

Preventing Student Cell Phone Access during Testing

Updated 8/28/15

The Rule: *Section 3.2 Student-Initiated Test Improprieties* of the Test Administration Manual prohibits students from “accessing or using electronic equipment (e.g., cell phones, PDAs, iPods, or electronic translators) during testing.”

Promising Practices: Preventing students from accessing cell phones during testing is an important part of ensuring security of the test environment. However, enforcing this rule poses a variety of challenges for districts. Various districts have reported using a combination of the following methods to prevent student cell phone access during testing:

- Student handbooks contain the policy that cell phone access/use is prohibited on the school premises, during school hours, and / or during testing.
- TAs require that students leave cell phones in their lockers. If students bring cell phones into to the testing environment, TAs instruct students to “check in” their phones with the TA. The TA holds onto the phones until the students leave the testing environment. To prevent theft, some districts have TAs lock phones in a secure place accessible only to the TA.
- TAs remind students before each testing event that cell phones are not allowed. To increase awareness, some districts have also sent home reminders about the district policy to parents.
- Districts have established disciplinary policies for students who break the rule, ranging from detentions to suspension depending on the severity of the violation.