

# Standard Test Administration and Testing Ethics Policy For Utah Educators



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## Purpose of Testing

When administered properly, statewide assessments allow students to demonstrate what they know and can do. Valid and reliable results from statewide assessments provide the public, the Legislature, the board, local education agencies (LEA), and teachers under [Utah Code 53E-4-301.5](#) with:

- A standardized source of measurement information about student proficiency
- Information, in combination with locally collected data, for evaluation of the effectiveness of school programs and helps guide instructional planning
- Information to recognize excellence, guide and improve instruction, identify the need for additional resources or to provide the reallocation of educational resources in a manner to ensure educational opportunities for all students

Educators are obligated to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills fairly and accurately. Educators involved with statewide assessments must conduct testing in a fair and ethical manner ([Utah State Board R277-217-3.14](#)).

## Statewide Assessments

Statewide assessments require that educators adhere to all ethical practices and procedures as outlined in this policy ([Utah State Board R277-404-8](#)). Information about these assessments can be found at the [Assessment and Accountability](#) website (<http://www.schools.utah.gov/assessment>).

Statewide assessments are defined as assessments that are federally-mandated, state-mandated, and/or require the use of a state assessment system or software that is provided or paid for by the state ([Utah Code 53G-6-803.9a](#)).

## Formative Assessment Tools

Formative Assessment Tools (e.g., RISE Benchmark modules, RISE Interims, High School Core Benchmarks, Acadience Reading Progress Monitoring, Utah Compose, and UTIPS) provided by the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) are productivity tools for Utah teachers and students. They are designed to give teachers and students an opportunity to identify strengths and weaknesses with specific knowledge, skills, and abilities outlined in the Utah Core Standards.

While standards for administration of these formative assessments are important, to maintain the integrity of the assessment items, they differ from the requirements contained in this policy. Please refer to each formative assessment tool's guidance documentation (e.g., test administration manual, user guide, online instructions) as the formative assessment tools may have differing policies and procedures from the summative assessments for specific test administration requirements.

## Before Testing: Teaching Practices

Licensed Utah educators are expected to:

- Provide instruction aligned to Utah Core State Standards using appropriate, locally-adopted curriculum
- Provide accommodations throughout instruction to eligible students as identified by an EL, IEP, or 504 team
- Use a variety of assessment methods, including the formative assessment process, throughout the year to assess student competency and inform instructional practices
- Provide students with a variety of assessment experiences, including feedback on their performance and progress, throughout the year
- Use the reference sheets provided for specific assessments as instructional tools throughout the year
- Use the resources provided for each assessment, as applicable, to familiarize students with the testing tools and item types

Utah LEAs shall ensure that:

- Students are enrolled in appropriate courses
- Curriculum and instruction in all courses is aligned with the Utah Core State Standards

## During Testing

Utah LEAs shall ensure that:

- Parents are provided with information and procedures regarding student participation in state testing
  - An LEA shall honor parent requests to excuse a student from taking an assessment in accordance with the requirements of [Utah Code 53G-6-803](#) and [Utah State Board R277-404](#)
- All statewide assessments are proctored under the supervision of a licensed educator
- Educators, paraprofessionals, and third-party proctors who administer and/or proctor tests, complete annual testing ethics training provided by the LEA (Utah State Board R277-404)
- Test Administrator and proctors review and follow guidelines, instructions, and scripts included in test administration manuals (TAM) for the assessment prior to and during test administration
- All students who are eligible to test are tested or recorded as to why they didn't participate
- LEA and/or school hardware, software, and network specifications can successfully support test administration
- All school testing coordinators, administrators, teachers, and proctors administering tests are aware of their role in the assessment administration

Licensed Utah educators shall ensure that:

- An appropriate environment is set for testing to limit distractions
- A student is not discouraged from participating in testing
- Students aren't penalized who have been exempted by a parent from a statewide assessment ([Utah State Board R277-404-7-3b](#))
- Students aren't provided a nonacademic reward for participating in or performing well on a statewide assessment ([Board Rule R277-404-7-8](#); [Utah Code 53G-6-803-9c\(iii\)](#))
- Students are provided an alternative learning activity if they are exempted by a parent from a statewide assessment ([Utah State Board R277-404-7-9](#))
- Students who have been exempted by a parent from a statewide assessment may be allowed to be physically present in the room during test administration ([Board Rule 277-404-7](#)) though testing policy, procedures, and security should still be followed
- A proctor is present, and active proctoring takes place throughout the test session
- At least two assigned proctors are actively involved in each testing session
- Test administrators and proctors review and follow test preparation guidelines and the instructions and scripts included in the test administration manuals (TAM) for each assessment

