



NEWS RELEASE

Utah State Board of Education

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Some Utah Schools Experience Problems with New RISE Tests

SALT LAKE CITY – Technical problems with Utah’s new computer-adaptive RISE tests affecting 18,429 third through eighth grade students are being reported to the Utah State Board of Education (USBE).

Assessment and Accountability staff are working with RISE vendor Questar to determine any impacts the service interruption on April 25 has on the validity of the students’ test results.

“We are using a new testing system this year,” said Assistant Superintendent of Student Learning Darin Nielsen. “We were planning for – though not expecting – the kinds of issues associated with any new computer testing system and have been transparent with districts and charter schools about problems affecting our students during the winter and spring testing windows. We continue to work with our vendor to provide a valid and reliable state assessment system.”

The RISE assessments are given annually to third through eighth graders in the areas of language arts and math. Beginning in grade four, science is also tested. Writing is tested in fifth and eighth grade.

This is the first year that RISE tests have been administered although there is continuity in standards and content with the previous assessment. Before this year, SAGE tests were used. SAGE tests were part of a five-year contract with the American Institutes for Research (AIR). That contract expired in

2018. A bidding process was put in place for a new contract. The Utah State Board of Education awarded Questar Assessment Inc. the contract through the 2023-24 school year in accordance with the state procurement process.

Not all students take the RISE test on the same day. The issue only affects students who took tests on Thursday or who attempted to take the science test today. Students who have already submitted their tests and students who have not yet taken a RISE test are unaffected.

Early reports show a slowdown began in the testing system at 10:45 a.m. Thursday, April 25 causing the vendor's servers to drop in and out of service. Some students taking the tests would have received error notices as they attempted to submit their test. A total of 85,559 students have taken RISE tests so far this year; 64,829 of those students had their scores successfully submitted. An additional 2,301 students had not started the tests before problem were reported leaving 18,429 student tests – or 5.9 percent of third through eighth graders –in progress at the time of the issue. Questar believes the data from those tests can be recovered. Problems that began Thursday are impacting the ability to provide science tests today. These issues should be resolved by Monday. The testing window for RISE remains open for several more weeks.

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