any materials the school system submits. School systems and the North Carolina Testing Program must work together to maintain the security of the testing system since the cost of replacing compromised test items is prohibitive and impacts the delivery of multiple forms of the tests.

The NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program has sample test items available for grades 3 through 8. Sample test items may be found at the following web sites:

- Grade 3 Pretest sample items are available at www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/grade3practiceactivity/
- End-of-grade sample test items are available at www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/eog
- Computer skills tests sample items are available in the student handbook at www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/computerskills/

Sample test items are also available for high school tests:

- End-of-course sample test items are available at www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/eoc
- High school comprehensive sample items are available in the teacher handbook at www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/highschoolcomprehensive/index.html
- Competency tests of reading and mathematics sample items are available in the student handbook at www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/competency/

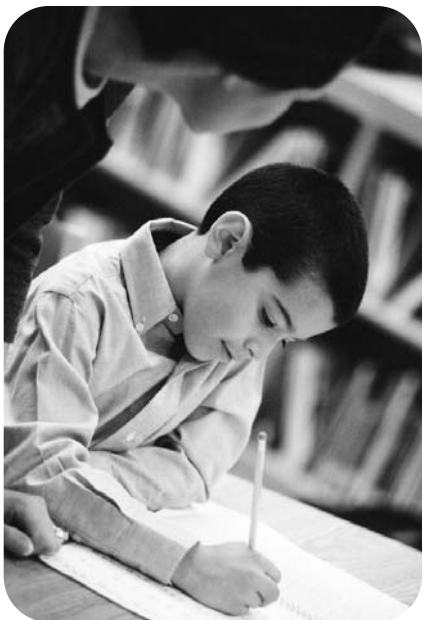
Testing Notification

According to APA 16 NCAC 6D .0302, school systems shall, at the beginning of the school year, provide information to students and parents or guardians advising them of the district-wide and state-mandated tests that students will be required to take during the school year. In addition, school systems shall provide information to students and parents or guardians to advise them of the dates the tests will be administered and how the results from the tests will be used. Also, information provided to parents about the tests shall include whether the State Board of Education or local board of education requires the test.

Testing Window and Testing Schedule

All state-mandated tests have a testing window, which is outlined in each North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual. The testing window should provide ample opportunity to complete testing. Flexibility within this window of testing is provided to the school system test coordinators with a strong suggestion that security be the major guiding principle as they deal with local conflicts in the schedule. A common date for all students within each school should be established for each subject in each school in the system. All testing should occur as early in the school day as possible. Each North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual provides the estimated administration time and the testing schedule guidelines that school systems must follow in administering specific tests.

Eligible Students



APA 16 NCAC 6D .0306 states that test administrators must administer the test to all eligible students. This includes assessing students through (1) the standard test administration, (2) the standard test administration with accommodations, or (3) the state-designated alternate assessment such as North Carolina Alternate Assessment Portfolio (NCAAP) or the North Carolina Alternate Assessment Academic Inventory (NCAAI). Accommodations must be as stated in the student's current IEP, Section 504 plan or the students limited English proficiency plan. Eligible students refers to the total number of students in membership who are required to take the specified test as outlined in the North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual, including students with disabilities and students identified as limited English proficient who participate in alternate assessments such as the NCAAP and the NCAAI.

Test Materials

In order to administer statewide tests to North Carolina students in a fair and equitable manner, only the testing materials specified in the appropriate North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual or part of an approved procedural accommodation are allowed during the test administration. Test materials are to be distributed to test administrators at the beginning of the testing day and returned to the principal or school test coordinator at the end of the test administration each day. Only approved supplemental materials may be used during the test administration. Test administrators are responsible for the test materials in their possession. The test administrator is not to give students additional materials during the test administration (with the exception of additional blank paper or graph paper or replacing broken pencils as specified in the appropriate North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual) without the prior written consent of the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program through the school system test coordinator. The local school system will provide each school with the test materials specified in the appropriate North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual, or will direct schools on how to obtain these materials (e.g., blank paper or calculators). In turn, school test coordinators will provide directions for distributing test materials. Procedures such as taping a copy of formulas or reference tables on students' desks are not permitted during the administration of secure tests. Placing the test materials on student's desks prior to the beginning of the test administration is a violation of the procedures outlined in the North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual and the *Testing Code of Ethics*.

