

Proper Testing Procedures

This document condenses information included in the *2014 District and Campus Coordinator Manual* as well as the STAAR Test Administrator manuals. 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: No element of the testing room environment should hinder any student's performance. A "Testing—Do Not Disturb" sign should be posted outside the testing room.

Bulletin boards and instructional displays that could aid students during testing must be covered or removed.

Clocks (either analog or digital) in the testing room do not have to be covered or removed. All desks or computers used for testing must be cleared of books and other materials not required for the test.

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

Answer: Organize test sessions in which students are given different tests (STAAR, STAAR Spanish, STAAR Modified) in a way that keeps students from being confused or disturbed by differences in directions read aloud or accommodations provided. In some cases, students taking STAAR and STAAR Modified administrations may be grouped across programs, grades, and subject areas or courses. (STAAR Modified reading or writing assessments may not be grouped with other assessments because of the level of interaction with the test administrator.)

A bilingual teacher may be permitted to administer STAAR in English to English-dominant ELLs and STAAR in Spanish to Spanish-dominant ELLs in the same testing room.

A student who uses certain testing accommodations or allowable procedures may need to complete the test in a separate setting to eliminate distractions to other students and to ensure the confidentiality of the test. The STAAR assessments have a time limit. Schedule sufficient time for each test session, including sessions for students receiving extra time accommodations.

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, the names of all test administrators/monitors involved in the session, and a record of the start and stop times. The stop and restart times for students who are allowed breaks that stop the clock must also be recorded. Additional seating charts must be made available and completed if students are moved to another room during testing.



Seating Charts

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 and if the student has not had contact with any other student who has already completed the same test. Students will be provided the allowed time period to complete tests. Students must complete the test within the same school day.

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, 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 may not duplicate and retain either student compositions or short answer responses.

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: No person may view, reveal, or discuss the contents of a test booklet or online assessment before, during, or after a test administration unless specifically authorized to do so by the procedures outlined in the test administration materials. Test administrators and school personnel are not allowed to score test items or discuss with students how they performed. If circumstances necessitate that a test booklet or online assessment be examined, permission **must** first be obtained from TEA.

Question: Where can I find mathematics and science charts?

Answer: Mathematics and science charts are located in the applicable test booklets. Additionally, campuses may print these reference materials from the TEA website and distribute them to students to use during the test administration.

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

Answer: All answers must be marked on an answer document with a No. 2 pencil by the end of the allowable time period. Students are not allowed to record or transcribe answers onto their answer document after the allowable time period has ended.

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. Students taking a STAAR L paper administration will answer questions in their test booklets and the test administrator will transcribe the answers to the online system. 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. See the “STAAR Time Limits Policies and Procedures” section of the Coordinator Manual and the Test Administrator manuals for which types of breaks require stopping and starting the time clocks, as well as other details.

Question: May students be given lunch breaks during testing?

Answer: Students may stop testing to take a supervised lunch. The testing time must be stopped for a lunch break and will restart when students resume taking the test. Stop and restart times must be recorded on the seating chart. 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. Also, these devices also cannot be used to fulfill the STAAR Dictionary Policy or the STAAR Calculator Policy. 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: In certain circumstances, or in order to best serve students receiving accommodations, it may be necessary for students to move to another testing room. Test administrators and campus personnel must ensure a proper testing environment in the new location and maintain proper testing procedures during the transition. Another seating chart must be filled out for the new location with start and stop times recorded.

After Testing

Question: What can students do after completing their test?

Answer: After students submit their tests online, or after their paper tests are collected, students may be allowed to quietly read books or 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 before the end of the allowed time period 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 and time remains in the four-hour time period, 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 student responses?

Answer: Test responses, which include the written composition, multiple-choice questions, and griddable questions, cannot be scored unless they appear on an answer document. If transcription is needed due to a damaged answer document or a temporary or permanent disabling condition, refer to the Allowable Test Administration Procedures and Materials for STAAR, STAAR Spanish, STAAR L, STAAR Modified, and TELPAS document located on the District and *Campus Coordinator Manual* webpage.

