Appendix A. About the Secure Browser

Students must use the secure browser installed on the computer to log in to the Student Testing Site. The secure browser is designed to ensure test security by prohibiting access to external applications or navigation away from the test.

Your school's Technology Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the secure browser has been correctly installed on all computers to be used for testing at your school. If you are not sure that the secure browser was installed or you have questions, contact your Technology Coordinator.

 For information about installing the secure browser, refer to the *Technical Specifications Manual for Online Testing*. This document is available on the Smarter Balanced portal.

While the secure browser is an integral component of test security, Test Administrators perform an equally important role in preserving test integrity. In addition to the guidelines put forth by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium and individual districts or schools, TAs should be aware of the following and employ the necessary precautions while administering online tests:

- **Close External User Applications**

  Prior to administering the online tests, Test Administrators should check all computers that will be used and close all applications except those identified as necessary by the school's Technology Coordinator. After closing these applications, the Test Administrator should open the secure browser on each computer. The secure browser will not work if the computer detects that a forbidden application is running (see below).

- **Prohibit Testing on Computers with Dual Monitors**

  Students should not take online tests on computers that are connected to more than one monitor. Systems that use a dual monitor setup typically display an application on one monitor screen while another application is accessible on the other screen.

Forbidden Application Detection

The secure browser and Student Testing Site automatically detect certain applications that are prohibited from running on a computer while the secure browser is open, *unless the student has Permissive Mode enabled for testing*. When the secure browser is launched, the system checks all applications currently running on a computer. If a forbidden application is detected, the student will not be able to log in. A message will also be displayed that lists the forbidden application(s) that need to be closed.

 Warning: *If a forbidden application is launched in the background while the student is already in a test, the student will be logged out and a message displayed.* This typically occurs when a process such as Internet Explorer is triggered in the background in order for a software auto-update to occur. AIR recommends checking all software auto-updates and ensuring that they are done outside of planned testing hours.

Before administering tests, Test Administrators should ensure that all software applications are closed before opening the secure browser on student computers. Contact your school's technology staff if you need assistance in closing forbidden applications.

About Permissive Mode

Permissive Mode is a designated support option that must be enabled in TIDE. When Permissive Mode is enabled, students can use accessibility software in addition to the secure browser.

Permissive Mode becomes enabled when the student is approved for testing. Students who have the Permissive Mode setting enabled must NOT continue with the login process until their accessibility software is correctly configured. Otherwise, they will have to log out and resume the login process.

Using accessibility software with the secure browser:

1. Open the required accessibility software.

2. Open the secure browser. Begin the normal login process through to TA approval (for login instructions, refer to Student Login and Test Selection).

3. When a student is approved for testing, two things happen:

   - The student sees the **Is This Your Test?** page (Step 4, Verifying Test Information).

   - The secure browser allows the operating system's menu and task bar to appear

     - **Windows:** Start menu and bottom task bar

     - **Mac:** Apple menu and top task bar

4. The student *must immediately switch* to the accessibility software that is already open on the computer so that it appears "on top" of the secure browser. The student cannot click within the secure browser until the accessibility software is set up.

   - **Windows:** Use [**Alt**] + [**Tab**] to switch to the accessibility software application or click the application in the task bar.

   - **Mac:** Use [**Ctrl**] + [**Tab**] to switch to the accessibility software application or click the application in the dock.

5. The student configures the settings in the accessibility software.

6. After configuring the accessibility software settings, the student returns to the secure browser.

   Important: Once the secure browser is back "on top," the student can no longer switch back to the accessibility software. The taskbar and operating system menu will also be hidden. If changes need to be made, the student will need to log out and back in again.

7. The student clicks [**Yes, Start My Test**] and continues with the login process.

- Permissive Mode is available only for computers running supported desktop Windows and Mac operating systems. For information about supported operating systems, refer to the *Technical Specifications Manual for Online Testing*.

- Accessibility software must be certified for use with the Smarter Balanced Test Delivery System.

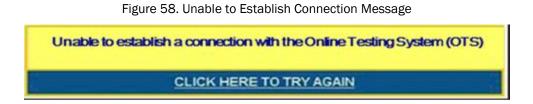- Forbidden applications will still not be allowed to run.

Secure Browser Error Messages

- **Secure Browser Not Detected**

  The Test Delivery System automatically detects whether a computer is using the secure browser to access the Student Testing Site. Students will not be able to access the Field Test site using a non-secure browser.

- **Unable to Establish a Connection with the Test Delivery System**

  If a computer fails to establish a connection with the Test Delivery System, the message below will be displayed. This is most likely to occur if there is a network-related problem. The cause can be anything from a network cable not being plugged in to the school's firewall not allowing access to the site.

Figure 58. Unable to Establish Connection Message

Unable to establish a connection with the Online Testing System (OTS)

CLICK HERE TO TRY AGAIN

Force-Quit Commands for Secure Browsers

In the rare event that the secure browser or test becomes unresponsive and you cannot pause the test or close the secure browser, you have the ability to "force quit" the secure browser.

To force the browser to close, use the following keyboard commands. (Reminder: This will log the student out of the test he or she is taking. When the secure browser is opened again, the student will have to log back in to resume testing.)

> **We strongly advise against using the force-quit commands, as the secure browser treats this action as an abnormal termination.** The secure browser hides features such as the Windows taskbar, and if the secure browser is not closed correctly, then the taskbar may not reappear correctly.
>
> These commands should be used only if the [**Close Secure Browser**] button does not work.

> Windows: [**Ctrl**] + [**Alt**] + [**Shift**] + [**F10**]
>
> Mac OS X: [**Ctrl**] + [**Alt**] + [**Shift**] + [**F10**]
>
> Linux: [**Ctrl**] + [**Alt**] + [**Shift**] + [**Esc**]
>
> Chromebooks: [**Ctrl**] + [**W**]
>
> *Note for Windows and Mac Users:*
> If you are using a laptop or netbook, you may also need to press the [**FN**] key before pressing [**F10**].

Force-quit commands do not exist for the mobile secure browser for iOS and Android.

- **iOS (iPads):** Triple-click the Home button to exit Guided Access, then close the app as you would any other iOS app.

- **Android:** Tap the [**Exit**] button in the upper right corner to close the secure browser.