

# THE PROCTOR'S GUIDE



2019–20



**PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
**Division of Accountability Services | North Carolina Testing Program**  
Department of Public Instruction | State Board of Education

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Stock No. 21189

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Thank you for volunteering your time to serve as a proctor. Proctors serve an important role as additional monitors who help ensure test scores are the result of a fair and uniform testing session.

### **WHO CAN SERVE AS A PROCTOR?**

Proctors can be any responsible adult community member (i.e., age 18 or older and not enrolled as a student in the K–12 public school system), school staff, or school system staff.

Proctors should not be assigned to proctor in a room where his or her relative or ward is to be tested. Relatives and wards include children, stepchildren, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, siblings, in-laws, and persons under the proctor's guardianship. Additionally, a proctor should not be assigned to proctor with a test administrator who is a personal family member or a close acquaintance.

### **WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A PROCTOR?**

Proctors should attend a training session before the test session. Proctors should read and be familiar with the North Carolina *Testing Code of Ethics* before being assigned to a test administration. Special attention should be given to understanding the sanctions in the *Testing Code of Ethics*. Proctors assist the test administrator with the responsibilities outlined below.

#### **1. Maintaining Test Security (at all times)**

Except for students being tested, test books and/or online test items are not to be read or reviewed by anyone, at any time. An exception to this rule would be when students with documented special needs require an accommodation, such as *Test Read Aloud (in English)*, or when there is express permission from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI).

School personnel and proctors must neither disclose the contents of secure tests nor discuss with each other or with students any specific test items or information contained within the tests or write about them on the Internet or social media sites.

Proctors are not allowed to distribute/collect materials, read directions, provide assistance to students (by any manner) in choosing responses, or code/review information on student answer sheets and/or header sheets.

#### **2. Ensuring Physical Conditions in Testing Rooms Are Appropriate**

Personal cell phones/electronic devices must not be used during the test administration, including breaks. Before testing begins, proctors must turn off their personal cell phones/electronic devices and ensure these devices are not

visible during testing, including breaks.

Proctors should work with the test administrator to ensure distractions and interruptions during the test administration are minimized and order is maintained. All rooms designated for testing must be quiet, orderly, and comfortable with adequate seating, lighting, heating, and cooling. Any displays related to the content being measured or test-taking strategies must be covered or removed.

Each student should have enough space in which to work. Seating should be arranged to discourage students from sharing responses. Students are not permitted to access personal belongings during testing, including breaks.

Students are not allowed to use or have in their possession cell phones or any other electronic devices at any time during testing, including breaks. If any student is found or observed with a cell phone/electronic device during testing time, the school test coordinator must be contacted and the student dismissed from testing. If the test administrator or proctor believes a cell phone/ electronic device was used during the test administration to store or exchange information or to make an image of the test, the device must be collected from the student and the school test coordinator contacted immediately.

### **3. Ensuring Materials Are Distributed Appropriately**

Test administrators should place test materials on students' desks as directed by the script in the *Assessment Guide* (except for approved supplemental materials such as highlighters or color acetate overlays).

- Students are not to have any electronic devices (unless testing on an authorized device for an online assessment) or resources that may provide assistance/unfair advantage during the test administration.

Exceptions:

- Students may place color acetate overlays over the test book during the paper/pencil administration of state tests. This does not give an unfair advantage to students; it simply helps some students see the print more clearly.
- Students may use highlighters in the test books, but they must not use highlighters on answer sheets.
- Students requiring the *Student Marks Answers in Test Book* accommodation do not use an answer sheet during testing. Therefore, in order to provide them with equitable access to the demands of the constructed response or mathematics gridded response items, these students may receive a copy of the NCDPI-issued/approved samples of the constructed response space or mathematics grid during testing.
- Students who complete the test before the scheduled time is over must be provided the opportunity to read novels or other nontextbooks

(e.g., magazines) while other students continue to work during the scheduled time. All testing materials should be collected from a student before he/she is allowed to read.

#### **4. Ensuring Appropriate Test Administration Procedures Are Followed**

While the test administrator is reading directions to students, proctors may assist the students in finding the correct place on the answer sheet, in the test book, or on the computer screen (for online administrations).

During the test, proctors should walk frequently and quietly throughout the room and help the test administrator monitor the test administration. For paper/pencil administrations, proctors can check to ensure each student is working in the appropriate section of the test and is recording his or her responses in the appropriate section of the answer sheet. Test administrators will assist students in the event misalignment occurs during the paper/pencil administration, if necessary.

For online administrations, proctors should notify the test administrator if a student has a computer problem such as a network malfunction or an item that fails to load properly. (Only test administrators are to assist students with these computer problems and may answer any student's procedural questions [e.g., those concerning the Web browser, app, toolbar, navigation buttons, review screen], but they cannot provide any specific assistance with answering test questions.) Proctors should avoid distracting behaviors during the test session.

