Assessment Best Practices

Missouri DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION™

Office of College and Career Readiness

End-of-Course

2020-2021

This document is a guide to help districts plan for the spring administration of the End-of-Course Assessment. Use this information and guiding questions in conjunction with the Test Coordinators and Test Administrators Manuals to help create and draft your plan for this year's test administration.

While districts have adopted physical distancing practices in public spaces and schools adjusted instructional practices to incorporate remote or hybrid learning, the End-of-Course assessment can be administered only in person on-site. The official department statement on this decision can be found in DESE Administrative Memo CCR-21-002 at http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/am/documents/CCR-21-002-Spring-2021-MAP-Testing.pdf.

In making the decision to offer testing on-site only, DESE consulted with their assessment technical advisory committee, testing vendor and school districts. Factors considered included risks to item security, operational delivery, costly change management procedures and the validity and reliability of remote assessment administration.

In addition to providing settings that are more familiar for students, teachers and test administrators, on-site administration of assessments will help ensure stability of student supports and smooth management of device- and platform-related questions or technology issues. Furthermore, some students may not have the necessary hardware or bandwidth capabilities to participate in remote testing. Other students may not have the required adult supervision, or the parents/guardians are unable to provide direct help to the student due to language or technology barriers.

Preparation should be started early so that your district can be as ready as possible when the testing window begins. Planning will ensure you have the equipment, supplies, training, and communication in place to keep everyone safe and healthy throughout this testing season.

TRANSPORTATION

If students are participating in remote learning, they will need to come to the district to test. Districts need to decide if they will provide transportation for the student to and from the testing site or if parents/ guardians will be expected do so.

Think About

- If the district is providing transportation for the student to and from the building, who needs to be contacted and how will that be setup?

- Will parents/guardians be expected to bring students to the testing site?

- If parents/guardians bring the student to the testing site and they want to wait on-site while the student tests, where will they wait?

- If parents/guardians bring their student to the testing site and do not want to wait on-site, what is the protocol to contact them to provide the student a ride home?

Test Scheduling

Scheduling for the End-of-Course assessment may look different from previous years. First, the requirement to test all students in a subject within a seven-business day window is being waived this spring. With social distancing guidelines in place, ensure the rooms used for testing are large enough that students can be seated at a distance from one another. Follow local guidance on desk or chair spacing. Test in small groups if necessary to maintain physical distance between students. As always, be sure all students can hear the test administrator and any recorded audio that may be played during testing.

For individual or small group test administrations, identify a testing room as large and practical as possible. For example, avoid testing in a small office.

If your school or district is currently offering remote instruction, test examiners might need special access to buildings. Plan ahead to ensure test examiners know the plan and specific arrangements. Coordinate and communicate as necessary with school and district administrative staffs, district IT staff, building security staff and janitorial service staff.

Think About

- If the district shifted to remote or asynchronous learning, what is your plan to complete testing within the window?
- How many students can be tested safely at once?
- Will the schedule prioritize groups of students or content areas earlier in the testing window rather than later?
- Will students need to test at times that may fall outside of regular school hours?
- Will students need to complete more than one session when present?
- If scheduling a group of students at the same time, what will happen if a student scheduled for a group test is late?
- If students arrive at the testing location early, where will they wait?
- Will the district allow families to select their testing time/location?
- Does the schedule allow time in between students/groups to sanitize materials and equipment?
- Will the schedule allow time for make-up testing?
- Is there a backup plan if the testing site would need to be closed?

Health and Safety

When designing and implementing your on-site testing plan, health and safety of both students and staff is the top priority.

Physical Testing Materials

Physical test materials can be inventoried immediately upon arrival. Boxes are packed by employees who participate in daily health screenings, and the materials are not touched for several days during shipping. Therefore is no need to quarantine test materials upon delivery.

When possible, avoid having test administrators share materials. Test Coordinator and Administrators manuals and scripts for listening items are available to download and can be printed as needed throughout your testing window. Manuals and scripts can be disassembled and put into sheet protectors or clear plastic bags that can be wiped down after each administration. Large Print and Braille books should not be modified unless necessary.

Safety Precautions

Depending on local policy:

- Avoid sharing materials.
- Have students bring their own pencils for testing or provide pencils that students can keep.
- Minimize close interaction by placing all testing materials on students' desks before they arrive. Have students leave materials on their desks when they finish testing.
- When setting up a testing room, allow for as much space between students as possible.
- Provide face shields that test administrators can wear in addition to masks.
- Surfaces, writing utensils, technology, and—if possible—test materials should be sanitized before and after each test administration.
- Wash your hands before and after each test administration.
- Have students use hand sanitizer as they enter and exit the testing room.
- Have students continue to wear masks throughout testing.

