

# Language Supports for English Learners/Multilingual Learners Participating on Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards Assessments Transcript

## Slide 1:

CSDE Learning Series for Planning and Placement Teams and Section 504 Teams

Language Supports for English Learners/Multilingual Learners Participating on Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards Assessments.

Welcome to this training!

## Slide 2:

What are language supports and who qualifies?

As educators, we have a vital opportunity to support all students—especially English learners and multilingual learners (ELs/MLs)—by meeting them at their current stage of language development. Through targeted scaffolding, tools, and instructional strategies, we can reduce barriers and promote equitable access to learning.

While we can't control how each student learns, we can influence outcomes by aligning supports with individual goals. Bilingual and ESL programs help ELs/MLs develop essential receptive, productive, and interactive language skills. Bilingual programs, as defined in Section 10-17e of the Connecticut General Statutes, use both the student's native language and English to deliver content instruction, fostering deeper understanding and academic growth.

When language supports are aligned with principles of equity and access, they create inclusive environments where all learners can thrive. Many of these supports are also reflected in the designated supports available on statewide assessments such as Smarter Balanced and NGSS, ensuring ELs/MLs can effectively demonstrate their knowledge.

This presentation highlights key language supports that enhance both instruction and assessment outcomes for multilingual learners.

## Slide 3:

Language Supports

Students progressing toward English language proficiency—including English learners/multilingual learners (ELs/MLs) and dually identified ELs/MLs with disabilities—may benefit from designated supports that promote language access during Connecticut’s statewide assessments. These supports are not one-size-fits-all and may not address every language need, but they can help reduce barriers and improve access.

This presentation outlines a range of supports, including:

- Simplified Test Directions, On-the-Fly Translations, and printed directions read by the test administrator;
- Tools to support navigation of the Test Delivery System for math and ELA; and
- Specific supports for Spanish-speaking students on math and science assessments.

It’s important to remind students that assessments are just one snapshot of their learning. For students with significant language barriers, testing time should be reasonable and appropriate to their needs.

Designated supports are selected by informed educators—ideally a team familiar with the student’s English proficiency, instructional supports, and assessment history. Input from families and students is essential in this decision-making process.

There are two types of designated supports:

- Embedded supports: Built into the test platform.
- Non-embedded supports: Provided by educators during testing, as permitted by the CSDE Assessment Guidelines.

For a full list of available supports, refer to the [Embedded and Non-Embedded Designated Supports for English Learners/Multilingual Learners brochure](#).

## Slide 4:

### Three-Tier Accessibility Approach

The Three-Tier Accessibility Approach is a tool to illustrate how accessibility supports aid students specific to need and purpose.

In looking at the largest bridge, Tier 1, Universal Tools are available to ALL students. Universal Tools are those that every student should have access to if they will benefit the student, such as scratch paper or a highlighter. These tools can be used by any student that needs them at any time, regardless of the activity or the content area.

The bridge below, Tier 2, is for a smaller group of students. Here, the educator team reviews strengths and barriers to determine if designated supports are needed. An example of a Tier 2 support might include those that promote language access. Designated supports such as the bilingual word-to-word glossary on the science test may be beneficial for some students who already use this tool during instruction.

Tier 3, is for an even more specialized subset of students who have an IEP or Section 504 Plan. Accommodations might include the provision of closed captioning of the ELA Listening assessment for students with hearing impairments.

Resource:

From the [Council of Chief State School Officers \(CCSSO\) Accessibility Manual](#):

The Three-Tier Accessibility Framework is an adaptation of the following National Center on Educational Outcomes report commissioned and published by CCSSO: Lazarus, S., Goldstone, L., Wheeler, T., Paul, J., Prestridge, S., Sharp, T., Hochstetter, A., and Warren, S. (2021). CCSSO Accessibility Manual: How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accessibility Supports for Instruction and Assessment of All Students. The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

## Slide 5:

Let's review these different levels of supports and accommodations using the Accessibility Chart, shown here. It was developed specifically for the Smarter Balanced and the Next Generation Science Standards Assessments. It provides 3 tiers of support ranging from Universal Tools, shown to the far left in blue, designated supports, shown in orange and located in the center of the chart, and accommodations, shown in red to the far right. You will notice that within each section, embedded and non-embedded tools are listed, along with hyperlinks to additional information, if applicable.

