# Initial ELPAC Security Incidents and Appeals Procedure Guide

## Table of Contents

**Introduction** .............................................................................................................................1  
  Security Incidents and Appeals Procedure Guide Content .........................................................2  
  Intended Audience of This Manual ..........................................................................................2  
  Document Conventions ...........................................................................................................2  

**Chapter 1. Test Security Incident Management** .................................................................3  
  Background ..................................................................................................................................4  
  Required Action Steps ..............................................................................................................5  
  Commonly Reported Security Issues and How to Avoid Them ................................................8  

**Chapter 2. The STAIRS/Appeals Process** .............................................................................9  
  About the STAIRS/Appeals Process ........................................................................................10  
  Purpose ........................................................................................................................................10  
  Use .............................................................................................................................................11  
  Coordinator Procedures ............................................................................................................11  
  When Not to Report in STAIRS .................................................................................................12  
  Submit the Information Requested on the STAIRS/Appeals Screen ....................................13  
  Required Information ..............................................................................................................13  
  Cautions When Using the STAIRS/Appeals Process .............................................................15  
  Steps for Submitting an Incident .............................................................................................16  
  Search Incidents and Check Statuses ......................................................................................17  
  View a STAIRS Case ..................................................................................................................20  
  Withdraw a Case .......................................................................................................................22  
  Communicate with the CDE About a Case ..............................................................................25  

**Chapter 3. Appeals** ..............................................................................................................27  
  About the Appeals Process .......................................................................................................28  
  Cautions About Filing an Appeal .............................................................................................29  
  When to File an Appeal ...........................................................................................................29  
  Postdecision Actions .................................................................................................................30  
  Reasons for Rejection ...............................................................................................................31  
  Online System Appeals Types .................................................................................................31  
  Checking Appeals Information .................................................................................................38  
  View an Appeals Status in STAIRS..........................................................................................38  
  View Most Recent Appeals in the TOMS [Score Status] Tab ................................................42  
  How to Look Up Student Information in the Completion Status System ..............................46  

**Appendices** ..........................................................................................................................47  
  Appendix A. Test Security and Incident Chart .........................................................................48  
  Appendix B. Incident Types, Descriptions, and Actions in the ELPAC STAIRS/Appeals Process ........................................................................................................................................52  
  Appendix C. STAIRS/Appeals Process Flowchart ..................................................................59  
  Appendix D. Incident Types and Questions on the TOMS STAIRS/Appeals Screen ............60  
  Appendix E. STAIRS Applicable Testing Incidents .................................................................67  
  Appendix F. Reasons for Appeal Types in the Appeals System ...............................................74
List of Tables

Table 1. Key Symbols and Document Conventions ................................................................. 2
Table 2. Search for Incidents Fields .......................................................................................... 18
Table 3. Search for Appeals Fields ........................................................................................... 39
Table 4. Columns in the “Most Recent Appeals” Section of the Student Profile Screen ...... 45

List of Figures

Figure 1. Impropriety process flow diagram ............................................................................. 5
Figure 2. Irregularity process flow diagram ............................................................................. 6
Figure 3. Breach process flow diagram ................................................................................... 7
Figure 4. Buttons on ELPAC.org ............................................................................................ 16
Figure 5. Search for Incidents screen ..................................................................................... 17
Figure 6. STAIRS search results ............................................................................................ 20
Figure 7. STAIRS Summary screen ......................................................................................... 21
Figure 8. STAIRS Summary with the [WITHDRAW] button .................................................... 23
Figure 9. [Notes] tab in STAIRS/Appeals ............................................................................. 26
Figure 10. Search for Appeals screen ..................................................................................... 38
Figure 11. Appeals search results ........................................................................................... 41
Figure 12. Search for Students screen ..................................................................................... 42
Figure 13. Student search results ............................................................................................ 43
Figure 14. [Score Status] tab on the Student Profile screen .................................................... 44
Figure 15. “Most Recent Appeals” section of the Student Profile screen ............................ 44
# Acronyms and Initialisms Used in the *Initial ELPAC Security Incidents and Appeals Procedure Guide*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELPAC</td>
<td>English Language Proficiency Assessments for California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAASPP</td>
<td>California Assessment for Student Performance and Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CalTAC</td>
<td>California Technical Assistance Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDE</td>
<td>California Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDS code</td>
<td>County-District-School code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEI</td>
<td>Data Entry Interface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELAS</td>
<td>English Language Acquisition Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEP</td>
<td>individualized education program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEA</td>
<td>local educational agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSVP</td>
<td>Rotating Score Validation Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSID</td>
<td>Statewide Student Identifier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSR</td>
<td>Student Score Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAIRS</td>
<td>Security and Test Administration Incident Reporting System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDS</td>
<td>test delivery system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THSS</td>
<td>Teacher Hand Scoring System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOMS</td>
<td>Test Operations Management System</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction
Security Incidents and Appeals Procedure Guide Content

Intended Audience of This Manual

The Initial English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) Security Incidents and Appeals Procedure Guide provides instructions to local educational agency (LEA) ELPAC coordinators and site ELPAC coordinators who will file reports of testing improprieties, irregularities, and breaches that were encountered during the Initial ELPAC test administration.

Document Conventions

Table 1 lists key symbols and typographical conventions used in this manual.

Table 1. Key Symbols and Document Conventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>!</td>
<td><strong>Warning:</strong> This symbol accompanies important information regarding actions that may cause fatal errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>!</td>
<td><strong>Alert:</strong> This symbol accompanies important information regarding a task that may cause minor errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Note:</strong> This symbol accompanies additional information that may be of interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Resources:</strong> This symbol accompanies a list of URLs for web pages and web documents that provide additional information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[text]</td>
<td>Text in brackets is used to indicate a link, tab, or button that is selectable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1. Test Security Incident Management
Background

Resources In This Section

- Online Initial ELPAC Test Administration Manual—
- ELPAC Security and Test Administration Incident Reporting System (STAIRS)/Appeals Process web page—https://www.elpac.org/test-administration/stairs/
- Test Operations Management System (TOMS) website—https://mytoms.ets.org/

LEA ELPAC coordinators and site ELPAC coordinators must ensure that all test security incidents are documented by means of the STAIRS/Appeals process. After the information is submitted, TOMS provides the means to file an Appeal. The submitter receives a confirmation email containing a case number; the LEA ELPAC coordinator is copied if the STAIRS case is submitted by the site ELPAC coordinator. Ensure that communications generated by the email address ca-assessments@ets.org are not automatically sent to a junk mail or spam folder.

Some incidents may require that an Appeal be submitted to reset, restore, reopen, rescore, or request a grace period extension for a test. The type of Appeal is determined and submitted when the STAIRS case is submitted.

Some incidents may be nonappealable. These incidents may require that an irregularity notation be included in reports related to STAIRS, on the STAIRS Confirmation screen, on the STAIRS Summary screen, and in the [Score Status] tab of the Student Profile in TOMS. If there is a breach or irregularity due to social media exposure on the part of a student or adult or to media coverage of an administration, the LEA ELPAC coordinator must immediately report a breach or irregularity by calling CalTAC at 800-955-2954. STAIRS is only available during the administration window.

Note: If a testing irregularity or security breach occurs during the administration of the Initial ELPAC paper–pencil test between July 1, 2020, and August 19, 2020, the LEA ELPAC coordinator must call CalTAC within 24 hours of the incident. Fill out the ELPAC Testing Irregularities and Security Breach Form for Initial ELPAC paper–pencil tests only, and fax or email the form to CalTAC within five working days of the incident. If the ELPAC Testing Irregularities and Security Breach Form is already submitted for an incident, do not report the same incident in STAIRS. Testing incidents that occur for the 2019–2020 Summative ELPAC test administration in the interim between July 1 and August 19, 2020, should be reported using the STAIRS and Appeals process in TOMS.
Required Action Steps

The Test Security Required Action Steps depict the required actions for each test security incident in a process flow diagram format. The following subsections describe the security incident types and provide a process flow diagram for each.

Impropriety

An unusual circumstance that has a low impact on the individual or group of students who are testing and has a low risk of potentially affecting student performance on the test or of impacting test security or test validity. (Example: Student(s) made distracting gestures or sounds or talked during the test session, creating a disruption in the test session for other students.)

The process flow diagram for improprieties is presented in figure 1.

![Figure 1. Impropriety process flow diagram](image-url)
**Irregularity**

An unusual circumstance that impacts an individual or group of students who are testing and may potentially affect student performance on the test or impact test security or test validity. These circumstances can be contained at the local level. (Example: Disruption during the test session such as a fire drill, or student(s) cheated or provided answers to each other.)

Some testing incidents require that a corrective plan of action be provided by the LEA at the time of submitting the STAIRS case. The corrective action plan may include, but is not limited to, a description of specific training or communication measures.

The process flow diagram for irregularities is presented in [figure 2].

---

**Figure 2. Irregularity process flow diagram**
**Breach**

A test administration event that poses a threat to the validity of the test. Breaches require immediate attention and escalation via telephone. If the breach is due to social media exposure on the part of a student or adult or to media coverage of an administration, the LEA ELPAC coordinator contacts CalTAC at 800-955-2954. Following the call, the site ELPAC coordinator or LEA ELPAC coordinator must report the breach using the STAIRS/Appeals process within 24 hours.

Examples may include such situations as exposure of secure materials or a repeatable security or system risk. These circumstances have external implications. (Example: Test administrators modifying student answers or test items shared in social media.) The process flow diagram for breaches is presented in figure 3.

---

**Figure 3. Breach process flow diagram**

- Test examiners or staff mitigate the incident as necessary and immediately report the breach to the site ELPAC coordinator, the LEA ELPAC coordinator, or both.
- LEA staff investigate the security risk, alert CalTAC for social media breaches by a student or adult or media coverage of an administration and stand ready to receive further guidance on the dispensation of the event.
- The LEA ELPAC coordinator immediately calls CalTAC to report the breach. Following the call, the site ELPAC coordinator or LEA ELPAC coordinator reports the breach within 24 hours using the online STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS.
- The submittor (and the LEA ELPAC coordinator, if the submittor was a site ELPAC coordinator) receives an email summarizing the submittal.
- The coordinator submits an Appeal request, if prompted.
- The CDE reviews the STAIRS case and approves the Appeal, if necessary. Some breaches may be nonappealable but need CDE approval. The coordinator retains the STAIRS response email for the record.
- The coordinator submits an Appeal request, if prompted.
Commonly Reported Security Issues and How to Avoid Them

LEA ELPAC coordinators should work with site ELPAC coordinators and other LEA staff to reduce the chances that student testing will be interrupted or delayed if a testing incident were to occur.

- Verify that student test settings are correct in TOMS and in the Test Administrator Interface before the student starts testing. The student’s embedded designated supports and non-embedded accessibility resources for the Initial ELPAC can be changed in the Test Administrator Interface before the student starts testing or resumes testing after a pause. If a Reset appeal is required to resolve incorrect settings, the student’s testing will be interrupted or delayed while the STAIRS case is submitted and the Reset Appeal is processed.

