

Series 2002-2003
Circular Letter: C-13

REVISED 10-1-02

TO: Superintendents of Schools
District Test Coordinators

FROM: Theodore S. Sergi
Commissioner of Education

DATE: September 5, 2002

SUBJECT: Connecticut Mastery Test Fall Assessment and *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*

The new federal legislation, *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB), contains a number of requirements which directly affect the administration and reporting of Connecticut's state assessments.

No Child Left Behind

NCLB requires annual testing of all students in reading and mathematics in Grades 3 through 8 beginning in 2005-2006. In the next 12 years, every state, school district and school has the goal of 100 percent of their students reaching proficiency in reading and mathematics. In addition, there is an additional goal of annually increasing the number of students scoring at the Proficient* level.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

The state is required to annually determine if a district and school is making adequate yearly progress toward reaching the goal, within 12 years, of having 100 percent of its student population scoring at or above the Proficient level in mathematics and reading on the standard state assessments, the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT). **There is also a requirement of at least 95 percent student participation in the state assessment program.**

- 2001-2002 CMT and CAPT results are used to establish the baseline against which AYP will be calculated.
- 2002-2003 } CMT and CAPT results, plus test participation rates, will be used to identify
- 2003-2004 } those schools not making adequate progress over a two-year period.
- Spring 2004 Identification of districts and schools not making AYP on CMT.
- Summer 2004 Identification of districts and schools not making AYP on CAPT

* On June 12, 2002, the State Board of Education adopted four CMT and CAPT standards which create five levels of performance: Below Basic (Level 1 on CMT3); Basic (Level 2 on CMT3); Proficient (Level 3 on CMT3), Goal (Level 4 on CMT 3); and Advanced (New).

Although all schools will be subject to the AYP analysis and identification, only those identified schools and districts receiving Title I funds will be subject to a specific set of consequences.

The achievement results and participation rates will be calculated for the following groups in each school and district:

- All students in the school or district
- Students eligible for free or reduced price lunch
- Students in special education
- Students with limited English proficiency (LEP)
- Students in each major racial or ethnic group

Achievement

Based on the 2001-2002 CMT data, the federal baseline is established by the performance of the school where the 20th percentile student is enrolled (63 percent proficient in mathematics and 55 percent proficient in reading). Therefore, each district, school and student subgroup that does not have 63 percent of their students Proficient in mathematics and 55 percent of their students Proficient in reading on the CMT would fall below the established baseline. For CAPT, the target level of performance for both mathematics and reading is 53 percent of students at or above the Proficient level. Over time, schools will be required to have an increasing percentage of students in each of the above-mentioned groups (when the groups are of reasonable size) scoring at the Proficient level or higher on the state assessments to meet AYP. By federal law, these percentages must be calculated differently from the traditional way in which CMT and CAPT results have been calculated. **Therefore, the results published in state and district reports will be different than the results published to meet the NCLB accountability requirements.** The differences in the calculation and reporting procedures are summarized in Attachment A.

Participation

The **participation rate** requirement is that no less than 95 percent of all students (except those LEP students exempt by state law from the assessment) in each of the above-mentioned groups take part in the CMT and CAPT or the alternate state assessments: the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist and Out-of-Level (OOL) tests. That means that 95 percent of all students in a school **must** participate in the testing program. This particularly has implications for assuring the attendance of students during the testing window and providing make-up tests for those students absent from the district's scheduled tests. **If a school or district fails to meet the 95 percent student participation standard, it will be identified as not making AYP.**

This new participation requirement does not replace Connecticut's established target goals and expectations for the participation of special education students on the standard grade level version of the CMT and CAPT. These target goals and expectations remain as follows:

- At least 80 percent of all special education students will participate in each subtest of the standard grade level version of the CMT/CAPT.
- No more than 15 percent of the special education students will participate in OOL testing.
- No more than 5 percent of the special education students will participate in the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist.

If a special education student is determined to be unable to take the standard grade level test and takes an OOL test, that student will be counted as performing at the Below Basic level on the standard grade level test for calculating AYP. An exception to this will be made for those students who take the Skills Checklist, those with severe cognitive disabilities. The state will establish a separate set of standards used to determine proficiency on the Skills Checklist.