#### **5. Assisting Students with Emergencies/Restroom Breaks**

If a student must leave the room during the test administration because of an emergency, proctors should assist the test administrator as appropriate to deal with the situation with as little disturbance to other students as possible. If the test administrator must leave the room, the school test coordinator must be notified. A trained test administrator must be in the room at all times during the test administration.

#### **6. Monitoring Students During the Test Session**

A primary responsibility of a proctor is to monitor the test administration. This entails walking frequently and quietly throughout the room.

#### **7. Ensuring Accommodations Are Provided Appropriately**

Before the test administration, proctors monitoring a test administration in which students with disabilities and/or students identified as English Learners (ELs) receive accommodations should review with the test administrator any information needed regarding the students' accommodations. Information that should be discussed includes the following:

- the type of accommodation(s) the student(s) will receive

- how the test administration may differ from what is considered a normal administration
- the special procedures necessary to provide the accommodation(s)

### **8. Reporting All Testing Irregularities**

A testing irregularity or alleged testing violation must be reported to the school test coordinator and/or principal on the day of the occurrence. It is critical that the report is made immediately.

### **9. Maintaining Student Confidentiality**

Any information about individual students that a proctor may become aware of as a result of serving in this capacity is considered confidential information. Proctors must not disclose any personally identifiable information (PII) about students to anyone beyond what is required while attending to their proctoring responsibilities. Students are protected by Federal privacy laws.

# Testing Code of Ethics

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## Introduction

In North Carolina, standardized testing is an integral part of the educational experience of all students. When properly administered and interpreted, test results provide an independent, uniform source of reliable and valid information, which enables:

- *students* to know the extent to which they have mastered expected knowledge and skills and how they compare to others;
- *parents* to know if their children are acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in a highly competitive job market;
- *teachers* to know if their students have mastered grade-/course-level knowledge and skills in the curriculum and, if not, what weaknesses need to be addressed;
- *community leaders and lawmakers* to know if students in North Carolina schools are improving their performance over time and how the students compare with students from other states or the nation; and
- *citizens* to assess the performance of the public schools.

Testing should be conducted in a fair and ethical manner, which includes:

### *Security*

- assuring adequate security of the testing materials before, during, and after testing and during scoring
- assuring student confidentiality

### *Preparation*

- teaching the tested curriculum and test-preparation skills
- training staff in appropriate testing practices and procedures
- providing an appropriate atmosphere

### *Administration*

- developing a local policy for the implementation of fair and ethical testing practices and for resolving questions concerning those practices
- assuring all students who should be tested are tested
- utilizing tests which are developmentally appropriate
- utilizing tests only for the purposes for which they were designed

### *Scoring, Analysis, and Reporting*

- interpreting test results to the appropriate audience
- providing adequate data analyses to guide curriculum implementation and improvement

Standardized test scores are only one of the many indicators of how well the student is achieving. Such information should be used in conjunction with all other available information known about a student to assist in improving student learning. The administration of tests required by applicable statutes and the use of student data for personnel/program decisions shall comply with the *Testing Code of Ethics* (State Board of Education policy TEST-010), which is printed on the following pages.

## Testing Code of Ethics

- (a) This Rule sets out the administrative testing procedures and testing code of ethics and shall apply to all public school employees, including charter school and regional school employees, who are involved in the state testing program.
- (b) The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall develop local policies and procedures to ensure maximum test security in coordination with the policies and procedures developed by the test publisher.
- (c) The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall instruct personnel who are responsible for the testing program in testing administration procedures. This instruction shall include test administrations that require testing accommodations and shall emphasize the need to follow the directions outlined by the test publisher.
- (d) The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall designate the personnel who are authorized to have access to secure test materials. "Access" to test materials by school personnel means handling the materials but does not include reviewing tests or analyzing test items.
  - (1) Persons who have access to secure test materials shall not use those materials for personal gain.
  - (2) No person may copy, reproduce, or paraphrase in any manner or for any reason the test materials without the express written consent of the test publisher.
- (e) The principal shall ensure test security within the school building.
  - (1) The principal shall store test materials in a secure, locked facility. The principal shall allow test materials to be distributed immediately before the test administration.
- (f) Any breach of security, loss of materials, failure to account for materials, or any other deviation from required security procedures shall be reported immediately to the principal, school test coordinator, school system (LEA) test coordinator, superintendent/charter school director, and regional accountability coordinator.
- (g) Preparation for testing.
  - (1) The superintendent/charter school director shall ensure that school system (LEA) test coordinators:
    - (A) secure necessary materials;
    - (B) plan and implement training for school test coordinators, test administrators, and proctors;
    - (C) ensure each school test coordinator and test administrator is trained before each test administration on the policies and procedures for conducting a proper test administration and for processing and returning test materials; and
    - (D) in conjunction with program administrators, ensure the need for test accommodations is documented and that accommodations are limited to the specific need.
  - (2) The principal or the principal's designee shall serve as school test coordinator.
  - (3) The principal shall ensure the school test coordinator:
    - (A) maintains test security and accountability of test materials;
      - (1) Before each test administration, the school test coordinator shall accurately count and distribute test materials.
      - (2) Immediately after each test administration, the school test coordinator shall collect, count, and return all test materials to the secure, locked storage facility.

