



Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Handbook

Table of Contents

- Purpose of PCCSS Local Assessments 3
- Assessment Beliefs 3
- Definitions..... 3
 - Academic Rigor 3
 - Accommodations 4
 - Formative Assessments..... 4
 - Standardized Test..... 4
 - Summative Assessments 4
- Security and Accountability..... 4
- Testing Irregularities 5
- Steps for Reporting a Testing Irregularity of Local Assessments..... 6
- Steps for Reporting a Testing Irregularity of State Assessments..... 7
- Professional Ethics..... 7
- Putnam County Charter School System Program Responsibilities..... 9
 - Superintendent 9
 - Principal 9
- Appendix 10
 - Testing Irregularity Report Form – Statement Report..... 10
 - Test Security Sign-off for System and State Assessments 11
 - Professional Standard Ethics:..... 13

Purpose of PCCSS Local Assessments

The purpose of the local standardized assessments is to measure the level of student achievement of the state-adopted curriculum, to identify students failing to achieve mastery of content, to provide teachers with diagnostic information, and to assist the school system in identifying strengths and areas of improvement in order to establish priorities in planning education programs. In order to fulfill the purpose and maintain integrity of the assessment program, test security must be established. Occurrences that violate test security will risk damage to test integrity and could result in the invalidation of the systems assessment data.

The system assessment program includes all state assessments and locally assigned assessments such as: SRI, STAR Math and Reading, Thinkgate pre, post, benchmark assessments and standards quizzes.

Assessment Beliefs

- Assessment is an on-going, spiraling data driven process that guides instruction
- Assessment quality is more important than quantity
- Assessments insure that students have a clear understanding of what they have learned and why
- Assessment is aligned and integrated with curriculum
- Assessment is essential to achieve student and teacher accountability
- Assessment promotes greater learning and growth through differentiated yet respectful tasks
- Assessments need to have breadth, depth and rigor
- Assessments should include opportunities for student self-reflection
- Assessments are a form of communication

Definitions

Academic Rigor

Rigor refers to academic rigor – learning in which students demonstrate a thorough in-depth mastery of challenging tasks to develop cognitive skills through reflective thinking, analysis, problem-solving, evaluation or creativity. Rigorous learning can occur at any school grade and

in any subject. Doing more and longer assignments does not equal rigor. Rigor is about the quality, not the quantity, of student work.

Accommodations

Accommodations are a change in a test administration that modify how a student takes or responds to the assessment. Accommodations do not change what the assessment is designed to measure, nor do they dilute the meaning of the resulting scores. They do not, reduce learning expectations. All accommodations must be approved through a student's IEP/504/EL.

Formative Assessments

Assessments that provide information to students' and teachers that are used to improve teaching and learning. Formative assessment is not limited to paper/pencil or those used in the calculation of a grade.

Standardized Test

A test designed with specific psychometric properties which is administered and scored following a prescribed procedure so that resulting scores carry the same meaning.

Summative Assessments

Cumulative assessments used to measure student growth after instruction. Examples include performance assessments, extended written response, short answer and selected response items.

Security and Accountability

Any action that compromises test security or leads to the invalidation of an individual student's or a group of students assessment scores will be viewed by the Putnam County Charter School System as inappropriate use or handling of test and will be treated as such. Below are guidelines to assist the system personnel in determining which activities might compromise test security or assessment validity. Please note that this list is not exhaustive. Any concern regarding test security must be reported to the principal immediately. Academic Coaches are available to help system personnel develop and implement appropriate test security procedures.

It is a breach of test security if anyone performs any of the following:

- coaches students during testing or alters or interferes with student's responses in any way;
- gives students access to test questions or prompts prior to testing;
- copies, reproduces or uses in any manner inconsistent with test security regulations all or any portion of assessment questions;
- makes answers available to examinees;
- reads or reviews test questions before, during (unless specified by the IEP or EL accommodations) or after testing;
- questions student about test content after the test administration;
- fails to follow security regulations for distribution and return of secure test materials as directed or fails to account for all secure test materials before, during and after testing;
- uses or handles secure assessment documents and answer documents for any purpose other than testing;
- fails to follow administration directions for the test;
- fails to properly secure and safeguard pass codes/usernames necessary for online test administration;
- participates in, directs, aids, counsels, assists, encourages or fails to report any of these prohibited acts;
- erases or alters response on an answer document.

Failure to safeguard assessment materials or to comply with test administration procedures could adversely affect an individual's certification status. Such must be reported to the Putnam County Charter School System if local or GaDOE if it is a state assessment and may be referred to the Educators Ethics Division for the Professional standards Commission as failure to adhere to established policies and procedures. Under no circumstances may any tests be reproduced or duplicated for individual or group use unless authorized by Putnam County Charter School System on local assessments.