Reporting

The CMT and CAPT data from the 2001-02 school year will be used as the baseline data for setting the starting point for achievement expectations. **In the fall of 2002, you will receive school and district report cards (as an appendix to your district and school Strategic School Profile) which will show, for NCLB accountability purposes, the performance and participation rate of your school district's students in mathematics and reading on the 2001 CMT and the 2002 CAPT.** Please see Attachment B for a draft model of this report. There are several differences from the standard CMT and CAPT reports. Of note are the terms used to describe the performance of students according to the achievement levels. On the NCLB school and district report cards, the percentages of students scoring at Basic and above, at Proficient and above, and at Advanced will be reported. On all other **state** reports for CMT and CAPT, the percentages of students scoring in each of the five levels will be reported: Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, State Goal, and Advanced. Because of the many other differences described in Attachment A, the percentages of students across these two types of reports will not be the same.

Future Implications of NCLB on CMT and CAPT Administration

A new generation of CMT (CMT-4) and CAPT (CAPT-3) will be administered to students beginning in school year 2005-06. This new generation of the CMT coincides with the implementation of NCLB that expands the test to include students in grades 3 through 8, and moves the administration of the CMT and CAPT to the first two weeks in April, pending state legislation. It is anticipated that the CAPT administration will move to April beginning in 2003-04 and CMT will move in 2005-06. There would be no CMT in the fall of 2005; but April 2006 would be the first spring administration of the CMT.

For the CMT, pending state legislation, students in grades 3 through 8 will be tested in the areas of mathematics, reading, and writing starting in 2005-06, which begins a new generation of CMT (CMT-4) which will be very similar to the present generation in format, time and content. Science will be added in grade 5 and grade 8 beginning in school year 2007-08. The new generation of CAPT (CAPT-3) will also begin in the 2005-2006 school year and will be very similar to the present assessment.

In order to prepare test forms for the CMT-4 piloting of grade 3-8 students will begin in the **spring of 2003**. As in the past, we will need all students to be involved in the piloting, but only on one or two sessions, not the full CMT. The pilot is scheduled to be administered from March 31, 2003, to April 11, 2003. Below is a chart with a tentative schedule of CMT Generation 3 and 4 census and pilot testing for school years 2002-03 through 2007-08.

(Pending State Legislation)

School Year	Fall (September/October)		Spring (April) 2003	
	Census	Pilot	Census	Pilot
2002-03	CMT3, Grades 4, 6, and 8	CMT3, Grades 4, 6, and 8 (only some districts will pilot)	None	CMT4, Grades 3-8
2003-04	CMT3, Grades 4, 6, and 8	CMT3, Grades 4, 6, and 8 (only some districts will pilot)	None	CMT4, Grades 3-8
2004-05	CMT3, Grades 4, 6, and 8	None	None	CMT4, Grades 3-8
2005-06	None	None	CMT4, Grades 3-8	CMT4, Grades 3-8
2006-07	None	None	CMT4, Grades 3-8	CMT4, Grades 3-8
2007-08	None	None	CMT4, Grades 3-8	CMT4, Grades 3-8

Attachment C provides a copy of a draft calendar (**pending state legislation**) for the administration of the CAPT for the years 2003-04 through 2007-08 and for the CMT years 2004-05 through 2007-08. The testing window will be approximately two weeks in length with the Science Performance Task occurring the month before regular testing. A list of religious and state holidays that occur during the testing window has been included to assist you with scheduling dates within your district. Fixed sessions must be given on the dates indicated, but all other testing may be scheduled at any time during the two-week testing window.

Summary: Please take the time to consider the following immediate needs:

- 1. For the fall 2002 CMT, take steps to ensure that all students participate in the testing program. Use make-up tests within the testing window for absentee students, by tracking individual student participation.**
- 2. To prepare for the November Strategic School Profiles (which calculates and reports out on CMT and CAPT results using a different methodology), examine Attachment A- CMT and NCLB Comparison of Methods of Reporting Results, and Attachment B – Federal Report Card.**
- 3. In meeting with all school administrators and staff, begin to analyze all your school and district data by subgroup and for year-to-year progress.**

For questions regarding new accountability requirements and the testing programs, you may contact Dr. Abigail L. Hughes, Associate Commissioner, at (860) 713-6800 or via email at abigail.hughes@po.state.ct.us.

