

COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM/ EDUCATIONALLY RELATED RESEARCH: 2400P

In compliance with State and Federal directives, the Federal Way Public Schools will administer standardized tests to designated students per funded program or grade level. Examples of programs include the Chapter 1 Program, the State's Learning Assistant Program (LAP), the Washington State Assessment Program, the Transitional Bilingual Program, Gifted and Talented, and programs under Student Support Services for students with disability conditions. The purpose of the testing shall be to obtain information which documents the student's eligibility for the program or the progress of the student while in the program compared with national age or grade mates.

Parents shall be informed of all requirements for testing as a part of their student's participation in a State or Federally funded program.

State and Federal program tests shall include, but not be limited to, standardized, individual or group, norm-referenced tests and specifically designed questionnaires. The tests and questionnaires may not elicit student beliefs about sex or religion without prior written consent of the parent or guardian.

A set of the tests that are a part of the State or Federal testing programs shall be available for examination by the parent or guardian. The District Testing or Student Support Services Director shall be available to explain the purpose of the tests. Copying, duplicating or the loaning of the instrument, or any part thereof, shall not be permitted.

Student test scores shall become a part of the student's program record and may be placed in the student's permanent school record. All student scores shall be provided to parents or guardians and appropriate school staff in a meaningful form.

Students excluded from an "all students at a grade level" testing for a State or Federal testing program shall be documented. Parents or guardians shall be notified of the exclusion and its reason. An explanation of the exclusion from testing shall be placed in the student's permanent school record.

Grade Level Testing

As an integral part of the regular District educational program, the District shall administer standardized tests of academic achievement and general abilities to students at specified grade levels. The purpose of this program shall be to obtain information about students to be used in their school instruction and placement, graduation, or the evaluation of the of the District's standards.

Parents or guardians should be informed in advance of an all-student grade-level testing.

Grade level assessments shall include, but not be limited to, norm-referenced tests, competency tests for high school graduation, and criterion-referenced or performance-based assessments.

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Results shall be entered into the student's permanent school record. Student's scores on all tests contained in the Grade Level Testing Program shall be provided in meaningful form to the school, the students and their parents or guardians.

Group tests, inventories, questionnaires, opinionnaires, sociograms or surveys that are designed to assess personality and social behavior, condition of mental health, personal or family values, and sexual or religious beliefs shall not be included in the Grade Level Testing Program.

A set of the tests included in the Grade Level Testing Program shall be maintained for examination by the student's parents or guardians at the District Assessment Center. Examination will take place in the presence of the Assessment Coordinator, a principal, designee, or a counselor who will explain the purpose, structure and administration of the instrument. Copying, duplication, or loaning of the instrument, or any part or portion, thereof shall not be permitted.

The security of these tests will be maintained. The test, itself, will not be used by the teaching staff as part of a curriculum.

Classroom Testing and Assessment

Evaluation of the student's classroom performance is essential to the process of providing adequate educational experiences for the student. Classroom teachers are authorized to construct tests or use commercial assessment procedures designed to diagnose academic strengths or weaknesses; evaluate progress and mastery of information, skills and concepts; and measure a student's achievement of the curriculum objectives and standards established for the class or course.

Teacher-constructed or commercial tests, inventories, questionnaires and checklists and practices shall not be designed to assess the personality, sexual attitudes, or religious belief of the students unless knowledge of such factors of the student is prescribed as a part of the curriculum of that class. When the curriculum includes such factors, tests and practices must receive approval from the principal and the Superintendent/designee prior to use with students. The administration of such tests and practices shall require prior written parental or guardian consent if beliefs relative to sex or religion are elicited.

These tests and scores of these test processes shall not be placed in the student's permanent record.

Teacher-constructed and commercial tests or assessment practices shall be made available for examination to the parents or guardians at their request.

Educational Research

Educational research is central to continuing efforts to improve the quality of education for students attending the Federal Way Public Schools.

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Formerly Procedure – 2080P; Adopted or Previously Revised – 05/26/98

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District research projects shall be submitted to the Superintendent/designee for approval. The evaluation of such research projects shall be based upon the benefit of the research testing to the District, its staff, students, and community.

Instruments and procedures used by District students for research testing and assessment in connection with their school activities that involve other students, parents or teachers shall be approved by the student's advisor-teacher and principal. Student research shall follow the principles of ethical human research and District Policy – 2400.