Students may use the following materials during the regular administration of state tests:

- pencils
- color acetate overlays
- graph paper (NCDPI issued/approved)
- calculators (as specified in the appropriate North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual)
- * highlighters
- blank paper

* *Note: Highlighters may be used for all state-developed multiple-choice test books except for the computer skills multiple-choice test and competency tests of reading and mathematics test books. Highlighters cannot be used on answer sheets/documents.*

Materials that are prohibited during the regular administration of state tests include the following:

- textbooks
- dictionaries
- bookmarks
- food, drink, or candy (except for medical reasons)
- reference books
- thesauruses
- music

Accounting for and Storing Test Materials

According to APA 16 NCAC 6D .0302, school systems shall: (1) account to the department (NCDPI) for all tests received; (2) provide a locked storage area for all tests received; (3) prohibit the reproduction of all or any part of the tests; and (4) prohibit their employees from disclosing the content of or discussing with students or others specific items contained in the tests. Secure test materials may be stored at the school only for a short period prior to and after the test administration. **Every effort must be made to minimize school personnel access to secure state tests prior to and after each test administration.**

The principal shall:

- account for all test materials received;
- store test materials in a secure, locked area except when in use as established by APA 16 NCAC 6D .0306;
- establish a procedure to have test materials distributed immediately prior to each test administration and returned daily; and
- report any discrepancies to the school system test coordinator **immediately**.

Before each administration the school-level test coordinator shall:

- accurately count and distribute test materials to each test administrator;
- collect, count, and return all test materials to the secure, locked storage area immediately after each test administration; and
- report any discrepancies to the school system test coordinator **immediately**.

Test administrators shall:

- count and record the number of secure test materials and supplemental materials when the materials are first received, prior to the distribution of materials to students, during and after the test administration, and when the materials are returned to the school level test coordinator; and
- report any discrepancies **immediately** to the school test coordinator.

A complete list of testing security roles and responsibilities is located at the end of this publication.

All testing materials must be returned according to directions specified in the North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual. Test materials must be accounted for at all times. Test security must be maintained at all times. It is imperative that test materials be tracked and accounted

for at each level of distribution. The procedure for accounting for test books must ensure that missing test materials can be identified at the classroom level. The procedure established by the school for tracking and accounting for test materials must be provided to the school system test coordinator or the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program upon request. A testing irregularity form must be completed for any breaches of security.

Testing Environment

The principal shall designate an area for the test administration that provides an environment that minimizes distractions and disruptions for students. All rooms used for test administrations must be quiet, orderly, comfortable, and have adequate lighting. Seating must be arranged to discourage students from sharing responses. If testing is to take place in a facility other than a classroom (e.g., cafeteria or library), special effort may be required to establish and maintain a proper testing atmosphere. The principal is encouraged to designate areas for testing that are similar to their classroom environment and familiar to students. The test administrator must remain in the room at all times. General visitors to the classroom are prohibited during the test administration except under extreme circumstances (i.e. emergency situations).

For all administrations of North Carolina tests, any information regarding the content being measured or test-taking strategies displayed in the room in any manner or form during a test administration results in a misadministration. These displays must be covered or removed.

Examples include, but are not limited to the following:

- “Tips for Taking Tests”
- word lists
- definitions
- multiplication tables
- displays
- word walls
- writing formulas
- mathematical formulas/theorems

Test administrators must contact the school system test coordinator prior to the test administration if they have questions related to the testing environment. Failure to cover or remove such displays during a test administration may be considered a violation of the Testing Code of Ethics and a potential misadministration.