TSS:cgt
Attachments
cc: Elementary and Middle School Principals

ATTACHMENT A

CMT and NCLB

Comparison of Methods of Reporting Results

CMT and NCLB Comparison of Methods of Reporting Results

Topic	CMT	NCLB
1. In what school are students reported?	The school currently attended	The school attended the prior year. CMT results will be attributed to feeder schools serving students below Grade 3.
2. Are students who are in a school for less than a year included when reporting results for that school?	Yes	No
3. Are grades reported separately?	Yes	No
4. What is the key reporting unit?	Percent at or above goal	Percent at or above proficient
5. What size group is reported?	Groups of 10 or more are reported.	Scores will be reported whenever the group result would not reveal an individual student's performance. Only groups of reasonable size (yet to be determined) will be included in determining school performance.
6. What levels are reported?	advanced goal proficient basic below basic	advanced proficient basic
7. What denominator is used?	The denominator is the number of valid test scores. It does not include students who take OOL tests or the Skills Checklist, or students who are absent, exempt, use special modifications, leave a test blank, or whose Direct Assessment of Writing tests are unable to be scored.	The denominator is all students except exempt students.

Topic	CMT	NCLB
8. How are performance levels determined for students based on the test taken?	Students taking the standard CMT will be placed in a level based on the score earned. Those taking OOL and Skills Checklist are not put into levels with students taking the grade level test. OOL students are given OOL individual reports with level information. Students who are absent, exempt, use special modifications, leave a test blank, or whose Direct Assessment of Writing tests are unable to be scored are not put into levels.	Students taking the standard CMT will be placed in a level based on the score earned. Those taking OOL, absent, use special modifications, or leave a test blank, or whose Direct Assessment of Writing tests are unable to be scored will be placed in below basic. Students judged proficient on the skills checklist (limited to .5% of all students) may be counted as proficient. Those LEP students who are exempt are not put into levels.
9. Are scale scores reported?	Scale scores are reported for those students taking the standard CMT. Scale scores are not reported for those taking the Skills Checklist as well as those students who are absent, exempt, use special modifications, or leave a test blank, or whose Direct Assessment of Writing tests are unable to be scored. OOL students have scale scores reported on OOL reports but not on grade level reports.	No
10. Is non-scorable a reported category?	Non-scorable is reported for the Direct Assessment of Writing test only, as applicable. In that case, a student does not receive total Writing scale score.	Non-scorable students are automatically put in the below basic level for Writing.
11. How are “Void” students handled?	Students are no longer reported as voids. When a student becomes ill or cheats on any subtest (these were the only two situations when a Void was previously given), students must be administered a breach form of the test. That student is given the score they earn on that breach form.	Voids are not reported. When a student becomes ill or cheats on any subtest, they must be given a breach form of the test. That student is given the score they earn on that breach form.

Topic	CMT	NCLB
12. How are Limited English Proficient (LEP) students reported?	LEP students are reported as either Bilingual, Transitional Language Support Services or Other Instructional Language Services.	Students receiving LEP mandated program services of Bilingual, Transitional Language Support Services or Other Instructional Language Services are included in one category: LEP students.
13. How are special education students who take Out of Level tests reported?	These students are reported as taking OOL tests on the standard rosters and are not reported with scores or levels. On the OOL roster, they are reported with scores and levels. OOL students are not included in the denominator for the standard test.	Students taking OOL tests are automatically reported in the below basic level.
14. How are special education students who take the Skills Checklist reported?	These students are reported as taking the Skills Checklist on the standard rosters and are not reported with scores or levels. Skills Checklist students are not included in denominators.	Students judged proficient on the Skills Checklist (limited to .5% of all students) may be counted as proficient.
15. How are students reported who are present but leave a test blank?	These students are not given scores and are reported as leaving a test blank. These students <u>are not</u> included in denominators.	These students are not given scores and are reported in the below basic level. These students <u>are</u> included in the denominator.
16. How are students who are absent from the test reported?	These students are not given scores and are reported as absent. These students <u>are not</u> included in the denominator for results.	These students are reported as absent and are reported in the Below Basic level. These students <u>are</u> included in the denominator for results.
17. How are LEP students who are exempt reported?	These students are not given scores and are reported as exempt. These students <u>are not</u> included in the denominator.	These students are not given scores and are reported as exempt. These students <u>are not</u> included in the denominator.
18. What students are considered participants and how is participation reported?	Participation rates are calculated using total enrollment as the denominator. The percent of total enrollment in each category is provided: standard, OOL, Skills Checklist, exempt, absent, and No Valid Score (includes students who leave a test blank, students who use special modifications, and students whose Direct Assessment of Writing tests are unable to be scored).	One participation rate is calculated. Students who take standard, OOL, Skills Checklist, and students who use special modifications, who leave a test blank, or whose Direct Assessment of Writing tests are unable to be scored are included as participants. Absent students are not included as participants. The denominator includes all but exempt students.