All research proposals shall be submitted to the Superintendent/designee to ensure that all proposed studies meet the following criteria:

1. The proposal is well planned, organized, and is technically sound;
2. The research procedures must be consistent with District policies and principles of ethical human research;
3. The agency or person proposing the study is responsible for completing the study consistent with sound research practices;
4. The study has the potential for making a unique contribution to the field of educational research, or providing information that is useful in local decision-making processes;
5. All reports, publications, and briefs resulting from the study will be sent to the District without charge unless otherwise agreed upon in writing.

Researchers and District staff or agencies outside the district shall obtain the approval of the Superintendent/designee before proceeding with the research testing. All research shall be conducted in accordance with provisions of research stated in this regulation, other District policies and the Ethical Principles in the conduct of Research with Human Participants (APA, 1989).

Student or staff participation shall be voluntary. The student's parents or guardians shall be given information about any study and in some cases an opportunity to decline participation in any research program. Administration of tests designed to elicit beliefs or practices regarding sex or religion shall require prior written parental or guardian consent.

Research and Evaluation studies shall include, but not be limited to, studies of inquiry, observation, or examination of information by professional educational agencies or persons. Coding, classification, surveying or testing of District students and staff; or an analysis of District-collected information are examples of researchable inquiries.

Results of research testing and assessment shall be used for research purposes only and shall not be included in the student's or staff's permanent record. In all cases, the participant's anonymity shall be guaranteed in reports of research testing.

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Specific instruments or practices to be used in research testing shall be made available for examination to the student's parents or guardians at the school or at the District assessment center.

Instruments shall be examined in the presence of the principal, counselor or the Assessment Coordinator. Copying, duplicating or loaning of tests, or any portions thereof, shall not be permitted.

Budgetary responsibility for purchasing, developing, administering, scoring or reporting of research designated tests and practices shall be at the researcher's expense.

Optional Testing and Assessment

Classroom teachers and educational specialists are authorized to administer approved tests and inventories to individual students or groups of students on an optional basis. The purpose of such assessment shall be to obtain specific educational information to be used in the placement, educational planning, evaluation, instruction and guidance of the student.

Teachers, counselors and psychologists using procedures and materials approved by the building principal and/or the Assessment Coordinator, may administer aptitude, interest, and achievement tests to students on an individual basis. Teachers and counselors shall keep parents or guardians apprised of student progress.

Counselors and school psychologists or other qualified staff, using procedures and materials appropriate to their professional training and approved by their supervisor, may with prior written consent of parent or guardian, conduct an individual psychological assessment which includes diagnostic intelligence or personality testing of students when educational circumstances indicate the need for a more detailed analysis of the student in relation to their educational program. Written consent of parent or guardian shall be obtained by the school district prior to the administering of any diagnostic intelligence or personality tests.

A written request for a case study which includes the giving and interpreting of any tests which seem necessary shall be on file with the Assessment Coordinator or the Director of Student Support Services.

Definitions of Individually Administered Tests

Individual Aptitude or Intelligence Tests - Refers to tests which are standardized to provide normative and comparative data on general intellectual functioning, and on specific aptitudes and abilities important to learning.

Individual Interest Tests - Refers to tests administered individually which are standardized to provide normative and comparative data about a student's interests which are useful in educational and vocational planning.

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Individual Achievement Tests - Refers to tests administered individually which are standardized to provide normative and comparative data about a student's achievement in skills related to successful learning in all areas of the school curriculum.

Diagnostic Personality Tests - Refers to tests administered individually or in groups, which are based on a systematic conception of personality and which are designed to systematically assess major dimensions of an individual's personality in such a way that the results of the test provide standardized normative and comparative data about the individual's personality.

Individual Testing and Assessment

It is sometimes desirable to administer instruments designed to assess the individual student's intellectual, social, emotional, perceptual-motor and other specific learning characteristics. Tests, inventories, scales or other appropriate instruments or practices designed to provide desired information regarding these characteristics shall be used only by school personnel qualified to administer the instrument or process.

Prior to the administration of any individually administered instrument or practice, a member of the building multidisciplinary team (MDT), principal or designee shall confer with the student's parents or guardians to describe the need for individual assessment. In these cases written approval by the parent or guardian shall be obtained prior to the testing and assessment. In all instances, such written parental or guardian approval must be obtained prior to administration of a diagnostic, intelligence or personality test.

Following the completion of an individual assessment, the specialist who has performed the individual study shall report the findings to a building principal or designee. The specialist shall confer with the student's parents or guardians for the purpose of reporting findings and recommendations. A written report of assessment that includes a statement of the perceived problem, instruments used, results obtained, interpretations, and recommendations shall be placed in the student's program file. Evidence of this report shall be placed in the student's permanent school file.