Testing Irregularities

It is the responsibility of all personnel in the local system to follow protocol as they become aware of testing irregularities. Security breaches and testing irregularities can have long-reaching impact on students, schools and systems, as well as upon any personnel who might be responsible for causing or contributing to any circumstance leading to a testing irregularity. Examples of testing irregularities include, but are not limited to missing test booklets; copying of (by machine or in handwriting) or verbal communication about test content; failure to create an

appropriate test environment (e.g., relevant teaching aids visible by students during the test session); teachers assisting students with answers during the test session; actual or cloned test items presented to students before, during, or after the test session (except released test items or items in the OAS); testing session disruption for any reason; student cheating (i.e. sharing answers, using electronic devices to copy, send, share answers or test information).

Any signs of any testing irregularity must be dealt with immediately. The examiner should contact the School Test Coordinator if any cheating or security violations are suspected. The School Test Coordinator, in turn, notifies the principal, who in turn notifies the System Test Coordinator.

In the case of any state assessments, if any system personnel become aware of testing irregularities within the testing window, the GaDOE Assessment Administration Division Assessment Specialist should be called immediately to determine if the test session can/should continue or if student scores must be invalidated (incidences of cheating will result in invalid student scores). If the decision is made to discontinue the testing process, Assessment Administration Division staff will assist system personnel with re-scheduling and/or re-testing, if appropriate. If the irregularity is revealed following the scheduled testing window, Assessment Administration Division staff should be contacted to determine if the scores on the affected tests are valid. All reports to the GaDOE should be made by the System Test Coordinator.

If any persons from the general public should contact the Putnam County Board of Education with allegations of classroom/school/system testing irregularities, in these cases, the System Test Coordinator, asking that person to investigate, determine if possible unethical conduct is involved, make the appropriate report to the Superintendent and/or Assistant Superintendent to determine reporting to the Professional Standards Commission.

Steps for Reporting a Testing Irregularity of Local Assessments

School Test Coordinator:

- Communicate with the principal who in turn contacts the System Test Coordinator about a possible testing irregularity.
- System Test Coordinator will provide guidance to investigate the possible testing irregularity.
- Written narrative must be provided by all parties involved in the irregularity.
- Return all documentation to the System Test Coordinator.

System Test Coordinator:

- Collect Testing Irregularity Information and documentation from School Test Coordinators
- Compile documentation for each incident reported.
- Provide documentation to Superintendent and/or Assistant Superintendent
- Superintendent will determine course of action to be taken

Steps for Reporting a Testing Irregularity of State Assessments

School Test Coordinator:

- Communicate with the principal who in turn reports to the System Test Coordinator about a possible testing irregularity.
- System Test Coordinator will provide guidance to investigate the possible testing irregularity.
- Written narrative must be provided by all parties involved in the irregularity.
- Return all documentation to the System Test Coordinator.

System Test Coordinator:

- Collect Testing Irregularity Forms and documentation from School Test Coordinators
- Compile documentation for each incident reported.
- Call the assessment specialist in the Assessment Administration Division to determine appropriate coding for student answer documents. (Additional information about using the Portal to report irregularities will be shared during each pre-administration webinar.)
- Include appropriate information and documentation in the GaDOE 0385.
- The Assessment Administration Division will inform the local district if it is required to report the irregularity to the Professional Standards Commission.

The School or System Test Coordinator is not required to follow up on irregularities concerning common place interruptions (e.g., alarms, sickness, cell phones ringing, power outage, etc).

Professional Ethics

Standardized testing has become a basic component of accountability for students, teachers, administrators, schools and school systems in Georgia and other states. Communities rely on their schools' assessment and standardized scores to determine the success of their schools and to compare them to other communities. When tests are properly administered, scored and

interpreted with a high degree of professionalism, all of the aforementioned stakeholders can be guided to make reliable and appropriate decisions.

A good testing program provides the following benefits:

- Students, based on their individual test scores, will know which skills and knowledge they have mastered toward meeting state standards by grade level.
- Information provided to parents from assessments can help evaluate whether their children are obtaining the skills and knowledge they need to be successful during and after their school experiences.
- Teachers can determine if students have mastered the skills and knowledge needed to advance to the next level and if not which skills and knowledge are in need of improvement.
- Community members can compare local student performance with performances of students in other locations. The community has a measuring stick to determine if schools are making improvements from year to year.