ATTACHMENT B

DRAFT OF DISTRICT AND SCHOOL REPORT CARD FORMAT



Connecticut State Department of Education

District Report Card, 2001-2002

for XYZ School District

pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

DRAFT

The federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 requires a statewide school accountability system. As part of this system, school districts receiving assistance under Title I must prepare and disseminate annual report cards. This is a sample of a report card for XYZ School District. A school report is also required and contains the same information at the school level. It shows, for accountability purposes, the performance of the school district's students in mathematics and reading on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT). There is also information about the qualifications of teachers based on the federal definition of "highly qualified" teachers.

The state was required to set three levels of achievement, Basic, Proficient and Advanced. The mastery Goal standard that Connecticut has used, and continues to use, to measure student achievement, is more demanding than the Proficient level, but not as high as the Advanced level.

Because the figures in this report were calculated using the NCLB school accountability model, rather than the state student assessment, they will be different than the performance percentages found in the Strategic School Profiles and the CMT and CAPT reports. In this report card, the test results of students who were not enrolled in the district a sufficient length of time are not reported. Also, the percentage of students at each level of performance is based on all eligible students enrolled in the district. In student assessment reports, the percentages are based only on those students who have valid test scores.

Starting with the 2002-03 school year, the state must set performance objectives for each year in reading and mathematics. The 2001-02 school year testing data is used as the baseline. A performance objective is the minimum percentage of students who must reach the Proficient level or above. In order for a district or school to make adequate progress for the year, its students overall, and groups of students categorized as eligible for free or reduced price meals, enrolled in special education, having limited English proficiency, or from major racial and ethnic groups, must meet the minimum Proficient objectives. Also 95% of these students must participate in the assessments including out of level and CMT/CAPT skills checklist. If a school does not make adequate yearly progress for two consecutive years, it is so identified. Only those identified schools and districts receiving Title 1 funds will be subject to a specific set of consequences.

While there are still significant questions about exactly how AYP will be calculated and the potential for further Congressional action and/or United States Department of Education definition, we thought it was prudent to share this information with you at this time, particularly in light of the November Strategic School Profiles and the new federal report cards.

The data in the November district and school NCLB report cards will be preliminary and will not reflect the final method for calculating AYP. The data do not reflect: the final subgroup size that will be reported; the number of months a student attended a school (students with less than one school year will be excluded in the future); the impact of a "safe harbor" provision for schools making progress although not enough for AYP; a graduation rate for each district and school; and a third assessment for elementary and middle schools.

If you have questions or suggestions about the format and content of the report cards please contact Abigail L. Hughes, Associate Commissioner, at abigail.hughes@po.state.ct.us.

Table A. District (or School) Comparison to State Baseline Achievement, 2001-2002

DRAFT

		% of Students Scoring At or Above Proficient				# Students Tested	% Students Tested
		Math		Reading			
		Grades 4, 6, 8	Grade 10	Grades 4, 6, 8	Grade 10		
State Baseline							
Actual District Achievement:							
All Students, N=xxx,xxx							
Racial/Ethnic Group							
	American Indian						
	Asian American						
	Black						
	Hispanic						
	White						
	Other Race						
Disability Status							
	Disabled						
	Non-Disabled						
English Proficiency Status							
	Limited English Proficient						
	English Proficient						
Economic Status							
	Disadvantaged						
	Non-Disadvantaged						

Mathematics

DRAFT

Table B. Connecticut Mastery Test Achievement, Grades 4, 6, and 8: District or School

Student Group	# Students Tested	% Students Tested	% Students Not Tested	% of Students Scoring At or Above		
				Basic	Proficient	Advanced
All Students, N=xxx,xxx						
Racial/Ethnic Group						
American Indian						
Asian American						
Black						
Hispanic						
White						
Other Race						
Gender						
Male						
Female						
Disability Status						
Disabled						
Non-Disabled						
Migrant						
Migrant						
Non-Migrant						
English Proficiency						
Limited English Proficient						
English Proficient						
Economic Status						
Disadvantaged						
Non-Disadvantaged						
State						

Mathematics

DRAFT

Table C. Connecticut Academic Performance Test Achievement, Grade 10: District or School