Think About

- Will test administrators wear gloves, masks, or other face coverings? Who will provide them? What is the district policy on students wearing masks and face coverings?
- Will the district conduct or require a temperature check upon entrance to the building? Will the building have adequate devices for this screening?
- Who is responsible for cleaning frequently touched surfaces?
- Who is responsible for providing the cleaning materials?
- Where will cleaning materials be stored?

Test Administrators And Proctors

Some districts will require more testing groups than normal, and therefore may require additional test examiners and proctors.

A test examiner is in charge of testing – providing instructions to the students and answering their questions. Test proctors work with examiners to monitor testing ensuring students do not cheat. Student teachers may observe testing, but not participate in the process.

Ideally, though not a requirement, the test examiner is the same person providing instruction to the student.

Test Examiner Requirements
- A district employee
- At a minimum, meets the requirements of a para-professional
- Completes district provided training

Test Proctor Requirements
- At a minimum, meets the requirements of a para-professional
- Completes district provided training

Parents/Guardians

As always, parents/guardians are going to play a major part in the success of test administration.

Communication with parents/guardians is key – the district should develop communication that outlays the entire district testing plan.

Districts should keep students and families informed of testing plans and procedures by communicating early and often. Communication should include details of testing logistics, what students should bring on testing day and what safety precautions the district is taking.

The communication should address the following:
- When will testing occur?
- Will parents/guardians will have the option to choose dates/times?
- When are make-up days scheduled?
- District procedures and policies relating to health and safety
- Transportation expectations and/or choices

Think About
- What is the district plan for ensuring families understand the purpose of the test, testing expectations, locations, date/time?
- What does meaningful communication to families look like in your district?
  - Communication methods – phone, text, email, parent portal, website, etc.
- Having a communication plan for following-up to verify times/dates, transportation, rescheduling, etc.

TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

A number of resources are available to your IT staff to answer questions as they setup devices for MAP Grade-Level testing.

These resources can be accessed by logging into the DRC Portal, going to General Information> Documents and choosing the document type INSIGHT Technology Support Resources.

The following documents are available:

- COS Service Device Decision Guide
- Network Evaluation & Troubleshooting
- Site Readiness Overview and Checklist
- System Requirements
- Tech Bulletins
- Recorded IT Training

Under the document type INSIGHT Technology User Guide, IT staff can access the guide, which covers COS, installing INSIGHT and troubleshooting.

Districts need to make sure that the devices being used for testing are configured and tested prior to testing day.

In many districts that offer remote instruction, students are using district issued hardware. If this same hardware is to be used for testing, districts will need to plan ahead to assure the device is ready for testing prior to the testing day.

If students will test on shared devices, consider placing plastic wrap or another disposable barrier over keyboards or screens to provide a sanitary surface for each student.

Some electronics cannot be sanitized in the same way as testing surfaces. Districts will want to talk with IT staff about the best way to sanitize devices and headsets.

Think About

- Will the district use the new Test Monitoring application for students testing on-site? Will it be a building or classroom choice?
- Will students be expected to share headsets for those taking ELA Listening items or those using Read Aloud – Text-To-Speech?
- Will the district allow students to use their own headset/earbuds? If so, the district should test the headset/earbuds with the device prior to testing to ensure compatibility.
- Where will devices and headsets be stored when not in use?

END-OF-COURSE CALENDAR

EVENT	DATE
First Pre-Code Due Students In System 02/22/21	02/10/21
LP and Braille Additional Materials	02/22/21 – 05/21/21
TEST WINDOW	**03/01/21 – 06/15/21**
Second Pre-Code Due Students In System 04/05/21	03/17/21
Third Pre-Code Due Students In System 04/21/21	04/07/21

Miscellaneous

● Be advised that the guidance in this document may be updated based on additional guidance from the US Department of Education and the Missouri State Board of Education.

● Bilingual staff, family liaisons and community outreach personnel will be valuable resources in connecting with families to ensure a smooth and safe test administration process. Districts need to be flexible in considering and adapting to the cultural and linguistic factors in communication and scheduling, including religious customs, gender-related norms, addressing people by proper names, regional gestures, etc.

● If testing is to occur in a building that is closed due to students participating in remote learning, work with district and building administration to determine if meals will be provided to students coming in for testing.

● The testing window has been extended to June 15. Additionally, DESE is suspending the rule regarding a 7-business day window per content area. Districts can test students throughout the state window.

● As indicated within the administrative memo CCR-21-005, - https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/am/documents/CCR-21-005.pdf - DESE has set participation rate at a minimum of 85%. At this time, we recommend keeping documentation of parent refusals and communications with your community. Additional information can be found in the Spring 2021 Assessment FAQ document at https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/asmt-spring-2021-faq.pdf.

● Districts should attempt to test all students this spring. For those who are unable to test 85% of students this spring may apply for a Fall Test Window. Information on Fall Test Window will be sent to District Testing Coordinators and be posted on the DESE Assessment site.

● For questions about accountability, please contact DESE MSIP at 573-526-4886 or 573-751-4104 or email MSIP@dese.mo.gov.