- Set up an appropriate schedule with testing times that ensure all students can test in a timely manner. Initial ELPAC domain assessments have an expiration rule of 20 calendar days from the day the test is opened. LEAs are encouraged to ensure that the test for the domain is completed before it expires. This will avoid the need to submit the STAIRS case and ask for a Re-open Appeal.

- Limit requesting a Restore Appeal only to those cases where a test has been inadvertently or improperly reset as result of a mistakenly submitted Reset Appeal.

- Limit requesting a Grace Period Extension Appeal to situations where a technical issue beyond the control of the test examiner has occurred that resulted in the expiration of the 20-minute pause rule for the Reading or Listening domains. A grace period extension will only be granted for the Reading and Listening domains for online tests in cases where there was a disruption to a test session, such as a technical difficulty, fire drill, schoolwide power outage, earthquake, or other act beyond the control of the test administrator. A grace period extension cannot be granted for situations where the pause rule expired due to student breaks, such as recess- or lunch-related issues that lasted for more than 20 minutes.

- LEAs are encouraged to ensure that the correct test form is selected in the Data Entry Interface (DEI) while entering the student test scores for the Speaking domain.
Chapter 2. The STAIRS/Appeals Process
About the STAIRS/Appeals Process

Resources in This Section

- ELPAC STAIRS/Appeals Process web page—https://www.elpac.org/test-administration/stairs/

Notes:

- The ELPAC STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS must be used to report testing incidents that occur during the administration of the Summative ELPAC and the Initial ELPAC for both online and paper–pencil tests.

- STAIRS testing incidents like “Restore from Reset,” “Irregularity Flag submitted in error,” and “Other Issues” require the LEA ELPAC coordinator to contact CalTAC by phone at 800-955-2954 or email to caltac@ets.org requesting to submit a STAIRS case for these testing incidents on behalf of the LEA.

Alert: In the event of a breach involving the Initial ELPAC, the breach incident must be reported to the LEA ELPAC coordinator immediately. The LEA ELPAC coordinator must immediately report the breach to CalTAC by calling 800-955-2954 if the breach is due to social media exposure on the part of a student or adult or due to media coverage of an administration. In addition, the coordinator must complete and submit an ELPAC STAIRS/Appeals request in TOMS within 24 hours (instructions on the ELPAC STAIRS/Appeals Process web page).

Purpose

LEA and site ELPAC coordinators must use the online ELPAC STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS to report a test security incident or other testing issue that interferes with the administration and completion of the initial assessments, and then submit an Appeal to reset, restore, reopen, rescore, or receive a grace period extension for a domain. The STAIRS/Appeals process is the means by which LEA ELPAC coordinators and site ELPAC coordinators report and resolve Initial ELPAC testing incidents. Coordinators report by means of the ELPAC STAIRS/Appeals process. Sometimes the issue is resolved by an Appeal to reset, restore, reopen, rescore or grant a grace period extension to a student’s test domain. For a flowchart that maps the STAIRS process, refer to appendix C.

The CDE or CalTAC will review the submitted STAIRS case to determine whether the LEA needs to take additional action.
Caution: Coordinators cannot file an Appeal without first submitting an ELPAC STAIRS/Appeals request online. Reporting of some test security incidents is allowed only when the LEA includes a corrective plan of action at the time of submitting the STAIRS case. The corrective action plan that the LEA intends to implement to avoid such testing irregularities may include, but is not limited to, a description of specific training or communication measures.

Use

Use the online ELPAC STAIRS/Appeals submission screen, which is available to coordinators through TOMS, to provide the required information to the CDE or CalTAC when an incident is confirmed. The screen includes the option to manually enter or securely upload a spreadsheet containing the Statewide Student Identifiers (SSIDs) of the students involved in the irregularity. Do not include student names, only SSID numbers.

The LEA ELPAC coordinator or site ELPAC coordinator submitting the STAIRS case will receive an email (the LEA ELPAC coordinator will receive a copy) that includes details about the submittal.

Coordinator Procedures

**Site ELPAC Coordinator Responsibilities**

- Receives notification of an incident
- Reviews the information provided and verifies that an incident has occurred
- Contacts the LEA ELPAC coordinator and provides all pertinent information or fills out and submits the online ELPAC STAIRS/Appeals case, if this is the procedure established for the LEA, if the incident has not been reported by the site ELPAC coordinator, and if the incident is not a breach

**LEA ELPAC Coordinator Responsibilities**

- Receives notification of an incident from the site ELPAC coordinator
- Reviews the information and verifies that the occurrence is a reportable incident
- Notifies CalTAC immediately (by phone) if the breach is due to social media exposure on the part of a student or adult or to media coverage of an administration,
- Reports the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process
- Responds to and assists the CDE and test security personnel, as requested
- Keeps any documentation associated with the incident for one year
When Not to Report in STAIRS

In the following circumstances, there is no need to report an incident using the ELPAC STAIRS/Appeals screen:

- If student logon information is lost or misplaced, do not report; this is a breach of a student’s personally identifiable information that should be addressed at the local level.

- Except for Speaking and Writing domains, the system ensures students answer all questions and prevents submission of the test for that domain with unanswered questions. Therefore, a report is not needed if the coordinator thinks that a question was not answered—this scenario has been thoroughly tested and no evidence has ever been found that this happens.

- If during a testing session, a student used an electronic device after testing was completed, do not report. However, if the student was actively engaged in a testing session or the student completed testing but the LEA can verify that the device was being used to help other students that were engaged in the testing session, then report.
Submit the Information Requested on the STAIRS/Appeals Screen

Additional Resources in This Section:

- ELPAC Security and Test Administration Incident Reporting System (STAIRS)/Appeals Process web page—https://www.elpac.org/test-administration/stairs/
- ELPAC Forms web page—https://www.elpac.org/test-administration/forms/
- Guide to California Assessment for Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) and ELPAC Completion Status and Roster Management—available on the Manuals, Instructions, and Quick Reference Guides web page at https://www.elpac.org/test-administration/instructions/

Required Information

The STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS requires the following information from coordinators:

- Date of the incident
- School name
- Grade affected
- Test name and domain (for example, Initial ELPAC and Listening or Initial ELPAC and Reading)
- Test Delivery Mode/Score Entry Mode (for example, whether the Initial ELPAC for the Reading domain was an online or a paper–pencil test or whether the scores for the Initial ELPAC were for the Writing domain)
- The type of testing issue; incident types are listed in appendix D, which includes the details required by the STAIRS case
The STAIRS/Appeals Process | Submit the Information Requested on the STAIRS/Appeals Screen

- Total number of students involved in this incident
- SSID(s) for the involved student(s)
  - The spreadsheet template into which the SSIDs are to be entered can be downloaded from the [New STAIRS] action tab—accessible from the [STAIRS] navigation tab in TOMS—after data has been entered in the first few screens. The “Prepare File for Upload” section of the New STAIRS screen—Student Information progress step, contains a [DOWNLOAD TEMPLATE] button. There is also a link on the ELPAC STAIRS/Appeals Process web page.
  - Coordinators will be prompted during the STAIRS/Appeals process when SSIDs must be entered or uploaded.
  - Not all incident reports require that coordinators upload SSIDs, such as a report of the exposure of secure materials when an adult is the source of the breach.
  - If filing an Appeal, coordinators will also be required to submit SSIDs.
- A brief description of the incident is required (The description should contain additional information about the case and not just restate the testing issue selected on the previous screen[s].)
- If the incident type involved SSIDs that were used incorrectly during testing, SSID swap information is needed.
- The submission of STAIRS incidents for certain testing issues requires the LEA to provide a corrective plan of action describing the resolution the LEA intends to implement to avoid such irregularities or breaches in the future. The corrective plan of action may include, but is not limited to, a description of specific training or communication measures. The testing incidents that require a plan are as follows:
  - Accessibility Issue
  - Administration Error
  - Administered Incorrect Assessment
  - Technical Issue (only includes the scenario for the Listening domain that results in a Reset Appeal)
  - Exposing Secure Materials
  - Incorrect SSID Swap
  - Student Cheating or Accessing Unauthorized Devices
  - Student Disruption
  - Validity Issue
Cautions When Using the STAIRS/Appeals Process

Note the following about using the STAIRS/Appeals process to report testing incidents:

- Coordinators can only identify one domain per submittal. Coordinators must file a separate incident report using the STAIRS/Appeals process for each domain. Incidents cannot be combined.

- Coordinators can only identify one grade level per submittal. Coordinators must file a separate STAIRS/Appeals incident report for each grade, even if there were multiple grades associated with an incident.

- Mandatory fields are marked with an asterisk (*)..

- Coordinators must select the [SUBMIT] button to finish the process. If an Appeal can be filed, it can be selected by checking a box before selecting this button.

- Check with the email administrator that the email address ca-assessments@ets.org is whitelisted and that emails can be received from this address. STAIRS email confirmations should be received within two hours of submittal.

- Refer to appendix B of the CAASPP and ELPAC Technical Specifications and Configuration Guide for Online Testing—available on the Manuals, Instructions, and Quick Reference Guides web page—for a complete list of URLs that should be whitelisted by the network’s firewalls.

- Summative ELPAC registrations cannot be created for the 2020-2021 test administration in TOMS if any Appeal(s) for the Initial ELPAC require processing in STAIRS. All Appeals for the Initial ELPAC must be processed before the student(s) start(s) testing for the Summative ELPAC.

- If the student(s) have started testing for the Summative ELPAC and the LEA needs to submit an Appeal for an Initial ELPAC domain assessment taken by the student(s), the LEA must first submit Reset Appeal in STAIRS for all the domains for the Summative ELPAC that are in progress or have completed testing. The Appeal(s) for the Initial ELPAC can be submitted only after all the Appeals for the Summative ELPAC have been processed.
Steps for Submitting an Incident

**Note:** Coordinators should select the Completion Status Report from the [Reports] navigation tab in TOMS to run a report of student testing status(es). This will help ensure that the correct incident type is submitted and the appropriate Appeal is requested. The report is available in TOMS at both the LEA and site level. The steps for submitting a test security incident in STAIRS are available in the *TOMS User Guide* available on the [Manuals, Instructions, and Quick Reference Guides](#) web page.

**Step 1. Access the STAIRS/Appeals Screen in TOMS.**

1. Use an internet browser to go to the [ELPAC website](#) and select the [Test Operations Management System (TOMS)](#) button, shown in [figure 4](#), to access the TOMS Logon screen to open TOMS.

