

**OFFICE OF CHIEF ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER**  
**Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items**  
**Consent Agenda**  
**April 18, 2024**

**OFFICE OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

- L. Approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process: To revise *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2023, Appendix F, Requirements of the Mississippi Statewide Assessment System - Standard 16*

Background Information: Appendix F, Requirements of the Mississippi Statewide Assessment System - Process Standard 16, of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2023*, provides the guidelines to protect the security, integrity, and reporting of results of all tests administered through the Mississippi Statewide Assessment System. The State Board of Education establishes these requirements and the consequences applied when a school district or school is found in violation of any requirement. These requirements are established under the authority granted in Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-16-1, 27-16-3, and 37-16-4.

The proposed revisions to Appendix F will add updated information pertaining to the administration of statewide assessments as outlined below.

- (a) Part II. Definitions includes the addition of the general role of the District Test Coordinator (DTC), the School Test Coordinator (STC), and School Test Security Plan, the District Test Security Plan, and explains prohibited electronic devices. The categories of secure test materials, possible testing irregularities and verified testing irregularities have been updated.
- (b) Part III. Reporting and Use of Test Data now includes retesting opportunities for the Literacy Based Promotion Act (LBPA) and updates to graduation requirements.
- (c) Part IV. Requirements have been reorganized and categorized to encompass today's statewide computer-based and device-based testing, including Responsibilities of the DTC, Test Materials, Training and Testing Personnel, Policies for Mississippi Assessments, Accommodations and Accessibility Features, Test Administrations, Electronic Devices, and Test Security Violations and Forensic Data.

Note: No revisions are being proposed at this time to Part V. Investigation and Part VI. Consequences, due to on-going investigations from the Spring 2023 assessments.

The Commission on School Accreditation voted unanimously in a regularly scheduled meeting on December 7, 2023, to request the State Board of Education approve a temporary rule and to begin the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) Process to revise Miss. Admin. Code: 7-24, *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2023*, specifically Appendix F.

The public comment period was open from January 22, 2024, through 5:00 p.m. February 20, 2024. The Mississippi Department of Education received seven (7) public comments. Based on the comments received, the MDE is proposing substantial revisions that will require the MDE to begin the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) process again to revise Miss. Admin. Code 7-24, *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2023*, specifically Appendix F.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

Summary of Administrative Procedures Act (APA) Comments  
 Approval to begin the Administrative Procedures Act Process: To revise *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2023*, Appendix F, Requirements of the Mississippi Statewide Assessment System - Standard 16

The Office of Student Assessment received the following APA comments regarding the revision of Appendix F.	
Summary of Comments	MDE Response
<p>Dr. Steven Hampton – Superintendent of Education, Lamar County Schools                      Mandating an administrative endorsement for DTC’s may limit the pool of qualified individuals who can take on this crucial role. Requiring an administrative endorsement may place an additional burden on districts. The stipulation that DTCs without an administrative endorsement may only count within the District’s 5% of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) units working outside of the area(s) of endorsement adds an additional layer of complexity.</p> <p>I urge reconsideration of this policy change to ensure that the selection of District Test Coordinators is based on their knowledge, experience, and commitment to maintaining the integrity of the assessment process.</p> <p>Greg Paczak – Director of Research &amp; Development, Madison County Schools</p> <p>1. P.6, #9: DTCs were informed at the Fall 2023 training that documentation would need to now be kept for five (5) years; however, the proposed document states three years.</p> <p>2. P.8, #13: An additional sentence should be added at the end of this item explaining that students with Dyslexia and those requiring medical device monitoring may have accommodations.</p>	<p>Change II. Definitions &amp; IV. Requirement #1                      Based on the comments received through the APA Process, the MDE is recommending the removal of administrative endorsement requirement for the DTC; requesting the State Board of Education to allow the reopening of the APA Process based on the changes.</p> <p>Change IV. Requirement #9                      The MDE will make the correction in the upcoming APA Process to reflect five (5) years.</p> <p>No Change required for IV. Requirement #13:                      Both items are included in the <i>2022 Mississippi Testing Accommodation Manual</i>. Dyslexia is on page 20 and Medical Monitoring is #12 on page 15 under Accessibility.</p>
<p>Scott Rimes – Superintendent, Rankin County School District                      Question: How long should testing documentation be maintained by the district? <u>Rationale:</u> In the Fall 2023 DTC training, participants were instructed to keep records for <i>five</i> years. In the proposed revisions to Appendix F, Section IV: Requirements, #9 states documentation should be kept three (3) years. <u>Suggestion:</u> If testing documentation should be kept for 5 years, the suggestion is to change three years to five years.                      Question: Are there requirements for <i>schools</i> to keep documentation? <u>Rationale:</u> The way the proposal is currently written, documentation is</p>	<p>Change IV. Requirement #9                      The MDE will make the correction in the upcoming APA Process to reflect five (5) years.</p>

