

PERFORMANCE MATTERS

News from the CSDE Performance Office



Volume 5 | Issue 4 | October 2020 www.ct.gov/sde/performanceoffice

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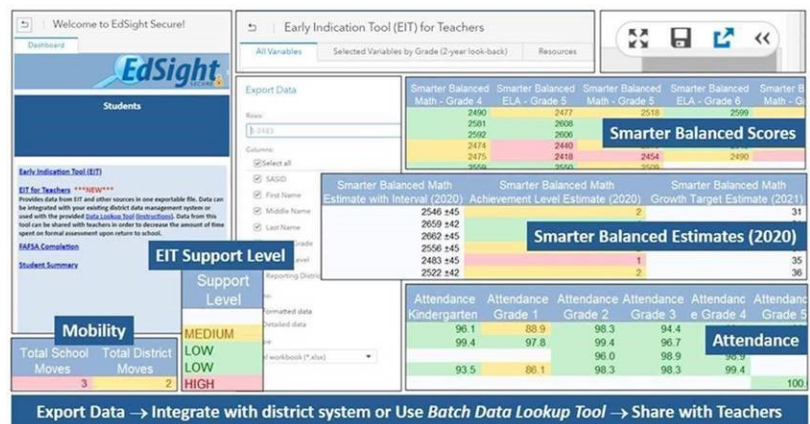
Early Indication Tool (EIT) for Teachers – New Resource in EdSight Secure

The *Early Indication Tool (EIT)* is an [EdSight Secure](#) report that can support timely student interventions by district/school staff. The *EIT for Teachers* is a new EdSight

Secure report that provides historical student-level data and EIT support levels for incoming students. The report also includes estimated student scale scores for the 2019-20 Smarter

Balanced assessments and corresponding growth targets for the 2020-21 year. The ultimate goal of this report is to facilitate sharing of these data with teachers in order to decrease the amount of time spent on formal assessment in accordance with the [Sensible Assessment Practices](#)

guidance. District data coordinators can use school roster information and the linked *EIT for Teachers Data Lookup Tool* ([instructions](#)) to generate custom reports for any of a



Learning Models and Student Participation

The State Board of Education's [August 11, 2020 resolution](#) allows remote learning days to count toward the 177 school day requirement. This authorization is contingent upon school districts providing rigorous learning and engagement opportunities that are aligned with State standards and Board expectations. The Board charged the CSDE with ensuring fidelity to this expectation by collecting whatever data are necessary and making that information transparent. Therefore, the CSDE established [two new data collections](#). Weekly data on [learning models and student participation](#) are available on EdSight. Detailed monthly attendance data collection is in progress and is expected to be reported by the end of the month.

Assessment and Accountability in 2020-21

Please see the [memorandum dated October 15, 2020](#) which affirms the CSDE's commitment to statewide assessments and describes CSDE's plans for district/school accountability for the 2020-21 school year.

Procurement of New Statewide Special Education Data Management System

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) announced, after a thorough procurement process, the department is entering into a partnership with the Public Consulting Group (PCG) to support its goals and vision of developing a comprehensive statewide Special Education Data System (CT-SEDS) to make available to all of its local school district partners. CSDE's commitment to improved efficiency for the state's special education general monitoring and supervision system will provide numerous benefits for Connecticut's more than 84,000 students with disabilities, their families and educators.

The implementation of this system will allow local school districts to redeploy funds toward a streamlined special education data collection process and student based programming needs that were previously used to support an online IEP system. 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 are excited to partner with PCG and get this extremely important work underway.

The CT-SEDS adaptive electronic Individual Education Program (IEP) document was designed to improve the format and flow of information with intuitive, easy to use displays. The new system includes a parent portal for families to access their student's IEP and other important

information as well as a language translation feature to ensure that parents receive information in their native language. The new and improved document will also assist planning and placement teams (PPTs) in navigating the special education process, leading to the development of high quality IEPs for Connecticut's students. School districts will also have access to additional modules within the system to support Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI)/Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), Section 504, Gifted and Talented, and Medicaid reimbursement processes.

The 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years will be devoted to customizing the system to meet Connecticut's needs. This complex endeavor will involve piloting the system with select districts, making necessary adjustments to system functionality and, to the greatest extent possible, migrating historical data. Ensuring a thoughtful and deliberate implementation timeline will allow for extensive system testing, comprehensive end-user training, and provide time for existing school district software contracts to expire in advance of full implementation during the 2022-23 school year. Much more information will be shared with districts as the customization work gets underway. Questions should be directed to [Diane Murphy](#).

NEW REPORT: A Closer Look at High School ELs

English learners (ELs) are a subgroup of Connecticut's high school students, unique from their non-EL peers in the challenge they face to access and master secondary-level academic content while concurrently trying to develop English language proficiency. Additionally, they are also sometimes distinguished from non-EL peers by their demographic characteristics. The [A Closer Look at Connecticut's High School English Learners \(SY 2018-19\)](#) paper presents a statewide picture of high school ELs in SY 2018-19, including their demographics, assessment results and trends in these areas.

**Chronic Absenteeism
Data for 2019-20 is
now available on
[EdSight!](#)**



Students with Disabilities and English Learners Graduation Rates

Students with high needs, which includes students eligible for free- or reduced-price meals, students with disabilities and English learners, have posted their highest six-year graduation rates to date. Connecticut’s six-year adjusted cohort graduation rate improved to 91.4 percent for the 2016-17 cohort, an increase from 90.9 percent from the previous cohort. The six-year adjusted cohort graduation rate represents the percentage of first time ninth graders who graduate with a regular high school diploma in six years or less.