![Figure 4. Buttons on ELPAC.org](#)

2. Follow the steps for submitting a testing incident in STAIRS as explained in the *TOMS User Guide* available on the [Manuals, Instructions, and Quick Reference Guides](#) web page.
Search Incidents and Check Statuses

Use the search function to check a STAIRS case, which could be in any of the following statuses:

- Completed
- Draft
- Partial CDE Approval
- Partial CalTAC Approval
- Pending CDE Approval
- Pending CalTAC Approval

Coordinators can find students through the Search for Incidents screen, where it is possible to view and edit the STAIRS and appeals information, as well as to communicate with the CDE or CalTAC about the case using the Note function.

1. Select the [STAIRS] navigation tab on the top navigation bar (figure 5).

2. Select the [Search STAIRS] action tab on the navigation bar in the [STAIRS] navigation tab (figure 5).

Figure 5. Search for Incidents screen
3. Enter details about the student in the search fields in the “Search for Incidents” section (shown in figure 5). Enter information for one or more of the fields described in table 2. If the user enters information only in the Organization field, the search will return a list of all students in the organization for whom a STAIRS case has been started or submitted.

Table 2. Search for Incidents Fields

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>• To pull up all students in an associated organization, do not specify any search criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• To view students from a particular school, type at least five characters of the school’s name (including spaces) or the County-District-School (CDS) code to get selectable values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSID</td>
<td>Enter a single SSID.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAIRS ID</td>
<td>Enter the STAIRS case number.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Enter the grade for all students for whom a STAIRS case has been started or submitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Name and Type</td>
<td>Select a test type from the drop-down list. If no grade is selected, all tests are listed. If a grade is selected, only those assessments available in that grade are listed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAIRS Status</td>
<td>Select a STAIRS status from the drop-down list. Statuses are as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Completed (Refers to cases where all Appeals for all the SSIDs included in a STAIRS case were processed by CalTAC or the CDE, or the STAIRS case required no Appeals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Draft (Refers to cases that are saved in TOMS and are yet to be submitted—to be submitted at a later time and before the end of the testing window)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Partial CDE Approval (Refers to cases in which the CDE has approved or rejected some, but not all, of the Appeals within a STAIRS case)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Partial CalTAC Approval (Refers to cases in which CalTAC has approved, rejected, or withdrawn some, but not all, of the Appeals within a STAIRS case)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pending CDE Approval (Refers to when the CDE has yet to approve or reject at least one SSID associated with a STAIRS case)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pending CalTAC Approval (Refers to when CalTAC has yet to approve, reject, or withdraw at least one SSID associated with a STAIRS case)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 (continuation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submitted Date Range</td>
<td>View all STAIRS cases with all statuses for a desired duration during the test administration year. These STAIRS cases can be viewed by providing a date range using the <em>Submitted Date (From)</em> and <em>Submitted Date (To)</em> boxes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing Issue</td>
<td>Select a testing issue. These are the issues that are listed on the Step 2 screen (figure 6 and figure 7) and listed in appendix D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal Type</td>
<td>Select from the drop-down list to view all STAIRS cases submitted for that Appeal. This will be explained further in chapter 3.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Select the [SEARCH] button—indicated in figure 5—to conclude the search or the [CLEAR] button to clear all information from the screen’s fields.
View a STAIRS Case

The search will yield a list of entries that meet the criteria entered, as shown in figure 6.

![Figure 6. STAIRS search results](image)

Select a [View] magnifying glass [Q] icon in the Actions column shown in figure 6 to access the STAIRS Summary screen for a STAIRS case (figure 7). Select the delete icon[ ] to delete a STAIRS case that is in the Draft status. This shall remove the STAIRS case in the Draft status permanently from the records.
Figure 7. STAIRS Summary screen
Withdraw a Case

If a STAIRS case is still pending approval from CalTAC or the CDE, it is possible to withdraw (cancel) the case.

Take the following steps to withdraw a STAIRS case:

1. Search for a STAIRS case.
2. Select a [View] magnifying glass [Q] icon in the Actions column shown in figure 6 to access the STAIRS Summary screen.
3. If the case is pending approval, there is an additional table at the bottom of the screen, the STAIRS Details table, shown in figure 8.

![Figure 8. STAIRS Summary with the [WITHDRAW] button](image)
This table has the following columns:

- Statewide Student Identifier
- Test Name
- Status
- Test ID
- Result ID
- Total Response
- Grade
- Test Type/Domain
- Test State
- Test Start Date
- Session ID

4. If a selective or partial withdrawal is needed, select the checkbox of the respective SSID(s) in the STAIRS Details table.

5. Select the [WITHDRAW] button to withdraw this submission or the [CLOSE] button to return to the Search for Incidents screen.

Selecting [WITHDRAW]:

- Confirms that those SSID(s) will not be part of the STAIRS case submitted and any Appeal associated with those SSID(s) and resulting from the submitted STAIRS case will not be processed
- Results in the user receiving an email confirming the withdrawal

6. To resubmit the case once it has been withdrawn, coordinators must enter the details of the incident.
Communicate with the CDE About a Case

Coordinators can communicate with the CDE about a STAIRS case involving any kind of Appeal using the Notes feature, which permits secure communication with the CDE about a STAIRS case.

Note: CalTAC and the CDE have access to read these communications. The description of the corrective plan of action that an LEA is required to provide to submit the STAIRS case in TOMS can be viewed in the [Notes] tab once the STAIRS incident is submitted.

Take the following steps to submit a Note or to read notes and responses associated with a STAIRS case:

1. Search and open a case, following the steps in the Search Incidents and Check Statuses section.

2. Select the [Notes] tab, indicated in figure 9. A numeric value in parentheses indicates the total number of comments added in the Comments field.

3. Enter the comments or questions in the Comments text field.
4. Select the **ADD NOTES** button to post the comment or question, thereby submitting it to the CDE or CalTAC; or select **CLEAR** to delete all the text that was entered. Coordinators will be notified via email when there is a reply to the comment.
Chapter 3. Appeals
About the Appeals Process

Resources in This Section

- ELPAC Security and Test Administration Incident Reporting System (STAIRS)/Appeals Process web page—https://www.elpac.org/test-administration/stairs/
- ELPAC Student Accessibility Resources web page—https://elpac.org/test-administration/accessibility-resources/

Appeals are filed by the LEA ELPAC coordinator or the site ELPAC coordinator if directed to during the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS.

For security incidents that result in the need to have an irregularity notation included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile for exposing secure materials (if the student is the source of breach); because student(s) cheated or accessed unauthorized devices; or because student(s) disrupted an ongoing testing session; or to address an issue that is not listed in the existing STAIRS testing incidents in TOMS, the request must be approved by the CDE.

In the event of restoring a test that was inadvertently or inappropriately reset because a reset was wrongly requested in a test Appeal request to address an issue that is not listed in the existing STAIRS testing incidents in TOMS or to remove an irregularity flag submitted in error, the LEA ELPAC coordinator must contact CalTAC to submit a STAIRS case on behalf of the LEA. A Restore Appeal must be approved by the CDE.

In the event of an audio stimulus that cannot be replayed for a student who has not been assigned the pause or replay audio embedded designated support and the test has proceeded to the next item level or has been submitted, the LEA must submit a Reset Appeal. If the LEA wants to replay the audio stimulus only for the specific question and is aware of the exact question number, the LEA should contact CalTAC by phone at 800-955-2954 or email at caltac@ets.org within one business day to submit a STAIRS case for “Other Issues.” This is applicable for Listening and Speaking domains only.
In most instances, an Appeal must be submitted to address a test security breach or irregularity. In some cases, an Appeal must be submitted to address incidents that are not security related, such as reopening an assessment for a student who becomes ill and is unable to resume testing until after the student’s initial test has expired or for a student who accidentally submitted a test prior to completion.

Cautions About Filing an Appeal

Note the following about when to file the Appeal:

- When requesting that a student’s test be reopened, submit the request through the New STAIRS Submit screen and submit the subsequent Appeal with sufficient time for the student to complete testing since the test will be available for no more than 20 calendar days.

- Any Appeal for the Initial ELPAC that results in a student’s continued testing must be filed with sufficient time for the student to complete testing before the end of the testing window.

- LEA coordinators are notified if any STAIRS case is in Draft status. The message will appear in the [Notifications] tab on the LEA’s home page in TOMS.

- LEA ELPAC coordinators can also read a message in the To-Do List when a STAIRS case is in Draft status.

- The messages in the To-Do List and in the [Notifications] tab also remind the LEA about the submission of STAIRS cases in Draft status before the testing window ends.

When to File an Appeal

**Warnings:**

- An Appeal must be filed before the end of the testing window. Once the testing window closes, students cannot resume testing. Hence, the LEA should ensure that all actions after the approval of an Appeal are completed prior to the end of the testing window.

- Summative ELPAC registrations cannot be created in TOMS if any Appeal(s) for the Initial ELPAC require processing in STAIRS. All Appeals for the Initial ELPAC must be processed before the student(s) start testing for Summative ELPAC. If the student(s) have started testing for the Summative ELPAC and the LEA needs to submit an Appeal for an Initial ELPAC domain assessment taken by the student(s), the LEA must first submit Reset Appeal(s) in STAIRS for all the domains for the Summative ELPAC that are in progress or have been completed. The Appeal(s) for the Initial ELPAC can be submitted only after all the Appeals for Summative ELPAC have been processed.
LEA ELPAC coordinators or site ELPAC coordinators should take the following steps to file an Appeal:

1. Document and submit an irregularity or test security incident for the Initial ELPAC using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS. Users will be prompted for information.

2. If the case is eligible for an Appeal, the system will prompt the user to file an Appeal. If the case is not eligible for an Appeal, the system will notify the user. For guidance on timing the filing of an Appeal, refer to the subsection Cautions When Using the STAIRS/Appeals Process.

3. The Appeal will be processed within four business days of its receipt; coordinators will receive a notification from TOMS when a decision has been made.

Postdecision Actions

If the Appeal is denied for an administrative reason—for example, because the wrong type of Appeal was filed (e.g., to reset instead of reopen)—the coordinator may refile.

If the Appeal is approved, note the following about the actions that can be taken:

- If the case required a Re-open Appeal, the student(s) may resume testing. Expired tests will resume at the last unanswered item on the test (if the student went back to review prior items, for example). A Re-open Appeal will not allow the audio stimulus to be replayed because the test proceeded to the next item level and the student has not been assigned the pause or replay audio embedded designated support.

- If the case required a Reset Appeal, the test has been removed from the system and the student(s) will start a new test from the beginning. Please ensure that the test assignment and test settings are accurate before allowing the student(s) to start a new test. A Reset Appeal may require an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

- If the case did not require an Appeal for a domain exemption or incorrect alternate assessment, where the student received a domain exemption or an alternate assessment that was not prescribed by the student’s individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan, the LEA coordinator, after submitting the STAIRS incident in TOMS, must update the student’s test assignment options appropriately in TOMS.