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<p>addressed at the district level but not at the school level. <u>Suggestion</u>: In the same section (Section IV: Requirements), the suggestion is to add a #10 and define the testing documentation a <i>school</i> should keep and for how long.</p> <p>Ryan Kuykendall - Under section II and IV (1), the proposed Appendix F states, “<i>District test coordinators shall possess a current and valid Mississippi educator’s license with an administrative endorsement. (Note: DTCs without an administrative endorsement may count in the District’s 5% of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) units working outside of the area(s) of endorsement allowed by Process Standard 2.2 and as calculated by MSIS.)</i>” Adding the requirement for DTCs to possess an administrative endorsement is a very big mistake. This is because most STCs are not administrators and therefore, do not possess this endorsement. Therefore, you will force some districts to hire an administrator as the DTC that has no STC experience. This will lead to more testing errors (including test security issues).</p> <p>Under section IV (6), the proposed Appendix F states... “<i>The DTCs shall be responsible for training the district personnel such as the superintendent, Principals, STCs, technology coordinators, special education directors, English learner coordinators, and any other personnel who will be involved in preparations for the administration of state assessments.</i>” Some of the groups listed are not involved in testing at all in some districts. This includes the superintendent, special education director, and possibly others. In addition, the DTCs may conduct a different training with these groups (including principals) than they do with STCs since the needs based on their responsibilities are much different. The statement should be changed to the following to make this more general but accomplish the goal of this section, “<i>The DTCs shall be responsible for making sure any district personnel that will have any role in testing is trained properly. Any information from the Mississippi Department of Education that is specific to the principal role as it relates to testing shall be shared with principals by the DTC. Principals also must attend training led by the STC.</i>”</p>	<p>Change II. Definitions &amp; IV. Requirement #1                      Based on the comments received through the APA Process, the MDE is recommending the removal of administrative endorsement requirement for the DTC; requesting the State Board of Education to allow the reopening of the APA Process based on the changes.</p> <p>Change IV. Requirement #6                      Based on the comments received through the APA Process, the MDE recommends clarifying the training of the testing personnel; requesting the State Board of Education to allow the reopening of the APA Process based on the changes.</p> <p>Change IV Requirement #15.                      A comment clarifying the screener schedules will be added to the document; requesting the State Board of Education to allow the reopening of the APA Process based on the changes.</p>

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<b>The Office of Student Assessment received the following APA comments regarding the revision of Appendix F.</b>	
<p>Under section IV (15), the proposed Appendix F states... “A specific schedule for each school administering a Statewide assessment within the district shall be submitted to the Office of Student Assessment 30 calendar days prior to the start of any test window.” This is not possible for some of the assessments. The Pre-K/K Readiness fall window starts in July. Many schools are not in session 30 calendar days before the window begins. The rest of the section outlines that the purpose of this new addition to Appendix F is to reduce schedule changes. The 30-day change from the 14-day change does the opposite.</p> <p>Jonathan Barnes – Water Valley School District</p> <p>I am writing this in favor of changing the requirements of administrative certifications to serve as the DTC. School counselors and many others in school do most of the testing and should be able to have the opportunity to serve in that role. Especially in smaller school districts like ours; people wear many hats and could take some work load off of other administrators who have many other titles as well.</p>	<p>Change II. Definitions &amp; IV. Requirement #1</p> <p>Based on the comments received through the APA Process, the MDE is recommending the removal of administrative endorsement requirement for the DTC; requesting the State Board of Education to allow the reopening of the APA Process based on the changes.</p>
<p>Steven Hampton, Superintendent, Lamar County Schools</p> <p>Under section II and IV (1), the proposed Appendix F states... “District test coordinators shall possess a current and valid Mississippi educator’s license with an administrative endorsement. (Note: DTCs without an administrative endorsement may count in the District’s 5% of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) units working outside of the area(s) of endorsement allowed by Process Standard 2.2 and as calculated by MSIS.)” Adding an administrative endorsement requirement for DTCs would be mistake for a number of reasons. Some districts have a limited number of people who hold administrative endorsements and sometimes these people are not the best person to be DTCs. Also, STCs are not administrators and therefore, do not possess this endorsement. We, just like most school districts, hire an experienced STC in the DTC position when we have an opening. Having to hire someone who has an admin endorsement</p>	<p>Change II. Definitions &amp; IV. Requirement #1</p> <p>Based on the comments received through the APA Process, the MDE is recommending the removal of administrative endorsement requirement for the DTC; requesting the State Board of Education to allow the reopening of the APA Process based on the changes.</p> <p>Change IV. Requirement #6</p> <p>Based on the comments received through the APA Process, the MDE recommends clarifying the training of the testing personnel; requesting the State Board of Education to allow the reopening of the APA Process based on the changes.</p>

