



Assessment News

April 30, 2015

URGENT: Procedure to Prevent Students from Using Cell Phones During Smarter Balanced, HSA Science, and End-of-Course Test Sessions

Attention Public School Principals, Public Charter School Directors, Smarter Balanced Test Coordinators, Technology Coordinators, and Student Services Coordinators:

Due to an increase in the number of reports of test security violations involving the use of cell phones during Smarter Balanced test sessions, schools are being asked to review their cell phone policy and to use the procedure provided below if students ARE ALLOWED to bring their cell phones into the testing rooms. The use of this procedure is not needed at schools that DO NOT ALLOW students to bring their cell phones into the testing rooms. This procedure also needs to be used at the beginning of each HSA Science and End-of Course test session at schools that allow students to bring their cell phones into the testing rooms.

All test administrators need to read the following statement at the beginning of every Smarter Balanced, HSA Science, and End-of-Course test session conducted during the remainder of the testing window that ends on June 3, 2015:

"Take your cell phone out of your pocket, back pack, or bag and turn it off. Do not leave it on or place it on silent mode. If you have a back pack or bag, place the turned off phone in the back pack or bag and place it in the area I have designated in the testing room that is not near your computer. If you do not have a back pack or bag, bring your phone to my desk and place it in the area I have designated on the desk. Your phone will be returned to you after all students have ended their test session. If you do not follow these test security directions and use your phone during the test session for any reason, the test you are working on will be invalidated and your parents will be informed of your behavior and the consequences that will be determined by the principal."

All schools are being asked to use this procedure to prevent students' from having their tests invalidated when they use their cell phones for any reason during test sessions e.g., checking their social networking feeds, texting friends and family members, using the calculator on their cell phones to answer Mathematics items when an online calculator is not allowed for these items, accessing the Internet on their cell phones to locate answers to test items, taking pictures of test items and posting them on Snapchat, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. This will also prevent schools from being identified for ignoring the test security requirement regarding the use of cell phones which may affect their Strive HI accountability results when students' scores are invalidated, may require them to pay for items that are posted on social networking sites which can be clearly read, and will require them to be closely monitored during the testing windows for all statewide student assessments for one to two years.

Here is a list of the tasks that a school must complete when the test security requirement regarding cell phones is not followed by one or more of the students and/or staff members who serve as test administrators during the test sessions.

1. The test administrator needs to take the student's phone away in the testing room when observing or being told by the proctor or another student that the student used the phone and contact the test coordinator using the agreed upon communication system, i.e., cell phone or land line in the testing room, so the student can be taken to the office immediately.

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2. The student must show the principal or vice principal and test coordinator the picture(s) that is posted on a social networking site and is also saved on the phone.
3. The principal, vice principal, or test coordinator needs to take a screen shot of the picture(s) on the social networking site so it can be forwarded to the Assessment Section to review and then forwarded to the mainland Smarter Balanced team to determine whether the item needs to be deleted from the item bank being used by all of the Smarter Balanced states.
4. The student must be directed to delete the picture(s) from the social networking site and from the phone after the screen shot has been taken.
5. The principal or vice principal will determine the Chapter 19 consequences for the student and inform the student's parents about the testing incident.
6. The test coordinator will submit the Appendix M: Testing Incident Report Form on page 87 in the Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual to the Assessment Section.
7. The test coordinator will also create a test impropriety request in TIDE to have the student's Computer Adaptive Test or Performance Task invalidated by the Assessment Section.
8. The student will not be allowed to retake this test.
9. The test administrator will have his/her TA certification cancelled and will be required to retake the TA certification course in order to administer any additional test sessions during spring 2015.
10. Another certified test administrator must be present in the testing room with this test administrator during every test session for the remainder of the spring 2015 testing window.
11. The principal or vice principal needs to have an emergency staff meeting to review the test security procedures that are included on pages 13-18, 62, and 87 in the Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual and to direct all test administrators that they must read the following statement at the beginning of every test session conducted for the remainder of the current school year:

"Take your cell phone out of your pocket, back pack, or bag and turn it off. Do not leave it on or place it on silent mode. If you have a back pack or bag, place the turned off phone in the back pack or bag and place it in the area I have designated in the testing room that is not near your computer. If you do not have a back pack or bag, bring your phone to my desk and place it in the area I have designated on the desk. Your phone will be returned to you at the end of the test session. If you do not follow these test security directions and use your cell phone during the test session for any reason, the test you are working on will be invalidated and your parents will be informed of your behavior and the consequences that will be determined by the principal."
12. The principal must inform the Complex Area Superintendent if a test item(s) has been posted on a social networking site by a student.
13. If Smarter Balanced decides to remove the test item from the item bank being used by all of the Smarter Balanced Consortium states, the school will be charged for the loss of the test item that will require the development of a replacement item.