



TESTING PROGRAM  
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Introduction

The Seattle School District has a need to monitor students' academic progress, interests, and liabilities as part of its responsibility to students and the public. Regular and systematic measures of progress are useful guides for parents, counselors, teachers, and students; they provide indices of progress measured by individual potential, system-wide standards, and national norms; they enable those directly concerned to adapt instructional programs to the best interests of children. In addition, these measures of progress are essential tools for evaluating teaching methods and mastery' of subject content. Achievement tests provide data by which teachers, administrators, and Board members can measure the appropriateness of subject content and the efficiency of classroom techniques.

The testing service is expected to provide objective data about students' academic achievement and progress, aptitudes, abilities, and interest. The testing service should provide information by which the instructional services of the Seattle Public Schools can be compared with national achievements, aptitudes, and abilities among children so that necessary instructional program adoptions are possible. It should provide a means of comparing achievements, aptitudes and abilities of students within schools, of classes within schools, or of students within classes, with city-wide standards.

As a prerequisite for providing such data, the tests and measurement devices used must meet certain standards of good testing practice--those of reliability, validity, and standardization.

Excluded from the following procedures are those tests utilized by teachers as part of the daily instructional process. Examples of such tests are the end of chapter or unit tests in textbooks and quizzes and examinations developed by the teacher for use in the classroom.

Identification

Definitions

1. Tests for District Sanctioned Purposes - These tests or measurement devices include those whose use is requested by District staff to collect data for purposes directly related to School District activities, information needs and/or legally mandated requirements.



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2. Tests for Research Purposes - These tests include that class of tests or measurement devices requested either by District staff or individuals or groups outside the District for use in collecting data not directly related to School District activities, needs for information, or legally mandated requirements (i.e.: data collection related to Master, Doctoral theses, course requirements, requests by consulting organizations, etc.).
3. Reliability - The consistency with which a test measures whatever it is designed to measure.
4. Validity - The extent to which a test fulfills the purpose for which it is being used.
5. Standardization of Test Administration - The establishment of fixed procedures for administering and scoring a test.

Procedures

1. Review of Tests and/or Other Measurement Devices
  - a. Copies of all tests and/or other measurement devices will be sent by the individual or group requesting a test to be administered to the Testing Office, Administrative and Service Center.
  - b. The requestor will also send along with the tests or measurement devices detailed information concerning:
    - (1) The statement of need.
    - (2) The content domain or objectives being measured (if applicable).
    - (3) An outline of the test development process (if the tests were developed commercially or by another organization, the technical manual should suffice).
    - (4) The population for which the test was designed.
    - (5) The directions for interpretation of the results and an outline of the situations for which the results may be appropriately used.



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- (6) Evidence of test reliability.
- (7) Evidence of test validity (this may be content validity only, in which case the items must be clearly related to the objectives asked for above).
- (8) The standardized test administration processes and procedures.
- (9) Definition of target population.
- (10) Location of test administration.

If the tests or measurement devices are to be used for District sanctioned purposes, copies of the above material should be sent to the Testing Office no later than three months before requested date of test administration to allow adequate time for review.

If the tests are to be used for research purposes, the above information should be submitted along with the "Application for Research..." form (see E 01.01).

- C. No tests or measurement devices containing any questions about a student's personal beliefs and practices in sex, family life, morality, and religion or any questions about his parents' or guardians' beliefs and practices in the same shall be administered to any student in the public schools of Seattle unless the parent or guardian gives written permission for the student to take such test, questionnaire, or examination. The nature of the parent permission forms must be negotiated between the Evaluation Office and the researcher.
- d. The test review process outlined below will be implemented to cover all group tests that are used or may be used within the District. The ongoing review of the individual psychological and intelligence tests will either be integrated into this process or become a connected parallel process.

The content and technical manuals, or each test, or test battery, or measurement device will be reviewed by various subcommittees of the Superintendent's Evaluation and Testing Advisory Committee (SETAC) (i.e., Content Review, Test Data Review, Evaluation, Bias, and Teacher Review).

- (1) Content specialists will judge the adequacy of content coverage, the appropriateness-of the items, and the test's compatibility with the ongoing District instructional program.



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- (2) Teacher groups will review the tests relative to content, ease of administration, interpretation of results, format attract ability, and clarity of administrator's manual. The teachers will also comment on the methods the publisher utilizes to summarize results and the publisher's recommendations as to the use of these results.
- (3) The Supervisor of Testing will judge the technical data as to its adequacy for the stated purposes--norms, test development process, reliability, validity, ease of scoring, conversion to the District's test data handling system, its appropriateness for use in longitudinal studies, and its part in the total testing program both present and future.
- (4) The Evaluation Office will review the tests in regards to their use in program evaluation, longitudinal studies, development of expectancy tables, etc.