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<p><b>The Office of Student Assessment received the following APA comments regarding the revision of Appendix F.</b></p> <p>will lead to hiring people with no testing experience and in turn will lead to more testing errors and violations.</p> <p>Under section IV (6), the proposed Appendix F states... “The DTCs shall be responsible for training the district personnel such as the superintendent, Principals, STCs, technology coordinators, special education directors, English learner coordinators, and any other personnel who will be involved in preparations for the administration of state assessments.” I would like to point out that it is not a necessity to have an admin endorsement to lead an effective training.</p> <p>Under section IV (15), the proposed Appendix F states... “A specific schedule for each school administering a Statewide assessment within the district shall be submitted to the Office of Student Assessment 30 calendar days prior to the start of any test window.” This is not possible for some of the assessments. The Pre-K/K Readiness fall window starts in July. Many schools are not in session 30 calendar days before this window begins. The rest of the section outlines that the purpose of this new addition to Appendix F is to reduce schedule changes. The 30-day change from the 14-day change does the opposite.</p>	<p>Change II. Definitions &amp; IV. Requirement #1                  Based on the comments received through the APA Process, the MDE is recommending the removal of administrative endorsement requirement for the DTC; requesting the State Board of Education to allow the reopening of the APA Process based on the changes.</p>
<p>Ronnie Boyd, DTC, MSIS Coordinator, SAM Coordinator Union County School District</p> <p>I take this one kind of personally. I have been involved with testing for the past 24 years. I started with the FLE and worked in a K-12 school as a counselor. During that time I administered every type of assessment there has been. I hold a masters in school counseling which was an intense 48 hour program. Under this change I would not qualify to hold the position of DTC I have been in for the past ten years. I understand I can count in the 5% but I also feel that is kind of a slap in the face to those of us who have worked hard to get a chance at a district position. I personally do not see a coloration between having an administrative endorsement and being able to conduct state testing. You could say it is based on leadership but my administration saw some type of potential</p>	

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in me when I was offered the position of DTC. I feel you will be blocking good people from having a chance after I am gone.	



## APPENDIX F

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### REQUIREMENTS OF THE MISSISSIPPI STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM STANDARD 16

#### I. PURPOSE

It is the policy of the State Board of Education that all test procedures and results that are used in the Mississippi Statewide Assessment System and/or used in the Mississippi Statewide Accreditation System be valid and accurate for making related decisions. ~~In order to~~ To protect the security and integrity of all tests administered through the Mississippi Statewide Assessment System, as well as to ensure reporting of accurate assessment results, the State Board of Education establishes the following requirements and the consequences applied when a school district or school is found in violation of any requirement. These requirements are established under the authority granted in {Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-16-1, 37-16-3, and 37-16-4}, ~~as amended~~.

#### II. DEFINITIONS

The District Test Coordinator (DTC) serves as the point of contact between the Office of Student Assessment (OSA) and the district in all matters related to the Mississippi Assessment Programs. The DTC, trained by the OSA is responsible for training district personnel and school test coordinators in the administration of State Assessments, ensuring they are knowledgeable in all aspects of testing processes and test security procedures. DTCs shall possess a current and valid Mississippi educator's license that may include an administrative endorsement. The DTC shall be appointed by the Superintendent.

The School Test Coordinator (STC) serves as the point of contact for the district test coordinator and a specific school within their district. The STC is ultimately responsible for the training of personnel to ensure those involved in the administration of State Assessments are trained in all aspects of testing and test security procedures. School test coordinators shall possess a current and valid Mississippi educator's license.

The District Test Security Plan is a comprehensive collection of procedures and actions that serve as a guide to ensure test security and test integrity are protected at all levels within the district. The District Superintendent and the DTC are ultimately responsible for completing the plan, reviewing, updating, and verifying all information is correct each year.

The School Test Security Plan is a comprehensive collection of procedures and actions that serve as a guide to ensure test security and test integrity are protected at the school site administering State Assessments. Each individual school test security plan shall be made to fit each school, completed by the STC and Principal and attached as a part of the district's test security plan.

Secure test materials include, ~~certain test administrator manuals, test booklets, answer documents, and other materials as specified by the Office of Student Assessment~~ but are not limited to, student testing login tickets, all paper that contains access codes, scratch paper, reference charts, and writing rubrics.

A possible testing irregularity is any alleged incident(s) ~~in the test handling or administration that leads to a question regarding the security of the test or the accuracy of the test data~~ before, during or after the test administration that deviates from the statewide assessment requirements as established under SBE authority, representing a potential violation to test security and questions the validity of the assessment data.

A verified testing irregularity is a confirmed violation of ~~a testing requirement~~ one or more of the statewide assessment requirements as established by the SBE.

A prohibited electronic device is a device that maintains one or more of the following functionalities: cellular/internet connectivity, Bluetooth connectivity, unallowable calculator functions, and image or audio capture capabilities.



### III. REPORTING AND USE OF TEST DATA

The school district will release test score information to parents, legal representatives, teachers, students, ~~other~~ educators, the media, and the public in a timely manner and provide interpretive material as necessary. The school district will use test scores appropriately in making decisions regarding students. ~~A decision or characterization that will have a major impact on an individual student is not made on the basis of a single test score. Additional retesting opportunities will be made available for any “high stakes” test.~~ Additional retesting opportunities may be available for assessments that apply to the Literacy-Based Promotion Act and Graduation Requirements. Refer to appendix A-5 found in the current edition of *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards* for more information.

### IV. REQUIREMENTS

The following is not an exhaustive list of requirements.

