

## Testing Guidance for Schools and SGOs

The Accountability Act requires SGOs to ensure that qualifying schools receiving scholarship funds annually administer achievement tests to those students' receiving scholarships. If a school fails to comply, the SGO must inform the Alabama Department of Revenue of this failure immediately.

Schools receiving scholarship funds from Renaissance Scholarships, Inc. must annually administer either the state achievement tests or nationally recognized norm-referenced test that measure learning gains in math and language arts in grades that require testing under the accountability testing laws of the state for public schools. Testing is required for grades 2-8 and grades 10-11. Tests should include national percentile scores and scale scores if both are available.

Test scores must be made available to the SGOs in a timely manner, so that they can meet the August 15<sup>th</sup> reporting deadline for ISSR.

When choosing a standardized test to give to students, schools should ensure that the tests have the following:

- Test should be norm- or criterion-referenced or have some other standards or benchmarks that allow ISSR to compare scholarship recipient performance to student performance in the U.S and/or track progress against a set of validated measures.
- Test should have English/Language Arts, Math, and Reading scores. Any other subjects are not included in our reports.
- Test should provide standardized or scale scores.
- Test should provide national percentile scores.
- If a student who should be tested, was not tested, please include a letter from the school explaining why (e.g., absent the day of testing).

There were several instances in the past where the schools sent questionable test scores and/or sent information that potentially represents FERPA violations. Here is some additional guidance for schools in reporting test scores:

- Schools should send scanned copies of official test scores from the testing company with the normative year visible, if it is included in the test report.
- Ideally, there will be a separate report for each student. Lists or tables with students' scores that are not generated by the testing company are problematic because they cannot be verified.
  - A photograph of a scantron with the student's name on it is not acceptable/
  - We cannot accept an email in which someone provides a score, unless the forwarded email also has a scanned copy of the test report.

- *The scores should only include students who are listed on the SGO demographic file.* Scores from other students either need to be removed OR the identifying information needs to be redacted before sending it to ISSR.
- If the school sends a doctor's note when the student is absent for testing, please note that in the test index and demographic form (and include it with the test scores).