Montana Comprehensive Assessment System (MontCAS)

Guidelines and Procedures for Test Security

2009-2010

opi.mt.gov

Denise Juneau, Superintendent
Montana Office of Public Instruction
www.opi.mt.gov

January 2010

Montana Comprehensive Assessment System (MontCAS) Guidelines and Procedures for Test Security 2009-2010

Purpose:

To maintain the integrity of the Montana Comprehensive Assessment System (MontCAS), standardized procedures must be followed so that materials are kept secure and all students take the tests under standard conditions. For purposes of accountability, results must be valid and accurate to ensure fairness among all participating school districts.

MontCAS requires that the test questions remain secure. To maintain the security of the tests, only authorized persons are permitted to use the test questions and reading passages. With the exception of questions and reading passages released by the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) with official reports and on the OPI Web site, all test questions, as well as reading passages and performance tasks, are to be regarded as secure instruments and are for the sole purpose of the MontCAS. Testing personnel should not reproduce, discuss, or in any way release, share or distribute the test questions, reading passages, or performance tasks. Any other use of these materials may constitute a security breach. All test booklets and answer booklets must be returned to Measured Progress on time. Late or missing booklets constitutes a serious security breach and could result in the invalidation of student results for schools and/or systems.

Although the Montana Office of Public Instruction specifies the following policies and guidelines, all possible testing situations cannot feasibly be covered. If a testing issue arises that is not addressed in this document, apply the following guideline:

→ **No student taking the test should have access to any form of assistance or material that could provide an unfair advantage.**

This Guide is to be used in conjunction with the MontCAS test coordinator and test administrator guides and manuals. All tests must be administered in strict accordance with the instructions contained in the test coordinator and administrator manuals. Questions and uncertainties that cannot be answered by these materials or by your system test coordinator should be directed to Judy Snow, State Assessment Director, at the Office of Public Instruction.

→ **Judy Snow, State Assessment Director**
Telephone: (406)444-3656
E-mail: jsnow@mt.gov
Fax: (406)444-0743
PO Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501

Definitions:

Test Security is dependent on keeping materials secure and following standard procedures in administering tests. The following definitions are included for clarification.

Testing irregularity—

- Any event (before, during, or after testing) that could potentially impact the security of the test or the accuracy of the test data.
- Includes any actions or precautions that vary from directions specified by testing contractor manuals or the OPI.

Secure test materials—

- Test booklets, answer documents, and other materials as defined by OPI and testing contractors that must remain secure to preserve the integrity of the test.
- Materials must be kept in a secure location and not copied.
- All test booklets and answer booklets must be returned to Measured Progress on time. Late or missing booklets constitutes a serious security breach and could result in the invalidation of student results for schools and/or systems.

Security breach—

- Test materials copied or not kept in a secure location.
- A violation of a testing procedure that gives an unfair advantage to a student or group of students and could jeopardize the security and integrity of the tests and/or resulting data.

Coaching—

- A security breach that gives an unfair advantage to a student or group of students.
- The coaching security breach includes providing answers to students, changing student responses, or influencing student responses to test questions by offering hints, clues, cues, facial expressions, nods, voice inflections or any other manner of assistance that could impact a student's answers.

Training Requirements:

It is the responsibility of each school district to appoint a system test coordinator and/or designated school testing representatives. The system test coordinator is responsible for reviewing applicable training and assessment materials and attending training sessions as offered and provided by OPI.

The system test coordinator and designated school representative are also responsible for providing test administration training to all building test coordinators within their respective districts.

All persons involved with testing, including proctors, scribes, and test administrators, should receive annual training on test administration procedures and guidelines, test security, accommodations, and calculator use.

MontCAS should be administered to students only by licensed professionals who have been trained and are familiar with standardized testing procedures. Substitute and student teachers should not administer the tests unless they have been trained in these procedures.

All individuals involved with testing should be informed by their system test coordinator or designated testing representative of the appropriate measure for reporting any form of testing irregularities or security breaches.

Materials:

Test security is vitally important to the integrity of the statewide testing system and involves accounting for all secure test materials before, during, and after test administration.

Secure test materials should be kept in locked storage when not in use and access should be limited to authorized persons who have been trained in handling secure testing materials.

All test booklets and answer booklets must be returned to Measured Progress on time. Late or missing booklets constitutes a serious security breach and could result in the invalidation of student results for schools and/or systems.

