



Oconee County Schools: Assessment Security and Accountability

The Oconee County Schools acknowledges the importance of maintaining a system of student assessment that is of the highest quality. High quality assessments must be administered in a manner characterized by integrity that is ensured only when sound procedures of test security and accountability are implemented. These procedures are designed to establish an environment in which student assessment is conducted in a way that establishes confidence that the results are reliable and valid and can be used to accurately gauge student achievement and improve instructional practices. Oconee County Schools is committed to the use of online assessments whenever possible which greatly enhances test security, provides a more positive user experience, and maximizes the accessibility of these assessments to students with disabilities and other learning differences.

Plans and Procedures

The following test security plans and procedures are designed to be consistent with guidance provided by the Assessment Division of the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) that is contained within the *Student Assessment Handbook* and to adhere to the *Code of Ethics for Educators* established by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC).

Training of Personnel

Assessment Security and Accountability

Each school year, the Oconee County Schools requires all PSC certified personnel with a role in the administration of state-mandated student assessments to complete and receive credit for an assessment compliance course. The content of the courses is based on information included in the *Student Assessment Handbook* and the *Code of Ethics for Educators*. Content covered includes a review of the standards of professional ethics that specifically apply to student assessment (Standards 4, 7, 9, &11), maintaining test security and integrity, the consequences of the failure to comply with the *Code of Ethics for Educators*, limiting and the reporting of testing irregularities, and a review of the responsibilities for each role in the assessment program. The course is differentiated based on the roles of School Superintendent, Principal, School Test Coordinator, System Special Education Coordinator, System ESOL/Title III Coordinator, and Test Examiner/Test Proctor.

Test Coordination and Administration

The Oconee County Schools implements a train-the-trainer model to disseminate information in regard to student assessment coordination and administration. The System Test Coordinator participates in training sessions conducted by the Assessment Division of GaDOE. The System Test Coordinator, in turn, conducts training sessions for the School Test Coordinators that are designated for each school. School Test Coordinators, in turn, train school Principals, test examiners, test proctors, and others with a role in the assessment process. The content of these training activities includes but is not limited to the secure storage and handling of test materials, information on providing testing accommodations, instructions to complete necessary coding of student records, specific procedures related to the

administration of each assessment as outlined in test administration manuals, and information regarding the training of examiners and proctors. In addition, guidelines to minimize the occurrence of and the reporting of testing irregularities are reviewed.

Distribution and Return of Secure Testing Materials

As the Oconee County Schools strives to maximize the use of online assessments, the transfer of paper copies of secure test materials is greatly reduced. However, there is a limited amount of transfer of secure material even for online assessments (i.e. test tickets and used scratch paper), and there are instances in which paper assessments are used which require more extensive security procedures. The system of distribution and return of secure testing materials is designed to maintain their security at each point of transfer, and any discrepancies are resolved at that time.

Vendor ↔ System Test Coordinator: All test materials are received from vendors by the System Test Coordinator in the manner prescribed by the State that is particular to the specific testing program. As soon as is possible, the System Test Coordinator, in turn, distributes test materials intended for schools directly to School Test Coordinators. In the event that test materials cannot be distributed to schools on the day that they are received and/or there are overage materials that will be maintained by the system, the materials are securely stored as described in a subsequent section of this document (See *Storage and Disposal of Testing Materials*). If there are scorable and/or non-scorable materials that must be shipped back to vendors at the completion of testing, these materials are also stored as described prior to being readied for shipment back to the vendor.

System Test Coordinator ↔ School Test Coordinator: At the time of delivery of assessment materials to schools, confirmation of receipt is completed with the School Test Coordinator signing and dating to indicate receipt from the System Test Coordinator of each piece of test material that has a security number. At the conclusion of testing, test materials are returned to the System Test Coordinator who confirms receipt by signing off and dating to indicate the return of each piece of test material with a security number that had been originally transferred to the School Test Coordinator. Online test tickets and used scratch paper are also transferred to the System Test Coordinator during this process.

School Test Coordinator ↔ Examiner: To limit the amount of time that secure test materials are in the possession of test examiners, transfer of secure test materials to test examiners occurs no sooner before the beginning of testing sessions than is required by the demands of the particular assessment program. In turn, examiners are instructed to return testing materials to the School Test Coordinator immediately after testing is terminated and testing materials have been collected from students. Security Logs are maintained to document transfer of secure test materials between the School Test Coordinator and Examiner. The test security log lists the date of transfer, a description of the materials being transferred, the number of materials being transferred, and, if applicable, the security numbers of test materials being transferred. When materials are checked out by Examiners, they must, in the presence of the School Test Coordinator/designee, sign, and time stamp the form confirming the distribution. When the materials are returned, the School Test Coordinator/designee must, in the presence of the examiner, sign and time stamp the form confirming the return of the materials.

Storage and Disposal of Testing Materials

Storage: At all times when secure testing materials are not in use for testing, they are stored in a secured locked area. This applies whether the materials are in the possession of the System Test Coordinator or School Test Coordinator. The secure storage areas are only accessible to the System Test Coordinator or, at the school level, the Principal and School Test Coordinator.

Disposal of Testing Materials: In regard to some testing programs, the State DOE directs schools systems to securely dispose of some testing materials. In these cases, all materials are collected from schools by the system test coordinator as previously described. These materials are securely stored

until such time that an independent document destruction vendor takes possession of the materials for secure destruction or they are shredded by the System Test Coordinator.

Monitoring of Assessment Activities

At the school level, the monitoring of assessment activities is primarily the responsibility of school building administrators. The Principal and School Test Coordinator must confirm that assessment procedures have been adhered to in their school by submitting the *Principal's Certification* form at the completion of test administration windows. In addition, the System Test Coordinator monitors assessment activities at schools by performing random visits and observations during test administration. The Superintendent confirms that assessment procedures have been adhered to in the system by submitting to GaDOE the *Superintendent's Certification* form after January 31 and July 31 of each school year.

Response to Reports of Irregularities and/or Security Breaches

The Oconee County Schools responds to testing irregularities and security breaches in a timely manner and in a way that establishes the validity of assessments and ensures accountability. Training of School Test Coordinators, Examiners, and test Proctors includes defining what constitutes an irregularity and/or security breach, citing examples of each, discussing the responsibility of certified personnel to report any such observations, and reviewing the procedure to follow in making reports. Examiners and test Proctors are instructed to immediately report possible irregularities and security breaches to the School Test Coordinator or Principal who, in turn, must report it to the System Test Coordinator. When necessary, the System Test Coordinator will provide guidance in conducting an investigation of the incident which may include obtaining written narratives from all parties involved. Irregularities and security breaches are reported by the System Test Coordinator to the appropriate GaDOE Assessment Administration Division Assessment Specialist. The System Test Coordinator will follow the instructions of the assessment specialist who may provide guidance in the investigation, suggest a course of action, give instructions for recording the incident on the GaDOE secure portal, provide the appropriate codes if the incident is deemed to be an irregularity and/or requires an invalidation, and, if deemed appropriate, make a recommendation for a report to the PSC.

Consequences of Failure to Follow Procedures / Violations of Professional Ethics

All school system personnel are expected to follow prescribed procedures and to operate within ethical guidelines in regard student assessment. Failure to do so can result in the full variety of disciplinary actions up to and including termination of employment. Violation of the *Code of Ethics for Educators* will be reported to the Professional Standards Commission (PSC) who may impose a variety of sanctions that can include revocation of the professional credentials of offending educators.