

REGULATION MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Related Entries: GJC-RA, GJD-RB, IFA-RA, IKA, IKA-RA, JFA-RA
Responsible Offices: Chief of Staff – Montgomery County Public Schools
Related Sources: *Code of Maryland Regulations* §13A.03.04.01–.07; Maryland State Department of Education Test Coordination Manuals

Assessments with Security and Reporting Requirements

I. PURPOSE

To provide guidance for managing, administering, and reporting assessments with test security and reporting requirements.

II. BACKGROUND

Assessments administered by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), including state-required assessments as well as MCPS centrally developed assessments, represent an important component of a comprehensive approach to developing curriculum, monitoring the delivery of instruction, and identifying opportunities for continuous improvement, all in support of academic achievement of individual students. Assessment data are analyzed and reported consistently with local, state and federal requirements, while also providing staff, students, parents/guardians, and the community with accountability for the attainment of systemwide goals and the performance of academic reforms.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Management

1. The Office of Shared Accountability (OSA) is responsible for managing the administration of standardized assessments with security and reporting requirements.
2. OSA, acting as the superintendent of schools' designee, will inform the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) in writing annually of the name of the individual to serve as the Local Accountability Coordinator (LAC) authorized to procure assessment instruments used in assessment programs administered by or through MSDE. OSA will update MSDE in

writing within 10 days of any official change to a different authorized individual.

3. The Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs (OCIP) is responsible for creating and revising MCPS centrally developed assessments and for sharing the responsibilities of administration of assessments developed by MCPS and test vendors.
4. The Office of Technology and Innovation (OTI), in collaboration with OSA and OCIP, is responsible for managing the assessment platforms and systems that are used to administer computer-based, online assessments and record and report scores.

A. Development and Procurement of MCPS Assessments

1. OCIP develops formative and summative assessments specific to the MCPS curriculum. OCIP works with OSA to implement appropriate test security procedures that are consistent with Maryland State test security requirements.
2. OSA evaluates centrally developed assessment items for reliability and validity, in collaboration with OCIP.
3. OSA, in collaboration with OCIP and OTI and the Procurement Unit in the Department of Materials Management, develops or selects the instruments and/or assessment platforms for systemwide assessments and negotiates purchasing contracts with test vendors, to ensure best prices and economies of scale, when possible.

Every effort will be made by OSA and other offices to ensure that vendors provide assessments in accessible formats.

C. Test Administration

1. The testing schedule, test administration procedures, and training materials are coordinated by OSA, as described below.
 - a) OSA collaborates with the Office of School Support and Improvement (OSSI) and OCIP, and other offices as appropriate, to create the annual testing calendar. This includes negotiating with MSDE regarding proposed dates for statewide assessments and establishing the dates for non-statewide assessments, with the

approval of the Chief of Teaching, Learning, and Schools. OSA communicates information about statewide assessment dates and provides the approved calendar to schools. OSA, OSSI, and OCIP collaborate to communicate non-state assessment windows to schools.

- b) OSA develops test administration procedures that ensure that test administration activities are carried out according to procedures prescribed by MSDE, MCPS, and the appropriate test vendors.
 - (1) OCIP provides input to administration procedures for centrally developed assessments.
 - (2) OTI provides input to administration procedures for computer-based and online assessments.
- c) OSA provides schools with test administration and coordination manuals and copies of the administrative procedures and the necessary training materials.
- d) OSA ensures that test administration and certification of training forms produced by the testing authority are signed and retained as directed, when required by the testing authority.

2. All school test coordinators must be trained on test administration and security procedures.

- a) OSA, in collaboration with OCIP and other offices as appropriate, trains school test coordinators and designated staff for vendor-produced and local assessments.
- b) School test coordinators, under the supervision of principals, conduct trainings for school staff. MCPS utilizes a “trainer of trainers” model where appropriate.
- c) OCIP trains designated school-based staff, including resource teachers overseeing the administration of centrally developed assessments.
- d) MCPS staff who assist and/or administer state assessments must complete annually the MCPS test security training module and, upon completion, provide a copy of the MCPS nondisclosure form to the STC.

3. Test administration procedures and training materials will provide trainees with information on logistics, test administration, and security. Test administration procedures will include but are not limited to the following:
 - a) School staff members adhere to scheduled days when it is permissible to administer specific assessments, also known as testing windows.
 - b) Test administrators must read verbatim from the test administrators manual when giving directions or providing read-aloud accommodations.
 - c) Test administrators, proctors, and accommodators do not provide answers to students or alter student responses.
 - d) In some cases, individual assessments restrict students from receiving certain accommodations. Students with Individualized Education Programs, Section 504, or English Learners plans shall be provided with those accommodations stated in their plans that are permissible under the administration requirements of applicable assessments.
 - e) Non-test-related personal mobile devices (PMDs) that could be considered a test security risk or a distraction are not permitted in the testing environment, except as exempted in MSDE guidance, as follows:
 - (1) Specific exemptions may apply for staff use of PMDs during test administration, as authorized by the LAC in the OSA Testing and Reporting Unit.
 - (2) Specific exemptions may apply for student use of PMDs during test administration for medical or audiological purposes, as authorized by the LAC in the OSA Testing and Reporting Unit.
 - f) Test administration documentation and assessment data must record the names of test administrators, proctors, and accommodators and be retained as directed.
 - g) Testing behavior violations are considered to be those violations identified by the *Code of Maryland Regulations* (COMAR) Section

