Testing Procedures Questions and Answers

This document condenses information included in the *2017 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 computer workstations 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 (e.g., STAAR and STAAR Spanish) 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 may be grouped across grades and subjects or courses.

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

A student who uses certain designated supports or accessibility features may need to complete the test in a separate setting to eliminate distractions to other students and to ensure the confidentiality of the test.

Question: **How should seating charts be completed?**

Answer: Seating charts must include the names of the students testing, the location of each student while testing, and the names of all test administrators/monitors involved in the session. Seating charts must include the start and stop times for each test session, including stop and restart times for students who are permitted a break that stops the time clock. Additional seating charts must be 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 a test session has begun may be tested if sufficient time remains in the day to provide the student with the allowed time for testing. Also, the student may test only if he or she has not had the opportunity to interact with other students who have been administered the same test.

Question: **What is meant by "active monitoring"?**

Answer: Test administrators must ensure that students remain seated during testing, except when they are receiving or returning authorized test materials. Students are not allowed to talk to one another while testing is in progress. Ensure that students do not return to a subject-area assessment attempted on a previous test day or to work on a subject-area assessment that has not yet been administered. Test administrators may not view or discuss individual test questions or responses unless specifically directed to by the test procedures.

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 never 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; view or discuss test questions with anyone before, during, or after testing; or score test questions or discuss with students how they performed.

Question: **May students' compositions be copied?**

Answer: Districts may not duplicate and retain student compositions.

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

Answer: The test administrator may read aloud or sign the writing prompt to any student who requests this assistance. The test administrator cannot translate (except into sign language), change, add to, or explain the writing prompt. The test administrator may not interpret or make suggestions to the student about how to respond.

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. If circumstances necessitate that a test booklet or online assessment be examined, permission **must** first be obtained from TEA.

Question: **Where can I find STAAR 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 must regularly remind students participating in paper administrations to record their responses on their answer documents. Test administrators may say, **"Remember that you must record your responses on the answer document."** Answers marked in a test booklet will not be scored. Test administrators are not allowed to require students participating in paper administrations to mark their answers in the test booklet before transferring them to the answer document.

Only students are allowed to erase their stray marks or darken answer-choice circles on their answer documents, and only during the scheduled test session. Test administrators may say, **"Be sure to erase any stray marks that you might have accidentally made on your answer document."**

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 paused. Refer to the "STAAR Policies and Procedures" section of the *2017 District and Campus Coordinator Manual* and the Test Administrator manuals for more 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. If students are testing online, they must exit the test. Students must be monitored by trained testing personnel and are not allowed to discuss any test content during lunch.

NOTES

Question: **May students use cell phones during testing?**

Answer: Districts are required to have procedures in place to prevent the use of cell phones and personal electronic devices during test administrations. With the exception of running the secure browser, students are **NOT** permitted additional Internet access during testing. Electronic devices with Internet or photographic capabilities cannot be used.

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

Answer: In certain circumstances, 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 stop and restart times recorded.

After Testing

Question: **What can students do after completing their test?**

Answer: Once a student has completed and turned in or submitted the test, the student may quietly read a book or be allowed to leave the testing area.

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 scan the completed answer document to be sure the student has recorded answers as instructed. If the student has not done so and time remains, 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. Students will **NOT** be allowed to record answers on the answer document after the time period ends.

Test administrators may not look at or comment on answers to individual test questions or point out individually skipped test questions.

Coordinator Manual Resources

Question: **What is the procedure for transcribing student responses?**

Answer: Test responses, which include the written compositions, multiple-choice questions, and griddable questions, cannot be scored unless they appear on an answer document. Transcription may be needed due to a damaged answer document or if the student is eligible for this designated support. If transcription is required, testing personnel should follow instructions for Basic Transcribing on the Accommodation Resources webpage.