While there is a standard expectation that students will complete high school within four years, specific groups of students require more time to graduate for a variety of reasons. For example, students who are English learners may need additional time to become proficient in English while mastering content and developing skills necessary for college and career readiness. Students from low income families may need to work part-time to support their families while balancing coursework.

The table on the right shows the graduation rate for the 2016-17 cohort at year four, five, and six. When comparing the 6-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for the 2016-17 cohort to the 4-year rate for that group of students, the greatest increases are seen among students with disabilities, English learners, students with high needs, and those eligible for free lunch. In total, more than 1,200 additional students reached the key milestone of earning a high school diploma in six as opposed to four years.

To gather best practices on what it takes to ensure students who need more time to graduate are provided the opportunity, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) contacted leaders in East Haven, Enfield, Killingly, and Manchester, all of which are districts that have seen improvements in their extended graduation rates for students with high needs and in particular students with disabilities and English learners. The discussions revealed a variety of common conditions that promote best outcomes for students, such as:

- An inclusive environment where all teachers feel responsible for the learning and engagement of students with disabilities and English learners;
- A school culture that fosters a strong sense of community and mutual respect among the students and staff;
- Carefully selected staff who possess the expertise, a willingness to continuously improve, and a talent for developing positive, productive relationships with students and their families;
- A range of pathways and choices that appeal to students and keep them engaged and excited about learning;

2016-17 Adjusted Cohort Four-, Five-, and Six-Year Graduation Rates

Student Groups	4-Year	5-Year	6-Year
All Students Statewide	87.9	88.2	91.4
High Needs	78.1	78.7	84.5
Non-High Needs	97.9	97.9	98.5
Eligible For Free Lunch	76.0	76.4	82.0
Eligible For Reduced Lunch	88.3	88.7	92.6
Not Eligible For Lunch	95.5	95.6	97.2
English Learners	68.4	68.9	76.6
Non-English Learners	89.1	89.3	92.3
Special Education	66.7	68.2	78.8
Non-Special Education	91.8	91.9	93.7

- Targeted attention to and careful planning for the middle to high school transition, especially for the most vulnerable students; and
- A leadership team that is unwavering in its practice of putting students at the center of all decisions.

District and school level graduation rates are available on [EdSight](#). In addition to the [six-year graduation rate for the 2016-17 cohort](#), this data release also includes the [five-year graduation rate for the 2017-18 cohort](#).

Blog Post: Rethinking Accountability for 2020-21

Check out this blog post on the [National Center for Assessment web site](#) that was coauthored by Executive Director, Dr. Scott Marion of the National Center and CSDE Chief Performance Officer, Ajit Gopalakrishnan.

Connecticut Recognized in Two National Reports

Connecticut was recognized by Results for America (RFA) as 1 of 7 leading states nationally for evidence-based policymaking. In particular, our collective work to collect student addresses and exchange data between state agencies to [disseminate Pandemic-EBT cards to more than 287,000 students](#) was lauded.

A report by the Education Strategy Group and the Level Up Coalition, [From Tails to Heads: Building Momentum for Postsecondary Success](#), recognized Connecticut's efforts to expand AP participation. The report also offers a framework for a new set of postsecondary transition metrics for states and communities to prioritize in order to help more students successfully move to and through higher education.

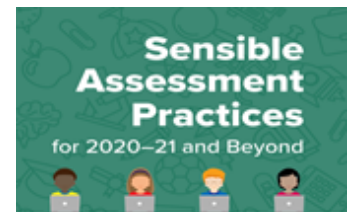
Sensible Assessment Practices and the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Blocks

The [Sensible Assessment Practices for 2020-21 and Beyond](#) document was created to support the return to school this fall, for both in-person and remote instruction. It offers guidance to educators, including general and special education teachers, interventionists, instructional specialists, and related service providers on how they can "assess" their incoming students without necessarily having to "test" them using formal assessments.

To conceptualize what this would look like in the classroom, the CSDE developed the [Sensible Assessment Practices webinar series](#), which are short, focused webinars that provide examples, considerations, and resources specific to each phase of the school year referenced in the document. Topics designed for teachers include **Start of the School Year**, **Building Community**, and **Beginning with a Unit Designed for Success**. Additional webinars are coming soon and focus on using EdSight Secure Longitudinal Data, the Instruction and Assessment Cycle, and Focusing on Sensible Assessment Practices Year Round.

The Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments and NGSS Interim Assessments are open for the 2020-21 school year. The interims are optional resources that local school districts may choose to use to assess their students'

learning throughout the school year, during both remote and in-person learning. In support of the Sensible Assessment Practices guidance distributed to districts in July 2020, the interim assessments may be particularly helpful with reopening plans this school year. Below is a list of resources to support your use of the interims and formative assessment processes this fall. Please contact [Cristi Alberino](#) if you have any questions.



- [Quick Guide to Administering Smarter Balanced and NGSS Interim Assessments Remotely](#)
- [Using Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards \(NGSS\) Interim Assessments Remotely](#)
- [Considerations for Non-Embedded Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations](#)
- [Tools for Teachers](#): Educator-created lessons, activities, strategies, and professional development to help tailor instruction and boost learning.