

PERFORMANCE MATTERS

News from the CSDE Performance Office



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EdSight Secure Report Lists Students Receiving Letters from CSDE

For the past eight years, the Commissioner of Education has sent letters directly to students in 10th and 11th grade who had the potential to succeed in rigorous courses like dual enrollment classes offered by colleges and universities, the College Board's Advanced Placement courses, or the International Baccalaureate program. This year, the CSDE is sending similar letters -- one to the parent/guardian followed by another to the student. The list of students notified in your district/school, along with the supporting resources, is available through EdSight Secure.

In past years, the sole criteria for identification was a PSAT score. This year, partly due to much lower participation in the PSAT due to the pandemic, the CSDE used the Smarter Balanced results from middle school (primarily Grade 8, but some

6/7 as well) to identify students. Our research indicates that the [Smarter Balanced and PSAT are highly correlated](#) and that student performance on the Smarter Balanced assessments in middle school is [a strong indicator of student success in high school](#). Using the Smarter Balanced results allowed the CSDE to identify 15,000 more students statewide than would have happened through the PSAT alone, with many of these students coming from Alliance Districts.

Going forward, the CSDE is planning to send these letters to students in Grades 9/10 in the fall (not winter/spring). This earlier notification should give students, families, and schools more time to plan a high school pathway that best challenges students and matches their individual interests. An [FAQ is also available](#).

Connecticut Accountability Waiver Request Approved

The U.S. Department of Education has approved Connecticut's request for a waiver from implementing district/school accountability for the 2020-21 school year. Therefore, Connecticut will not issue a summative rating (i.e., the Accountability Index), not categorize schools into 1-5

categories, and not identify new Turnaround or Focus schools (category 4 and 5) in Fall 2021 based on data from the 2020-21 school year. Please see the [Next Generation Accountability web page](#) as well as the [April 8th Commissioner memo](#) to Superintendents for more information.

CSDE Offers the DESSA — an SEL Assessment System — to CT Districts

The CSDE has entered into a partnership with Aperture Education to provide a statewide SEL assessment for K-12 schools. Starting in the fall of 2021 and after a thorough procurement process, CSDE will make Aperture's research-backed social-emotional

learning assessments, the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) System and the DESSA-mini, available to all Connecticut districts at no cost. Please see the [press release](#) for more information.

Districts Share Approaches to Teaching, Learning, and Community Building in 2020-21

In October 2020, the CSDE Academic and Performance Offices invited representatives from twenty districts to share their stories about how they adapted and applied different learning models to address local needs and the unique situations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants were selected based on past achievements including Schools of Distinction, National Blue Ribbon Schools, and those with a strong record of academic

growth. Information was gathered through two virtual sessions organized by grade level (elementary/middle school session and a high school session). The conversations and lessons learned are summarized in a publication titled [Reimagining the Possibilities: Teaching, Learning, and Community Building in 2020-21](#) posted in the [Learn Together, Growth Together](#) section of the CSDE website.

CT SEDS

The CSDE announced in October 2020 that it is developing a comprehensive statewide Special Education Data System (CT-SEDS) to improve efficiency of the state's special education general monitoring and supervision processes. CT-SEDS will provide numerous benefits for Connecticut's more than 84,000 students with disabilities, their families and educators. This statewide initiative will reduce the overall reporting burdens on local school districts and provide schools a necessary resource to better serve

students with disabilities and their families. We continue to make great progress on the CT-SEDS initiative with our partner Public Consulting Group (PCG). We are on pace for a "go live" date of July 1, 2022. A brief 6 minute video, which provides an overview of the capabilities of the system, as well as an FAQ document can be found on our website at <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Special-Education/New-IEP/New-IEP-CT-SEDS>.

Special Education Data Collections

Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO):

ECO post-testing of preschool children with disabilities who will be advancing to kindergarten in the fall of 2021 should be conducted between now and the end of the 2020-2021 school year. Post-test data should be reported in the ECO Data Collection system as soon as possible, but not later than the post-test due date of June 30, 2021.

SEDAC:

Districts should be reviewing the Nexus Missing Report, the ED-166 Primary Disability Report and the Resolution Meetings Data Collection for any cases that need immediate attention. Reminder: Resolution Meetings have a statutory timeline of 15 calendar days from the time a complaint is filed by a parent.

Restraint & Seclusion (R/S):

Reminder: R/S has a statutory timeline of 2-business days to report from the date of the incident. All districts should ensure they are up-to-date on their R/S reporting.

Evaluation Timelines (ETC):

Districts are encouraged to report all their 2020-2021 evaluations immediately, but not later than June 30, 2021. Immediate reporting is required for accurate identification of students with disabilities for statewide testing purposes and provision of assessment accommodations. By reporting all evaluations before PSIS summer roll-over, the Nexus Missing Report in SEDAC and ETC can identify students who need their Nexus District information updated in PSIS. This will ensure that all reporting for next fall is timely and accurate for newly identified students.

New Computer Science Reporting Guide

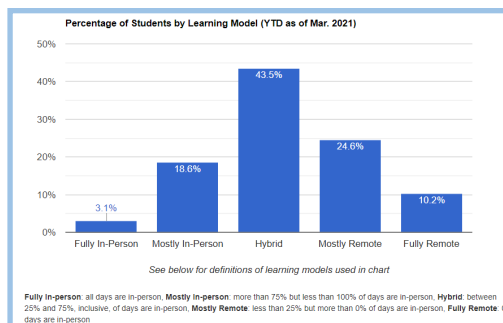
In an effort to improve and expand reporting about computer science course participation in Grades 9-12, the CSDE has produced a [new computer science reporting](#)

[guide](#) to assist districts with accurate course code selection in the Teacher-Course-Student (TCS) collection.