13A.03.04.05, examples of which include but are not limited to the following:

- (1) Copy, reproduce, use, or otherwise disclose in any manner inconsistent with test security regulations and procedures any portion of secure test materials.
 - (2) Coach examinees during testing by giving them answers to test questions or otherwise directing or guiding their responses or altering or interfering with examinees' responses in any way.
 - (3) Failure to properly monitor test administration, including permitting inappropriate collaboration between or among individuals.
- h) Testing violations are to be reported and investigated consistent with section D below.
- i) Principals and school test coordinators are responsible for ensuring that test administration activities within the school are carried out according to procedures established by OSA, MSDE, and/or the test vendors and included in the *Test Coordination Manual* specific to each test.

D. Security and Testing Violations

1. To ensure that assessments and assessment data are not compromised, the following security protocols are in place:
 - a) OSA and OCIP are responsible for providing secure storage within the OSA office or other designated area(s) for all answer keys, answer documents, and tests.
 - b) Principals, school test coordinators, and resource teachers are responsible for ensuring that assessments are secure at all times as well as providing for a secure, locked location for the storage of assessments.
 - c) OTI, in collaboration with OSA and OCIP, is responsible for ensuring that the online testing environment is secure.
2. Questions or concerns about secure test items must be transmitted only by

means that do not disclose the item content. Examples of acceptable questions or statements of concern are as follows:

- a) “The directions for the first writing question were unclear.”
 - b) “The second passage was too hard for students.”
 - c) “Question 3 appears to have two possible answers.”
3. Testing irregularities and/or testing incidents must be reported according to procedures established by OSA, test administration guidelines, and applicable state laws. OSA is responsible for initiating the investigation of testing irregularities and/or testing incidents. The Office of Human Resources and Development and other MCPS offices are consulted as needed.
 4. If a testing irregularity or testing incident is determined to constitute a violation, OSA follows procedures established by MSDE.
 5. Discipline for violating test security will be imposed, consistent with COMAR 13A.03.04.07 and all applicable Montgomery County Board of Education policies and MCPS regulations and procedures. Discipline for employees may include, but is not limited to, the following: verbal reminder of procedure, memorandum for the record, written warning, letter of reprimand, and/or suspension or termination.
 6. OSA, in collaboration with the Department of Materials Management, is responsible for distribution, storage, retrieval, and shredding of secure test materials and reports containing confidential student information.

E. Reporting, Scoring, and Interpretation

1. Reporting
 - a) OSA is responsible for ensuring that assessment data are processed and communicated accurately in a user-friendly format with results aggregated and reported to the Board, MCPS offices, and schools. OSA is also responsible for developing and sending home student- or school-level reports in coordination with statewide assessment vendors.
 - b) OTI aggregates test data to the appropriate individual, school, or district level, making the data available only to appropriate viewers,

to ensure confidentiality of student information.

2. Scoring

- a) OCIP is responsible for providing schools with answer keys and rubrics for all centrally developed assessment items where appropriate. Answer keys must be provided via a secure protocol.
- b) OSA, OCIP, and OTI are responsible for loading assessment data where appropriate.

3. Interpretation

- a) OSA provides guidance and analytical support to central services staff members, school staff members, and the public with the interpretation of assessment data and the implications of the results.
- b) Principals, with guidance from OSA, are responsible for—
 - (1) analyzing data disaggregated by reporting categories for each assessment by course, content area, and grade level;
 - (2) analyzing school results in terms of instructional implications and implementing necessary adjustments;
 - (3) providing opportunities for discussion of school assessment results with school staff as well as with parents/guardians;
 - (4) incorporating individual student assessment results into each student's permanent record file;
 - (5) distributing the individual assessment scores to parents/guardians (or eligible students as appropriate);
 - (6) making individual student assessment data available only to the student, their parents/ guardians (or eligible students as appropriate), teacher(s), principal, counselor, area staff, and other professional personnel with specific responsibility for helping the student; and
 - (7) ensuring that assessment results are used in conjunction with other information to make decisions about instructional programs for individual students or groups.

Regulation History: Formerly Regulation No. 340-3, August 20, 1980, revised January 1984, revised December 1986; revised September 22, 1994; revised March 12, 2013; revised July 19, 2021.