- If the case did not require an Appeal for an incorrect SSID used where the student has completed the test and the LEA wants to associate the assessment results with the student’s correct SSID, the LEA ELPAC coordinator must contact CalTAC within one business day of the incident—by phone at 800-955-2954 or email at caltac@ets.org—to confirm details of the incorrect SSID, correct SSID, result ID, and test status information associated with this incident. The approval email received for submitting this STAIRS request also instructs the LEA that further action is needed.
• If the case required a **Restore** Appeal—because a test was inadvertently or inappropriately reset as result of a Reset Appeal submitted earlier—the previous test will be restored. The test will resume at the last unanswered item.

• If the case required a **Grace Period Extension** Appeal for a paused test, the test questions that include an audio stimulus are not permitted to be replayed for a student who has not been assigned the pause or replay audio embedded designated support and had navigated away from the audio stimulus at the time the test was paused.

• If the case required a **Rescore** Appeal, the scores for the Writing domain for online tests for the Initial ELPAC have been removed from the Teacher Hand Scoring System (THSS), and the test examiner will have to reenter all the scores from the beginning.

• If a test required student’s(s’) scores or test item responses to be entered in the DEI and if the LEA submitted a STAIRS case for a testing incident other than the testing incident of Data Entry Issue, the appeal to reset or reopen the test shall apply to the student’s(s’) test(s) as well as the scores or test item responses that were entered in the DEI.

**Reasons for Rejection**

An Appeal request may be denied if it does not fit the requirements of the types of appeals (Reset, Re-open, Restore, Grace Period Extension, or Rescore) described in this manual.

**Online System Appeals Types**

The online appeals types described in this subsection are as follows:

- **Reset**
- **Re-open**
- **Restore**
- **Grace Period Extension**
- **Rescore**

**Reset**

**Description**

Resetting a student’s initial test removes that test from the system and enables the student to start a new test from the beginning.

**Conditions for Use**

CalTAC may provide approval to reset a domain if a designated support or accommodation needs to be changed because it was incorrectly set. A few of the designated supports or accommodations applicable for the Initial ELPAC include:

- Mouse pointer
- Braille (braille is a language setting)
- Pause or replay audio (applicable for Listening and Speaking domains)
• Turn off any universal tool(s)
• Color contrast
• Text-to-speech as an accommodation (not applicable for the Reading domain)
• Streamline, masking, and audio transcript (includes braille transcript)

Details of all designated supports and accommodations can be verified from the ELPAC Student Accessibility Resources web page.

Additionally, a Reset includes the following scenarios:

1. A student without an IEP or Section 504 plan received an incorrectly designated support that needs to be changed or deleted. **Note:** An irregularity notation is included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the **Score Status** page of the Student Profile if the following test completion threshold is true for the domain that has been selected for the STAIRS case:
   • The student has completed **three** or fewer questions in the Listening domain.
   • The student has completed **six** or fewer questions in the Speaking domain.
   • The student has completed **two** or fewer questions in the Reading domain.
   • The student has completed no more than **one** question in the Writing domain.

2. The student did not receive a domain exemption or an alternate assessment as prescribed by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan. This is applicable for online tests only.

3. An incorrect SSID is used and the assessment is not completed by the student. **Note:** An irregularity notation is included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the **Score Status** page of the Student Profile.

4. An incorrect SSID is used and the assessment is completed by the student. However, the LEA wants the test to be reset and the student to take a new test. **Note:** An irregularity notation is included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the **Score Status** page of the Student Profile.

5. There is a data entry issue and the student’s assessment must be reset in the DEI. All of the student’s responses must be reentered.

6. A student was administered an assessment for the wrong assessed grade level and outside the prescribed grade span.

7. A student was not able to hear the audio item stimulus completely or heard it partially due to a technical issue for a Listening online domain and is unable to replay the audio. **Note:** An irregularity notation is included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the **Score Status** page of the Student Profile.

8. There is a data entry issue with all item responses or with scores that need to be updated.
Re-Open

Description
Reopening an Initial ELPAC domain assessment allows a student to access a test that has already been submitted or has expired.

If an expired domain assessment is reopened, the test will resume at the last unanswered item on the assessment.

If a submitted domain assessment is reopened, the test will reopen at the last page of the test. The student cannot review items, without first submitting a Grace Period Extension Appeal.

\[
\text{Note: A Grace Period Extension Appeal can only be requested for a Reading or Listening domain that is in a “paused” state and only if the test expired due to a disruption or a technical issue beyond the control of the test examiner.}
\]

Conditions for Use

1. A Re-open Appeal for a domain can be approved if a student is unable to complete the test before it expires (20 calendar days) due to an unanticipated excused absence or unanticipated school closure, or if the test was accidentally submitted.

2. There is a data entry issue with only selected item responses or scores that need to be updated.
**Restore**

**Description**
Restoring an Initial ELPAC domain assessment returns it from the Reset status to its prior status. *This action can only be performed on tests that have been mistakenly reset through a Reset Appeal request.*

**Conditions for Use**
Requests to restore a test if a test was inadvertently or inappropriately reset because an LEA wrongly requested a Reset Appeal must be made by submitting a report using the STAIRS/Appeals process. To file a Restore Appeal, the LEA ELPAC coordinator must contact CalTAC to submit a STAIRS case on behalf of the LEA.

**Grace Period Extension**
A grace period extension only applies to the Reading and Listening domains. There are no pause rules for the Speaking and Writing domains.

**Description**
A Grace Period Extension Appeal for the Initial ELPAC allows the student to review previously answered questions upon logging back on to the test after the expiration of the pause rule. It applies to the Reading and Listening domains only. Note that for the Speaking and Writing domains, having the test administrator open a new testing session may be all that is needed to continue testing. All the domains for an Initial ELPAC are available for 20 days from the day the test was paused.

**Conditions for Use**
Grace period extensions are for situations where the 20-minute pause rule expired due to circumstances beyond the control of the test examiner. The CDE may grant a grace period extension for the Reading or Listening domains only in cases where there was a disruption to a test session, such as a technical difficulty, fire drill, schoolwide power outage, earthquake, or other act beyond the control of the test examiner.

**Rescore**
A Rescore Appeal for the Initial ELPAC only applies to the Writing domain. The Appeal can be filed for online tests for grades three through twelve.

**Description**
A Rescore Appeal for an Initial ELPAC domain assessment allows the test examiner to reenter all the scores for the student responses in the THSS.

**Conditions for Use**
Rescore Appeals are for situations where an error was made while scoring student responses in the THSS. These errors could be caused due to incorrectly applied rubrics or could be based on the Rotating Score Validation Process (RSVP) that changes the English Language Acquisition Status (ELAS).
Nonappealable STAIRS Incidents with an Irregularity Notation that Require Manual Approval.

Description

Certain STAIRS incidents for the Initial ELPAC do not result in an Appeal; however, these STAIRS incidents may need an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile. The student(s) will be included in the calculation of the school’s participation rate and the irregularity will not affect the student’s score.

Conditions for Use

CalTAC may approve a STAIRS case that does not need an Appeal but would result in an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile if:

1. A designated support for a student without an IEP or Section 504 plan was set incorrectly and needs to be changed or deleted. The irregularity notation is posted if the following test completion threshold has been exceeded for the domain that is selected for the STAIRS case:
   - The student has completed more than six questions in the Listening domain.
   - The student has completed more than three questions in the Speaking domain.
   - The student has completed more than six questions in the Reading domain.
   - The student has completed more than two questions in the Writing domain.
2. The test examiner or teacher coached or provided some assistance to students that may affect their responses.
3. The test examiner provided students with nonallowable materials or devices or nonprescribed accommodation during test administration.
4. A test examiner or coordinator modified student responses at any time.
5. Administrative errors occurred, such as related instructional materials left on the walls in the testing room; failure to ensure administration and supervision of the assessment(s) by qualified, trained personnel; incorrect instructions given and not corrected prior to testing; or a test examiner or coordinator sharing a username or password.

The CDE may approve a STAIRS case that does not need an Appeal but would result in an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile if:

1. Secure test materials were exposed by a student when the student took test materials home or an administrator allowed students to take home printed test items, reading passages, writing prompts, or scratch paper that was used during the test, or the administrator failed to otherwise securely store test materials.
Appeals | About the Appeals Process

2. A student copied, discussed, or otherwise retained test items, stimuli, reading passages, writing prompts, or answers for any reason. **Note:** This does not include student logon information.

3. A student retained scratch paper and had it during the same test in a subsequent testing session.

4. A student cheated or accessed unauthorized devices such as a cell phone, tablet, or smartwatch during testing. Student(s) cheated or provided answers to each other, including passing notes, giving help to other students during testing.

5. A student accessed the internet or any unauthorized software or applications during the student’s testing event.

6. A student disrupted the test session by making distracting gestures or talking during the test session.

7. The description of the testing incident is not included in either of the testing incidents available in the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS, and the STAIRS case that the LEA wants to submit requires an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

**Nonappealable STAIRS Incidents with No Irregularity Notation but Requiring Manual Approval.**

**Description**

Certain STAIRS cases for the Initial ELPAC do not result in an Appeal; however, these STAIRS incidents require that a manual approval be granted by the CDE or CalTAC.

**Conditions for Use**

CalTAC approval is needed when a STAIRS case is submitted for the following testing incidents that require no Appeal:

1. A student received a domain exemption or an alternate assessment that was not prescribed by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan. This is applicable for online tests only.

2. A student registered for paper–pencil tests **either** did not receive a domain exemption or an alternate assessment **or** received an incorrect domain exemption or alternate assessment as prescribed by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan.

3. Someone other than the student had access to the test (unless identified as an allowable accommodation in the student’s IEP).
4. A nonappealable STAIRS case that does not need an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile, may require approval from the CDE when:

- The description of the testing incident is not included in either of the testing incidents available in the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS, and the STAIRS case that the LEA wants to submit does not require an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.
- An Appeal submitted earlier had an incorrect irregularity flag that needs to be revoked.
Checking Appeals Information

Appeals statuses can be checked in the STAIRS module in TOMS. Appeals associated with a student can also be viewed in that student’s Student Profile, in the [Score Status] tab.

View an Appeals Status in STAIRS

Search

Coordinators can access a student’s Appeal status within the STAIRS module in TOMS to review the Appeal within the context of a STAIRS case.

1. Log on to TOMS.
2. Select the [STAIRS] navigation tab in the navigation bar as shown in figure 10.
3. Select the [Search Appeals] action tab as shown in figure 10.

Figure 10. Search for Appeals screen
4. Enter details about the student in the search fields in the “Search for Appeals” section (shown in figure 10). Enter information for one or more of the fields described in table 3.

If the coordinator entered information only in the Organization field, the search will return a list of all students in the organization for whom a STAIRS case has been started or submitted.

