

Participation in State Assessment Committees

The Florida Department of Education maintains open communication with Florida educators regarding how the state assessment system and its various associated processes and activities might be improved. Educators may be nominated to state assessment committees by their school district superintendent, district-level administrators, or peers serving on state assessment committees.

Annual Committees—Rotating Membership

Bias Review Committee—This committee, composed of approximately 15–30 Florida educators representative of Florida’s regional, racial/ethnic, and cultural diversity, reviews passages, prompts, and items for potential bias. Reviewers look for the following types of bias: gender, racial/ethnic, linguistic, religious, geographic, and socioeconomic. A test item (or prompt or passage) is considered biased if characteristics unrelated to the skill being measured may result in an unfair advantage or disadvantage for a particular group of students. Participants in this committee include representatives of Florida school districts, universities, and statewide organizations that serve the various groups potentially affected by the types of bias described, such as Title I and English language learner (ELL) students. Every attempt is made by the Department to represent the various groups potentially affected by bias at a level at or above their representation in the general population. Each Bias Review Committee meets once a year at the same time as the Community Sensitivity Review Committee meeting.

Community Sensitivity Review Committee—This committee, composed of approximately 15–30 Florida citizens associated with a variety of organizations and institutions, reviews passages, prompts, and items for issues of potential concern to members of the community at large. This review ensures that the primary purpose of assessing achievement is not undermined by the inadvertent inclusion of test material that may be deemed inappropriate by parents and other citizens. Reviewers are asked to consider whether the subject matter and language of each reading and writing passage, writing prompt, and test item reviewed will be acceptable to Florida students, their parents, and other members of Florida communities. Participants in these committees include representatives of statewide religious organizations, parent organizations, community-based organizations, cultural groups (e.g., Hispanic or Native American), school boards, school district advisory council members, and leaders in business and industry from across the state. Each Community Sensitivity Review Committee meets once a year at the same time as the Bias Review Committee meeting.

Item Content Review Committee—This committee is composed of approximately 25 groups of educators who serve to review reading and writing passages, writing prompts, and reading, mathematics, science, and social studies test items to determine whether the passages and items are appropriate for the grade level or subject for which each is proposed. In addition, these groups, composed of 6–10 educators each, are asked to evaluate whether the items measure the standards or benchmarks, are clearly worded, have a correct answer, and are of appropriate difficulty. Participants include teachers from the targeted grade level and subject area, as well as school and district curriculum specialists. The Item Content Review Committee meets each year, usually in the fall.

Rangefinder Committee—After text-based writing prompts are field-tested, a representative set of student responses for each prompt is scored to establish guidelines for the handscoring of all student responses. A group of approximately 6–10 Florida educators for each grade level tested establishes the range of responses that represent each score point of the rubric for each domain. As a result of these meetings, training materials for handscorers are assembled prior to handscoring of the operational prompts. Participants in these committees include teachers from the targeted grade level, as well as school and district curriculum specialists. Participants will usually have served on other state assessment committees, such as the Item Content Review Committee, prior to serving on a Rangefinder Committee.

Rubric Validation Committee—This committee is composed of approximately 3–6 groups. Each group of approximately 4–6 educators reviews field-test responses to machine-scored constructed response (MSCR) items for ELA Reading and Mathematics to determine whether all possible correct answers have been included in the scoring key. The various responses are examined and judged as either incorrect or correct. Committee members are asked to evaluate the possibility of finding the answer through an alternate process and to determine if the resulting answers are acceptable. On the basis of their recommendations, the Department establishes rules for how each MSCR item will be scored. Participants include teachers from the targeted grade level and subject area, as well as school and district curriculum specialists. The Rubric Validation Committee meets in the spring of each year.

Science Expert Review Committee—Due to the theory-based nature of the content area, all potential science test items undergo an extra level of scrutiny. Participants in this committee review newly developed science test items to ensure the accuracy and currency of the science content. This group of approximately 10–15 participants includes practicing scientists from the private sector and university-level science researchers and faculty. The Science Expert Review Committee meets once a year, after Item Content Review.

Social Studies Content Expert Forms Review Committee—This committee evaluates items selected for inclusion on the Civics End-of-Course Assessment to ensure that the content has not been compromised by any recent government action and for efficacy and suitability for inclusion in a high-stakes assessment. The Social Studies Content Expert Forms Review Committee meets annually.

Technical Advisory Committee—This committee is composed of approximately 10–15 professionals with expertise in psychometrics. Members include Florida district assessment coordinators and representatives of universities and state agencies outside Florida. In addition, the psychometric advisors of the Department’s contractors participate in the meetings. Committee members assist the Department by reviewing technical decisions and documents and by providing advice regarding approaches the Department should use to analyze and report state assessment data. This committee meets once or twice a year.

Ad Hoc Committees—Rotating Membership

ELA Content Advisory Committee—This committee is composed of approximately 20–25 language arts professionals from schools, school districts, and universities. This group provides guidance, as needed, regarding the ELA Reading and text-based Writing components. The members of this committee advise the Department about how standards should be assessed, the rubrics, the Calibration Scoring Guides, the texts and prompts to be used, and the content of the *Test Item Specifications* documents. When needed, this committee may meet once or twice a year.

Mathematics Content Advisory Committee—This committee is composed of approximately 20–25 mathematics professionals from schools, school districts, and universities. The members of this committee advise the Department about the scope of the Mathematics assessments. Their recommendations may include the standards that should be assessed on a statewide test, the item types recommended for each assessed standard, and the content of the *Test Item Specifications* documents. When needed, this committee may meet once or twice a year.

Science Content Advisory Committees—This committee is composed of approximately 20–25 science professionals from schools, school districts, and universities. The members of this committee advise the Department about the scope of the science assessments. Their recommendations may include the benchmarks that should be tested on a statewide assessment and the content of the *Test Item Specifications* documents. When needed, this committee may meet once or twice a year.

Social Studies Content Advisory Committee—This committee is composed of approximately 15–25 social studies professionals from schools, school districts, and universities. The members of this committee advise the Department about the scope of social studies assessments. Their recommendations may include the benchmarks that should be tested on a statewide assessment and the content of the *Test Item Specifications* documents. When needed, this committee may meet once or twice a year.