The behavior of the test administrators and proctors during testing can have a significant impact on the overall testing environment. Test administrators and proctors are encouraged to frequently move throughout the room and scan the students’ work area during testing. While seated the test administrator and proctor should position himself or herself so he or she

have an unobstructed view of and easy access to students. Monitoring student progress must be the priority of the test administrator and the proctor. To perform this function successfully, and to maintain test security, the test administrator and proctor should grant their full attention to the testing site at all times.

The test administrators and proctors should avoid the following distracting behaviors:

- holding extended conversations with one another
- reading newspapers or novels
- eating
- working on a computer
- carrying out other professional duties
- tending to unrelated professional duties

Uniformity of Test Administration

All tests that are part of the North Carolina Testing Program require a standardized process of administration. In order for test results to be valid from a standardized test administration, all procedures located in the North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual must be followed. It is imperative that the test administrator follows and presents the directions in the test administrator's manual **as written**. Thus, the test administrator must study the designated manual prior to the test administration to ensure that uniform test administration procedures are followed throughout North Carolina. It is a violation of the Testing Code of Ethics **to omit, rewrite or paraphrase orally or in writing** the instructions presented in the North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual without the prior written consent of the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program. Unethical testing practices include, but are not limited to, interpreting, explaining, or paraphrasing the test directions or multiple-choice test items. Test administrators may repeat test directions only and are not permitted to provide any specific assistance with answering test questions. For example, test administrators and proctors are **not** permitted to clarify test directions, read multiple-choice test selections or questions aloud, provide synonyms for unknown words, or rephrase questions. It is imperative that each student completes his or her own work without assistance in order for the scores to reflect the student's ability. Therefore, the testing team of test administrator and proctor must ensure that the information collected from students accurately represents the students' current level of academic performance. While most test administrators may have conducted similar testing sessions previously, they are required to receive training prior to administering or proctoring any secure state test. Absences from training must be reported to the principal and will require makeup sessions.

All students must complete the items under the same conditions, unless a student with a current IEP, Section 504 Plan, or limited English proficiency plan has the appropriate documentation in accordance with state policies to receive procedural accommodations. All documented accommodations must be approved for use by the test publisher (i.e., the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program). The test administrator must ensure that the appropriate students receive the accommodations and follow all appropriate procedures for providing accommodations to students. For additional information on testing students with disabilities refer to *Testing Students with Disabilities* (published February 2003) at www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/alternate/Disabilities/TestingStudents.pdf

Additional information on testing students identified as limited English proficient may be found in the latest publication of Guidelines for Testing Students With Limited English Proficiency.

Testing Irregularities

As a part of test security, all testing irregularities must be reported to the school system test coordinator no later than **five days** from the date of the test administration. The Report of Testing Irregularity: Part 1, which is located in the back of the North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual must be completed and filed with the school system test coordinator immediately and in no case later than five days of the test administration. Different incidents must be documented on separate reports of testing irregularities even when the incidents occur during the same test administration in the same room. For example, if one student becomes off-line and another student becomes ill during the administration of a test, two separate reports of testing irregularity must be filed. The test administrator, proctor, school test coordinator, or principal may file a report of testing irregularity. If the superintendent or school system test coordinator declares a misadministration, the school system must complete **both** sides of the Report of Testing Irregularity form prior to sending **both** sides of the form to the regional accountability coordinator (RAC). All requested information on the form must be completed.

Examples of testing irregularities include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Failing to follow the procedures as described in the North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual;
2. Administering the test without properly training test administrators and proctors;
3. Failing to administer the secure NCDPI-designated form(s) of the tests on the test date or during the testing window designated by the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program;

