

Cache County School District

Policy Series 4000: Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment

Policy No. 4700 P3

Assessments of Student Achievement – Testing Ethics, Violations, & Protocol

Testing Ethics

It is unethical for employees, including educators, to jeopardize the integrity of an assessment or the validity of student responses. Administrators, educators, and staff must comply with all ethical and procedural requirements when preparing for, administering, and accounting for assessments and their results. Employees violating these provisions may be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, termination of employment. Additionally, licensed educators violating testing procedures and/or ethics are subject to referral to the Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission for disciplinary action related to their educator license (R277-215 & R277-404).

Testing Ethics Violations

Unethical testing practices include, but are not limited to:

- Providing students directly, or indirectly, with or changing instruction to include a specific 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).
- Displaying materials (e.g., posters, word walls, formula charts) on walls or other visible locations that provide answers to specific test items.
- Allowing parents of students to assist with the proctoring of a test their child is taking.
- Reclassifying students to alter subgroup reports.
- Allowing students to test without the immediate supervision of a trained adult proctor.
- Allowing the public to view secure test items or to observe testing sessions.
- Reviewing a student's response and instructing them to, or suggesting that the student should, rethink their answers.
- Reproducing or distributing, in whole or in part, secure test content (e.g., taking pictures, copying, writing, posting in a classroom, posting publicly, emailing).
- Explicitly or implicitly encouraging students to engage in dishonest testing behavior or not answer questions.
- Administering an assessment outside of the prescribed testing window.
- Providing students with a non-academic reward for participation in or performance on statewide assessments.
- Explicitly or implicitly encouraging parents/guardians to exclude their child from participating in a statewide assessment (53E-4-312).

Ethics Violation Protocol

When a school administrator receives notice of an action that violates testing ethics, the District Director of Assessment shall be notified immediately of the violation. At the direction of the Director of Assessment, the administrator will conduct an initial school-level investigation including:

1. Gathering relevant testing materials/documents;
2. Gathering statements from those reporting the violation as well as others who were present during the violation;
3. Sending the person suspected of the violation a request for information regarding the violation.

The District Office of Assessment will review the initial investigation and:

- Determine findings with regard to the alleged violation.
- If the inappropriate practices are substantiated, the Director of Assessment, school administrator, and the Director of Human Resources will apply the procedures of the District's Employee Discipline Policy. In applying provisions of this policy, the employee may receive further training, a reprimand, or other additional disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- If the violation is of sufficient concern, the Director of Human Resources may forward the incident to the Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission for review (R277-404-8).

Student Ethics Violations

Students engaging in practices that compromise the accuracy, validity, or reliability of assessment results will have tests invalidated according to each assessment's Test Administration Manual, and appropriate consequences will be enacted in accordance with each school's student discipline policies and procedures and as determined by school administration. If a student is found to be engaging in a testing ethics violation, the school administrator will notify the District Director of Assessment and invalidation procedures will be enacted. The school administrator will also notify the student's parents/guardians of the invalidation of assessment results and any school-level consequences the student will receive.

Legal References:

[Utah Code 53E-4-3](#)
[Utah Code 53E-5](#)
[USBE R277-215](#)
[USBE R277-217](#)
[USBE R277-404](#)
[USBE Policy](#)

Assessments
Accountability
Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission (UPPAC)
Educator Standards and LEA Reporting
Requirements for Assessment of Student Achievement
Standard Test Administration and Testing Ethics Policy

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