Problems and Solutions

As a testing coordinator, you should be available during test administrations to handle problems as they arise in your district or on your campus. You may encounter the following situations during test administrations.

Lunch Breaks

Problem: **Students in several classes at a campus have not completed testing by lunchtime and the allowed time limit has not ended. The campus coordinator would like to give the students a lunch break.**

Solution: 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 log out of the test. Students must be monitored by trained testing personnel and are not allowed to discuss any test content during lunch.

Failure to Record Answers/Blank Answer Documents

Problem: **A campus coordinator asks for clarification about how a test administrator should respond if a student has neglected to record his responses on his answer document before the end of an allowed time period.**

Solution: Test administrators must actively monitor the testing room while students are working. Test administrators should ensure that students are marking their responses on the correct section of the answer document. 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."** 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 in the allowed time period, the test administrator must say, **"You have not recorded 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 their responses on their answer documents after the time limit has expired. Test administrators may not look at or comment on answers to individual test questions or point out individually skipped test questions.

Report any blank answer documents to TEA at 512-463-9536.

Incomplete Assessments

Problem: **A student leaves the test session to go to the nurse and does not return to complete the assessment. The campus coordinator wants to know how the student's answer document should be coded.**

Solution: If a student is unable to complete the assessment due to illness, the district must determine whether the student's test should be scored. If the district determines that the test should not be scored, the "O" (Other) in the SCORE CODE field on the answer document should be marked to indicate that the test was not completed. Students who cannot finish their online tests due to illness should not click the ***Submit and End Test*** button. The student should log out of the test. The district must determine whether the student's score code should be "Other" for an illness or if the student's responses should be submitted for scoring by leaving the score code set to the default "Score."

Problem: **A campus coordinator wants to know what to do if a student has not finished at the end of the allowed time period.**

Solution: Test administrators must alert students (orally or in writing) to the amount of time left to test in one-hour intervals and, if desired, in shorter intervals during the last hour. Students who do not complete their tests within the time limit must submit what they have completed.

Grade 3 Mathematics Reading Assistance

Problem: **A test administrator wants to read all the mathematics questions aloud to a group of students who are participating in the STAAR grade 3 mathematics test. The campus coordinator wants to know whether the test administrator may read all the mathematics test questions to the group.**

Solution: The test administrator may read a word, phrase, or sentence in a test question or answer choice to any grade 3 student but only when asked to do so by the individual student. If a student needs the entire test read aloud, the eligibility criteria for an oral administration must be met.



Accommodation Resources

Unusable Answer Documents

Problem: **A student who is already halfway through the reading section of his test accidentally tears his answer document while erasing.**

Solution: If an answer document tears or otherwise becomes unusable, the student should not continue to use the damaged answer document. The test administrator should obtain a new answer document and instruct the student to begin marking answers on the new document at the point where the student stopped on the unusable document. Once testing is over, testing personnel should follow instructions for Basic Transcribing on the Accommodation Resources webpage.

Defective Test Materials

Problem: **A student who has already begun testing discovers that there is a page missing from her test booklet. The campus coordinator wants to know what to do.**

Solution: If a student discovers a defect (e.g., light print, missing questions or pages) in the test booklet, the student should be given a new test booklet with which to continue testing. The new booklet must have the same form number (if applicable) as the original booklet; otherwise, the student's answers will not be scored correctly. The new test booklet number should be noted on the student's answer document. Report any defective test booklets to the Student Assessment Division.

Temporary Disabilities

Problem: **A student with her arm in a cast arrives at the writing test session and is unable to record her responses on the answer document. The campus coordinator wants to know whether the student should be excused from the test.**

Solution: When considering how to meet a student's needs in an unexpected or emergency situation, encouraging student independence should be a priority. Determine if the student can continue to participate in the test. If she can answer questions by using her unaffected arm, continue testing the student. If the student's needs can be met with an accessibility feature or locally determined designated support, it should be made available to the student during testing. There is no need to contact TEA. If, however, a student needs a designated support that requires the approval of TEA, contact TEA's Accommodations Task Force for permission and additional instructions.

After testing, if the student used a designated support, the appropriate bubble should be marked on the student's answer document or in the STAAR Assessment Management System.

Schoolwide Emergencies

Problem: **A campus coordinator wants to know what he should do when a fire alarm sounds during testing.**

Solution: In the event of a schoolwide emergency that causes a disruption in testing, ensuring the safety of students is top priority. Students should leave their tests where they are and follow the school's procedures. In the case of online administrations, testing staff should not instruct students to log out of their test sessions. Test administrators must closely monitor their testing groups to make sure that no one discusses the test. Once the emergency has been resolved, the students should resume testing when instructed to do so.

Campus coordinators should report the event to the district coordinator. If the emergency prevents students from resuming testing, the district coordinator should call the Student Assessment Division at 512-463-9536 for guidance on how to proceed.

New District Enrollees

Problem: **A student from another state enrolls during the designated testing period. The student and his parents want to know whether he will need to take a STAAR test.**

Solution: Students who enroll during the testing period may be required to test. Contact TEA for more information.

If you need assistance in handling unusual circumstances of any kind on the days of testing, call the TEA Student Assessment Division at 512-463-9536.