4. Failing to follow the test schedule procedures or makeup test schedule designated by the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program;
5. Failing to assess all eligible students (16 NCAC 6D .0306);
6. Interpreting, explaining, or paraphrasing the test directions, test items (16 NCAC 6D .0306), or answer choices;
7. Leaving students unsupervised with access to secure test materials;
8. Allowing students to review secure test materials prior to the test administration;
9. Giving students instruction related to the concepts measured by the tests on the morning prior to or during the test administration session;
10. Failing to cover or remove classroom displays that provide information regarding the content being measured by the test or test-taking strategies;
11. Paraphrasing, omitting, revising, or rewriting the script or the directions contained in the appropriate test administrator's manual
12. Providing students with extra test administration time beyond the designated time specified in the North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual (unless a student with a disability or identified as limited English proficient is to receive the accommodation Scheduled Extended Time or Multiple Testing Sessions);
13. Cheating;
14. Illness during testing;
15. Reading or tampering with (e.g., alters, changes, modifies, erases, or scores) student responses to the test questions by school district personnel;
16. Failing to return the originally distributed number of test materials (e.g., test books and answer sheets) to designated school personnel;
17. Testing students with disabilities and/or students identified as limited English proficient who have the appropriate documentation in accordance with state policies when they should not participate in the multiple-choice test administration;
18. Failing to follow appropriate procedures for providing testing accommodations;
19. Failing to provide accommodations to the appropriate students;
20. Providing accommodations to students who are not eligible to receive them;
21. Permitting the use of a calculator during the administration of the calculator-inactive section or the use of inappropriate calculators during the test administration; and
22. Allowing school or district personnel access to the tests who do not have a legitimate need.

Misadministrations

School systems must monitor test administration procedures. According to 16 NCAC 6D .0302, if school officials discover any instance of improper administration and determine that the validity of the test results has been affected, they must notify the local board of education and order the affected students to be re-tested. If the school system discovers any instance of a serious improper administration and determines that the validity of the test results has been affected, a misadministration is declared. Only the superintendent or designee and the school system test coordinator have the authority to declare misadministrations at the local level. When a misadministration is declared, the affected students must be administered another secure form of the test. Failure to do so will result in an invalid score. Only scores resulting from a valid test administration are to be included in a student's permanent record. The second test administration must be completed as soon as the school schedule permits. All misadministrations must be reported to the local board of education and the regional accountability coordinator (RAC) using the appropriate documentation and appropriate notification procedure.

Makeup Testing and Students Absent from Makeup Testing

Any student absent or not present for the test administration must be given the opportunity to make up the test within the testing window. The school system test coordinator will specify how makeup tests are to be handled at the school (e.g., returning makeup test materials) and will schedule/approve dates and times for completing makeup tests in each school based on scheduling determined by the NCDPI. Makeup sessions are to extend up to two weeks (10 working days) from the date of the **scheduled test administration** for each test; however, the makeup session for the writing assessment at grades 4, 7, and 10 is limited to the day after the test administration. The count for makeup days for each test begins with the first working day after the regular administration date of each test. Instructions are located in the specific North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual regarding appropriate procedures for makeup testing and students who are absent from makeup testing. There is no makeup testing for field tests.

Processing Test Materials

In an effort to maintain test security, the NCDPI strongly recommends that the test administrators review and edit answer sheets and header sheets **in a group setting** as specified in the North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual. Secure test books are **not** to be available during the editing process. Test administrators are required to review and edit each answer sheet and header sheet to ensure that all materials are ready to be machine scored. This includes the Special Codes section of each student's answer sheet. Students are **not** permitted to edit other students' answer sheets. Tampering with student responses on a test

document constitutes a serious breach in test security and the *Testing Code of Ethics*. After completing the header sheets and coding and checking each answer sheet, the test administrator is required to package and return the test materials in a secure manner for scoring as outlined in the appropriate North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual. The school system test coordinator may provide separate instructions for processing the answer sheets of seniors preparing to graduate. **Secure state test materials must not be copied or used in instruction at any time.**

The North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual describes which tests are processed (scanned, scored, and reported) under the direction of the local test coordinator. The school system test coordinator establishes the schedule for scanning and scoring North Carolina multiple-choice tests at the local level. Scanning, scoring, and initial district school-level reporting occur locally, with the exception of tests that are scored by the designated NCDPI contractor, such as the Writing Assessment at Grades 4, 7, and 10. The school system test coordinator (1) provides the results (reports) from the test administrations soon after scanning/scoring is completed and (2) stores all used multiple-choice answer sheets in a secure (locked) location for six months following the return of test scores. After six months, the used answer sheets are destroyed/recycled in a secure manner according to NCDPI policies and procedures. All unused test materials (such as test books, NCDPI issued rulers and protractors) must be stored locally in a secure (locked) facility unless the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program directs the school system to do otherwise.