Please note the User Key, located on the far right, that includes symbols representing tools that are not available on the science assessments, those accommodations that are non-standard and require additional teacher training, and tools that might be appropriate for English learners/multilingual learners.

While the Accessibility Chart is a great reference, to learn the details about each of these accessibility features reference the CSDE Assessment Guidelines.

Accessibility Charts for the LAS Links Assessment and the Connecticut SAT School Day are posted to the CSDE web page.

Other Accessibility Charts are available for the CT SAT School Day and LAS Links.

- [CT SAT School Day Accessibility](#)
- [LAS Links Accessibility Chart](#)

### Slide 6:

This optional form is available to the educator team for determining language supports for English learners/multilingual learners participating in the Smarter Balanced mathematics and English language arts assessments and the NGSS assessment. These decisions should be determined prior to testing to ensure optimal test conditions and to minimize test irregularities.

### Slide 7:

As with all designated supports and accommodations, test settings must be documented in TIDE prior to testing.

Designated supports for students who are not identified as Special Education or Section 504 can be entered directly into TIDE by the District Administrator (DA) or School Test Coordinator (SC) either manually or via the upload process prior to testing. However, if conducting a batch upload, please remember to remove records for students who have documented IEP/Section 504 Plans.

Designated supports and accommodations for students with finalized and implemented plans will sync to TIDE from CT-SEDS.

As with all designated supports and accommodations, test settings must be documented in TIDE prior to testing. If the student does not have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan, the supports can be manually entered in TIDE or uploaded. Refer to the Documenting Designated Supports and Accommodations in TIDE brochure for details.

### Slide 8:

Now that we know how to distinguish between the levels of supports, let's review those types of language supports that are available on the state summative tests.

### Slide 9:

This designated support is intended as a language support for any student approved by the educational team, based on need. An audio translation is available as well and may be useful to students who rely on the oral dictation of the word. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional time to complete the assessment.

Based on differences in complexity across languages, different language glossaries may provide support for different construct irrelevant English language terms. Therefore, if a student has access to the English and one second-language glossary, some terms may have both glossaries present while other terms may have only one of the two glossaries present. Please note that not all math items contain glossary options.

Refer to [Translation \(Glossary\) – Embedded Designated Support](#) for more information.

## Slide10:

To use the embedded Translation Glossary for Math, the student should look for a dotted line above or below a word or phrase. This indicates an available translation as shown inside the red rectangular box on your slide.

When the student hovers the mouse over the term, a pop-up box will appear with the translation, audio, and/ or illustration of the term.

The student can select the audio icon next to the glossary term and listen to the audio recording of the glossary.

The student can click the X at the top right-hand corner of the pop-up window to close the glossary.

The use of this support may result in the student needing additional time to complete the assessment.

Translation Glossary must be documented in TIDE prior to testing. It will be visible in the Test Administration Interface and immediately available to the student for use while taking an interim or summative assessment. Once set in TIDE, this setting will persist until the end of the school year unless otherwise adjusted. Also note that many designated supports are not retroactive (e.g., Translation Glossary), meaning that if the support is not reflected in TIDE prior to testing, it will not be available on the test form. Instead, an appeal may need to be submitted through TIDE to generate a new test form with the updated test setting.

Image of math question with a red rectangular box around the word "Calculator" as this word is flagged with a translation option.

### Slide 11:

The illustration glossary is designed to help students understand words or phrases in test questions when their primary native language is not available.

A dotted line above or below a word or phrase indicates an available illustration. Refer to the red rectangular box on the slide that shows a translation option for the word “Calculator.”

When students hover over the term, it becomes highlighted, and when it is selected, a pop-up window with the illustration appears (as shown on the slide).