Secure test materials should not be duplicated in any form, and test questions should not be discussed.

Maintaining Standardized Testing Procedures:

All MontCAS test administration materials, policies, and guidelines should be reviewed before any tests are administered. Tests must be administered in strict accordance with the instructions and policies contained in these materials. Directions should not be modified in any way, unless specified in individualized education plans (IEPs) or plans for students with limited English proficiency (LEP) or eligible for services under section 504.

If at any point there is a testing irregularity or any concern that the security or integrity of the test has been jeopardized, follow the procedures outlined in this guide (beginning on page 7).

Test administrators are responsible for ensuring that no child is given an unfair advantage in the administration of the MontCAS. Therefore:

Do NOT…	
Do NOT…	allow students to have cell phones, headphones,* or other electronic communication devices in testing areas.
Do NOT…	allow students to use dictionaries, Thesauri, or reference sources.*
Do NOT…	allow students to use calculators when not specified.
Do NOT…	coach or provide feedback to students before, during, or after testing.
Do NOT…	influence, alter, or interfere with a test response in any way or instruct a student to do so.
Do NOT…	fill in any unanswered questions or provide actual answers.
Do NOT…	give students access to secure test questions prior to testing or discuss test questions at any time.
Do NOT…	copy or reproduce any portion of the secure test materials, or provide answer keys.
Do NOT…	deviate from the procedures specified in the MontCAS test coordinator and administrator manuals. (NOTE: There may be some cases in which the OPI requires procedures different from those in the manuals published by the test contractors. DO follow the OPI procedures.)
Do NOT…	instruct students to deviate from these guidelines.
Do NOT…	leave students unattended with testing materials.
Do NOT…	allow students to go back to previous test sections to review, complete, or revise answers.
Do NOT…	allow students to re-test once they have started or completed a test section.
Do NOT…	provide accommodations other than those specified and allowed in MontCAS test manuals.
Do NOT…	exclude eligible students from taking the tests.
Do NOT…	participate in, direct, aid, counsel, assist, encourage, or fail to report any of the acts prohibited in this section.

** Unless specified as an accommodation for an individual student.*

Test administrators are not allowed to answer any questions related to the contents of the test. If a student asks a question, the test administrator may respond, "I'm sorry I can't help you; just do the best you can."

Do…	maintain a positive attitude about testing before, during and after testing.
Do…	follow test security and administration guidelines.
Do…	make sure if a test section is started that it is finished in the same day.
Do…	cover or remove bulletin boards, posters, or other instructional displays that could aid students during testing.**
Do…	account for all test booklets and answer documents and keep them in a secure location.
Do…	scribe exact student responses, including incorrect responses, when scribing is a specified accommodation. Include all grammatical and punctuation errors when scribing answers to constructed response questions.
Do…	transcribe exact student responses, including incorrect responses, when a student's test booklet has been damaged or an alternate format has been used (such as Braille).
Do…	keep voice inflections neutral in the event a required and allowable test accommodation is to read portions of the test aloud.
Do…	minimize distractions during testing, including intercom announcements.
Do…	place "Do not disturb" signs on doors where testing is occurring.
Do…	allow students rest room breaks in advance of testing.
Do…	check to see if all eyeglasses and/or hearing devices are working and being used, if needed.
Do…	make sure the testing environment is comfortable and has appropriate lighting.
Do…	monitor students as they test.
Do…	utilize testing proctors at a recommended ratio of one proctor to not more than 30 students.
Do…	account for and return all secure test materials as specified in test coordinator and administrator manuals.
Do…	report testing irregularities/security breaches.
Do…	follow procedures for reporting as specified.
Do…	clear main/home screen of calculators both before and after calculator use sessions.

*** Anything that could guide a student to an answer should be covered or removed. This includes instructional items that are not available to all students taking the test such as graphic organizers or multiplication tables. In addition to the need for students to work independently, no students should have any form of assistance or material that other students do not have. The tests are standardized and the testing process is standardized. Any deviations from the process might compromise valid assumptions.*

Unforeseeable Circumstances:

In the event a student suffers from an unforeseeable circumstance immediately before or during testing, the student may be provided with allowable standard accommodations as appropriate. Examples include:

Injuries—If a student is unable to write, the student may respond orally to a trained scribe. Scribes must record exact student responses, including incorrect responses, and must include all grammatical and punctuation errors when scribing constructed response items. **Constructed response answers must be scribed verbatim.**

Illness—As long as the test section has not been started, the student should be allowed to make-up the test within the specified testing window. If a student becomes ill during the test and the test has been partially completed, the student may NOT re-take the test. Once a student has started a test section, it must be finished during the same day.