At the assessment conference, instruments and practices used in the assessment will be discussed, along with the theory and structure supporting them and the kinds of information they are designed to elicit.

Individual assessment instruments and practices shall not be given to or by any individual not specifically qualified in their administration and interpretation. All instruments included in this category shall be made available for examination either at the school or the District Student Support Services office at the request of the parents or guardians. Examination shall take place in the presence of a staff member who is qualified to administer and interpret the test. Copying, duplicating or loaning of the instruments or any portion thereof shall not be permitted.

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Pre-college and Vocational Testing and Assessment

The District recognizes the importance of student participation in various pre-college, prevocational and military placements and entrance and aptitude testing programs which are under the control of non-district agencies. Student participation in such testing programs will be strictly voluntary and for the most part, at the student's own expense. District financial and administrative responsibilities for such testing shall be directly related to the perceived usefulness of the results in the instruction and guidance of the student while that student is in attendance in the Federal Way Public Schools. Counseling personnel shall be available to provide consultation and interpretation of scores obtained on these tests and inventories.

Brochures, information sheets and registration forms provided by the test publisher shall be available to interested parents or guardians and students at the school and the District's testing center. Specific questions regarding the nature and structure of the tests and specific test items or inventories included in these testing programs shall be directed to the test publisher.

Results of pre-college or prevocational testing shall be included in the student's permanent record when provided to the District in a form which is compatible with the District's permanent record format. However, it shall be the student's responsibility to provide reports of scores to agencies outside the public schools when such reports are required.

Parents or guardians will need to contact the agencies to examine copies of the test materials. Copying, duplicating or loaning of the instruments, or any portion thereof, shall not be permitted. Security of the tests in District possession will be maintained.

Assessment of Health-Related Needs

Nurses, occupational and physical therapists, drug counselors and other health specialists shall administer tests and procedures to detect the presence of health and illness-related problems. They shall also screen students for emerging disability concerns. Vision, hearing, scoliosis, physical education, neuro-muscular range of motion, and drug usage screenings are examples of health-related assessments. The purpose of this testing is to provide relevant information about the student's physical characteristics, behavior or performance that may affect individual educational planning and career counseling.

Assessment tools or processes shall be administered on an individual or group basis by a qualified professional or by personnel supervised by a certified health specialist. Approval for assessment practices shall be under the Director of Student Support Services.

Results of health-related testing shall be a part of the student's permanent or confidential school record. All health reports shall be provided to parents and school staff in a meaningful form. Upon the remediation of the health-related problem, information in the student's file may be expunged upon request of the parent or guardian. Parents shall be kept apprised of the development of the health-related problem and updated on remedial efforts.

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A qualified specialist shall be available to explain the purpose of the instruments used for health testing. All tests and procedures shall be available for examination at the request of the parent or guardian. Copying, duplicating or loaning of the instrument, or any portion thereof, shall not be permitted.

Testing Readiness Training

Testing-readiness training serves the purpose of educating students about the testing process and thereby helps to assure the validity of obtained test results.

Test-taking skills should help a student to avoid errors for reasons other than a lack of knowledge or skill of the content being tested. Therefore, before test instruments are used, teachers, counselors, school psychologists, health specialists and administrators should ascertain the student's capability of: understanding the test's directions and the asking for clarification, if needed; following through the format(s) of the test and any booklet or answer sheet; responding with or transferring exactly a chosen answer in a manner consistent with the test's format; knowing how and when to guess; scheduling his/her use of time; and checking answers.

Test-readiness training should never include practices where students are given correct answers; have access to review or practice exact test items; are exposed to test content (e.g., spelling words, vocabulary, stories or graphics prior to testing but not as a normal part of instruction); or practice with item options that are in the same position as the test's answers. The approval of testing-readiness materials shall be part of the responsibilities of the Assessment Coordinator.

Parents or guardians should be informed of appropriate test-taking skills for the grade level of their child.

Assessment Coordinator Function and Responsibilities

The Assessment Coordinator shall have the following specific responsibilities:

1. Assist in development of specific policies and procedures governing performance of research and confidentiality of data in the district;
2. Consider prior to implementation all research or evaluation studies which propose to use District facilities, pupils, staff, or information;
3. Assist District professional staff in their planning and conducting of research procedures;
4. Approve, disapprove or require modification of research study proposals submitted for approval;
5. Assist professional staff in the use of the District's human, physical, and organizational resources to complete approved research, and advise professional staff regarding distribution or dissemination of information about approved studies.