The role of SETAC will be to initiate and oversee the test review process. Tests may be entered into the process either by SETAC or through the Testing Office alone. Further, the SETAC will consolidate the evaluations arising out of the process and develop the recommendations as to the test usage or adoption.

Tests for special purposes will be reviewed by subcommittees with chairpersons from the SETAC who have the knowledge and skills in the particular area measured.

- e. Recommendations will be made by SETAC as to the scope of the test, i.e., the dates of administration, particular target populations and the size of the target population. This will be done in order that certain students or schools are not "over tested" or to avoid a conflict with the existing District Test Schedule.



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- f. If the test or measurement device meets the indices of quality (see 1.d. of this procedure) as set by the various subcommittees of SETAC, that committee will recommend to the Superintendent that the device be used for its stated purpose. Should the Superintendent approve, the test or measurement device will carry the endorsement of the Superintendent and of SETAC on its cover. Its administration will come under the auspices of the Testing Office, subject to the details of the arrangements negotiated between that office and the test developer or the group requesting the administration of that test.
- g. Tests or measurement devices used for research purposes will be reviewed by the Testing Office, as part of the Research Review Process. The tests or other devices will be judged as to their adequacy to perform the intended research function, the amount of time needed, and the existing or anticipated testing load on the population to be studied.

2. Quality Control

- a. Tests and measurement devices developed by commercial organizations or others outside the District that are to be used for District sanctioned purposes will also be reviewed for quality by SETAC.
- b. Tests and measurement devices developed within the District and possessing the information requested in Section 1 .b. of these procedures that are to be used for District sanctioned purposes will also be reviewed for quality by SETAC.
- c. Those District individuals or groups who are either using a test or measurement device that does not meet the indices of quality as outlined in Section 1 .b. of these procedures or are charged with the development of a test or measurement device will contact the Testing Office giving detailed information of what they wish to accomplish.
- d. The Testing Office will search the test files for tests or measurement devices that may be substituted.
- e. If no existing test or measurement device can be substituted, a member of the Testing Office will become a member of the user's project team assisting in the development and analysis of the testing device and in the reliability and validity studies.

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- f. The test or measurement device will also be entered into the test review process of SETAC and its progress in development and analysis monitored by that committee.
- g. If shortcomings are found in regards to any of the variables listed in Section 1.b. in those devices that are developed by District staff for District sanctioned purposes, recommendations for modifications will be made to the test developer by SETAC through the Testing Office. .
- h. Upon completion of the final review, the Testing Office will notify the individual or group requesting the administration of the test regarding the recommendation of SET AC to the Superintendent as to acceptance or rejection of the request and the resultant decision of the Superintendent.
- i. If the test or measurement device meets the indices of quality set by SETAC, it will carry the endorsement of that committee and of the Superintendent on its cover. (Specific criteria for quality depends upon the type of testing device and type of reliability and validity sought.)
- j. Should the test or measurement device not meet such indices, the Testing Office will recommend in writing to the developer or user and to the Superintendent that such test or measurement device not be used in any situation that would allow decisions which would affect the education program of a student.

3. Test Monitoring

- a. The Testing Office will maintain a file for each school or program detailing the testing activity covered by these procedures that has occurred and is scheduled to occur in the school or program. Each file will contain a listing of the test name, date, and target population for the present school and for the ones preceding and following.
- b. Upon receipt of a request to administer a test that has not already been mandated by the District and reflected On the District Test Schedule, the Testing Office will review the files of the target school(s) and make tentative recommendations as to the advisability of the test administration based upon the testing load of the school(s).



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- c. If the test or measurement device is to be used for research purposes, the Testing Office will inform the Evaluation Office of the recommendation through the Research Review Process.

Should the research project be accepted, the Evaluation Office will notify the Testing Office of the fact listing the schools finally selected and a description of the target population. This information will be entered in the appropriate files by the Testing Office

- d. If the test and measurement device for District sanctioned purposes is to be administered to gather data for its item analysis or reliability or validity study, the test developer will notify the Testing Office of the time, date, and location of administration, and the target population. The Testing Office will review the past and anticipated testing load of the target population and notify the test developer as to the advisability of testing that population.