Damaged materials—In the event an answer document is damaged and unable to be scored, answers may be transcribed on to a new answer document as long as student answers are transferred exactly the same. If the document is damaged during a test section, the student may continue to answer the questions on a new answer document (insuring the student is using the same form of test booklet) at the number they left off. Previous answers can later be transcribed by a trained test administrator. Please contact the State Assessment Director for guidance.

Interruptions/emergencies—In the event that testing is interrupted due to an emergency, the system test coordinator should be notified. If students are able to resume testing after the emergency, the time should be extended so that the students are allowed full time allocation. If, however, the test is interrupted during a timed portion, consult with your system test coordinator who should contact the State Assessment Director for guidance.

Disruptive students—If a student becomes disruptive during testing, the student may be removed from the testing location so that other students can continue testing without the disruption. If the disruptive student is unable to finish the test section (session) at that time, that section (session) may not be continued on a different day. However, the student may finish the section (session) in a different location on the same day.

Student refusal/non-compliance—If a student refuses to test, refuses to complete a test, or engages in random marking or bubbling, the answer document must still be sent with used answer documents for scoring.

Cheating—Students should not be allowed to share information with or obtain information from other students in any way. All instances involving cheating should be reported.

Please note that due to the limitless possibilities of testing circumstances, not all situations can be addressed. Please direct all questions to your system test coordinator or your state assessment director.

Security Documentation for CRT and CRT-Alternate:

Consistent test administration is necessary for accurate test results. And, it is essential for educators handling test materials and administering the tests to receive training and understand correct procedures.

As a reminder and a guide, the OPI is providing three documents, one for educators who handle the materials and/or administer the test, one for system test coordinators who handle materials and provide training, and one for school principals who oversee the testing environment in their schools.

These forms are intended to provide advanced knowledge of possible consequences of a security breach. Using these forms in the manner outlined below insures that all educators involved in testing have been given the opportunity to know and understand their responsibilities and consequences regarding test security. The responsibilities and consequences remain the same with or without the forms; however, the forms are a vehicle to provide the information to the responsible parties.

For the spring 2010 CRT and CRT-Alternate test administration, the OPI asks System Test Coordinators and principals involved with CRT or CRT-Alternate testing and/or administration to provide documentation of training. Three forms and *Test Security Guidelines* will be provided by the OPI for this documentation.

Form 1—

- Information sheet for teachers describing their test security responsibilities. Each teacher administering the CRT or CRT-Alternate will receive the information sheet during training prior to the distribution of materials and test administration.

Form 2—

- System Test Coordinators are asked to sign agreements and return them to Measured Progress with completed Student Response Booklets (SRBs) for their system. These agreements specify responsibilities of test coordinators for test security training and distribution of materials. Test coordinator forms have a barcode label for their system attached. Measured Progess will scan the barcode label to acknowledge receipt of the form.

Form 3—

- School principals are asked to sign agreements and include them with the completed Student Response Booklets (SRBs). These agreements will specify responsibilities of principals for test security training and distribution of materials in their schools. Principals' forms have a barcode label for their school attached. Measured Progress will scan the barcode label to acknowledge receipt of the form.

Procedure for Reporting Testing Irregularities and/or Security Breaches:

Any concern about breaches in test security, testing irregularities, and/or noncompliance with test administration procedures must be documented immediately in a *MontCAS Testing Irregularity Report (TIR)*. The individual completing the TIR form is responsible for forwarding copies to the principal, the system test coordinator, and the State Assessment Director at the Office of Public Instruction. The district superintendent shall also be notified.

The responsibility to report any testing irregularity or breach in security lies with the individual who has concerns or knowledge of such. If the reporting individual has concerns about possible ramifications or sanctions from reporting an irregularity or breach, she (he) can choose to submit the TIR to the State Assessment Director only. Contact the State Assessment Director.

If, at any point, anyone involved in the administration of the MontCAS has reason to believe that these procedures are not being accurately followed, the individual should contact the State Assessment Director.