Requirement to Report Student Scores

School systems shall report scores resulting from the administration of district-wide and state-mandated tests to students and parents or guardians along with available score interpretation information within thirty (30) days from the generation of the score at the school system level or receipt of the score and interpretive documentation from the NCDPI.



At the time the scores are reported for tests required for graduation, such as high school competency tests and the computer skills tests, the school system shall provide information to students and parents or guardians to advise whether or not the student has met the standard for the test. If a student fails to meet the standard for the test, the student and parents or guardians shall be informed of the following at the time of reporting: (1) the date(s) when focused remedial instruction will be available and (2) the date of the next testing opportunity.

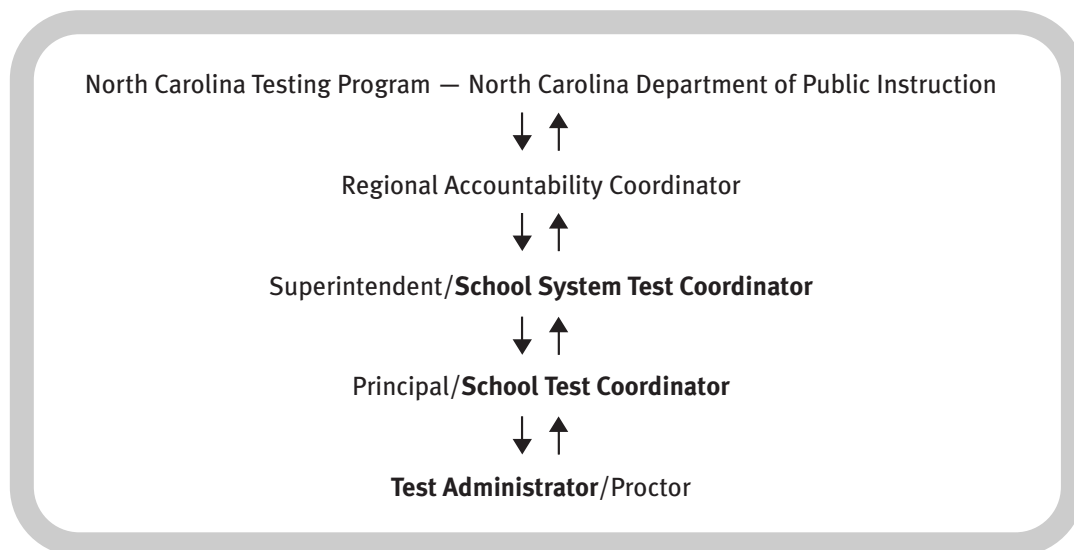
Confidentiality of Student Scores

Maintaining confidentiality of student test scores is an important part of test security in the North Carolina Testing Program. Any written material containing the identifiable scores of individual students on tests taken pursuant to these rules shall not be disseminated or otherwise made available to the public by any member of the State Board of Education, any employee of the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, any employee of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, any member of a local board of education, any employee of a local board of education, or any other person, except as permitted under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. 123g.

Protocol for Communication

In an effort to keep individuals well informed regarding testing security policies and procedures the North Carolina Testing Program recommends the following system for communication exchange. This protocol serves the purpose of linking all individuals involved in the testing community to better impact policy decision making. There is a two-way communication exchange between each level, which is particularly important in maintaining testing security.

