



Test Integrity Investigations Process Overview

Investigations Conducted for School Year 2016-17



Test Integrity Investigations



Vision for Test Security

OSSE's goal is for schools and LEAs to deliver a uniform and equitable statewide assessment program. **For assessments to yield fair and accurate results, the assessments must be administered in consistent and standardized conditions.** The best way to ensure standardization occurs is to ensure educators understand and recognize acceptable and unacceptable assessment practices.



Why is Test Integrity Important?

Having standard and equitable testing environments ensures that:

- Students have an equitable opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do on the assessments;
- Assessment results are valid; and
- Student performance can be measured and compared at the student, school, local education agency (LEA), and state levels.

Local DC statute outlines test security requirements at the State, LEA, and school levels.

- The Test Integrity Act of 2013, amended in 2015, mandates that LEAs and schools ensure that all testing environments are equitable and standard.
- The act also established a list of prohibitive actions and requirements that all authorized personnel (those individuals who will interact with the assessment) must adhere to during testing.



Test Security Guidelines & Resources

- OSSE releases annual Test Security Guidelines and supporting documents and resources for LEAs and schools.
- These guidelines set the standards and requirements for test security in the District of Columbia.
- All documentation and resources can be found on [OSSE's Test Security and Incident Forms](#) website. Resources include, but are not limited to:
 - [2017-18 Test Security Guidelines](#)
 - [Test Integrity and Test Security Notification Statement](#)
 - [Test Integrity and Test Security Affidavit](#)
 - [2017-18 OSSE Test Security Training](#)
 - [2017-18 School Test Security Plan Instructions](#)
 - [2017-18 School Year Districtwide Assessments Participation and Performance Policy](#)



State-Level Monitoring and Investigations

- OSSE has the authority to set standards for test security, monitor test administration, and investigate schools and/or LEAs for violations of test security and integrity.
- Per the Testing Integrity Act of 2013, LEAs and schools are required to participate in any investigation of test security or integrity.



OSSE Initiation & Selection of Schools

The selection of schools for post-administration test security investigation is made using the following process:

- OSSE reviews test administration practices across schools in the District. This review includes monitoring and incident reports/OSSE support tickets submitted by OSSE Auditors and LEA/School Coordinators, respectively, during test administration for potential test integrity violations.
- Additionally, OSSE consults with Caveon Test Security, an industry leader in test security, to conduct a series of forensics analyses using PARCC data provided by Pearson (PARCC vendor). Schools are indexed for anomalous data forensics.
- Lastly, OSSE consults with subject-matter experts in the test security field to ensure that the methodology used to flag schools is sound and up to industry and professional standards.



Data Forensics Flags for Indexing

Caveon ran analyses on all PARCC results across four data forensics categories:

- **M4 Similarity:** Occurs when an examinee's answer string is extremely similar with that of another. This could indicate answer copying, educator coaching, proxy test taking, or some other form of collusion.
- **WTR-RTW Erasures:** Occurs when an examinee has significantly more wrong to right erasures or answer changes than right to wrong changes.
- **Scored-Diff:** Occurs when an examinee's scores on scored items is significantly different than those on non-scored item.
- **Volatile Gains:** Occurs when the test score is inconsistently high or low in comparison with prior test scores. (Note: OSSE does not flag a school for investigation based solely on volatile gains.)



OSSE Initiation & Selection of Schools

- Schools may be identified for investigation based on one or more of the following sources:
 - Anonymous tip/whistleblower
 - Media monitoring (breach of security)
 - Data forensics flagging
 - Monitoring reports
 - Violation of test security through review of test administration practices (incident reports, OSSE support tickets, etc.)
 - Random identification



Data Forensics Indexing for DC

Caveon's analysis of all valid test scores in the District of Columbia resulted in the following indexing:

- Based on the results of the analysis, **14 out of 1879 total testing groups** were flagged for significant statistical anomalies across the four test security flags mentioned previously.
- Of the 14 groups flagged by the forensics alone, **3 schools** with the most statistically anomalous results were ultimately identified following a full administration review for an OSSE-initiated, LEA-led investigation.