#### Responsibilities of the District Test Coordinator (DTC)

1. The DTC shall be appointed by the District’s Superintendent. The DTC shall hold a current and valid Mississippi educator’s license that may include an administrative endorsement and possess knowledge and experience regarding assessment procedures. The Superintendent shall notify the Office of Student Assessment in writing (email is permissible) of DTC personnel changes.
2. The ~~District Test Coordinator or a designated representative of the school district~~ DTC shall attend ~~applicable~~ all State Assessment training sessions sponsored by the Office of Student Assessment.
3. ~~A District Test Security Plan is prepared each new school year no later than September 30~~ The DTC shall submit to the OSA the District and School Test Security Plan each year no later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday in January for the full calendar year. This is required, so a plan will be in place for the next school year’s fall testing.
  - a. The District ~~and School~~ Test Security Plan shall contain all components as required by the Office of Student Assessment.
  - b. The district Superintendent and DTC are responsible for creating and completing the District Test Security plan, reviewing, updating, and verifying all information is correct each calendar year. Once approved by the district school board, the ~~District~~ plan is signed by the district Superintendent, the DTC, and the chairman of the school board.
  - c. The School’s Principal and ~~STC~~ are responsible for creating and completing the School Test Security plan, reviewing, updating, and verifying all information is correct each calendar year. Once approved by the DTC, the School Test Security Plan, which is a part of the District Test Security Plan, is signed by the school Principal, ~~school test coordinator~~ STC, and the ~~district test coordinator~~ DTC.
  - d. The District Test Security Plan shall identify ~~ies~~ all individuals who have access to the secure materials storage area at the district and school sites.

#### Test Materials

4. Testing tickets shall be printed from the appropriate vendor platform in advance of the scheduled assessment. Reproduction and/ or the dissemination of test ticket information via an alternate method is prohibited. (i.e., Handwritten, reading ticket information aloud)
5. Except during actual test administration, secure test materials shall be kept ~~under lock and key, and~~ in a locked storage room/area designated for this purpose. ~~a~~ Access to secure test materials ~~is~~ shall be limited to only those individuals identified in the test security plan(s) as responsible for their security. ~~While~~ secure test materials are in the District, anyone listed as having access to the secure storage area must be accompanied by a second person when entering the secure storage area. ~~To ensure that security is~~

~~maintained from year to year, it is the responsibility of the District each year to review the list of individuals who have access to the secure storage area and to ensure that only those individuals listed have access to the secure area by way of keys or vault combination.~~

- a. ~~Secure test materials are kept in locked storage before testing at both the district and school levels. All printed secure testing materials are inventoried and accounted for at the district and/or school level. Printed secure materials are inventoried and logged on a district-developed tracking sheet documenting the material's chain-of-custody during the entire testing window. This tracking documentation shall be available for review by an OSA auditor.~~
- b. ~~Access to secure test materials is limited to those individuals identified in the test security plan. Test administrators and proctors will have access as described in the district test security plan. Access to test materials means handling the materials, not reviewing, and analyzing test items, unless reading accommodations are required. The superintendent or a specified designee shall designate the personnel who are authorized to have access to test materials. Deliverable secure testing materials are required to be inventoried by the DTC upon receipt from the vendor. The materials delivered shall match the vendor's ledger prior to distribution to the school site(s). After delivery to the school(s), the STC shall sign for, inventory, and maintain a log detailing the chain of custody of deliverable materials during the entire testing window. This tracking documentation shall be available for review by an OSA auditor.~~
- c. ~~Test materials are not to be removed from security packaging prior to the time indicated on instructions from the Office of Student Assessment. While secure test materials are in the district or in a school, anyone listed as having access to the secure area shall be accompanied by a second test security trained person when entering the secure storage area.~~
- d. ~~Secure test materials are kept in locked storage after testing at both the district and school levels unless otherwise directed by the Office of Student Assessment. Test Administrators and Proctors shall have access and handle secure test materials as described in the district and school test security plans and or as described in the vendor's test administration manual or test coordinator manual.~~
- e. Reproducing ~~(by any means)~~ or disclosing secure test material (including pilot material) and student responses before, during, or after test administration is prohibited. Reproduction or disclosure of secure test materials includes but is not limited to the following: reviewing, reading, or looking at secure test material in a manner that is inconsistent with test security regulations and/or procedures outlined in the Test Administrators Manual. Use of unreleased test items in any form (including rewording of such test items) is strictly prohibited.
- f. All secure materials shall be ~~are~~ returned according to the schedule published by the ~~Office of Student Assessment~~ test vendors and OSA. ~~In the event that~~ If a secure testing document has been contaminated by ~~bodily fluids or other~~ health-related hazards or severely damaged, the ~~STC/DTC district test coordinator~~ shall follow destruction procedures provided by the MDE. ~~for disposal as outlined during District Test Coordinator training and include these.~~ This procedure shall be included in the District Test Security Plan.

- ~~All secure test materials are accounted for before, during, and after testing as specified in the. Test administrators and proctors will have access as described in the district test security plan. Access to test materials means handling the materials, not reviewing and analyzing test items, unless reading accommodations are required. The superintendent or a specified designee shall designate the personnel who are authorized to have access to test materials.~~

~~All secure test materials are accounted for before testing at the district level.~~

~~All secure test materials are accounted for before testing at the school level.~~

~~Test administrators account for all secure test materials before students are allowed to leave the testing room.~~

~~All secure test materials are accounted for after testing at the school level.~~

~~All secure test materials are accounted for after testing at the district level.~~

- ~~g. If supplementary materials, such as scratch paper, maps, and manipulatives are provided, procedures for disposal are outlined in the District Test Security Plan and followed.~~