Putnam County Charter School System relies on local and state-mandated assessments as a key component of the local and state accountability program as well as using the test results to fulfill national requirements for educational accountability. For reliable and valid reporting, tests must be administered fairly and ethically. In the pursuit of fair and ethical testing for all stakeholders of Georgia, the following areas shall be addressed before, during and after testing:

- Test Security – Test materials shall be secured before, during, and after testing and scoring to ensure fair assessment of all students.
- Test Preparation – The test should reflect the curriculum being taught, and should be developmentally appropriate for the age and level of the test-taker. Students should be familiar with test-preparation skills. Educators should be trained on proper administration procedures and testing practices. Tests should be administered in the appropriate environment.
- Test Administration – Policies and procedures should be developed to implement fair and ethical testing procedures and practices. All eligible students should be assessed. Tests are used for their intended purposes.
- Test Data – Test scoring should be reliable and valid. Test data interpretation shall be appropriately given to stakeholders. Curriculum improvement should be guided by adequate data analyses.

Putnam County Charter School System Program Responsibilities

- **Superintendent** - The Superintendent has ultimate responsibility and accountability for all testing activities within the local school system:
 - Develops local policies and procedures based on Local Board of Education and Georgia Department of Education guidelines and test directions to maintain test security.
 - Supervises and monitors Principals to ensure that they fulfill their specific roles and responsibilities for the administration of tests.
 - Ensures that all personnel involved with testing receive training on appropriate test administration, policies, and procedures including accommodations for each assessment given.
 - Informs the local Board of Education, GaDOE, and Professional Standards Committee of any breach of security by employees of the system.
- **Principal** - The Principal has ultimate responsibility and accountability for all testing activities within the local school.
 - Ensures test security within the school building.
 - Ensures distribution of test materials occurs immediately prior to test administration.
 - Supervises all testing activities.
 - Ensures that all school personnel have been appropriately trained on test administration, procedures, and policies, including accommodations for each assessment given.
 - Ensures that accommodations have been given to only those students who appropriately need accommodations and have documentation of such needs.
 - Implements system's testing policies and procedures and establishes needed local school policies and procedures to ensure all students are tested fairly and appropriately.
 - Reports immediately any breach of security to the Superintendent.

Appendix

Testing Irregularity Report Form – Statement Report

Name:

Position:

Date of Incident:

What assessment?

What happened?

Who was Involved?

When did it happen?

Where did it happen?

Signature:

Date:

Test Security Sign-off for System and State Assessments

The need to be very careful regarding test security is critical. Staff members who are not involved in testing should also be aware of the school's responsibility for test security. Paraprofessionals, custodial staff and others in the school who may be in classes during testing or may be in the area where tests are stored, even though they do not have direct access to tests, should be aware of security rules.

Situations may arise which call for unplanned reactions. New questions may arise about what can and what cannot be done in relationship to testing issues. Therefore, test coordinators may have to make decisions on what actions should result. Attempting to analyze each situation by asking the following questions may help to decide the proper action to take:

- Could this possibly give one student an improper or unfair advantage over others?
- Could this possibly give one teacher's class an improper or unfair advantage over others?
- Could this possibly give a student or teacher advance knowledge of the test?
- Could this possibly be considered as teaching a child a small amount of information that is known to be on the test, or is very likely to be on the test, rather than teaching skills and the entire curriculum for the subject area to be tested?
- Could this possibly be considered unethical or a violation of board rule, professional teaching practices, the provisions in the GaDOE *Student Assessment Handbook*, or the instructions in the Examiner's Manual?

If the answer to any of the above was yes, then the action would be improper and should not be taken. This does not mean that teachers should not prepare students for standardized tests. They could have a daily review of skills or concepts that are to be tested. They should also be taught appropriate test-taking skills. Teachers should contact the School Test Coordinator for any questions about testing issues.

Following is a list for consideration prior to testing. The list should not be considered all-inclusive.

Must Do:

- Contact the School Test Coordinator if any question arises about tests or test security. The school principal must also be made aware of any issues involving testing or test security.
- Keep all testing materials stored in a secure place accessible only by the principal and the test coordinator. The GaDOE recommends that tests be stored in a locked cabinet in a locked room. If an adequate number of locked cabinets are not available then test

materials are to be stored in a locked room to which only the principal and test coordinator have access. Restricted access should be confirmed prior to receipt of test materials.