**Table 3. Search for Appeals Fields**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Organization** | - To pull up all students in an associated organization, do not specify any search criteria.  
  - To view students from a particular school, type at least five characters of the school’s name (including spaces) or CDS code to get selectable values. |
| **SSID**      | Enter a single SSID.                                                        |
| **Appeal ID** | Enter the Appeal ID generated when the Appeal request was submitted at the end of the STAIRS/Appeals process. |
| **Appeal Type** | Select an Appeal type. Options are as follows:  
  - Reset  
  - Re-open  
  - Restore  
  - Rescore  
  - Grace Period Extension  
  - No Appeal (Refers to STAIRS cases that resulted in no Appeal) |
Table 3 (continuation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appeal Status</td>
<td>Select an Appeal status from the drop-down list. Statuses are as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Approved—Appeals for SSIDs included in the STAIRS case are either auto-approved by the test delivery system (TDS) or have been approved by CalTAC or the CDE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pending—Appeals for SSIDs included in the STAIRS case have been approved and are awaiting processing by the TDS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pending Approval—Appeals for SSID(s) included in the STAIRS case are awaiting approval from the CDE or CalTAC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rejected—Appeals for SSIDs included in the STAIRS case were rejected by the CDE or CalTAC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rejected by System—Appeals for SSIDs included in the STAIRS case were rejected by the TDS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Swap Approved—The assessment results for SSIDs included in the STAIRS case have been associated with the correct SSIDs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Withdrawn—Appeals for SSID(s) included in the STAIRS case were withdrawn by the user.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAIRS ID</td>
<td>Enter a STAIRS case number associated with this Appeal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Select the [SEARCH] button—indicated in figure 10—to conclude the search or the [CLEAR] button to clear all information from the screen.
View
A list containing any students who meet the criteria entered appears.

1. Select a [View] magnifying glass icon in the Actions column shown in figure 11 to open an Appeals summary for that student.

![Figure 11. Appeals search results](image)

2. After the Appeals summary has been reviewed, use the [GO TO STAIRS SUMMARY] button to review the associated STAIRS case.
View Most Recent Appeals in the TOMS [Score Status] Tab

To review the Appeal within the context of the other details about the student’s ELPAC results, coordinators can access a student’s Appeal status in the [Score Status] tab of the Student Profile.

1. Log on to TOMS.
2. Select the [Students] navigation tab in the navigation bar (or, if the “Students” section is already active, select the [SEARCH] button). Figure 12 indicates the location of these buttons.

3. Enter details about the student in the search fields in the Search for Students screen (shown in figure 12);
   or
   Select the associated school or LEA from the Organization drop-down list.
   a. To pull up all students in an associated organization, do not specify any search criteria.
   b. To view students from a particular school, type at least five characters of the school’s name (including spaces) or CDS code to get selectable values.

Figure 12. Search for Students screen
4. Select the [SEARCH] button.

5. Select a [View] magnifying glass icon in the Actions column shown in figure 13 to access the Student Profile screen. The Student Profile opens with the [Demographics] tab selected.

Figure 13. Student search results
6. Select the [Score Status] tab (figure 14).

![Figure 14. [Score Status] tab on the Student Profile screen](image)

7. To review any processed Appeals for the student, scroll to the “Most Recent Appeals” section at the bottom of the screen (figure 15).

![Figure 15. “Most Recent Appeals” section of the Student Profile screen](image)
8. Columns in this section of the Student Profile are listed and described in table 4:

Table 4. Columns in the “Most Recent Appeals” Section of the Student Profile Screen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test</td>
<td>Test name that is being appealed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Date the Appeal was approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Type of Appeal: Reset, Restore, Re-open, or Grace Period Extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>Descriptive text for why an Appeal was created</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAIRS ID</td>
<td>STAIRS case number associated with this Appeal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to Look Up Student Information in the Completion Status System

Additional Resources in This Section:

- *Guide to CAASPP and ELPAC Completion Status and Roster Management*—available on the Manuals, Instructions, and Quick Reference Guides web page at [https://www.elpac.org/test-administration/instructions/](https://www.elpac.org/test-administration/instructions/)

Use the Plan and Manage Testing tool in the Completion Status module to validate student testing activity prior to filing an Appeal. Detailed instructions about generating these reports can be found in the Guide to CAASPP and ELPAC Completion Status and Roster Management available on the [Manuals, Instructions, and Quick Reference Guides](https://www.elpac.org/test-administration/instructions/) web page.
Appendix A. Test Security and Incident Chart

The **Test Security Chart** shows the test security incident levels and examples of types of issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Severity and Potential Effect on Test Security</th>
<th>Types of Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOW</strong>—Impropriety</td>
<td>Student receiving a domain exemption or alternate assessment not prescribed by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOW</strong>—Impropriety</td>
<td>A test expiring before the student could complete the test or the student accidentally submitting a test before completion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOW</strong>—Impropriety</td>
<td>Disruptions occurring during a test session such as a fire drill, schoolwide power outage, earthquake, or other acts outside the administrator’s or examiner’s control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOW</strong>—Impropriety</td>
<td>Testing events occurring that are not covered by STAIRS incidents existing in TOMS, and do not require an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOW</strong>—Impropriety</td>
<td>Student(s) making distracting gestures or sounds or talking during the test session that creates a disruption in the test session for other students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOW</strong>—Impropriety</td>
<td>An irregularity notation being posted because an incorrect Appeal submitted earlier needs to be revoked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIUM</strong>—Irregularity</td>
<td>Student not receiving a designated support or accommodation as required by IEP or Section 504 plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIUM</strong>—Irregularity</td>
<td>Student without IEP or Section 504 plan received an incorrect designated support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIUM</strong>—Irregularity</td>
<td>Student not receiving a domain exemption or alternate assessment as required by IEP or Section 504 plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIUM</strong>—Irregularity</td>
<td>Administrator, examiner, or coordinator leaving related instructional materials on the walls in the testing room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIUM</strong>—Irregularity</td>
<td>Administrator, examiner, or coordinator failing to ensure administration and supervision of ELPAC by qualified, trained personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIUM</strong>—Irregularity</td>
<td>Administrator or examiner giving incorrect instructions that are not corrected prior to testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIUM</strong>—Irregularity</td>
<td>Administrator, examiner, or coordinator giving out a personal username or password (via email or otherwise), including to other authorized users</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Test Security and Incident Chart (continuation one)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Severity and Potential Effect on Test Security</th>
<th>Types of Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity (Irregularity)</td>
<td>Administrator or examiner allowing students to continue testing beyond the close of the testing window (paper–pencil only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity</td>
<td>Administrator or examiner providing a student access to another student's work or responses (unintentional access granted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity</td>
<td>Student was administered for a test for a wrong assessed grade level and outside the grade span</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity</td>
<td>Disruptions occurring during a test session for a Listening domain where the student was not able to hear an audio stimulus completely or partially and cannot replay the audio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity</td>
<td>A test being reset because a Reset Appeal submitted in error needs to be restored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity</td>
<td>Student(s) cheating or providing answers to each other, including passing notes, giving help to other students during testing, or using hand-held electronic devices to exchange information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity</td>
<td>Student(s) accessing the internet or any unauthorized software or applications <strong>during</strong> a testing event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity</td>
<td>Student(s) accessing or using unauthorized electronic equipment (e.g., cell phones, PDAs, iPods, or electronic translators) <strong>during</strong> testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity (Irregularity)</td>
<td>Test examiner, teacher, or coordinator coaching or providing any other type of assistance to students that may affect the responses (This includes both verbal cues [e.g., interpreting, explaining, or paraphrasing the test items or prompts] and nonverbal cues [e.g., voice inflection, pointing, or nodding head] to the correct answer. This also includes leading students through instructional strategies such as think-aloud, asking students to point to the correct answer or otherwise identify the source of the answer, or requiring students to show work.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity (Irregularity)</td>
<td>Test examiner providing students with nonallowable materials or devices during test administration or allowing inappropriate designated supports or accommodations during test administration (e.g., use of a cellphone or an iPad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity (Irregularity)</td>
<td>Test examiner allowing designated supports not indicated by an educator (or team of educators) with parent/guardian and student input and that are not in the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Test Security and Incident Chart (continuation two)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Severity and Potential Effect on Test Security</th>
<th>Types of Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity</td>
<td>Test examiner allowing inappropriate accommodations (which are not in the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan) during test administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity</td>
<td>Test examiner or teacher allowing anyone other than a student to log on to the test unless prescribed as an allowable accommodation in the student’s IEP (This includes test examiners or other staff using student information to log on or allowing a student to log on using another student's information.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity</td>
<td>Test examiner or teacher allowing anyone other than a student to log on to the test unless prescribed as an allowable accommodation in the student’s IEP (This includes test examiners or other staff using student information to log on or allowing a student to log on using another student's information.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity</td>
<td>Test examiner providing a student access to another student’s work or responses (intentional access granted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity</td>
<td>Test examiner forgot to score the student’s Speaking responses in real-time and cannot determine scoring from voice-capture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity</td>
<td>Test examiner needs to correct the scores for the student’s Writing responses because of the Rotating Score Validation Process that changed the ELAS or due to incorrectly applied rubrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM—Irregularity</td>
<td>Test examiner or coordinator submitting an incident in STAIRS that results in an incorrect irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Test Security and Incident Chart (continuation three)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Severity and Potential Effect on Test Security</th>
<th>Types of Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIGH—Breach Test examiner, teacher, or coordinator modifying student responses or records at any time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGH—Breach Live student interface or Test Administrator Interface being used for practice instead of the practice tests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGH—Breach Adult or student posting items or test materials on social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGH—Breach Test examiner, or teacher allowing students to take home printed test items, reading passages, writing prompts, or scratch paper that was used during the test or failing to otherwise securely store test materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGH—Breach Adult or student copying, discussing, or otherwise retaining test items, reading passages, writing prompts, or answers for any reason (This includes the use of photocopiers or digital, electronic, or manual devices to record or communicate a test item. This also includes using secure test items, modified secure test items, reading passages, writing prompts, or answer keys for instructional purposes.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGH—Breach Secure test materials being shared with the media (such as the writing prompts, test items, or reading passages), or allowing the media to observe a secure test administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGH—Breach Adult or student improperly removing secure testing materials such as test items, stimuli, reading passages, writing prompts, or scratch paper from the testing environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGH—Breach Student retaining scratch paper used in a test and having it during subsequent testing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B. Incident Types, Descriptions, and Actions in the ELPAC STAIRS/Appeals Process

Breaches

Exposing Secure Materials—Retaining or Sharing (Student)

**Issue Description:** Student retaining or sharing secure test materials

**Action:**
1. Submit an incident report using the STAIRS/Appeals process that requires CDE approval. An irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS and in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS.

Exposing Secure Materials—Social Media

**Issue Description:** Secure test materials being shared with the media (such as the writing prompts, test items, or reading passages) or the media being allowed to observe a secure test administration

**Action:**
1. Contact CalTAC at 800-955-2954 immediately to report the issue.
2. Submit the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process.