#### Training and Testing Personnel

6. The OSA and the respective vendors are responsible for the initial training of the DTCs in advance of the test administration windows. The DTCs shall be responsible for training all district personnel and STCs who will be involved in state assessments.
7. Any person involved in any phase of the Mississippi Statewide Assessment System shall meet the outlined criteria and be trained by their district in appropriate assessment administration and test security procedures.
  - a. The district shall maintain complete records of all professional development on assessment training related to each assessment program. (i.e., ELPT, MAAP, MAAP-A, KRA)
  - b. All personnel involved in the administration of an assessment shall have a signed confidentiality and electronic device agreements on file prior to testing. These documents shall be kept at the district/school for five (5) years.
  - c. Test Administrators shall be licensed school personnel, hold a valid Mississippi Educator License, and be employed by the district.
  - d. Proctors are not required to be licensed school personnel unless they are fulfilling the role of Second Scorer for a MAAP-A administration or administering a state assessment to a homebound or an incarcerated student. These instances require the Proctor/Second Scorer to be a licensed teacher.
8. The district and/or school shall conduct professional development training on proper test administration utilizing accommodations and accessibility features on statewide assessments.

~~Any person involved in any phase of the testing program has been trained in appropriate assessment administration and test security procedures.~~

- ~~a. Test administrators shall be licensed school personnel.~~
  - ~~b. Due to the need for the one-on-one administration of the English language proficiency test for English Language Learners, which includes component subtests such as reading, writing, speaking, listening, the test administrator may be a non-licensed employee as long as the proctor for the administration is a licensed staff member.~~
  - ~~c. For only the English language proficiency test for English Language Learners, if a licensed employee is the test administrator, the District is not obligated to provide a second person as proctor.~~
  - ~~d. The District conducts professional development training on proper assessment administration procedures and test security for all individuals involved in the handling and administration of each test.~~
  - ~~e. The District maintains complete records of all professional development related to assessment.~~
  - ~~f. —The District has documentation that training related to assessment included information on test security violations and the consequences of violations.~~
9. The District shall maintain for five (5) years, and provide upon request, documentation demonstrating training related to each assessment program was administered. Additionally, training shall include information on test security procedures, violations of test security, and the consequences for those violations.

10. Coaching students, altering responses, or interfering with responses in any way during or after the scheduled test administration is prohibited. Coaching students is defined as providing answers by staff or other students to students in any manner during the test, including cues, clues, hints, and/or actual answers in any form-written, printed, verbal or non-verbal (including, but not limited to, charts, bulletin boards, posters, computers, hand ~~signals gestures~~), or allowing students to alter responses after the scheduled test administration.
11. Anyone with knowledge of, or information regarding, a possible testing irregularity or alleged security violations shall report the alleged irregularity/violation to an appropriate authority. {See Miss. Code Ann. § 37-16-4(1)(f)}

~~Both a test administrator and a proctor are present and actively monitoring students during the entire test administration.~~

~~a. At least two (2) people are present from the time that testing materials are distributed to the test administrator until all test materials have been returned to the secure area.~~

~~b. A seating chart is required for each room/site used for any statewide assessment; the seating chart must be signed and dated by the test administrator, proctor, and school test coordinator.~~

~~Students are not allowed access to test questions prior to testing and are not allowed access to answers at any time.~~

#### Policies for Mississippi Assessments

12. The Mississippi Statewide Assessment System ensures the inclusion of all students in the assessment programs {Miss. Code Ann. § 37-16-3(2)}; Literacy-Based Promotion Act, {Miss. Code Ann. §37-177-11}; e-CFR 200.5 (a)(1)(2)(3); Mississippi English Learner Guidelines: Regulations, Funding Guidance, and Instructional Supports, 2018R.

~~All eligible students are tested. (See also *Testing Students with Disabilities Regulations and Guidelines for English Language Learners: Policies, Procedures, and Assessments.*) (7 Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 3, Ch. 78, R. 78.1) {Miss. Code Ann. § 37-16-3(2)}~~

a. Accurate student attendance data during testing windows shall be maintained by the district/school. For example, if a student is taking the English II assessment and misses their World History class, the student should not be counted absent.

b. If a student is assigned to take a test and is absent, the student shall be counted absent. Districts/schools shall make sure attendance is maintained during testing windows as to who is present and who is not present.

~~Accurate exclusions, absences, and other required data are compiled for each test for each school.~~

~~Exclusions and absences data for each test for each school are maintained on file in the District.~~

c. Students who drop a course for which an end-of-course Subject Area Test is required after the dates noted below shall still take the appropriate end-of-course Subject Area Test.

#### Traditional Schedule

- Students enrolled in a course at the end of January (5<sup>th</sup> month) shall be tested.

#### Fall Block

- Students enrolled in a course at the end of October (2<sup>nd</sup> month) shall be tested.

#### Spring Block

- Students enrolled in a course at the end of March (7<sup>th</sup> month) shall be tested.

d. Students enrolled in and taking courses for the first time for which end-of-course Subject Area Tests is required shall take the appropriate Subject Area Tests. These students shall take the appropriate

end-of-course Subject Area Test, as listed the *Approved Courses for the Secondary Schools of Mississippi* includes the words Accelerated, Enrichment, or Advanced Placement.

