



NEWS

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DR. DIANNA R. WENTZELL, COMMISSIONER

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Governor Malloy and Commissioner Wentzell Applaud College Board Decision to Increase Equity by Expanding Testing Accommodations

(HARTFORD, CT)—Governor Dannel P. Malloy and Commissioner of Education Dianna R. Wentzell on Thursday applauded College Board’s decision to expand testing accommodations for English learners and students with disabilities.

This change will provide English learners taking the Spring 2017 Connecticut SAT School Day with college reportable scores when they access testing instructions in several native languages and/or use approved word-to-word bilingual glossaries. Furthermore, effective 2017-18, English learners can also receive extended testing time (up to time and a half) that will result in a college reportable score.

Connecticut led the way in working with the College Board to secure no-questions-asked testing accommodations on the Connecticut SAT School Day for students with disabilities who have those accommodations documented in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan. The College Board is now simplifying the accommodations request process, so that most students who are approved for and using testing accommodations at their school through a current IEP or 504 Plan will have those same accommodations automatically approved for taking the SAT, PSAT 10, PSAT/NMSQT, SAT Subject Tests and AP Exams.

“By switching to the SAT, Connecticut took a big step toward greater equity in our schools by giving all 11th graders in the state a chance to take a college and career readiness exam that can unlock the door to higher education,” Governor Malloy said. “Connecticut led the way in working with College Board to secure these expanded accommodations that will benefit our most vulnerable students. This decision helps us move even closer to our equity goals.”

“We welcome these changes. They are the right thing to do to improve access to the SAT and remove barriers for English Learners and students with disabilities,” said Commissioner Wentzell. “We have been working with the College Board over the past year on the issue of testing accommodations and we applaud them for taking steps to make the SAT more accessible to all students.”

With the first statewide administration of the Connecticut SAT School Day last spring, Connecticut moved closer to its goal of equity and excellence by ensuring all public school students in 11th grade take a college and career readiness exam that is often required for admission to college. Under federal law, Connecticut must administer end-of-year tests to all students in Grades 3 to 8 and once in high school.

In August 2015, Governor Malloy announced the decision to replace the 11th-grade Smarter Balanced assessment—or SBAC exam—with the SAT. The U.S. Department of Education approved the change as part of a request from Connecticut for flexibility in meeting accountability requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Governor Malloy sought the change to reduce the amount of standardized testing required for public high school students, to eliminate duplicative testing, reduce over-testing, mitigate student stress, and address the concerns of parents.

Results from the first Connecticut SAT School Day were released in August 2016 and can be accessed at the CSDE data portal, EdSight: <http://edsight.ct.gov>.

As part of its commitment to equity and in addition to administering the SAT to all public school 11th-graders, the State Department of Education will continue to pay for administration of the PSAT in Alliance District high schools and will continue to cover the cost differential for Advanced Placement (AP) tests for students from low-income families. The PSAT is a requirement for students applying for several key scholarships, including the National Merit Scholarship.

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