The protocol for communication exchange is as follows:



The school system test coordinator, school test coordinator, and the test administrator are emphasized in the above diagram because they typically serve as the direct contact for testing information at each specified level.

Roles and Responsibilities



All individuals in the testing community play a vital role in helping to maintain a secure testing environment at every level from test development through scoring and reporting. The following section outlines the roles and responsibilities of key individuals in the field in reference to maintaining testing security. The responsibilities that are outlined below reflect in detail those duties that are discussed in the Testing Code of Ethics.

Duties of the Superintendent or Designee as School System Test Coordinator

The local superintendent or designee shall serve as the school system test coordinator to assist in the local administration, reporting, and interpretation of tests and other accountability measures. Maintaining test security is a major responsibility of the superintendent.

The superintendent or designee as school system test coordinator shall:

1. ensure that a testing plan for the school system is developed and disseminated to each school prior to the beginning of the school year. A schedule of the state test administration dates for the school year is to be shared with teachers, students, and parents;
2. ensure that all eligible students are assessed; (16 NCAC 6D .0306);
3. account to the NCDPI for all test materials received and secure all test materials in a locked facility;
4. prohibit the reproduction of all or any part of the tests;
5. prohibit their employees from disclosing the content of, or specific items contained in, the tests to persons other than authorized employees of the school system;
6. develop local policies and procedures to ensure maximum test security in coordination with the policies and procedures developed by the test publisher (NCDPI);
7. designate the personnel who are authorized to have access to test materials;
8. conduct audits periodically to ensure that proper test administration sessions are being held;
9. ensure that the security of test materials and the integrity of the North Carolina Testing Program are maintained at all times;
10. ensure that test administrators at each school are school district or school personnel who have professional training in education and the North Carolina Testing Program;
11. assist the principal at each school in understanding his/her duties and responsibilities related to the state testing program and the implementation of state tests;
12. oversee the planning and implementation of training for school-level test coordinators, test administrators, and proctors;

13. ensure that each school-level test coordinator and test administrator is trained in the implementation of testing accommodations used with students with disabilities and students identified as limited English proficient;
14. assure that each school establishes procedures to ensure that all test administrators comply with the test publisher (NCDPI) guidelines;
15. make a determination about the seriousness of reports of breaches of test security, loss of test materials, failure to account for test materials, unauthorized reproduction or retention of test materials, or any other deviation from required security procedures;
16. declare a test administration as a misadministration using the appropriate procedures and documentation and ensure that students are administered another secure form of the test;
17. report his/her determination and personnel action taken to the local board of education and complete Parts I and II of the Report of Testing Irregularity — Part I within 5 days and Part II within 15 days; and
18. inform the local board of education of any breaches of the *Testing Code of Ethics*.

Duties of the Principal or Designee as School-Level Test Coordinator

The principal or school designee shall serve as school-level test coordinator. The school-level test coordinator shares responsibility in maintaining test security.

The principal/school-level test coordinator shall:

1. maintain test material security and accountability of test materials, store test materials in a secure, locked area;
2. allow test materials to be distributed immediately prior to the test administration;
3. accurately count and distribute test materials required for the test administrations at the school before each test administration. Immediately after each test administration, test materials must be collected, counted, and returned to the secure, locked storage area;
4. maintain the confidentiality of individual student scores when reporting test results to the public and the media;
5. encourage a positive atmosphere for the test administrations;
6. adhere to the testing plan and test administration schedules established by the NCDPI and the school system test coordinator;
7. attend training sessions sponsored by the school system test coordinator on the policies and procedures for conducting a proper test administration, editing and processing test materials;
8. train all school personnel on the appropriate use of test materials, test security, and the North Carolina *Testing Code of Ethics*;
9. emphasize to all school personnel that no person may copy, reproduce, or paraphrase in any manner or for any reason the test materials without the written permission of the NCDPI;
10. inform personnel that any person who learns of any breach of security, loss of test materials, failure to account for test materials, or any other deviation from required security procedures shall immediately report that information to the principal/school-level test coordinator, and the school system test coordinator;

