

**Part I of the Spring 2018  
*Test Coordinator's Manual:*  
Grades 3–8  
Computer-Based and Paper-Based Tests  
RICAS Test Security Requirements**

## RICAS Test Security Requirements

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS) tests are designed to elicit students' work in order to assess their comprehension of the subject being tested. The purpose of the RICAS Test Security Requirements is to protect the validity of RICAS results.

**Section A** describes responsibilities of principals and designees (i.e., individuals authorized by the principal to assist in coordinating test administration).

**Section B** describes shared responsibilities of all individuals who have access to secure test materials.

**Section C** describes responsibilities of test administrators.

**Section D** provides instructions for reporting testing irregularities and describes the process the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) follows for investigation.

**Principals and school personnel authorized to have access to secure materials and test content must follow the requirements listed below and may not participate in, direct, assist in, encourage, or fail to report any testing irregularity or act of misconduct.**

Principals are responsible for ensuring that all test administrators and school personnel authorized to have access to secure test materials comply with the requirements and instructions contained in this part of the *Test Coordinator's Manual (TCM)* and in the *Test Administrator's Manuals (TAMs)*.

Please note the following definitions for the purposes of this section and this manual:

- **“Secure”** materials and items include the following, except for certain materials listed below after they are securely destroyed as directed in this manual:
  - test questions not publicly released by RIDE
  - student responses to test questions
  - test booklets for paper-based testing (PBT)
  - answer booklets for PBT
  - computer-based test content on-screen
  - student testing tickets for computer-based testing (CBT)
  - any mathematics reference sheets or graphic organizers with student writing
  - used scratch paper
- **“Access”** refers to handling test materials, but does not include reviewing tests or individual questions, which is prohibited. Students may never transport secure test materials, including from their initial testing room to a test completion room.
- **“Locked storage area”** refers to the central locked area that must be used to store all RICAS test materials **at all times** when materials are not in use. Test coordinators must restrict access to the locked storage area to only those school personnel authorized by the test coordinator to handle secure materials. For example, custodial or cleaning staff may not enter the locked area where the test coordinator stores secure materials.

Each principal must complete the Principal's Certification of Proper Test Administration (PCPA) to certify that the school has followed proper RICAS test security requirements and test administration protocols. See Appendix C for the certification statements to which the principal must attest.

## A. Responsibilities of the Principal and Designee

1. **Authorize specific personnel to serve as test administrators, and train them to properly administer RICAS tests. Designate other school personnel as necessary to maintain a secure test administration (e.g., personnel permitted to access secure test materials, personnel to serve as hallway or restroom monitors, technology coordinators) and train them in RICAS security requirements.**
  - Before the training session, distribute
    - a copy of the appropriate TAM to every test administrator, and
    - a copy of the test security requirements to all school personnel who have access to secure materials.
  - Document that all test administrators have received TAMs and that school personnel who have access to secure materials have received the test security requirements (see sample form in Appendix C).
  - Train test administrators prior to test administration. The TCM and TAMs describe the protocols necessary to conduct a proper RICAS test administration.
  - For test administrators who provide accommodations to students with disabilities, or English learner (EL) students, provide training in the implementation of accommodations in accordance with Appendix A of this manual and the *RICAS Accessibility and Accommodations Manual, 2018* (available at [www.ride.ri.gov/RICAS](http://www.ride.ri.gov/RICAS)).
2. **Instruct students in RICAS test security requirements (see Part III, section N).**
3. **Develop local policies and procedures to ensure proper test security at all times.**
  - Schedule tests to avoid conflicts with recess or lunch (see Part III, section B for more information about scheduling test sessions).
  - Ensure that tests are administered within the prescribed window and in the prescribed order.
  - Ensure that hallways are properly monitored during testing so that students are supervised at all times when they leave testing rooms (e.g., to use the restroom or transition to a test completion room).
  - Ensure that test administrators administer tests according to section C on page 5.
4. **Keep RICAS test materials in locked central storage when RICAS tests are not being administered.**
  - Account for all secure test materials at the end of each test session and keep them in the locked storage area when not in use.
  - Restrict access to the locked storage area to only those school personnel authorized to have access to secure materials.
5. **Monitor the receipt and return of all paper-based test materials.**
  - Inventory paper-based materials immediately upon receipt and investigate any discrepancies in counts of materials as described in this manual.
  - Return all paper-based materials to the testing contractor according to the prescribed packing instructions and the deadlines in this manual.