Students can adjust the size and placement of each illustration depending on their needs and preferences.

Students who are deaf/hard of hearing and use sign systems other than American Sign Language may benefit from this support.

### Slide 12:

The non-embedded Translated Glossary is only available for students with an IEP or Section 504 Plan who qualify to take the Smarter Balanced Assessments using Large Print Test Booklets. The District Administrator (DA for Testing) must request the non-embedded Translated Glossary when ordering materials in TIDE.

This support must be documented by the Team in the student’s IEP/Section 504 Plan in CT-SEDS.

### Slide 13:

No script.

### Slide 14:

This designated support allows the test administrator to simplify the script within the SAY boxes published in the Smarter Balanced: Summative Assessment Test Administration Manual for English Language Arts and Mathematics (TAM). This can be done through the use of paraphrasing and clarifying the script while also adjusting reader speed and volume.

Simplified Test Directions are intended to support students with difficulties in auditory processing, short-term memory, attention, or decoding.

No other part of the test may be simplified. The test administrator must not prompt the student in any way that would result in a different response to a test item or influence the student’s response in any way.

Test administrators should not deviate from the test directions found in the TAM in ways that impact the measured content.

The student depends on the test administrator to read the script in the TAM accurately, pronounce words correctly, and speak in a clear voice. When a student needs additional support to understand the test directions found in the TAM, the test administrator may simplify or paraphrase the language in the script and verify the student's understanding. Simplifying test directions should be consistent with classroom instruction and includes repeating or rephrasing. This may include breaking TAM directions into parts or segments or using similar words or phrases, but it should exclude defining words or concepts.

The test administrator must be trained in administering the assessment and must follow the Smarter Balanced Guidelines for Simplified Test Directions (Guidelines for Simplified Test Directions in the Test Administration Manual).

This support is only available for the teacher directions published in the Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual.

### Slide 15:

This is a word-to-word translation of the directions and functions students encounter when using the online test delivery system (TDS).

PDFs of the terms are available for Smarter Balanced ELA and math only.

If available, a certified bilingual test administrator trained and employed at the school can read to the student or, if the student is literate in the selected language, they may read the terms independently. Students who are developing English language skills can use this translation resource.

The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment, as well as a separate setting.

Languages currently supported for the Non-Embedded Translated Test Directions include: Arabic; Burmese; Cantonese; Dakota; Filipino (Tagalog & Ilokano); French; Haitian-Creole; Hmong; Japanese; Korean; Lakota; Mandarin; Portuguese; Punjabi; Russian; Somali; Spanish; Ukrainian; Vietnamese; and Yup'ik.

If applicable to the student, PDFs should be downloaded and printed by the test administrator prior to testing and distributed to the student at the time of testing. Materials are available on the portal using this link [Translated Test Directions](#).

## Slide 16:

An on-the-fly native language reader of the script from the Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual can be provided to the student if a certified and trained teacher employed by the school is available who speaks that language.

Located in the interim/summative Test Administration Manual, all teacher test directions/scripts (indicated by SAY) may be read and clarified in English or using the student's native language for EL/MLs who have been identified as needing this support.

A certified staff person trained in test administration and security who proficiently speaks the student's native language may administer this designated support. If the teacher is non-certified, they must be trained and under the supervision of a certified educator.

Links to the Test Administration Manuals are included here:

- NGSS Test Administration Manual (TAM);  
<https://ct.portal.cambiumast.com/resource-item/en/ngss-test-administration-manual-tam>
- Smarter Balanced Summative Test Administration Manual (TAM);  
<https://ct.portal.cambiumast.com/resource-item/en/smarter-balanced-summative-test-administration-manual-tam>

## Slide 17:

This designated/language support provides the student with a visual reference in English for test directions/script within the SAY boxes in the Summative Test Administration Manuals (TAMs) for Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments. The test administrator must download, print, and distribute the printed test directions to the student at the time of testing. Options include:

- NGSS TAM Printed Test Directions Student Version for One-Day Testing
- NGSS TAM Printed Test Directions Student Version for Testing Two-or-More Days
- Smarter Balanced TAM Printed Test Directions Student Version Grades 3-5
- Smarter Balanced TAM Printed Test Directions Student Version Grades 6-8

## Slide 18:

Two types of word-to-word glossaries are permitted on the NGSS for students that use them regularly during instruction.