- Be certain that everyone involved in the testing process has been properly trained and informed of responsibilities in the area of test security. Provide sign-in sheets and rosters as well as training agendas. Attendance at training must be mandatory and well-documented. Untrained examiners must not be allowed to test.
- Be certain that all materials issued to persons administering tests are counted carefully when given out and when returned. Keep a daily log of checkout times and return times. If a problem occurs, notify the School Test Coordinator immediately.
- Distribute testing materials as close to the actual testing time as possible.
- Be certain that all persons receiving materials sign a checkout sheet when they receive the materials. This sheet should show date and time.
- Make certain that all materials are returned immediately after the testing session. Teachers are responsible for
- turning them in and coordinators are responsible for verifying that they do.
- Be certain all persons returning materials sign a check-in sheet. This sheet should show date and time.
- Be certain that materials are issued only to persons who have been carefully advised of their responsibilities for test security. Only staff members who have been trained on the proper management of secure test materials should handle such materials.
- Follow instructions in the test manual exactly. This is very important because manuals change each year. Not doing so can invalidate test scores.
- Be certain that the test coordinator, principal, or principal's designee is present when demographic data (name, student number, etc.) is entered on test booklets for grades K-12 if this is done in advance. This should be done in a central and well supervised location.
- Take down or cover any content materials displayed in the classroom if the item could provide assistance to students during the test.
- Teachers should collect and turn in to the School Test Coordinator any scratch paper used during a standardized test and the School Test Coordinator should destroy it. Scratch paper must
- not be used for a test if the test directions do not allow it.
- Teachers should notify the School Test Coordinator of any problems that occur during testing. School Test Coordinators should immediately notify the principal in writing of any problems and then notify the System Test Coordinator. If necessary, the System Test Coordinator will notify the GaDOE.
- Make certain that everyone involved in testing in any manner is aware of the items in this list and the list below.

- Make certain that everyone involved in testing is aware of professional practices and the consequences of violations.

Must Not Do:

- Allow anyone to see test forms for any state-mandated test before they are administered—not even for a brief look regardless of the reason.
- Copy tests or test materials in any way—no photocopies, no handwritten copies, no notes may be made about test content, including secure GAA portfolio entries.
- Allow anyone else to copy tests, testing materials, or make notes about test content.
- Keep tests or testing materials at the end of the testing session or the assessment window.
- Give students the answer, or any clues to the answer, to any test item.
- Make notes about test content during test administration.
- Use any information about actual test items, regardless of how it is obtained, to help students prepare for the test. Such information may not be shared with anyone for any purpose. This does not include appropriate sample test items or practice materials.
- During instruction, teach a particular problem or bit of information because it is known to be on the test. (This does not mean that skills and concepts, which are listed in the objectives or on test profiles, should not be emphasized—they should be.)
- Add anything to, or delete anything from, the directions in the test manual. This violates standardized test conditions and may invalidate scores. Directions may be clarified.
- Discuss test items or actual test content with anyone at any time. This does not prohibit discussions about test objectives, test profiles, test results, or test preparation.
- Select and distribute test materials, test forms, writing prompts, etc. in a manner designed to provide a student/group of students with an advantage over others.
- Alter or interfere with a student’s responses.
- Remove secure test materials from their secure storage location for reasons
- Other than the preparation of materials for testing, actual test administration, and the completion of tasks prescribed by test administration manuals or the *Student Assessment Handbook*.

Professional Standard Ethics:

Standard 11:

Testing - An educator shall administer state-mandated assessments fairly and ethically. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

- committing any act that breaches Test Security; and
- compromising the integrity of the assessment.

Reporting

(a) Educators are required to report a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. Educators should be aware of legal requirements and local policies and procedures for reporting unethical conduct. Complaints filed with the Professional Standards Commission must be in writing and must be signed by the complainant (parent, educator, personnel director, superintendent, etc.).

(b) The Commission notifies local and state officials of all disciplinary actions. In addition, suspensions and revocations are reported to national officials, including the NASDTEC Clearinghouse.

Disciplinary Action

(a) The Professional Standards Commission is authorized to suspend, revoke, or deny certificates, to issue a reprimand or warning, or to monitor the educator's conduct and performance after an investigation is held and notice and opportunity for a hearing are provided to the certificate holder. Any of the following grounds shall be considered cause for disciplinary action against the holder of a certificate:

1. unethical conduct as outlined in The Code of Ethics for Educators,
2. disciplinary action against a certificate in another state on grounds consistent with those specified in the Code of Ethics for Educators,
3. order from a court of competent jurisdiction or a request from the Department of Human Resources that the certificate should be suspended or the application for certification should be denied for non-payment of child support
4. notification from the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation that the educator is in default and not in satisfactory repayment status on a student loan guaranteed by the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation
5. suspension or revocation of any professional license or certificate;
6. violation of any other laws and rules applicable to the profession; and
7. any other good and sufficient cause that renders an educator unfit for employment as an educator.

(b) An individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended may not serve as a volunteer or be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, substitute teacher or in any other position during the period of his or her revocation, suspension or denial for a violation of The Code of Ethics. The superintendent and the superintendent's designee for certification shall be responsible for assuring that an individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended is not employed or serving in any capacity in their district. Both the superintendent and the superintendent's designee must hold GaPSC certification.

I received a copy of the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Handbook for “*Test Security Information for System and State Assessments*” and understand that I am required to be aware of its contents and to share this information with everyone who assists me with testing of both system and state assessments.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____