## RICAS Test Security Requirements

---

### 6. Monitor printing, distribution, and collection of materials for computer-based testing.

- Student testing tickets must be printed, distributed, and collected after testing.

### 7. Securely destroy the following materials after testing.

- Student testing tickets, proctor testing tickets, and used scratch paper (i.e., written on by students), must be securely destroyed (e.g., shredded) following testing.

## B. Shared Responsibilities of Test Coordinators, Test Administrators, Technology Staff, and Other School Personnel Authorized to Have Access to Secure Materials

### 1. Receive training in test security requirements and test administration protocols.

- Test coordinators are expected to participate in one of RIDE’s training sessions on RICAS test security and test administration protocols in February 2018.
- Test administrators, test coordinators, and other school personnel authorized to have access to secure test materials must attend the school training session. Appendix C contains a sample form that test coordinators may use to document participation.

### 2. Document the location of secure materials at all times.

- Track secure materials using the sample Test Materials Internal Tracking Form in Appendix C or a similar document. See Part III, section Q.4 for more information about requirements for internal tracking forms.

### 3. Ensure the security of the testing location.

- Do not allow unauthorized persons to enter the testing room. This includes parents, researchers, reporters, students not scheduled to be testing at the time, and any school personnel (including teachers) not assigned to the room as test administrators.
- School administrators, district personnel, and RIDE observers may enter testing rooms to monitor and observe testing procedures.
- Technology staff may enter testing rooms to troubleshoot problems with computer-based testing, but like other school personnel, are not permitted to photograph or otherwise duplicate secure test content on-screen.

### 4. Ensure the security of test questions, test booklets, and other secure materials.

- Do not leave secure RICAS materials unattended at any time unless they are locked in the secure storage area.
- For PBT, do not view the contents of test booklets or answer booklets before, during, or after a test administration (see TAMs for exceptions).
- For CBT, do not view computer-based test questions before, during, or after testing (see TAM for exceptions).
- Do not discuss or in any way reveal the contents of test booklets, answer booklets, CBT test questions, or student responses to CBT questions before, during, or after test administration (see TAMs for exceptions). Because RICAS test questions are secure and confidential until RIDE releases them publicly, school personnel should not discuss or review test questions with students or adults even after testing has been completed.

- Do not duplicate any portion of test or answer booklets, or computer-based tests, including but not limited to audiotaping, videotaping, photographing, photocopying, typing, or copying by hand.<sup>4</sup>
- Do not remove test materials from the school. For example, do not share test booklets or answer booklets with another school or program housed in your building.
- For PBT, do not allow any portion of test booklets or answer booklets to be retained, discarded, recycled, removed, or destroyed.<sup>5</sup>
- Do not allow scratch paper to be retained, discarded, or otherwise removed by students.
- Be sure that testing tickets and used scratch paper have been destroyed after testing.
- Do not allow students access to secure test questions prior to testing.
- Do not read or view any student responses.
- Do not change any student responses.

## C. Responsibilities of Test Administrators

### 1. Receive training from the test coordinator in administering test sessions properly and securely.

- Review the TAM and all relevant test security requirements before administering test sessions.
- Attend the training session led by the test coordinator before test administration. Appendix C contains a sample form that test coordinators may use to document participation in training and receipt of TAMs.
- Understand and follow the protocols related to administering tests to students with disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities, and protocols related to administering accessibility features.

### 2. Administer all tests according to appropriate protocols.

- Administer tests during the prescribed testing window, and in the prescribed order.
- Follow the directions and read the scripts in the TAM (and in any subsequent updates provided by RIDE) verbatim to students.
- Remove or cover any classroom displays that provide information related to the content being assessed or to test-taking strategies (see page 23).
- Provide students with all required test materials as listed in the TAM.
- Prevent the use of prohibited materials (see pages 24–29). Note that results may be invalidated for students who use cell phones or other prohibited electronic devices during a test session, including after a student turns in his or her test materials, during a break, and during the transition to a test completion area.

<sup>4</sup> The only exceptions are for test administrators who must transcribe student responses into answer booklets for students with disabilities receiving certain accommodations or for students who did some or all of their work in damaged, defective, or void booklets.

<sup>5</sup> The only exception is for test materials that have become contaminated; see page 39 for procedures.