- e. Each student enrolled in and re-taking courses for which end-of-course Subject Area Tests are required to take the appropriate Subject Area Test only if the student has not previously met the graduation requirement for the Subject Area Test.
- f. Each student shall take the appropriate end-of-course Subject Area Test at the end of the course regardless of the grade level in which the course is offered.
- g. Students enrolled in a Mississippi public school will be required to pass end-of-course Subject Area Test in a course for which the school accepts Carnegie units earned by the student through enrollment in summer school, virtual school, or any other non-standard school as defined by the Office of Accreditation. *See State Board Policy Chapter 36, Rules 36.2, 36.4, and 36.5.*

#### Accommodations and Accessibility Features

- 13. All guidelines listed in the current edition of the *Mississippi Testing Accommodations Manual* shall be followed. Appropriate accommodations and/or accessibility features shall be provided for each individual student (except those noted as non-allowable for specific assessments) per the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Section 504 Plan, and/or Language Service Plan (LSP).

~~Only appropriate allowable testing accommodations are provided for students as specified in the current edition of *Testing Students with Disabilities Regulations* and the current edition of *Guidelines for English Language Learners: Policies, Procedures, and Assessments*. (7 Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 3, Ch. 78, R. 78.1, R. 78.10) The use of any accommodation not listed in these documents or in the current edition of the *Testing Accommodations Manual* published by the Office of Student Assessment must first be approved by the Office of Student Assessment.~~

- 14. The medical monitoring policy shall be followed for any student or staff member that utilizes an electronic device in the testing environment due to monitoring a medically diagnosed condition. The school shall have the appropriate documentation on file, to include both a signed confidentiality and an electronic device form.

#### Test Administration

- 15. A specific schedule for each school administering a Statewide assessment within the district shall be submitted to the Office of Student Assessment 30 calendar days prior to the start of any test window. A school shall test in accordance with the schedule provided, unless administering a make-up session or the change is a result from inclement weather conditions or technology issues that prevented the assessment administration occurring on the day originally scheduled.
  - a. A school's testing schedule is developed by the DTC/STC in coordination with the school's Principal.
  - b. It is the responsibility of the Principal to notify students and parents/ guardians of their school's testing schedule.
  - c. A testing schedule shall be provided to the OSA for each 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading retest opportunity.
  - d. Screeners/placement tests do not require a testing schedule. Schools must test within the time specified by the program.
- 16. Make-up testing shall be provided during the State administration window for the respective assessment for students who are absent during the district/school scheduled test administration, including all 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading test sessions. ~~Makeup testing is provided for students who are absent during the regularly scheduled test administration.~~
- 17. Both a trained Test Administrator (TA) and a Proctor shall actively monitor students by frequently moving unobtrusively about the room.

- a. At least two (2) trained people shall be present from the time testing materials are distributed to the Test Administrator until all test materials have been returned to the STC to return to the secure material storage area.
- b. Tests shall be administered according to the standard procedures defined in the Test Administrator's Manual/Test Coordinator Manual, and or other assessment related documentation. ~~Tests are administered according to the standard procedures defined in the test administrator's manual and related documents and according to the schedule published by the Office of Student Assessment.~~
- c. Test Administrators and Proctors shall maintain a written record/log of any testing irregularities which may occur within the testing room during statewide assessments. ~~Test administrators and proctors keep written records of any testing irregularities occurring during testing and report these to the school test coordinator who then reports to the District Test Coordinator. The District Test Coordinator reports all irregularities for a test administration to the district superintendent for investigation. Documentation regarding testing irregularities is maintained on file in the district.~~
- d. A seating chart is required for each room/site used for any statewide assessment, including retest and make-up test sessions. Seating charts shall be legible, and reflective of the room's seating layout. Each chart shall maintain the following information: subject area tested, any accommodations provided (if applicable to the test session administered), the date of test administration, name of Proctor, name and Mississippi teachers license number of the TA. Each seating chart shall be signed by the STC and TA verifying the accuracy of the chart.
- e. Tests are to be administered in an environment that provides an adequate test setting for students. Such an environment should provide adequate lighting, comfortable room temperature, reduced noise level, and adequate spacing to ensure that ~~students cannot see answers being bubbled (or answers being selected during computer based online testing) by other students.~~ a secure and fair testing environment is in place for all students. Students should be seated in a manner to minimize opportunities to view the work of others. If adequate spacing cannot be achieved, then cardboard dividers shall be utilized.

#### Electronic Devices

- 18. The MDE prohibits the possession and/or use of any prohibited electronic communication device during the administration of statewide assessments. A prohibited electronic device is any device that gives a student a possible unfair advantage due to the capabilities it possesses. ~~The school prohibits the possession and/or use of any electronic communication device, including, but not limited to, iPods, MP3 players, Bluetooth devices, cell phones, and/or other personal digital assistance devices during the administration of scheduled statewide tests.~~
- 19. A school's Principal is responsible for the development of procedures and implementation of the policy prohibiting the possession of an electronic devices for students and staff within testing areas at their school site.
  - a. The Principal ensures the policy on the prohibition of electronic devices and the consequences for violations to this policy have been properly disseminated to staff, students, and parents/ guardians. Students and staff shall have a signed electronic device agreement on file.
  - b. The District Test Coordinator, designated technology support staff, and any other testing personnel, as outlined by OSA during DTC training, may have an electronic device in the testing environment to address emergency and/or technological related issues.