A [recording of the webinar](#) held on April 27, 2021 is available.

Monthly Attendance Reports

On the [Supporting Student Participation](#) page, the CSDE provides current data and trends in monthly attendance, school learning models, and health indicators for consideration of learning models. The monthly attendance data continue to show that students with high needs (i.e., English learners, special education, free-reduced price meal eligible) have lower year-to-date attendance rates in



2020-21 than during the 2019-20 school year. Moreover, the attendance challenges are compounded among students who reflect multiple high need factors. CSDE is partnering with [Attendance Works](#) to take a closer look at attendance trends (including chronic absence) in support of efforts to improve attendance and engagement, especially for Connecticut's most vulnerable students.

EdSight Secure Upgrade Provides New Features for Users

An EdSight Secure system upgrade was performed on February 8th. Users are now able to interact with charts and tables in a number of new ways. When interacting with charts, users can change the order in which data are sorted, change how the data are grouped (stacked or clustered), and add or remove data or segment labels. When interacting with tables, users can freeze and reorder columns, show or hide totals, and add cell graphs. In addition, users can export an increased number of records and navigate between reports using interactive breadcrumbs. The user's view



settings (i.e., the most recently viewed report page, prompt values, etc.) are saved between sessions, and a print feature now provides an option that includes

accessibility tags to produce accessible PDFs. The upgrade also improved

accessibility for keyboard-only users and for users of some assistive technologies.

Trainings on the upgraded interface were held on February 10th and 11th. Please see the [training presentation](#) or [view the recorded session](#) to learn more.

'Growth Mindset' Linked to Higher Test Scores, Student Well-Being in Global Study

By Sarah D. Sparks — April 09, 2021 in [Education Week](#)

Nearly 2 out of 3 students who participated in PISA (the Program for International Student Assessment in 2018) across all countries demonstrated a growth mindset, according to the study released Thursday. Moreover, after controlling for students' and schools' socioeconomic differences, students with a strong growth mindset scored significantly higher on all subjects—31.5 points in reading, 27 points in science, and 23 points in math—compared with students who believed their intelligence was fixed. In the United States in particular, where about 70 percent of students demonstrated a growth mindset, it was associated with a 60-point higher score in reading.

Teacher support proved the most closely connected to both students' mindsets and their performance. Students with supportive teachers—for example, those who show interest in every student learning and a willingness to provide extra help and explanation until a student understands—were 4 percentage points more likely to have a growth mindset than those without a supportive instructor. In the United States, students with a growth mindset outperformed those with a fixed mindset by 48 points in reading when they had low teacher support, but by 72 points when they had supportive teachers. See [Education Week](#) for the full story.

NAEP in the 2020-21 School Year



The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is not being administered to students this year, but there are Connecticut schools participating in two NAEP-related projects: the NAEP 2021 School Survey and the School and Teacher Questionnaire Study.

NAEP 2021 School Survey

In support of an [Executive Order](#) issued by President Biden, Connecticut has partnered with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to collect data on student instructional modes and attendance rates. These data are collected monthly through the [National Assessment of Educational Progress \(NAEP\) 2021 School Survey](#). The survey started in February and will run through June. The goal of the monthly data collection is to provide evidence-based guidance to inform national- and state-level decisionmakers responsible for policy and resources needed to reopen schools for in-person learning. Monthly results are reported through the [Monthly School Survey Dashboard](#). Most of the news coverage of the survey results have focused on the national picture, but of course, state-level results are available through the dashboard. There was wide coverage of the initial release by education-focused media outlets including [Education Week](#) and [Chalkbeat](#). Additionally, there was coverage on [NPR](#) and in the [New York Times](#), the [Washington Post](#), and the [Associated Press](#).

School and Teacher Questionnaire Study

The administration of the NAEP 2021 School and Teacher Questionnaire Study involves administering the standard online school and teacher [questionnaires](#) that are part of every NAEP assessment along with additional questions related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of the study is to gather contextual information from schools and teachers on student learning opportunities and experiences during times of school closures, remote instruction, and hybrid instruction. NCES will release national and state results in the fall of 2021.

Thank you to the Connecticut school administrators and teachers who are providing these important data. The school survey data allow us to showcase the great progress Connecticut educators have made in providing in-person learning opportunities to students. Results from the questionnaire study will provide us with a unique opportunity to hear from teachers and school leaders directly.

For questions regarding either NAEP project, please contact Renee Savoie at renee.savoie@ct.gov.

LEAP Initiative to Address Student Absenteeism and Disengagement

A new state program known as the **Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP)** is aimed at engaging K-12 students who struggled with absenteeism and disengagement during the 2020-21 school year as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The CSDE is partnering with the six state Regional Education Service Centers (RESCs) to target 15 school districts throughout Connecticut. Funds will go to increasing people power who will be deployed to homes to directly engage with families and students to provide support. Connecticut's RESCs will coordinate this work with school district officials, local community organizations, and other state service providers, and will

be deployed to homes to engage with families and provide support. The goal of LEAP is to achieve three important outcomes:

- Bridge students back to their school communities for the final months of the school year.
- Support student enrollment in upcoming summer camps and summer learning programs.
- Facilitate for families in need a seamless transition back into their school communities for the 2021-2022 school year.