## RICAS Test Security Requirements

---

### 3. Focus full attention on the testing environment at all times.

- Monitor the testing process by circulating around the room frequently. When not circulating around the room, test administrators should maintain a clear view of the students and keep their attention focused on them.
- For computer-based testing, a test administrator may view students' tests on-screen only for the purpose of assisting a student who is having trouble with the computer interface, or in order to administer appropriate accommodations and accessibility features. See Part III, section N.1 for more information about assisting students with the computer interface.
- For paper-based testing, a test administrator may view students' test booklets only for the purposes of confirming that students are working in the correct session, or in order to administer appropriate accommodations and accessibility features.
- Students must work only on the session being administered. For CBT, a student cannot review a prior session or skip ahead to the next session without the test session being unlocked by a test administrator. For paper-based testing, if a test administrator observes a student working in the incorrect session or section of the answer booklet or reviewing the incorrect session of the answer booklet or test booklet, this is a testing irregularity that must be reported immediately to the test coordinator.

### 4. Ensure that students provide answers that are strictly their own and do not participate in any form of cheating.

- Ensure that students do not consult notes, textbooks, or other teaching materials; do not access the Internet (with the exception of computer-based testing); do not share test questions with other students; and do not consult other students, school personnel, or anyone else during testing.

### 5. Do not give students any assistance or make suggestions for responding to any test question.

- Test administrators must not coach a student during testing or alter or interfere with a student's response in any way. Examples of coaching include, but are not limited to,
  - o providing answers to a student
  - o indicating that a student has answered a question incorrectly or left a question blank
  - o defining words or providing synonyms
  - o spelling words
  - o influencing a student's responses by offering hints, clues, cues, gestures, facial expressions, nods, or changes in voice inflection
  - o altering, explaining, simplifying, or paraphrasing any test question, reading passage, writing prompt, or multiple-choice answer option
  - o providing any manner of assistance that could impact a student's answers, including testing strategies
  - o suggesting that a student write more on a question, check his or her work, or review or reconsider a question

- At any time during a test session, a test administrator may repeat a portion of the TAM script if necessary for clarification.
6. **Do not read, view, or change student responses.**
  7. **Follow proper procedures for administering accommodations to students with disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities.**
    - Ensure that students are **only** provided accommodations that are listed specifically for use during RICAS testing in an approved IEP or a 504 plan, or that were specifically chosen as accommodations for English learner (EL) students.
    - Follow guidelines on proper provision of RICAS accommodations as prescribed in the *RICAS Accessibility and Accommodations Manual, 2018*.

## D. Testing Irregularities

Testing irregularities are incidents that represent a deviation from prescribed testing procedures. Testing irregularities may include student impropriety, errors in providing accommodations, educator misconduct, or the mishandling of secure test materials. Large technology failures (i.e., ones that affect one or more classrooms or in which the testing schedule is interrupted) are also considered testing irregularities.

### 1. Mandatory Reporting of Irregularities by All Personnel

All test irregularities must be reported by the test administrator to the school test coordinator. The school test coordinator must collect any information and/or documentation and inform the Local Education Agency (LEA) or district test coordinator. The LEA or district test coordinator must contact Phyllis Lynch, Director, Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum at 401-222-4693 to discuss the incident and provide any documentation, as necessary. The Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum will inform the local LEA/district if it is required to submit a formal investigation report of the irregularity to RIDE. If any school or district employee with knowledge of a test irregularity has questions about his or her reporting obligations, RIDE can be consulted.



Technology issues during testing that cannot be resolved quickly by troubleshooting (see Part IV, section D.1) should be immediately reported to the RICAS Service Center at 855-222-8936.

It is recommended that parents/guardians be informed when a student-specific irregularity is reported.

When reporting an irregularity to RIDE, the following information should be provided:

- a description of the alleged incident and the date it occurred
- the name of the school involved, along with the district and school code
- the name(s) of the individual(s) involved in the incident
- the specific test(s) and specific session(s) affected
- in student-specific reports: the student's name, date of birth, grade, and State-Assigned Student Identifier (SASID)



# RICAS Test Security Requirements

---

## E. School Observations

In order to ensure the security and proper administration of the RICAS program, RIDE conducts announced monitoring visits to schools to ensure that testing procedures are followed and to obtain feedback for improvement. At least two regular classrooms should be visited by RIDE staff and at least one accommodation session, if possible. Additional information about school selection and visit procedures are available in the *2018 RI Test Coordinator Handbook* on the RIDE website at [www.ride.ri.gov/RICAS](http://www.ride.ri.gov/RICAS).

RIDE observers will confirm that all test security requirements in Part I of the TCM are being met, including the following:

- Materials are stored properly.
- Staff have been trained.
- Test administrators are administering tests appropriately.
- The testing environment is secure.