Exposing Secure Materials—Social Media (Student)

**Issue Description:** Student posting items or secure testing materials on social media such as Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram

**Action:**
1. Contact CalTAC at 800-955-2954 immediately to report the issue.
2. Submit the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process.

Validity Issue—Adult Interference

**Issue Description:** Test examiner or teacher coached or provided answers to students, modified student responses, or allowed unauthorized access to student tests

**Action:** Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS. An irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.
Irregularities

**Accessibility Issue—Incorrect Resource or Accommodation Setting**

*Issue Description:* Student given an incorrect setting of a designated support or accommodation required by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan

*Action:* Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS and submit a Reset Appeal request.

**Accessibility Issue—Incorrect Designated Support**

*Issue Description:* Student without an IEP or Section 504 plan given an incorrect designated support

*Note:* The student’s embedded designated supports and non-embedded accessibility resources for Initial ELPAC domain assessments can be changed in the Test Administrator Interface before the student starts testing or resumes testing after a pause.

*Action:*

1. Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS.
2. Submit a Reset Appeal request for the student(s) if the test completion threshold for the domain selected for the STAIRS case holds true. The test completion thresholds subject to the respective domains are as follows:
   - The student has completed no more than **three** questions in the Listening domain.
   - The student has completed no more than **six** questions in the Speaking domain.
   - The student has completed no more than **two** questions in the Reading domain.
   - The student has completed no more than **one** question in the Writing domain.

*Note:* An irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the *Score Status* page of the Student Profile.

3. If the previously mentioned conditions do not apply for the domain involved, the incident reported in STAIRS is nonappealable. An irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the *Score Status* page of the Student Profile.

**Incorrect Domain Exemption or Alternate Assessment—**

*Issue Description:* Student not receiving a domain exemption or alternate assessment as prescribed by student’s IEP or Section 504 plan

*Action:*

Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS and submit a Reset Appeal request.
Disruption or Technical Issues

**Issue Description:** Having technical issues or school emergencies

**Note:** If the test is still in a Paused status, having the test examiner open a new testing session may be all that is needed for students to continue testing.

**Action:**

1. Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process; if the incident involves either the Reading or Listening domain, submit a Grace Period Extension Appeal.

2. Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS; if the incident involves either the Speaking or Writing domains, the incident reported in STAIRS is nonappealable.

3. Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process; if the incident involves audio-related issues for the Listening domain, submit a Reset Appeal.

Incorrect SSID Used—No Switch

**Issue Description:** Student(s) taking test associated with a different student’s SSID

**Action:**

1. If the student(s) have finished testing and the LEA wants to allow the student(s) to start a new test, report the incident and submit a Reset Appeal request using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS.

   **or**

2. If the student(s) have not finished testing, report the incident and submit a Reset Appeal request using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS.

**Note:** An irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

Incorrect SSID Used—Switch

**Issue Description:** Student taking test(s) associated with a different student’s SSID, and vice versa

**Action:**

1. The students have finished testing, but the LEA does not want to allow the students to start a new test. Instead, the LEA wants to associate the assessment results with the SSID of the correct student. This option should be selected only if the LEA knows both the incorrect SSIDs and the correct SSIDs.

2. Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS.

3. Submit a nonappealable STAIRS case. This is autoapproved.

4. Retain the approval email sent by ca-assessments@ets.org. The approval email determines that the incident is approved for further processing.
5. The LEA must call CalTAC to complete the manual process within one business day.

6. The LEA ELPAC coordinators must contact CalTAC by phone at 800-955-2954 or email at caltac@ets.org and confirm details of the incorrect SSID, correct SSID, result ID, and test status information associated with this incident. This must be done within one business day to report the issue.

**Student(s) Cheating or Provided Answers**

**Issue Description:** Student(s) cheating or providing answers to each other, including passing notes, giving help to other students during testing

**Note:** If a student used an electronic device after testing is completed during a session, it is not necessary to report this as an irregularity. However, if the student was actively engaged in a testing session or the student completed testing but the LEA can verify that the device was being used to help other students who were engaged in a test session, then an action is needed to be taken by the LEA

**Action:** Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS. An irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

**Student(s) Accessing Internet or Unauthorized Devices or Software Applications**

**Issue Description:** Student(s) accessing either the internet or any unauthorized software applications, or used unauthorized electronic equipment (e.g., a cell phone, tablet, or smartwatch), during the testing event

**Action:** Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS.

**Note:** An irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

**Administered Incorrect Assessment**

**Issue Description:** Student Test examiner administered a test for a wrong grade level or grade span

**Action:** Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS. An irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile if the incorrect assessed grade was within the prescribed grade span.
Validity Issue—Inappropriate Designated Support or Accommodation

**Issue Description:** Test examiner providing students with nonallowable materials or devices or nonprescribed accommodation during test administration

**Action:** Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS.

**Note:** An irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

Irregularity Flag Submitted in Error—Incorrect Notification of Irregularity Flag on Student Score Report

**Issue Description:** Appeal submitted earlier causing an incorrect irregularity flag in the STAIRS reports, in the STAIRS user interface, and in the Score Status page of the Student Profile to be revoked

**Action:** LEA ELPAC coordinator must contact CalTAC at 800-955-2954 or email at caltac@ets.org requesting to submit the STAIRS case for this testing incident in TOMS on behalf of the LEA.

Other Issues—Issues Not covered in the Existing Testing Incidents

**Issue Description:** Testing issue that needs to be reported not included in the existing list of testing incidents in STAIRS and requires an irregularity flag to be included in reports related to STAIRS and in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS

**Action:** LEA ELPAC coordinator must contact CalTAC at 800-955-2954 or email at caltac@ets.org requesting to submit the STAIRS case for this testing incident in TOMS on behalf of the LEA.
Appendices | Incident Types, Descriptions, and Actions in the ELPAC STAIRS/Appeals Process

**Improprieties**

**Administration Error**

**Issue Description:** One of the following conditions:
- Inappropriate or incomplete test preparation
- Leaving related instructional materials on the walls in the testing room
- Failing to ensure administration and supervision of online tests
- Giving incorrect instructions that are not corrected prior to testing
- Sharing username or password (via email or otherwise) with other authorized users
- Allowing students to continue testing beyond the close of a paper–pencil testing window

**Action:** Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS.

**Note:** An irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

**Student Disruption**

**Issue Description:** Student(s) making distracting gestures or sounds or talking during the test session, creating a disruption in the test session for other students

**Action:** Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS.

**Note:** An irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

**Data Entry Interface Error**

**Issue Description:** Adult error while entering student responses from a paper–pencil test or transferring answers from the student score sheet into the DEI (For online tests, this is applicable for the Speaking domain for all grades, and for the Writing domain for kindergarten through grade two. For paper–pencil tests, this is applicable for all domains for grades three through twelve.)

**Action:** Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS. Submit a Reset Appeal request to enable reentering of all student responses or a Re-open Appeal to correct errors made when entering selected student responses that have already been submitted.
Appendices | Incident Types, Descriptions, and Actions in the ELPAC STAIRS/Appeals Process

Hand Scoring Issue

**Issue Description:** Adult error while entering scores for student responses for the Writing domain in the Teacher Hand Scoring System (This is applicable for online tests for grades three through twelve.)

**Action:** Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS. Submit a Rescore Appeal request to enable reentering of all scores for student responses for the Writing domain.

Restoration of Test Access—Expired Test

**Issue Description:** Expiring or accidentally submitting a domain prior to completion

**Action:** Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS, and submit a Re-open Appeal request.

**Note:** All domains for an initial assessment are available to the student for 20 days from the day of reopen.

Restore a Test that Was Reset in Error

**Issue Description:** Resetting a student’s Initial ELPAC domain assessment inadvertently or inappropriately because of an LEA wrongly requesting a Reset in a test appeal request

**Action:** The student’s result ID must be available when making this request.

Administration Incidents—Unanticipated Expiration

**Issue Description:** Student not completing the test before it expires due to an unanticipated excused absence or unanticipated school closure

**Action:** Report the incident using the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS, and submit a Re-open Appeal request.

**Note:** All domains for an initial assessment are available to the student for 20 days from the day of reopen.

Administration Incidents—Lost Logon Information

**Issue Description:** Having lost or missing student logon information

**Action:** No action is required.

Other Issues—Miscellaneous

**Issue Description:** Testing incidents that are not covered by the existing testing event scenarios in STAIRS and that need to be reported (The testing incident does not require an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.)

**Action:** LEA ELPAC coordinator must contact CalTAC at 800-955-2954 or email at caltac@ets.org requesting to submit the STAIRS case for this testing incident in TOMS on behalf of the LEA.
Appendix C. STAIRS/Appeals Process Flowchart

Initial ELPAC Security or Administration Incident Occurs

The LEA ELPAC coordinator takes corrective action and reports the incident using the online STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS.

Is further action required?

Is the incident a breach of test security?

No

Coordinator files the Appeal as a step during the STAIRS/Appeals process in TOMS.

Yes

LEA staff alerts CalTAC by phone for breaches due to social media or due to media coverage of an administration.

Is the student the source of the breach?

Yes

No

The LEA ELPAC coordinator retains the STAIRS response email for LEA's records or takes further action if required.
Appendix D. Incident Types and Questions on the TOMS STAIRS/Appeals Screen

In this appendix, the sentences in bold appear in the STAIRS interface in TOMS, and those with asterisks indicate required fields.

**Accessibility Issue**

A designated support or accommodation was set incorrectly and needs to be changed.

Please provide the indicated information and select the description that best applies to the kind of accessibility issue that occurred.*

- A designated support or accommodation required by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan was set incorrectly and needs to be changed.
- A designated support for a student without an IEP or Section 504 plan was set incorrectly and needs to be changed.

If in the Listening domain:

**The student has completed no more than three questions in the Listening domain.**

- Yes
- No

If in the Speaking domain:

**The student has completed no more than six questions in the Speaking domain.**

- Yes
- No

If in the Reading domain:

**The student has completed no more than two questions in the Reading domain.**

- Yes
- No

If in the Writing domain:

**The student has completed no more than one question in the Writing domain.**

- Yes
- No

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.
Domain Exemptions or Incorrect Alternate Assessment

A domain exemption was set incorrectly and needs to be changed or an alternate assessment was set incorrectly and needs to be changed.

Please provide the indicated information and select the description that best applies to the kind of domain exemption issue that occurred.

- The student did not receive a domain exemption as prescribed by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan.
- The student received a domain exemption that was not prescribed by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan.
- The student did not receive an alternate assessment as prescribed by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan.
- The student received an alternate assessment that was not prescribed by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan.

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.

Administration Error

Related instructional materials were left on the walls, an assessment was administered by an unqualified test administrator, incorrect instructions were given, or the test administrator’s username and password were shared.

