

A Note from Don Smith

As you move to administer the high stakes assessments, be sure to adhere to the district's test administration and security standards which have been outlined in the Test Security Manual. Some keys points to remember are:

- Keep test questions and responses confidential
- Follow the logistical procedures for administering the assessment
- Adhere to ethical procedures in giving the assessment
- Be prepared to report any and all testing irregularities or violations.

Donald R. Smith, CFE, CPA

Embodying Ethics

Alena was glad when the district outlined the standards for districtwide test security. She'd read about the shenanigans that had occurred in other districts and was proud that our Evaluation and Accountability group had taken steps to make sure none of that happened here.

She'd taught her students the curriculum and took a little time the weeks before the test to familiarize them with the assessment format. She was confident they would do well. The morning of the assessment, she wished her students good luck before she walked down the hallway toward the class to which she had been assigned as test administrator.

Everything seemed to be going well a few hours into the assessment day. The group she was testing was focused and quiet. The helpers were sitting in the hallway at their duty posts, the testing monitor had looked in, realized all was well, and kept going. Alena went to the classroom door and beckoned to the helper so that he would come relieve her for a few minutes. She needed to go to the restroom in the teachers' lounge.

As she walked by her classroom on the way to the lounge, Alena glanced in. She was shocked. Mr. Buard, her students' test administrator, was out of his seat hovering over the students. She watched as he went from student to student looking at the answers they had bubbled on their answer sheets. He was so engrossed in his work that he didn't notice her as she moved closer to the classroom's door.

She looked in and realized that all her students had their testing booklets turned to the same page. All her years of teaching let her know this was an improbable occurrence. So she paid closer attention to Mr. Buard and what he was doing. She listened as he asked two of the students the same question, "Is that the answer your teacher would want you to mark?" Both students promptly erased the answer they had bubbled and selected another. One of the students obviously still had the incorrect answer as Mr. Buard asked her the question again. More erasing...more bubbling. He then said, "Everyone turn to the next page."

Before she knew it, Alena's feet had carried her from the doorway straight to Mr. Buard. She confronted him and told him he was cheating and that he needed to stop. Mr. Buard pretended to be innocent. He said he didn't know what Alena was talking about.

The children were watching everything that was going on between the two teachers. Alena stopped talking to Mr. Buard and told the students to return to their work. She then asked Mr. Buard to step into the hallway

She let Mr. Buard have it. She reminded him of the information they received at the pre-assessment orientation session, the oath he had signed, the possibility of having his certificate pulled if he was found guilty of cheating. He glared at her and was about to respond when the test monitor appeared in the doorway of the classroom across the hall.

The monitor quickly moved from that doorway to the door in which Alena and Mr. Buard were standing. He looked into the classroom. The children were working quietly. He then turned his gaze to Alena and Mr. Buard. He rapidly asked them a few questions. "Why is this group of students left unattended with testing materials?" "Which one of you should be in this classroom?" "If only one of you should be in this classroom, where does the other one of you belong?" "What kind of cheating are you discussing?"

What should Alena do?

- A. Explain the situation to the monitor and report Mr. Buard as part of the explanation.
- B. Ask for an opportunity to go and talk with one of the campus administrators before she answers the questions.
- C. Turn to Mr. Buard and say "Well?" Listen to his explanation and then go along with whatever he says.

See the bottom of the first column of page 2 for the answer.

Past and Present Ethical Thinking

"Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful."

Attributed to Samuel Johnson
English Poet

Dallas ISD Policy You Need to Know

The District adheres to the guidelines the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has established for maintaining the integrity of testing materials. Under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools, the Evaluation and Accountability Division assures tests are administered; the integrity of the test administration process is maintained; and every test administrator receives at least annual training in testing procedures.

EKB (Legal) is the policy in which state assessment is discussed.

Integrity in the Headlines

London

Great Britain's top anti-terror official resigned last week after he inadvertently exposed Top Secret documents to press photographers while getting out of a car. The content of the documents, which covered a planned anti-terror raid, were legible when magnified.

From Ethics Line

Mexico

Mexican drug cartel leaders have YouTube pages which feature their exploits and tout their virtues. The pages include videos featuring professional singers who "croon about cartel leaders while images of murdered victims fade one into the next."

From USA Today

Scranton, PA

The superintendent of Pittston Area School District, a small school district in Pennsylvania, requested a leave of absence after being charged with public corruption for taking thousands of dollars in bribes for granting district contracts.

From CitizensVoice.com

Detroit, MI

The new Inspector General for Detroit Public Schools plans to send several public corruption cases to the District Attorney in the upcoming weeks. The Inspector General is working leads on crimes that include theft, vendor fraud, ghost employees and "double-dipping by staff members who work at the school system and another job at the same time."

From Detnews.com

Ethics, Integrity and You

Students in many college level Ethics classes are required to respond to realistic and practical ethical quandaries. One of the frequently used quandaries is a workplace scenario. A modified version is being presented below for your consideration.

Your colleague is forever taking credit for your and other people's work. Is it okay to exact a little revenge and for once take credit for her labors?

Making Ethical Decisions



People make ethical decisions every day. However, at times, a situation presents itself that poses a decision-making dilemma. This section will feature common ethical decision-making models that may prove useful to readers when they are trying to address an ethical dilemma.

This six steps decision-making model was developed for Penn State Engineering students who used it as a guide when they completed the Ethical Case of the Month.

Step 1: Determine the facts in the situation

Obtain all the unbiased facts possible

Step 2: Define the Stakeholders

Identify those with a vested interest in the outcome

Step 3: Assess the motivations of the Stakeholders

Step 4: Develop alternative solutions and examine the pros and cons of each

Step 5: Seek additional assistance, as appropriate

Review policy, talk to peers, rely on personal experience, stop and do some personal reflection

Step 6: Select the best course of action

Pick the course of action which satisfies the highest ethical values.

Contact Us For Questions About Employee Ethics and Integrity or to Report Fraud, Waste or Abuse

Visit us in person at 2909 N. Buckner Blvd., Room 804

Call us at (972) 925-8850

Send a fax to (972) 794-3568

Send a letter to the OPR Post Office Box:

Office of Professional Responsibility

P.O. Box 181509

Dallas, TX 75218-8509

Visit us on the web at www.dallasisd.org/about/integrity or at www.dallasisd.org/spanish/about/integrity/

The correct answer is A. Alena must report Mr. Beard to maintain the integrity of the school's test administration process. If there was no wrongdoing on his part, an investigation will exonerate him.



Dallas Independent School District