11. select test administrators who are school system or school personnel who have professional training in education and the North Carolina Testing Program;
12. assign trained proctors to test administrations who are responsible adults from community volunteers, school staff, or school system staff;
13. implement the school system's testing policies and procedures and establish any needed school policies and procedures to assure that all eligible students are tested;
14. report all testing irregularities to the school system test coordinator using the appropriate procedures and documentation;
15. return all test materials to the school system test coordinator, as directed, immediately following the completion of the test administration; and
16. prohibit the reclassification of student(s) or assign a grade of "F" or "I" for the sole purpose of not having the student participate in any state assessment. Students may drop a course with an end-of-course (EOC) test within the first 10 days of a block schedule or within the first 20 days of a traditional schedule according to the State Board of Education policy HSP-C-003.

Duties of the Test Administrator

Only employees of the school system are permitted to administer secure state tests. Contracted tutorial services/agencies are not permitted to administer North Carolina tests. According to APA 16 NCAC 6D .0306, test administrators shall be school personnel who have professional training in education and the state testing program. Retired teachers, if working for the school district as a substitute teacher or member of the staff in any capacity, may administer North Carolina tests.

While the North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual outlines the full test administrator responsibilities, those specifically related to test security are provided below. The test administrator shall:

1. attend a test administration training session prior to each test administration conducted by the school system or school test coordinator and, if applicable, a training session on the use of accommodations;
2. read and study thoroughly the codified North Carolina Testing Code of Ethics (located in this manual and the appropriate North Carolina Test Administrator's Manual) prior to the test administration;
3. maintain test security at all times during the handling of test materials;
4. account for and record the number of secure test materials;
5. administer the test to all eligible students (16 NCAC 6D .0306);
6. conduct an unbiased administration of the tests according to the policies, procedures, and directions in the Test Administrator's Manual and any subsequent updates developed by the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program;
7. follow appropriate procedures when providing accommodations to students with disabilities and students identified as limited English proficient, if applicable;
8. assist students with emergencies (including restroom emergencies) during the test administration;

9. remain in the room throughout the entire test administration unless there is an emergency; if there is an emergency it is most appropriate to send the proctor for assistance;
10. read the directions in the Test Administrator's Manual and any subsequent updates developed by the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program to the students as written;
11. provide a positive test-taking environment (16 NCAC 6D .0306);
12. follow the procedures established by the school system test coordinator for returning all used and unused testing materials, blank paper, and supplemental materials;
13. securely review and edit student answer sheets to prepare for machine scoring. Test administrators shall not, at any time, modify, change, alter, erase, or tamper with student responses on the answer sheets/performance test books; and
14. report all testing irregularities to the school test coordinator and/or principal using the appropriate procedures and documentation.

Duties of the Proctor

According to APA 16 NCAC 6D .0306, proctors shall serve as additional monitors to help the test administrator ensure that testing occurs fairly and uniformly. A proctor shall be assigned regardless of the number of students being tested. Proctors may not assist students in choosing responses to test questions or, at any time, modify, change, alter, erase, or tamper with student responses to test questions. At no time shall proctors be responsible for reading directions or otherwise providing information for the test administration to students.

Proctors maintain test security through working directly with the test administrator. The proctor shall:

1. attend the appropriate test administration training session prior to each test administration;
2. read and study thoroughly the North Carolina *Testing Code of Ethics* and the sanctions prior to the test administration;
3. work with the test administrator to ensure that distractions and interruptions during the test administration are minimized;
4. remain in the room throughout the entire test administration unless there is an emergency;
5. assist the test administrator in maintaining test security;
6. assist the test administrator in maintaining order in the classroom;
7. follow appropriate test administration procedures;
8. follow appropriate procedures when providing accommodations to students with disabilities and students identified as limited English proficient, if applicable;
9. assist students with emergencies (including restroom emergencies) during the test administration; and
10. report all testing irregularities to the school test coordinator and/or principal using the appropriate procedures and documentation.