Please select the description that best describes the kind of administration error that occurred.*

- Related instructional materials were left on the walls in the testing room.
- There was a failure to ensure administration and supervision of the assessment(s) by qualified, trained personnel.
- Incorrect instructions were given that were not corrected prior to testing.
- A test administrator, test examiner, or coordinator’s username or password was shared (via email or otherwise), including to other authorized users.

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.

Administered Incorrect Assessment

The incorrect assessment was administered to the student(s).

Was an incorrect grade or grade span test administered to the student?

- Yes
- No

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.
Technical Issues

There was a technical issue that interfered with the test session.

If in the Listening or Reading domain:

Which type of technical issue occurred?

- Internet outage, fire drill, schoolwide power outage, earthquake, or other act beyond the control of the test examiner

  Note: If the test is still in a Paused status, having the test examiner open a new testing session may be all that is needed for students to continue testing.

  The disruption or technical issue resulted in the expiration of the 20-minute pause rule.

  (TRUE/FALSE) *
  - TRUE
  - FALSE

- Audio was not heard or was partially heard by the student and cannot be replayed.

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.

Expired or Accidentally Submitted Test

A student or test examiner accidentally submitted the domain prior to completion or started a domain and was unable to complete it before the domain expired.

Please provide the indicated information and select the description that best applies to the kind of test expiration issue or accidental submittal that occurred.*

- A student did not complete a domain before it expired.
- A student or test examiner accidentally submitted a domain prior to completion.

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.

Exposing Secure Materials

A test examiner or student copied, discussed, retained, or shared secure test materials.

The source of the breach was a(n):*

- Student
- Adult

Please select the description that best applies to the kind of exposure of secure materials issue that occurred.*
Adult:

- An adult posted items or test materials on social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.).

- An adult took test materials home or an administrator printed test items, reading passages, writing prompts, or scratch paper that was used during the test or an administrator failed to otherwise securely store test materials. An adult copied, discussed, or otherwise retained test items, stimuli, reading passages, writing prompts, or answers for any reason. **Note:** This does not include student logon information.

- An adult shared secure test materials (such as the writing prompts, test items, or reading passages) with the media or allowed the media to observe a secure test administration.

Student:

- A student posted items or test materials on social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.).

- A student took test materials home or an administrator allowed students to take home printed test items, reading passages, writing prompts, or scratch paper that was used during the test, or the administrator failed to otherwise securely store test materials. A student copied, discussed, or otherwise retained test items, stimuli, reading passages, writing prompts, or answers for any reason. **Note:** This does not include student logon information.

- A student retained scratch paper and had it during the same test in a subsequent testing session.

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.

Incorrect SSID

Student(s) accidentally took a test associated with a different student’s SSID.

Please select one of the following test statuses for the student(s) who unintentionally used another student’s(s’) SSID.*

- Test not completed
- Test completed

Completed tests can either be reset to allow the student to start a new test from the beginning or the assessment results can be associated with the SSID of the correct student. Which option would you like?

- Reset the test and allow the student(s) to start a new test
- Associate the assessment results with the SSID of the student(s). **Note:** Only select this option if you know the incorrect SSID(s) and the correct SSID(s).
Note: The LEA will receive an approval email. Retain the approval email sent by ca-assessments@ets.org. The approval email indicates that the incident is approved for further processing, and the LEA must call CalTAC to complete the manual process. The LEA ELPAC coordinator must contact CalTAC by phone at 800-955-2954 or email at caltac@ets.org and confirm details of the incorrect SSID, correct SSID, result ID, and test status information associated with this incident. This must be done within one business day to report the issue.

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.

Student Cheating or Accessing Unauthorized Devices

A student cheated or accessed unauthorized electronic devices such as a cell phone during testing.

Please select the description that best applies to the kind of student cheating or accessing of unauthorized devices that occurred.*

Note: If a student used an electronic device after the testing session was completed, it is not necessary to report this as an irregularity. However, if the student was actively engaged in a testing session or the student completed testing but the LEA can verify that the device was being used to help other students who were engaged in a testing session, then an irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.*

- Student(s) cheated or provided answers to each other, including passing notes or giving help to other students during testing.
- Student(s) accessed or used unauthorized electronic equipment (e.g., cell phone, tablet, or smartwatch) during the testing event.
- Student(s) accessed the internet or any unauthorized software or applications during the student’s(s’) testing event.

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.

Student Disruption

Student(s) made distracting gestures or sounds or talked during the test session, creating a disruption for other students.

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.
Validity Issue
A test examiner coached or provided answers, modified student responses, or allowed unauthorized access to student tests.

Please select the description that best applies to the kind of validity issue that occurred.*

- A test examiner or teacher provided coaching or another type of assistance to students that may have affected the responses.
- A test examiner provided students with nonallowable materials or devices or nonprescribed accommodation during test administration.
- Someone other than the student had access to the test (unless identified as an allowable accommodation in the student’s IEP).
- A test examiner or coordinator modified student responses or records at any time.

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.

Restore from Reset
A test was reset in error because of a mistakenly submitted Reset Appeal and needs to be restored.

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.

Data Entry Issue
An error was made entering information into the Data Entry Interface (by the test examiner) or the test delivery system (by the test examiner in the student interface).

Please select the description that best applies to the condition(s) associated with the data entry issue.*

If in the Speaking online domain or Writing online domain for grades kindergarten through two or paper–pencil tests for all grades for Speaking or Writing domains:

- The student’s assessment must be reopened in the Data Entry Interface. Selected item scores can be updated.
- If all item scores were entered inadvertently, the student’s assessment must be reset in the DEI. All of the student’s scores must be reentered.

If in the Speaking online domain or paper–pencil test:

- A test examiner forgot to score the student’s Speaking responses in real-time and cannot determine scoring from voice-capture.

If in the Reading or Listening domain for paper–pencil tests:

- The student’s assessment must be reopened in the Data Entry Interface. Selected item responses can be updated.
Appendices | Incident Types and Questions on the TOMS STAIRS/Appeals Screen

- If all item responses were entered inadvertently, the student’s assessment must be reset in the DEI. All of the student’s responses must be reentered.

If in either of the domains for paper–pencil tests:

- Test entry was started but not completed in the DEI. Reset the test in the DEI and allow the student to start a new test.

- Test entry was completed in the DEI. Reset the test in the DEI and allow the student to start a new test.

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.

**Hand Scoring Issue**

An error was made while scoring the student(s)’ responses in the Teacher Hand Scoring System (by the test examiner)

Please select the description that best applies to the condition(s) associated with the hand scoring issue.*

- Incorrectly applied rubrics

- Correction required based on Rotating Score Validation Process that changes the ELAS status.

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.

**Irregularity Flag Submitted in Error**

There was an Appeal submitted earlier with an incorrect irregularity flag that needs to be revoked.

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.

**Other Issues**

Testing issues occurred that are not listed previously.

Does this testing issue need an irregularity flag?

- Yes
- No

Provide a brief description that supports the testing issue reason selected.
Appendix E. STAIRS Applicable Testing Incidents

Accessibility Issue—All Domains Online (Except K–2 Writing)  
(RESET or No Appeal)

- A designated support or accommodation required by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan was set incorrectly and needs to be changed.
- A designated support for a student without an IEP or Section 504 plan was set incorrectly and needs to be changed. The testing event will result in a Reset Appeal if the student has completed no more than three questions in the Listening domain or two questions in the Reading domain or six questions in the Speaking domain or one question in the Writing domain.

**Note:** An irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

**Note:** The student’s embedded designated supports and non-embedded accessibility resources for the Initial ELPAC can be changed in the Test Administrator Interface before the student starts testing or resumes testing after a pause.

**Alert:** The submission of STAIRS case for this testing incident is allowed once the LEA provides a description of the corrective action plan based on the questions asked in the Submit progress step of the STAIRS case.

Domain Exemptions or Incorrect Alternate Assessment—All  
(RESET or No Appeal)

- The student did not receive a domain exemption or an alternate assessment as prescribed by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan.
  
  **Note:** After submitting the STAIRS case, the LEA should make appropriate updates in the student’s test assignments page in TOMS.

- The student received a domain exemption or an alternate assessment that was not prescribed by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan.
Administration Error—All
(No Appeal)

- Related instructional materials were left on the walls in the testing room.
- There was a failure to ensure administration and supervision of the assessment(s) by qualified, trained personnel.
- Incorrect instructions were given that were not corrected prior to testing.
- A test examiner’s username or password was shared (via email or otherwise), including with other authorized users.

Note: This requires an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

Technical Issues—All
(GRACE PERIOD EXTENSION or Reset or No Appeal)

- There was a disruption to a test session, such as a technical difficulty, fire drill, schoolwide power outage, earthquake, or other act beyond the control of the test examiner. (Grace Period Extensions can only be submitted for the Reading and Listening domains of online tests.)

Note: If the test is still in a Paused status, having the test examiner open a new testing session may be all that is needed for students to continue testing. Grace Period Extension is not applicable to Speaking and Writing domains online or to all domains for paper-based tests.

- The student was unable to hear the audio completely or partially for the Listening domain and the audio cannot be replayed. A Reset Appeal will remove the test and allow the student to retest and listen to the audio again. (An irregularity notation shall be mentioned in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.)

Alert: The submission of a Reset Appeal for this testing incident is allowed once the LEA provides a description of the corrective action plan based on the questions asked in the Submit progress step of the STAIRS case.
Exposing Secure Materials—All

- An adult or student posted items or test materials on social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.).

- An adult or student took test materials home, or an administrator allowed students to take home printed test items, reading passages, writing prompts, or scratch paper that was used during the test, or failed to otherwise securely store test materials. The adult or the student copied, discussed, or otherwise retained test items, stimuli, reading passages, writing prompts, or answers for any reason. An irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile if a student is the source of breach.

Note: This does not include student logon information.

- The student retained scratch paper used in a test and had it during subsequent testing. An irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

- An adult shared secure test materials (such as the writing prompts, test items, or reading passages) with the media, or media were allowed to observe a secure test administration.

Alert: The submission of STAIRS case for this testing incident is allowed once the LEA provides a description of the corrective action plan based on the questions asked in the Submit progress step of the STAIRS case.

Incorrect SSID Used—All
(RESET or SWAP or No Appeal)

- A test administrator or test examiner accidentally provided a student access to another student’s work or responses (accidental SSID swap).

Note: Only completed tests can be associated with different SSIDs. Incomplete tests must be reset through a Reset Appeal request. All reset tests require an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

The process for SSID swap for completed online tests requires that after a STAIRS/Appeals request that is nonappealable, the LEA ELPAC coordinator contact CalTAC by phone at 800-955-2954 or email at caltac@ets.org and confirm details of the incorrect SSID, correct SSID, result ID, and test status information associated with this incident to complete the process within one business day. This is also applicable for online tests for the Writing domain for kindergarten through grade two and for paper–pencil tests for all domains where the test entry is completed in the DEI.
Alert: The submission of STAIRS case for this testing incident is allowed once the LEA provides a description of the corrective action plan based on the questions asked in the Submit progress step of the STAIRS case.