#### Test Security Violations and Forensic Data

- 20. The District Superintendent shall investigate all district reports of alleged violations of test security and/or possible educator misconduct. The findings of all investigations shall be submitted to the OSA. ~~The~~

~~superintendent of the District investigates all reports of alleged violations of test security and/or potential testing irregularities and submits a report of findings to the Office of Student Assessment within fifteen (15) working days after the alleged violation and/or potential irregularity has been reported to him or her.~~

21. The Superintendent will be notified by MDE for investigation when data forensic analysis indicates:

- statistically significant similar or identical patterns of responses;
  - anomalous erasures are noted in students' responses; and/or
  - statistically significant group or individual scores are inconsistent with established patterns of achievement are noted.
- ~~• No statistically significant similar or identical patterns of responses and/or erasures are noted in students' answer documents.~~
- ~~• No statistically significant group or individual scores that are inconsistent with established patterns of achievement are noted.~~

## V. INVESTIGATION

The Office of Student Assessment follows a systematic procedure to ensure that all evidence indicating possible testing irregularities is investigated. Corrective action will be taken when warranted.

### A. PROCEDURE FOR INVESTIGATION

Identifying and investigating possible testing irregularities involves a variety of data sources. These include formal testing audits, self-reports of testing irregularities, allegations/complaints related to possible testing irregularities, and results of analyses and reports designed to identify possible irregularities, including the percent of students tested, changes in enrollment, score exceptionalities, erasure report results, and missing documents reports during the entire testing window in the district, school, and/or classroom/room where the test was administered.

The procedure for handling testing irregularities is repeated for each test administration. The Office of Student Assessment will notify the school district in writing when a possible testing irregularity has been identified. Within fifteen (15) working days following a reported potential irregularity/violation and/or receipt of the written notification from the Office of Student Assessment, the district will submit a written report to the Office of Student Assessment. The Office of Student Assessment reserves the right to conduct an independent investigation.

The Office of Student Assessment will evaluate the district report to determine whether the possible testing irregularity has been resolved or the testing irregularity has been verified. If the possible testing irregularity has been resolved, the Office of Student Assessment will notify the district that no further action is required. If a testing irregularity has been verified, the Office of Student Assessment will notify the district superintendent.

In the case of any verified testing irregularity that jeopardized or may have jeopardized the security and integrity of the test(s) or the accuracy of the test results, the Office of Student Assessment will report the irregularity to the Office of Accreditation for appropriate action and follow-up. (See *CONSEQUENCES*.) In the case of improper student behavior supported by a data forensics company and not disproved in the district report, the Office of Student Assessment will respond to the district superintendent with a request on behalf of the State Superintendent of Education that the district superintendent ask for the invalidation of the suspect test scores and prepare for the students with the suspect test scores to participate in the next test administration. If the district refuses to invalidate the suspect scores, the State Superintendent will have the authority to invalidate the scores.



In case of an allegation of an irregularity that prompts a need for an investigation by the Mississippi Department of Education and the investigation provides substantial evidence that an irregularity has occurred, the State Superintendent will have the authority to invalidate suspect scores. The district superintendent will be notified of the invalidated suspect scores and of the need to prepare students with the suspect scores to participate in the next test administration.

## **B. PROCEDURES FOR PERSONNEL MISCONDUCT INVESTIGATION**

If an irregularity that represents misconduct or other breaches of test security on the part of district personnel within a school district is identified, the superintendent of the district will be notified of the irregularity. It is the responsibility of the district to investigate the allegation and report its findings to the Office of Student Assessment. If the Office of Student Assessment concludes that the irregularity was resolved, the district is notified that no further action is necessary.

If the Office of Student Assessment concludes that the irregularity was verified, the district superintendent is notified that the Office of Accreditation is being apprised of the finding.

In case of an allegation of an irregularity or in the case of statistical analyses that prompt a need for an investigation by the Mississippi Department of Education and the investigation provides substantial evidence that an irregularity has occurred, the State Superintendent will have the authority to invalidate suspect test scores. The district superintendent will be notified of the invalidated suspect scores and of the need to prepare students with the suspect scores to participate in the next test administration. The district superintendent will be notified that the Office of Accreditation is being apprised of the findings.

The district attorney may investigate allegations of violations of test security on his own initiative following receipt of allegations, at the request of a school district, or at the request of the Mississippi Department of Education.

After a conviction, the personnel in question will be notified in writing that the evidence of conviction will be presented to the Commission on Educator Licensure and that the Commission is required to take action pursuant to the authority granted in Section 37-16-4, *Code of 1972*, as amended. In the case of improper student behavior supported by the data forensics company and not disproved in the district report, the district superintendent will be asked to request the invalidation of the suspect test scores and prepare for the students with the suspect test scores to participate in the next test administration.

## **VI. CONSEQUENCES**

### **A. LETTER OF WARNING**

If a violation has been verified that did not result in a substantial probability that the security, accuracy, or validity of the test results has been jeopardized, then the Office of Student Assessment may issue a letter of warning to the school district superintendent to be placed in the district and/or school file.