Test Integrity Investigation Process



Test Integrity Investigation Process for 2017

- Last year, OSSE engaged LEAs in task force meetings to provide feedback on the test integrity investigations process.
- Based on LEA feedback and expert consult, OSSE rolled out a new investigations process for the 2017 administration.
- The process focused on a partnership between LEAs and OSSE.
- The OSSE-initiated, LEA-led investigation process reflected the following changes:
 - Identified LEAs led the investigations and conducted all interviews
 - Identified LEAs had access to their data forensics and all flagging information used to identify their school(s)
 - LEAs were able to provide context for potential findings
 - LEAs self-identified findings to share with OSSE as part of the interview and investigations process



Test Integrity Investigations Steps

- **Step 1: Analyze Standard Administration Practices**
 - OSSE analyzes incident reports and administration for potential Test Integrity violations.
- **Step 2: Review Data Forensics**
 - OSSE partners with Caveon to conduct sophisticated data forensics indexing.
- **Step 3: Identify Schools for Post-Administration Review**
 - OSSE, in collaboration with Caveon and a leading national expert in test integrity, reviewed standard practices and data forensics to identify schools for review and investigation.
- **Step 4: Notify LEAs and Train LEA Investigators**
 - OSSE notifies LEAs who require an investigation and LEAs determine if they want to lead the investigation.
 - LEA investigators are trained to use the Caveon Core Protocol.



Test Integrity Investigations Steps

- **Step 5: LEAs Lead the Review and Investigation**
 - LEAs review their test administration practices and data forensics.
 - LEAs complete all interviews and documentation within two weeks, and submit notes and identification of test security violations and findings.
- **Step 6: Review of LEA Findings and OSSE Report**
 - OSSE reviews LEA interview reports, transcripts, audio files, and findings (if any) for each identified school.
 - OSSE delivers a summary report of LEA investigations and a letter of determinations to LEAs.
- **Step 7: Due Process**
 - LEAs may choose to appeal sanctions with the Deputy Mayor for Education's Office.
- **Step 8: Communications**
 - A summary of the process and findings are released publicly.



Test Integrity Violation Classifications

- **No findings:** No evidence of test security violations, wrongdoing, or error
- **Minor:** Minor misadministration errors
- **Moderate:** Moderate misadministration errors
- **Significant**:** Substantiated isolated test security violations; test tampering or academic fraud
- **Critical**:** Substantiated systemic test security violations; school- or LEA-led test tampering or academic fraud

*** Only significant and critical findings are shared publicly.*



Process Learnings from 2017



Investigation Process Takeaways

Key takeaways from the 2017 investigation process include:

- The new OSSE-initiated, LEA-led investigation process offered LEAs the opportunity to lead their own investigations and review all documentation used to identify their school(s).
- All LEAs identified chose to run their own investigation(s), as opposed to requesting that OSSE lead the investigation(s).
- LEA investigators provided information and interview data/summaries that were open, thorough, honest, and clear.
- Based on learnings from the first year of implementation, OSSE will work to enhance training for investigators and streamline the Caveon Core Investigation Protocol system for maximum usability for investigators.



High-Level Summary of Trends

Trends across investigations include:

- Additional training on active proctoring best practices during all levels of test security training should be provided. There are still inconsistencies in active proctoring.
- Further training may be needed to ensure Test Administrators are aware of prohibited actions, specifically what actions are considered educator coaching.
- It is important that an accurate record of Authorized Personnel Test Security Training attendance is stored at all schools before, during, and after testing.
- OSSE will provide more clarify in the 2019 Test Security Guidelines on best practices for avoiding prohibitive actions and on how to actively proctor.



Test Integrity Investigations for 2018

- For 2018 assessment administration, OSSE will continue with the OSSE-initiated, LEA-led investigations process.
- Additional training on the process will be provided to any LEA identified for investigation.
- All test security requirements for 2018 were made public and used for training in fall 2017 and winter 2018.