Flowchart for Reporting Testing Irregularities and/or Security Breaches

KNOWLEDGE OF TESTING IRREGULARITY OR POSSIBLE TEST SECURITY BREACH

COMPLETE MONTCAS TESTING IRREGULARITY REPORT (*TIR*)

Copy completed *TIR* and submit copies to

1. Principal
2. System Test Coordinator
3. State Assessment Director

System Test Coordinator should notify System Superintendent.

If concerned about ramifications from local reporting an irregularity or breach, submit form directly to State Assessment Director.

Montana Comprehensive Assessment System
Testing Irregularity Report (TIR)

A testing irregularity may constitute a security breach that could invalidate student scores and impact AYP determinations.

Date: _____

School: _____ District: _____

Person completing form: _____

Position: _____ Telephone:_____

Name of School Principal: _____

Name of System Test Coordinator: _____

Date of incident: _____

The Montana Comprehensive Assessment System requires that the test questions remain secure. To maintain the security of the tests, only authorized persons are permitted to use the test questions and reading passages. With the exception of questions and reading passages released by the Montana Office of Public Instruction with official reports and on the OPI Web site, all test questions, as well as reading passages and performance tasks, are to be regarded as secure instruments and are for the sole purpose of the MontCAS. Testing personnel should not reproduce, discuss, or in any way release, share or distribute the test questions, reading passages, or performance tasks. Any other use of these materials may constitute a security breach.

Below are definitions and examples:

Testing irregularity—

- Any event (before, during, or after testing) that could potentially impact the security of the test or the accuracy of the test data
- Includes any actions or precautions that vary from directions specified by testing contractor manuals or the OPI.

Secure test materials—

- Test booklets, answer documents, and other materials as defined by the OPI and testing contractors that must remain secure to preserve the integrity of the test.
- Materials must be kept in a secure location and not copies.

Security Breach—

- Test materials copied or not kept in a secure locaton.
- A violation of a testing procedure that gives an unfair advantage to a student or group of students and could jeopardize the security and integrity of the tests and/or resulting data.
- All test booklets and answer booklets must be returned to Measured Progress on time. Late or missing booklets constitutes a serious security breach and could result in the invalidation of student results for schools and/or systems.

Coaching—

- A security breach that gives an unfair advantage to a student or group of students.
- The coaching security breach includes providing answers to students, changing student responses, or influencing student responses to test questions by offering hints, clues, cues, facial expressions, nods, voice inflections or any other manner of assistance that could impact a student's answers.

The testing irregularity/possible security breach occurred during which test:

☐ *MontCAS Phase 2: Measured Progress (CRT)*

Grade level _____

☐ Reading Part 1	☐ Reading Part 2	☐ Reading Part 3
☐ Math Part 1	☐ Math Part 2	☐ Math Part 3
☐ Science Part 1	☐ Science Part 2	☐ Science Part 3
☐ Alternate Assessment		

Montana Comprehensive Assessment System
Testing Irregularity Report (TIR)

1. Please describe the test irregularity and how it happened.

2. Please indicate the names and positions of the individuals involved.

3. Which testing guidelines were not followed?

4. What action did you or other involved individuals take to resolve this situation?

5. Are other individuals aware of this irregularity? If yes, please list.

6. What action could be taken to prevent future test irregularities of a similar manner?

Please retain a copy of this form for your records and submit copies to your principal, your system test coordinator, and the State Assessment Director. You may also elect to send a copy only to the State Assessment Director: Judy Snow P.O. Box 202501, Helena MT 59620-2501 FAX 406-444-0743

Judy Snow, State Assessment Director
Telephone: (406)444-3656
E-mail: jsnow@mt.gov
Fax: (406)444-0743
PO Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501
www.opi.mt.gov

opi.mt.gov

Denise Juneau, Superintendent

Montana Office of Public Instruction
PO Box 202501
Helena, Montana 59620-2501
www.opi.mt.gov

The Office of Public Instruction is committed to equal employment opportunity and nondiscriminatory access to all of our programs and services, and will take necessary and appropriate steps to insure that the workplace and OPI programs and services are free of discrimination and sexual harassment. For information or to file a complaint, contact Tom Antonick, OPI Title IX/EEO Coordinator at (406) 444-3161 or tantonick@mt.gov.