Multiple and/or repeated minor violations that indicate the district and/or school has not corrected issues addressed in previous letters of warning or that the district and/or school has continued to be in noncompliance with the numbered issues listed in Requirements (Section IV) may result in a recommendation for a citation to be placed on the accreditation record. (See Section B below.) In the case of improper student behavior supported by the data forensics company and not disproved in the district reports, the district will be asked to request the invalidation of the suspect scores. If the improper student behavior is determined to be isolated to an individual student's or to individual students' behavior and not supported or condoned by the district, the district will not receive a letter of warning. The district will be asked in an official letter by the Office of Student Assessment to put measures in place to address and prevent the possibility of such improper behavior being repeated. However, multiple administrations resulting in suspect scores may result in further investigation by

the Office of Student Assessment that may lead to further consequences. (See CONSEQUENCES.)

**B. CITATION PLACED ON THE ACCREDITATION RECORD WITH NO IMMEDIATE ACTION TO DOWNGRADE THE ACCREDITATION STATUS**

**1. Multiple Letters of Warning**

Multiple and/or repeated violations as outlined in Section A above may result in a recommendation for a citation to be placed on the district's Accreditation Record Summary. The Office of Accreditation will note the citation of noncompliance on the district's accreditation record and notify the superintendent of this action. No immediate action to downgrade the district accreditation status will be recommended. This citation will remain on record until the district has **successfully** completed the next scheduled administration of the same test for which the irregularity was originally verified.

The Office of Student Assessment may recommend to the Commission on School Accreditation that the school's annual performance classification include the label School in Violation of Test Security.

**2. Substantial Probability That the Security, Accuracy, or Validity of the Test Results Has Been Jeopardized**

If a verified violation has resulted in a substantial probability that the security, accuracy, or validity of the test results has been jeopardized, the Office of Student Assessment will issue written notification to the district superintendent. The Office of Student Assessment will note the violation on the school and/or district Assessment Record and notify the Office of Accreditation.

The Office of Accreditation will note the citation of noncompliance on the district's accreditation record and notify the superintendent of this action. No immediate action to downgrade the district accreditation status will be recommended. This citation will remain on record until the district has **successfully** completed the next scheduled administration of the **same test** for which the irregularity was originally verified. For example, if the citation is issued for the December online and or paper/pencil Subject Area Administration of the U.S. History Test, the next scheduled administration for the same test will be the December online or paper/pencil Subject Area administration the following year.

The Office of Student Assessment may submit a recommendation to the Commission on School Accreditation that the school's annual performance classification include the label School in Violation of Test Security.

**C. CITATION PLACED ON THE ACCREDITATION RECORD THAT MAY RESULT IN IMMEDIATE ACTION TO DOWNGRADE OF ACCREDITATION STATUS**

If it is determined that a violation of a testing requirement jeopardizes the security and integrity of the test(s) or the accuracy of test results, the Office of Student Assessment will issue written notification of the violation to the superintendent of the school district and to the Office of Accreditation.

The Office of Accreditation will note the citation of noncompliance on the district's Accreditation Record Summary and notify the superintendent of this action. The citation of noncompliance will be presented to the Commission on School Accreditation for appropriate action. This citation will remain on record until the district has **successfully** completed the next scheduled administration of the **same test** for which the irregularity was originally verified. For example, if the citation is issued for the December online and or paper/pencil Subject Area Administration of the U.S. History Test, the next scheduled administration for the same test will be the December online and or paper/pencil Subject Area administration the following year.

The Office of Student Assessment may recommend to the Commission on School Accreditation that the school's annual performance classification include the label of School in Violation of Test Security.

## **D. INVALIDATION OF SCORES**

### **1. Student Retest and Score Invalidation Procedure**

In the case of findings that reveal misconduct at the district or school level, the State Superintendent of Education may order the local school district to have students retake the examination(s) at the district's expense for all areas in question. Should the local district choose not to have students re-examined to establish validity, the State Superintendent of Education will have the authority to have affected scores invalidated. At such time, the local district will be notified.

A school will not receive a school performance classification if the test data have been invalidated, and the school performance classification will be noted as Test Data Invalidated. (See Accreditation Policy 3.3.) In the case that the Office of Student Assessment has requested the district superintendent ask for the invalidation of a student's (or students') suspect scores based upon the analyses by the data forensics company and the district superintendent refuses to do so, the State Superintendent will have the authority to have suspect score(s) invalidated. At such time, the local district will be notified.

### **2. Individual Irregularity Procedure**

If there is evidence that confirms one (1) or more individual testing irregularities on the Subject Area Tests or other tests that have high stakes consequences for individual student(s) resulting in the student or students not being able to graduate in the current school year, the individual(s) in question shall be notified in writing of the irregularity by the district superintendent and given an opportunity to provide an explanation and evidence that the questioned score(s) is/are consistent with other test scores or other academic performance. If retesting of individuals on the test is required and the retesting yields scores that would deny students a diploma or affect promotion/retention decisions after all retesting opportunities have been exhausted, affected individuals will be given an opportunity to appeal to the State Board of Education the decision to invalidate their original scores on the test. No hearing will be granted to any student who has not completed all other requirements for graduation or promotion and exhausted all retake opportunities.

**Procedure for Handling Possible Testing Irregularities** (The procedure for handling testing irregularities is repeated for each test administration.)

