

## 2017 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

### 1. What is FLACS?

FLACS is a professional organization whose members traditionally have been World Language supervisors, chairpersons and/or other school administrators, however, we also welcome teachers to become members. This organization provides professional development to help educators develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in language programs. FLACS provides networking support to help educators navigate the myriad of regulations and challenges that we all face. Additionally, the FLACS organization is committed to the development of quality language assessments at the Checkpoint A and B levels in Chinese, French, German, Italian and Spanish. We only require one member representative per district.

### 2. What is the FLACS Exam Consortium?

The FLACS Consortium is made up of a group of FLACS member school districts who have registered annually to be a part of our exam development process and to use our assessments to satisfy the NYS high school diploma requirements regarding World Languages. Consortium members contribute test items electronically to a secure location. The chairpersons for each exam review and edit the items and then select items to be on the exam, ensuring that all topics are level appropriate and there is a balance of topics and ease/difficulty level. The assessments are then field tested and proofed. Assessments are made available (password-protected online) for printing and secure storage in early June.

### 3. How does a school district gain access to the FLACS Checkpoint A and B assessments?

A minimum of one representative from the district must first join FLACS. The District must appoint the World Language supervisor, or if there is no World Language supervisor, the district must designate a person to represent the district in the FLACS Consortium. In order to become a member of FLACS simply go to the homepage ([www.flacs.org](http://www.flacs.org)) and click on "Membership."

### 4. How many people need to join FLACS from each district?

A minimum of one member per district is necessary.

### 5. When is the deadline to join FLACS?

The deadline to join is October 15, 2017, (without penalty). The late fee imposed after October 15, 2017 is \$100. The late fee imposed after December 15, 2017, is \$500. Once membership in FLACS has been confirmed, an email will be sent to the district's Superintendent asking if the district would like to also join the FLACS Consortium. In order to join, the Superintendent or his/her designee will need to complete the online application. Once this step has been completed, the district will receive the FLACS assessments in June 2018.

### 6. Which FLACS assessments are available?

Checkpoint A & B exams are available in Chinese, French, German, Italian and Spanish.

### 7. Can a school district sign up for only one assessment and not another?

Yes, the school district's designee will receive access to all FLACS assessments and will use only the assessments needed.

### 8. What happens if a district joins the Consortium but then decides not to use the assessments?

That is the option of the school district. FLACS would simply ask that an email be sent to the FLACS Exam Steering Committee Chairperson, Laurie Lauria ([llauria@flacs.org](mailto:llauria@flacs.org)), with the reason for its own data collection.

### 9. Can schools in the consortium choose when to administer the assessments?

No. In order to keep the exams valid and secure, the FLACS assessments may only be given as follows:

Checkpoint A Exams: Monday, June 18, 2018 (in the morning)  
Checkpoint B Exams: Monday, June 18, 2018 (in the afternoon)

**If the district or school is not able to comply with this protocol, it may not use the FLACS assessments.**

**10. Can a district use FLACS exams as a make-up exam?**

No. The FLACS assessments are secure assessments that are administered on the same date and time each year. Once the assessment has been released for administration, it has been breached.

It is important to note that any district has the option to create its own local exam to meet the graduation requirements.

**11. What is the format of the assessments? Are there any changes?**

There will be **no** changes on the June 2018, FLACS assessments. A detailed description of each assessment can be found here:

<http://flacs.org/flacs-exams-2017/>

**12. Are previously administered assessments available?**

Yes. Only the June 2017, FLACS assessments will be available to current FLACS Consortium members (password-protected). These are located in the Exam Portal and are posted in their original form. Please contact Laurie Lauria (Exam Steering Committee Chairperson) for assessment access issues: [llauria@flacs.org](mailto:llauria@flacs.org). Assessments administered prior to June 2017 will now be used as part of a test bank.

**13. Will questions from previous assessments be recycled from year to year, or will there be a completely new exam each year?**

While new exams will be created annually, some previously administered items may be edited and reused in subsequent years.

**14. How can a teacher/district submit items for consideration of use on the assessments?**

Items can be submitted by accessing the Exam Portal on the FLACS website. Follow the steps outlined in the Item Writing Guidelines document and make use of the webinar found on the FLACS website to further assist you in this process. Submission of new speaking tasks for both Checkpoints A & B are also encouraged. Use the Exam Portal for the submission of these tasks as well. Please note that the process for submitting multiple choice items beginning in August 2017, now includes identification of the ACTFL Performance Indicator.

**15. How many items should districts submit?**

FLACS encourages quality over quantity. Item writing is the most important part of the process. In addition to being an excellent opportunity for professional development, item writing allows FLACS to have a pool of questions from which to choose. Consider this an opportunity for departments to discuss assessments, themes, topics, standards and proficiency development. Again, making use of the Item Writing Guidelines, the Item Writing webinar and the other Power Points on the website is recommended.

**16. How will schools receive the assessments?**

District designees will receive passwords to access the assessments in early June 2018. Assessments must be stored and kept secure until the day of administration: Monday, June 18, 2018. No teacher who will be administering the exam to his or her own students should see the assessment prior to the administration date. It is the district's responsibility to appoint a staff member who does not have a vested interest in the outcome of the assessment to receive access to them and oversee their photocopying and proper storage.

**17. Is FLACS collecting data and if so, what kind?**

FLACS has collected data regarding enrollment, passing and mastery rates via Google doc links. FLACS requests that all participating districts submit results via the Exam Portal (Data Submission) immediately following the scoring of the assessments. Individual schools should not submit data separately. Instead, only ONE district representative (preferably the district's designee) should submit data for all schools within the district collectively.

**18. How should schools handle the speaking part of the exams?**

The Test Guidelines and Samplers are posted on the FLACS website. Students taking Checkpoint A assessments will be awarded 0 (no credit), 1 point (minimal proficiency), or 2 points for each of the utterances for the three tasks. Students taking the Checkpoint B assessments will be awarded 0 (no credit), 1 point (minimal proficiency/Checkpoint A response), 2 points (Checkpoint B response) for the two tasks. As a reminder, administration of the Part 1 Speaking must begin after April 1, 2018.