- Accommodations are provided to eligible students, as identified by the EL, IEP, and/or 504 teams, and are consistent with those provided during instruction
- Any electronic devices (e.g., smart watches, cell phones) shall be inaccessible by students, if they can be used to
  - access non-test content
  - distribute test content and materials
- Any electronic devices that are necessary for a student’s health and safety (e.g. monitoring insulin levels) should be made available to the student when the need arises
- Make-up and test completion sessions are provided for students according to the policies and procedures as outlined in the test administration manual (TAM)

## After Testing

Utah LEAs shall ensure that the test results are:

- Provided to students and parents, along with information on how to appropriately interpret scores and reports, within three weeks of receipt of test scores by the LEA
- Made available to educators for use in improving their instruction
- Maintained according to LEA policies and procedures

Licensed Utah educators shall ensure that:

- All by-products (e.g. scratch paper, notes, student test tickets) of student testing are collected and handled according to instructions in the test administration manual
- All test materials are returned to the test coordinator, as outlined in the test administration manual

Utah LEAs and Licensed Utah educators may:

- Use a student’s score from a statewide assessment to improve the student’s academic grade for or demonstrate the student’s competency within a relevant course ([Utah Code 53E-4-3 \(302-305\)](#); [Utah State Board R277-404-7](#))

Utah LEAs and Licensed Utah educators may NOT:

- Prohibit a student from enrolling in an honors, advanced placement, or International Baccalaureate course based on a student’s score on a statewide assessment or because the student was exempted by a parent from taking the statewide assessment ([Utah State Board R277-404-6](#))
- Provide a nonacademic reward to a student for a student’s participation in or performance on a statewide assessment ([Utah State Board R277-404-7](#))

## Unethical Testing Practices

Unethical practices include, but are not limited to:

- Providing students directly or indirectly with or changing instruction to include a specific test question, answer, or the content of any specific item in a statewide assessment prior to or during test administration
- Changing, altering, or amending any student’s online or paper response answer or any other statewide material at any time in a way that alters the student’s intended response
- Rewording or clarifying questions, or using inflections or gestures to help students answer test questions
- Allowing students to use unauthorized resources during testing (e.g. dictionaries, thesauruses, mathematics tables, online references, graphic organizers)
- Using any prior form of any statewide assessment, including pilot assessment materials, that USBE has not released in assessment preparation without express permission of USBE
- Displaying materials on walls or other high visibility surfaces that provide answers to specific test items (e.g. posters, word walls, formula charts)
- Reclassifying students to alter subgroup reports

- Allowing parents to assist with the proctoring of a test their child is taking
- Using students to supervise other students taking a test
- Allowing the public to view secure test items or to observe testing sessions
- Reviewing a student's response and instructing the student to, or suggesting that the student should, rethink their answers
- Downloading, copying, printing, photographing, recording, or making any facsimile of protected assessment material prior to, during, or after test administration without express permission of USBE
- Explicitly or implicitly encouraging students to engage in dishonest testing behavior
- Administering assessment(s) outside of the prescribed testing window for each assessment
- Explicitly or implicitly encouraging parents to exclude their students from participating in a statewide assessment [Utah Code 53E-4-312](#)

*If your actions will cause students to not receive a valid and reliable score that accurately reflects what they know and can do, don't do it!*

## Testing Ethics Violations

Testing ethics violations are to be reported to the supervisor of the person who may be investigated, the school administrator, the LEA assessment director, or the USBE Assessment department.

Protocol:

- Each LEA must determine local policies and procedures regarding testing ethics violations
- In most cases, an initial investigation should be conducted at the school level
- The LEA assessment director will review the initial investigation and determine findings
- If the violation is of sufficient concern, the incident may also be forwarded to the Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission (UPPAC) for review
- If inappropriate practices are substantiated, educators or other staff may receive further training or a reprimand, be subject to disciplinary action, be terminated, and/or lose their Utah teaching license

*For more information about the processes in place concerning the investigation of testing ethics violations contact your LEA assessment director.*

## Resources

[Utah State Board of Education](http://www.schools.utah.gov) (<http://www.schools.utah.gov>)

[Assessment, Utah State Board of Education](http://www.schools.utah.gov/assessment) (<http://www.schools.utah.gov/assessment>)

[Utah State Law – Chapter 53E](https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title53E/53E.html) (<https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title53E/53E.html>)

[Utah State Law – Chapter 53G](https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title53G/53G.html) (<https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title53G/53G.html>)

[Utah Board of Education – RULES](https://rules.utah.gov/publicat/code/r277/r277-404.htm) (<https://rules.utah.gov/publicat/code/r277/r277-404.htm>)

[Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission](https://www.schools.utah.gov/policy/uppac) (<https://www.schools.utah.gov/policy/uppac>)