BACKGROUND

To ensure accountability for student learning and to meet Federal and State reporting requirements, the Maryland State Board of Education requires the administration of assessments in schools throughout the State, as referenced in Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.03.04. To ensure that tests are properly administered and results accurately reported, the State Board has established policies governing test administration, data reporting, and test procurement. The Board has identified violations related to test security which may include, but are not limited to, data collection and testing behavior. Guidelines have been set related to sanctions to be imposed when test security or data reporting violations occur. These policies are grounded in accepted professional standards regarding the administration and use of tests [cf. *The Standards for Educational and Psychological Tests* (1999), published by the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education].

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STATE TEST ADMINISTRATION AND SECURITY COMMITTEE (STASC)

The STASC is comprised of at least four members to include the State Test Security Officer (STASC Chairman), Assistant State Superintendent for Curriculum and Assessment, Section Chief for Assessment, and legal counsel from the Office of the Attorney General. The STASC will:

1. Work with LEAs to ensure standardization of testing conditions.
2. Ensure fairness and equity in state mandated testing.
3. Work with the LEAs in following test security procedures as mandated by COMAR 13A.03.04.
4. Meet at least monthly to review Testing Incident Report Forms and any related matters.
5. Direct and conduct activities to help ensure maintenance of test security on all aspects of Maryland's testing programs as they are developed, administered, scored, and reported.

To ensure the integrity of the testing program statewide, MSDE's STASC uses the methods listed below to assist in identifying potential test security incidents.

- Administration monitoring by MSDE
- Alerts from the vendor during scoring
- Analysis of improbable gains
- Erasure Pattern Analyses / Multiple Mark Analyses
- Reports from the Local School Systems
- Reports directly to MSDE

PROCESS FOR IMPOSING SANCTIONS FOR TESTING VIOLATIONS

- When reporting a testing violation/irregularity, the LEA is to recommend sanction(s) as appropriate for the personnel involved in the incident.
- MSDE reviews the LEA recommendations and may recommend an alternate sanction based on sanctions issued in similar cases across the state.
- Sanctions imposed by the LEA may include:
  o Personnel sanctions against LEA employees are a form of progressive action that *may* begin with a verbal warning, progressing to a written letter of warning, a written letter of reprimand, removal from duties, suspension, termination, and/or loss of credentials. A letter of warning differs from a letter of reprimand in that the letter of warning is not typically considered to be a disciplinary action.
  o Request to MSDE for the suspension or revocation of admin/teaching credentials
- Sanctions/penalties taken by MSDE may include:
  o Personnel sanctions against MSDE employees
  o Invalidation of test scores due to improbable test gains, inappropriate collaboration, or breach of security
  o Suspension or revocation of Admin/Teaching Credentials
  o Censure of School System
  o Recovery of Costs incurred as a result of the violation