Should the recommendation not be acceptable to the test developer, the test developer will meet with line administration and the Testing Office to resolve differences.

Once the target population is decided upon the Testing Office will note same in the appropriate file(s).

- e. For those tests or measurement devices mandated by the District or State or other organizations with mandating authority, or those tests or measurement devices that are to be used to meet certain categorical requirements, the Testing Office will be notified by the responsible individual as to time, place, target population, and test name. This information will be placed in the appropriate file(s).

4. Services

- a. The Testing Office will provide test data from the test history file to District staff with approved need-to-know status, or to researchers whose projects have been approved by the Superintendent. These requests may be made either through the Service Request or the Resource Allocation Plan procedures. No test data will be released without the signature of the Supervisor of Testing.



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- b. In general, the Testing Office when receiving a request for group achievement, aptitude, or ability data of an individual student from that student's parent or legal guardian will refer that individual to the appropriate principal or program manager. Should the principal or program manager be unavailable, the parents or legal guardians must submit a signed request to the Testing Office with the child's full name, birthdate, address, school, and grade level. The Testing Office will match this information with the Student Directory for confirmation before releasing the results.
  - c. Test data (4.b.) on an individual student is available to that student's principal, program manager, or teacher upon request.
  - d. The Testing Office will maintain a file of test or measurement device specimens that may be reviewed by staff, researchers, and citizens upon request.
  - e. The Testing Office will provide potential users with information concerning the quality and use of a given test, test battery, or other measurement device upon request, should such information be available.
  - f. The Testing Office will, upon request, recommend particular testing devices for potential users for specified purposes.
  - g. The Testing Office, upon request, will assist potential users in analyzing whether or not there is a need for a test device and if so, the type and availability of the testing device.
  - h. "The Testing Office will assist potential users in the development of tests and measurement devices. This service will be requested through the service request process.
  - i. The Testing Office will assist users in conducting reliability, validity, item analysis, and other studies concerning the tests and measurement devices. This service will be requested through the service request process.
5. District Testing Program - The general purpose of SETAC is to provide District management with a broad base of oversight for all evaluation and testing activity. SET AC functions pertaining to testing are presented here; those pertaining to evaluation are contained in the Evaluation Procedure elsewhere in this manual.



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- a. The Superintendent's Evaluation and Testing Advisory Committee (SETAC) will be convened each year to make recommendations to the Superintendent regarding the content and context of the District's testing and assessment program. The committee will be chaired by the Assistant Superintendent for General Administration and District Relations. The membership of this committee will be determined as follows:
- ( 1 ) The Testing Office will select the membership to represent the various users of test data. The ethnic and sex makeup of the committee will reflect the District's criteria for such committees.
  - ( 2 ) A recommended membership list will be sent to the Superintendent for approval.
  - ( 3 ) The Superintendent will notify the prospective members of their selection.
  - ( 4 ) Should a prospective member decline, the Testing Office will recommend alternatives to the Superintendent who will in turn notify the prospective member.
  - ( 5 ) The Supervisor of Testing will convene the first SETAC meeting.
- b. Prior to the beginning of each school year, a District Testing Schedule will be issued outlining the contents, dates, and deadlines of the required and optional testing program. A supplemental list of tests approved for use by SETAC and the Superintendent will also be issued. The District Testing Schedule will be developed as follows:
- ( 1 ) The Testing Office will develop a draft of the District Testing Schedule based upon the recommendations of SETAC as directed by the Superintendent and the testing program mandated by the District, the State, and various categorically funded programs.
  - ( 2 ) The District Testing Schedule will be submitted to SETAC for review and approval.
  - ( 3 ) The SETAC will recommend the schedule to the Superintendent.



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- (4) Upon the approval of the Superintendent, the Testing Office will construct the District Testing Schedule, noting the approval of the Superintendent and SETAC, and distribute it as identified above.
- c. The Testing Office will monitor the compliance with the required testing schedule as follows:
- (1) The principals and program managers will be notified of the deadline for the return of the test input documents for scoring prior to the test administration both by memos and through the District Testing Schedule.
  - (2) Unless the principal or program manager notifies the Testing Office and arranges for a delay, the input documents will be required to be in the Testing Office by that deadline.
  - (3) Should such documents not be in the Testing Office by the deadline, the appropriate Administrative Supervisor will be notified and asked to take corrective action.
  - (4) Any exceptions to required return of such documents must be approved by the Testing Office.
  - (5) Tests on the optional schedule will not be processed after the deadline unless the principal or program manager has made previous arrangements with the Testing Office.