

Proper Testing Procedures

This document condenses information included in the *Directions for District Coordinators, Campus Coordinators, and Test Administrators—TAKS, TAKS (Accommodated), and TAKS–M*. This is intended as an optional quick reference guide for administrators who might find the format more appropriate.

Before Testing

Question: How should the testing room be prepared for an administration?

Answer: The testing room should be quiet, well lighted, well ventilated, and comfortable. Each student should have enough space in which to work. Bulletin boards and instructional displays that might aid students during testing must be covered or removed. Any rooms to which students may be relocated must also be prepared. Books and other materials not used for testing must be cleared from desks and computers. A “Testing—Do Not Disturb” sign should be posted outside the testing room.

Question: How may administrations be grouped together in a test session?

Answer: Students taking TAKS and TAKS (Accommodated) administrations may be grouped across programs and grades. Students taking TAKS–M should not be tested in a room with students taking other programs. Students receiving accommodations might need to be tested individually or in small groups.

Question: How should seating charts be completed?

Answer: Seating charts must include the names of students testing, the locations of the students in the room, and the names of all test administrators/monitors involved in the session. Additional seating charts must be made available and completed when students are moved to another room during testing.

During Testing

Question: What if a student arrives after the test session begins?

Answer: A student who arrives after testing has begun may be tested if sufficient time remains in the test session and if the student has not obtained prior knowledge of test content through contact with students who have already finished testing.

Question: What is meant by “active monitoring”?

Answer: Test administrators must ensure that students remain seated during testing, except when they are acquiring or returning authorized reference materials or calculators. Do not allow students to talk to one another while test booklets or online test sessions are open. Ensure that students do not return to an assessment attempted on a previous test day or to work on an assessment that has not yet been administered. However, test administrators may not view or discuss individual test items or responses.

Question: Can students be reminded of testing strategies?

Answer: Reinforcing, reviewing for, and/or distributing testing strategies during an assessment is strictly prohibited.

Question: How does a test administrator reply to a student’s question if a direct answer is not permitted?

Answer: Test administrators are not allowed to answer any questions related to the content of the test itself. If a student asks a question that the test administrator is not permitted to answer, the test administrator may respond, for example, **“I can’t answer that for you; just do the best you can.”** Test administrators and school personnel are not allowed to translate test questions or passages (including the written composition prompt) into another language (except sign language); rephrase or add information to questions or the prompt; discuss test questions with anyone before, during, or after testing; or score test items or discuss with students how they performed.

Question: May students’ compositions or reading responses be copied?

Answer: Districts are not permitted to make copies of students’ compositions and/or short answer responses.

Question: Can spell-check and the word predictability function be used by students who are typing their compositions or short answer responses?

Answer: If students are typing responses for any TAKS writing or reading assessment, features such as spell-check and the word predictability function must be disabled.

Question: What response should be given to a student who asks for clarification of the prompt?

Answer: The test administrator may say, “I can’t explain it to you; just respond to the prompt in the best way you can.”

Question: May school personnel discuss test questions?

Answer: Test administrators and school personnel are not allowed to discuss test questions with anyone before, during, or after testing; or score test items or discuss with students how they performed.

Question: Where can I find mathematics and science charts?

Answer: Mathematics and science charts are located in the applicable test booklets. Additionally, separate mathematics and science charts are provided for students to use during the test administration.

Question: What is the policy regarding recording answers on an answer document?

Answer: Test administrators should regularly remind students to record their responses on their answer documents. Since the tests are untimed, each student must be allowed to have as much time as necessary to respond to every test item.

Test administrators should remind students to record their responses on their answer documents by periodically saying, “**Mark your answers very carefully and make your marks dark and neat.**” Answers marked in a test booklet will not be scored. Test administrators are not allowed to require students to first mark their answers in the test booklet and then transfer them to the answer document.

Only students are allowed to erase their stray marks or darken answer-choice circles, and only during the scheduled test session.

Question: May students be given breaks during testing?

Answer: Test administrators may allow students to take brief breaks in the testing room during a test session. Breaks are not mandatory. During breaks, students must not discuss the content of the test, and test booklets must be closed with answer documents inside. Online tests must be exited. Students may be allowed to take restroom breaks one at a time.

Question: May students be given lunch breaks during testing?

Answer: Students may stop testing to take a supervised lunch. Students must place their answer documents inside their test booklets so that all secure materials can be collected and placed in locked storage. Online tests must be exited. Students must be monitored by trained testing personnel and are not allowed to discuss any test content during lunch.

Question: May students use cell phones during testing?

Answer: Students are **NOT** permitted to have cell phones or personal electronic devices that allow Internet access turned on during testing. These devices can disrupt the testing environment and could be used to compromise the security and confidentiality of the test. Districts are required to have procedures in place to prevent the use of these devices during test administrations.

Question: What procedures should be followed if students need to be moved to another testing room?

Answer: If necessary, students may be moved to another testing room during testing. The campus coordinator must work with staff to ensure that test security is not breached. Students must place their answer documents inside their test booklets. Online tests must be exited. The test administrator must collect and carry all test booklets (students are not allowed to carry their own testing materials), accompany the students to the new testing room while ensuring that they do not discuss the contents of the test, and then redistribute the booklets once students are ready to continue testing. The new testing area must be properly prepared to receive the students, including removing or covering all instructional aids. Additional seating charts must be completed if students are moved to another room during testing. If applicable, the name of the new test administrator(s) must be recorded on the new seating chart.

After Testing

Question: What can students do after completing their test?

Answer: After students finish their tests and their test materials have been collected, they may be allowed to quietly read books or to leave the testing room. Students may not read books between the written composition and revising and editing sections of the writing assessments.

Question: Can a test administrator allow a student who has completed the test to leave the room?

Answer: Yes. Before a student leaves the room, the test administrator must review the completed answer document to be sure the student has recorded answers as instructed. If the student has not done so, the test administrator must say, **“You have not recorded all of your responses on the answer document. Please go back and mark your answers on it now.”** The testing materials should then be returned so that the student may record his or her answers.

Test administrators should quickly scan answer documents only to verify that responses are marked. Test administrators may not look at or comment on answers to individual test questions or point out individually skipped test questions.

Question: What is the procedure for transcribing answer documents?

Answer: If at any point a student's answer document becomes unusable, obtain a replacement from your campus coordinator. Instruct the student to start at the exact point where he or she stopped in the unusable answer document. After the student has finished the session, the test administrator must transcribe all student identification information as well as the contents of the original answer document onto the new one without making any changes and write "Transcribed by (NAME) because (REASON)" at the top of the new answer document. The unusable answer document should be marked "VOID" in large, bold letters across the front and placed under a Voided Answer Document Identification Sheet. Both the transcribed and voided materials should be returned with the scorable materials.