Student Group	# Students Tested	% Students Tested	% Students Not Tested	% of Students Scoring At or Above		
				Basic	Proficient	Advanced
All Students, N=xxx,xxx						
Racial/Ethnic Group						
American Indian						
Asian American						
Black						
Hispanic						
White						
Other Race						
Gender						
Male						
Female						
Disability Status						
Disabled						
Non-Disabled						
Migrant						
Migrant						
Non-Migrant						
English Proficiency						
Limited English Proficient						
English Proficient						
Economic Status						
Disadvantaged						
Non-Disadvantaged						
State						

Reading

DRAFT

Table D. Connecticut Mastery Test Achievement, Grades 4, 6, and 8: District or School

Student Group	# Students Tested	% Students Tested	% Students Not Tested	% of Students Scoring At or Above		
				Basic	Proficient	Advanced
All Students, N=xxx,xxx						
Racial/Ethnic Group						
American Indian						
Asian American						
Black						
Hispanic						
White						
Other Race						
Gender						
Male						
Female						
Disability Status						
Disabled						
Non-Disabled						
Migrant						
Migrant						
Non-Migrant						
English Proficiency						
Limited English Proficient						
English Proficient						
Economic Status						
Disadvantaged						
Non-Disadvantaged						
State						

Reading

DRAFT

Table E. Connecticut Academic Performance Test Achievement, Grade 10: District or School

Student Group	# Students Tested	% Students Tested	% Students Not Tested	% of Students Scoring At or Above		
				Basic	Proficient	Advanced
All Students, N=xxx,xxx						
Racial/Ethnic Group						
American Indian						
Asian American						
Black						
Hispanic						
White						
Other Race						
Gender						
Male						
Female						
Disability Status						
Disabled						
Non-Disabled						
Migrant						
Migrant						
Non-Migrant						
English Proficiency						
Limited English Proficient						
English Proficient						
Economic Status						
Disadvantaged						
Non-Disadvantaged						
State						

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Table G. District or School Summary: % Students Scoring At or Above Proficient

Subject	Grade 4 (CMT)		Grade 6 (CMT)		Grade 8 (CMT)		Grade 10 (CAPT)	
	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2001	2002
Mathematics								
Reading								

Table H. Qualifications of Teachers Teaching in the Core Academic Areas, 2001-2002

The academic subjects that have been identified as core academic areas by federal statute are English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, world languages, civics and government, economics, the arts, history, and geography; this includes elementary and middle school teachers, special education, TESOL, and bilingual education teachers teaching these subjects, but not physical education, health, vocational, consumer and technology education or other subjects not explicitly listed above.

	District or School	State Average	State High Poverty Schools	State Low Poverty Schools
Percent of Teachers Who are Highly Qualified				
Percent of Teachers Who are Not Highly Qualified				

Note: The federal definition would appear to define substitutes, long-term substitutes, durational shortage area permits (DSAPS), non-renewable interim, interim certificates and minor assignments as "not highly qualified." We will be calculating this percentage as of the end of each year and will make it available to districts, based on the 2001-2002 school year. We in Connecticut may choose to provide our own explanation of these "not highly" qualified staff.

REVISED 10-1-02

ATTACHMENT C
CALENDAR OF TEST ADMINISTRATION

PENDING STATE LEGISLATION

(PENDING STATE LEGISLATION)

CAPT Calendar 2004-08

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Science Performance Task	February 26 to March 31	February 28 to March 31	February 27 to March 31	February 26 to March 30	February 25 to March 28
CAPT Administration	April 1 to April 16	April 1 to April 15	April 3 to April 13	April 2 to April 13	April 1 to April 11
Interdisciplinary Writing 1	April 1	April 5	April 4	April 4	April 1
Response to Literature	April 2	April 6	April 5	April 10	April 2
Interdisciplinary Writing 2	April 7	April 7	April 6	April 11	April 3

CMT Calendar 2004-08

	2003	2004	2006	2007	2008
CMT Administration	September 17 – October 3	September 15 – October 1	April 3 to April 13	April 2 to April 13	April 1 to April 11
Direct Assessment of Writing	September 18	September 21	April 4	April 4	April 1
Science Performance Task	NA	NA	NA	NA	February 25 to March 28

HOLIDAYS OCCURRING DURING THE TESTING WINDOW

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Passover	April 5-6	NA	April 12-13	April 2-3	NA
Good Friday	April 9	NA	April 14	April 6	NA
Rosh Hashanah	Sept. 16-17	NA	NA	NA	NA
Yom Kippur	Sept. 25	NA	NA	NA	NA
Sukkot	Sept. 30- Oct. 1	NA	NA	NA	NA