Cheating or Accessing Unauthorized Devices—All (No Appeal)

- A student cheated or provided answers to other students, including passing notes, giving help to other students during testing.
- A student accessed or used unauthorized electronic equipment (e.g., cell phone, tablet, or smartwatch) during the student’s individual testing event—includes accessing the internet or any unauthorized software or applications.

Note: If during a testing session, a student used an electronic device after testing is completed, it is not necessary to report this as an irregularity. However, if the student was actively engaged in a testing session or the student completed testing but the LEA can verify that the device was being used to help other students who were engaged in a testing session, then an irregularity notation will be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

Alert: The submission of STAIRS case for this testing incident is allowed once the LEA provides a description of the corrective action plan based on the questions asked in the Submit page of the STAIRS case.

Student Disruption—All (No Appeal)

- Student(s) made distracting gestures or sounds or talked during the test session, creating a disruption in the test session for other students.

Note: The testing event requires an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

Alert: The submission of STAIRS case for this testing incident is allowed once the LEA provides a description of the corrective action plan based on the questions asked in the Submit page of the STAIRS case.
### Test Expiration or Accidental Submission—All Domains Online  
(Except K–2 Writing)  
(RE-OPEN)

- A student or a test examiner accidentally submitted the domain prior to completion.
- A student did not complete a test before it expired.

### Validity Issue—All  
(No Appeal)

- A test examiner or teacher provided coaching or any other type of assistance to students that may have affected the responses.
- A test examiner provided students with nonallowable materials or devices or a nonprescribed accommodation (i.e., not in the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan) during test administration.
- A test examiner or coordinator modified student responses at any time.

**Note:** All the previously mentioned testing incidents under Validity Issue require an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

- Someone other than the student had access to the test (unless identified as an allowable accommodation in the student’s IEP).

**Alert:** The submission of STAIRS case for this testing incident is allowed once the LEA provides a description of the corrective action plan based on the questions asked in the Submit progress step of the STAIRS case.

### Administered Incorrect Assessment—All  
(RESET or No Appeal)

- A student was administered an assessment for the wrong assessed grade level and outside the prescribed grade span.

**Note:** If the student was administered the wrong grade-level assessment within the correct grade span, the LEA is required to submit a nonappealable STAIRS case that results in an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

**Alert:** The submission of STAIRS case for this testing incident is allowed once the LEA provides a description of the corrective action plan based on the questions asked in the Submit progress step of the STAIRS case.
### Data Entry Issue—DEI—Online (Speaking Domain All Grades and Writing Domain for K–2 only) and Paper-Based Tests (All Domains)

**RE-OPEN or RESET**

- While entering information from a student’s paper answer booklet or from a student score sheet into the DEI, an error was made and all of the student’s responses must be reentered (Reset).
- While entering information from a student’s paper answer booklet or from a student score sheet into the DEI, an error was made, and selected student responses must be reentered (Re-open).
- A test examiner forgot to score the student’s Speaking responses in real-time and cannot determine scoring from voice-capture (Reset).
- Test entry for a paper–pencil test was started but either completed or could not be completed in the DEI. The LEA needs to submit a Reset Appeal in STAIRS to reset the test in the DEI and allow the student to start a new test.

### Restore from Reset—Online Only (All Domains Except K–2 Writing)

**RESTORE**

A test was reset in error, because of a mistakenly submitted Reset Appeal, and needs to be restored.

**Note:** The LEA ELPAC coordinator must contact CalTAC by phone at 800-955-2954 or email at caltac@ets.org requesting to submit a STAIRS case for this testing incident on behalf of the LEA.

### Rescore—Online Only (Writing Domain for Grades Three Through Twelve)

**REScore**

- A test examiner applied incorrect rubrics while scoring the student’s Writing responses in the THSS.
- Based on the Rotating Score Validation Process (RSVP) that changes the ELAS status, the test examiner needs to rectify the scores for the student’s Writing responses in the THSS.

### Irregularity Flag Submitted in Error—All

**No Appeal**

During the existing test administration year there was an Appeal submitted earlier with an incorrect irregularity flag that needs to be revoked.

**Note:** The LEA ELPAC coordinator must contact CalTAC by phone at 800-955-2954 or email at caltac@ets.org requesting to submit a STAIRS case for this testing incident on behalf of the LEA.
### Other Issues—All

(No Appeal)

This includes any testing event that is not listed in the existing STAIRS/Appeals System for Initial ELPAC tests and needs to be reported. The testing event may require an irregularity notation be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.

**Note:** LEA ELPAC coordinator must contact CalTAC by phone at 800-955-2954 or email at caltac@ets.org requesting to submit a STAIRS case for this testing incident on behalf of the LEA.
# Appendix F. Reasons for Appeal Types in the Appeals System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appeal Type</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Re-open Test** | A student or test examiner accidentally submitted the domain prior to completion.  
**Note:** This is applicable for all domains online except the kindergarten through grade two for Writing domain. |
| **Re-open Test** | A student started a test for a domain and did not complete the test before it expired.  
**Note:** This is applicable for all domains online except the kindergarten through grade two for Writing domain. |
| **Re-open Test** | While entering information from a student’s paper answer booklet into the DEI, an error was made, and selected student responses must be reentered.  
**Note:** This is applicable for the Speaking domain online for kindergarten through grade twelve and all domains for paper-based tests for grades three through twelve. |
| **Reset Test** | A designated support or accommodation required by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan was set incorrectly and needs to be changed.  
**Note:** This is applicable for all domains online except the kindergarten through grade two for Writing domain.  
Grade, alternate assessment, domain exemption, IEP, and primary disability fields are locked on the first testing event for the student between ELPAC or CAASPP assessments, whichever is first. Please contact CalTAC by phone at 800-955-2954 to unlock all the fields for the domain(s) tested on paper by the student.  
**If the student tested in all domain(s) or content area(s) in ELPAC and CAASPP assessments, the LEA needs to submit STAIRS cases for all the testing opportunities.**  
The submission of a Reset Appeal is allowed once the LEA provides a description of the corrective action plan based on the questions asked in the Submit progress step of the STAIRS case. |
### Reason for Appeal Types table (continuation one)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appeal Type</th>
<th>Reason</th>
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</table>
| **Reset Test**| A student without an IEP or Section 504 plan has an incorrect designated support that needs to be changed or deleted. The student has completed no more than three questions in the Listening domain or six questions in the Speaking domain or two questions in the Reading domain or one question in the Writing domain. This needs an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the *Score Status* page of the Student Profile.  
**Note:** This is applicable for all domains online except the kindergarten through grade two Writing domain.  
Grade, alternate assessment, domain exemption, IEP, and primary disability fields are locked on the first testing event for the student between ELPAC or CAASPP assessments, whichever is first. Please contact CalTAC by phone at 800-955-2954 to unlock all the fields for the domain(s) tested on paper by the student.  
**If the student tested in all domain(s) or content area(s) in ELPAC and CAASPP assessments, the LEA needs to submit STAIRS cases for all the testing opportunities.**  
The submission of Reset Appeal is allowed once the LEA provides a description of the corrective action plan based on the questions asked in the Submit page of the STAIRS case. |
| **Reset Test**| The student did not receive a domain exemption or alternate assessment as prescribed by the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan.  
**Note:** This is applicable for all domains online except the kindergarten through grade two Writing domain.  
Grade, alternate assessment, domain exemption, IEP, and primary disability fields are locked on the first testing event for the student between ELPAC or CAASPP assessments, whichever is first. Please contact CalTAC by phone at 800-955-2954 to unlock all the fields for the domain(s) tested on paper by the student.  
**If the student tested in all domain(s) or content area(s) in ELPAC and CAASPP assessments, the LEA needs to submit STAIRS cases for all the testing opportunities.** |
### Reason for Appeal Types table (continuation two)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Appeal Type</th>
<th>Reason</th>
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</table>
| **Reset Test** | A student was administered an assessment for the wrong assessed grade level and outside the prescribed grade span.  
**Note:** This is applicable for all domains online except the kindergarten through grade two Writing domain.  
If the student was administered an assessment for the wrong assessed grade level but within the prescribed grade span, an irregularity notation is mentioned in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.  
The submission of a Reset Appeal is allowed once the LEA provides a description of the corrective action plan based on the questions asked in the Submit page of the STAIRS case. |
| **Reset Test** | A student was not able to listen to the audio stimulus either completely or partially and the audio could not be replayed.  
**Note:** This is applicable for the online test Listening domain only. An irregularity notation is mentioned in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.  
The submission of a Reset Appeal is allowed once the LEA provides a description of the corrective action plan based on the questions asked in the Submit progress step of the STAIRS case. |
| **Reset Test** | A student accidentally took a test associated with another student’s SSID. This needs an irregularity notation to be included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile.  
**Note:** This is applicable for all domains online except the kindergarten through grade two Writing domain.  
The submission of a Reset Appeal is allowed once the LEA provides a description of the corrective action plan based on the questions asked in the Submit progress step of the STAIRS case. |
| **Reset Test** | A student accidentally took a test associated with another student’s SSID and either the test entry was started but not completed in the DEI or the test examiner completed the test entry in the DEI.  
**Note:** This is applicable for paper–pencil tests for all domains. |
### Reason for Appeal Types table (continuation three)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appeal Type</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Reset Test**                  | While entering information from a student’s paper answer sheet into the DEI, an error was made and all of the student’s responses must be reentered.  
**Note:** This is applicable for the Speaking domain online for kindergarten through grade twelve, Writing domain online for kindergarten through grade two, and all domains for paper-based tests for grades three through twelve. |
| **Reset Test**                  | A test examiner forgot to score the student’s speaking responses in real-time and cannot determine scoring from voice-capture.  
**Note:** This is applicable for the Speaking domain for all Initial ELPAC tests. An irregularity notation is included in reports related to STAIRS, in the STAIRS user interface in TOMS, and at a domain level in the Score Status page of the Student Profile. |
| **Restore Test (from Reset)**   | A test was reset inappropriately or in error. A Restore Appeal is not applicable for the Writing domain for the kindergarten through grade two paper–pencil test. The LEA ELPAC coordinator must contact CalTAC to submit a Restore Appeal on behalf of the LEA. |
| **Rescore**                     | The test examiner made an error while scoring the student’s(s’) responses in the THSS.  
**Note:** This is applicable for online test for the Writing domain for grades three through twelve. |
| **Rescore**                     | Correction of student’s(s’) scores for the Writing responses is needed based on RSVP that changed the ELAS.  
**Note:** This is applicable for online test for the Writing domain for grades three through twelve. |
| **Grace Period Extension**      | The 20-minute pause rule for the Listening and Reading domains online was exceeded because of disruptions to a test session beyond the control of the test administrator such as a technical difficulty, fire drill, earthquake, or schoolwide power outage. |