- (B) establishes any needed school policies and procedures to assure all eligible students are tested fairly;
  - (C) identifies and trains personnel, proctors, and backup personnel for test administrations; and
  - (D) encourages a positive atmosphere for testing.
- (4) Test administrators shall be school personnel who have professional training in education and the state testing program.
  - (5) Teachers shall provide instruction that meets or exceeds the state-adopted curriculum standards to meet the needs of the specific students in the class. Teachers may help students improve test-taking skills by:
    - (A) helping students become familiar with test formats using curricular content;
    - (B) teaching students test-taking strategies and providing practice sessions;
    - (C) helping students learn ways of preparing to take tests; and
    - (D) using resource materials such as test questions from test item banks and linking documents in instruction and test preparation.
- (h) Test administration.
- (1) The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall:
    - (A) assure each school establishes procedures to ensure all test administrators comply with test publisher guidelines;
    - (B) inform the local board of education of any breach of this code of ethics; and
    - (C) inform school system (LEA) test coordinators and principals of their responsibilities.
  - (2) The school test coordinator shall:
    - (A) assure school personnel know the content of state and local testing policies;
    - (B) implement the school system and local testing policies and procedures to assure all eligible students are tested fairly;
    - (C) ensure trained proctors are assigned to test administrations by the principal; and
    - (D) ensure all testing irregularities are reported to the school system (LEA) test coordinator.
  - (3) Test administrators shall:
    - (A) administer tests according to the directions in the assessment guide and any subsequent updates developed by the test publisher;
    - (B) administer tests to all eligible students;
    - (C) report all testing irregularities to the school test coordinator; and
    - (D) provide a positive test-taking environment.
  - (4) Proctors shall serve as additional monitors to help the test administrator assure that testing occurs fairly.
- (i) Scoring. The school system test coordinator shall:
- (1) ensure each test is scored according to the procedures and guidelines defined for the test by the test publisher;
  - (2) maintain quality control during the entire scoring process, which consists of handling and editing documents, scanning answer documents, and producing electronic files and reports. Quality control shall address at a minimum accuracy and scoring consistency.
  - (3) maintain security of tests and data files at all times, including:
    - (A) protecting the confidentiality of students at all times when publicizing test results; and
    - (B) maintaining test security of answer keys and item-specific scoring rubrics.
- (j) Analysis and reporting. Educators shall use test scores appropriately. This means that the educator recognizes that a test score is only one piece of information and must be interpreted together with

other scores and indicators. Test data help educators understand educational patterns and practices. The superintendent shall ensure that school personnel analyze and report test data ethically and within the limitations described in this paragraph.

- (1) Educators shall maintain the confidentiality of individual students. Publicizing test scores or any written material containing personally identifiable information from the student's educational records shall not be disseminated or otherwise made available to the public by any member of the State Board of Education, any employee of the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, any employee of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, any member of a local board of education, any employee of a local board of education, or any other person, except as permitted under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g.
  - (2) Educators shall release test scores to students, parents, legal guardians, teachers, and the media with interpretive materials as needed.
  - (3) Staff development relating to testing must enable school personnel to respond knowledgeably to questions related to testing, including the tests, scores, scoring procedures, and other interpretive materials.
  - (4) Items and associated materials on a secure test shall not be in the public domain. Only items that are within the public domain may be used for item analysis.
  - (5) Data analysis of test scores for decision-making purposes shall be based upon:
    - (A) disaggregation of data based upon student demographics and other collected variables;
    - (B) examination of grading practices in relation to test scores; and
    - (C) examination of growth trends and goal summary reports for state-mandated tests.
- (k) Unethical testing practices include, but are not limited to, the following practices:
- (1) encouraging students to be absent the day of testing;
  - (2) encouraging students not to do their best;
  - (3) using secure test items or modified secure test items for instruction;
  - (4) changing student responses at any time;
  - (5) interpreting, explaining, or paraphrasing the test directions or the test items;
  - (6) reclassifying students solely for the purpose of avoiding state testing;
  - (7) not testing all eligible students;
  - (8) failing to provide required accommodations during testing;
  - (9) modifying scoring programs including answer keys, equating files, and lookup tables;
  - (10) modifying student records solely for the purpose of raising test scores;
  - (11) using a single test score to make individual decisions; and
  - (12) misleading the public concerning the results and interpretations of test data.
- (l) In the event of a violation of this Rule, the State Board of Education may, in accordance with the contested case provisions of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, impose any one or more of the following sanctions:
- (1) withhold any applicable monetary incentive awards;
  - (2) file a civil action against the person or persons responsible for the violation for copyright infringement or for any other available cause of action;
  - (3) seek criminal prosecution of the person or persons responsible for the violation; and
  - (4) in accordance with the provisions of 16 NCAC 6C .0312, suspend or revoke the professional license of the person or persons responsible for the violation.

History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-12(9)c.; 115C-81(b)(4);  
Eff. November 1, 1997;  
Amended Eff. August 1, 2000.