1. NYS Statewide Language Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network: Bilingual Glossaries and Cognates (<https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/language-rbern/resources/bilingual-glossaries-and-cognates>)

This optional resource offers word-to-word translations in a variety of languages in the subject areas of math, ELA, history, and science- which is beneficial for classroom instruction. The science translations may be used on the NGSS.

In preparation for administering the NGSS, the teacher should use this resource to locate the word-to-word glossaries in the science section applicable to the student's native language (if available).

Materials should be downloaded, printed, and distributed to the student at the time of testing.

Note the following:

- Students are not permitted to use digital word-to-word glossaries within the secure test platform or secure testing environment. Only paper copies are allowed.
- These materials are not secure, but they should be safely stored by the teacher if the student is testing over multiple days.
- The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.
- These word-to-word glossaries are publicly available but may not be included in any publication to be sold without explicit permission from Steinhardt New York University. Inclusion does not constitute endorsement or any other commercial publication.
- For the purposes of statewide testing, this resource can only be used on the NGSS. It is not permitted for use on Smarter Balanced Assessments.

## Slide 19:

The second resource permitted for use on the NGSS is the Bilingual Dictionaries and Glossaries Authorized for Use by English Language Learners. This resource provides examples of word-to-word glossaries allowed on the NGSS. If your student's native language is not represented on this list, refer to the NYS Statewide Language Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network: Bilingual Glossaries and Cognates (<https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/language-rbern/resources/bilingual-glossaries-and-cognates>) for availability.

Please note the following reminders:

Dictionaries are not permitted on Connecticut's standardized tests. Only word-to-word translations are available to ELs/MLs on the NGSS Assessment.

- These materials are not secure, but they should be safely stored by the teacher if the student is testing over multiple days.
- The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.
- This resource is used with permission of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Inclusion does not constitute endorsement of this paper or any other commercial publication.
- For the purposes of statewide testing, this resource can only be used on the NGSS. It is not permitted for use on Smarter Balanced Assessments.

### Slide 20:

No script.

### Slide 21:

This Spanish presentation will allow the literate Spanish-speaking student to toggle between a full Spanish translation of the item and the English version of the passages and items.

By default, all test directions, navigation buttons, and test content will be presented to the student in the Spanish language.

For students whose primary language is not English and who use dual Spanish language supports in the classroom, the use of this designated support (dual language) translation may be appropriate.

This support should only be used for students who are proficient readers in Spanish and who are not proficient in English.

The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment and may increase reading and cognitive load.

### Slide 22:

Text-to-speech (TTS) is available in English for students who benefit and use it during instruction. TTS is available for ELA items (not reading passages) and math/science stimuli and items.

- Verify that TTS for items is documented for ELA.
- Verify that TTS of stimuli & items is documented for math and science.

These supports must be documented in TIDE prior to testing. They will not work if they are activated after a student begins their test.

### Slide 23:

TTS is available in Spanish on the math and science assessments for students who are fluent in Spanish who also use and benefit from text-to-speech during instruction.

- Work with your tech department to download the applicable Spanish voice pack to the student's testing device.
- Verify that TTS of stimuli & items is documented for math and science.
- Verify that Spanish Toggle is documented for math and science.

TTS reads questions, responses, and certain places in the stimuli/item by placing the mouse in front of the text and right-clicking. Choose “Start Speaking from Here.”

TTS and Spanish presentation (Spanish Toggle) must be documented in TIDE prior to testing. These supports will not work if they are activated after a student begins their test.

### Slide 24:

No script.

### Slide 25:

A read aloud in English is available for ELA items (not reading passages) and math/science stimuli and items.

The reader must review the Smarter Balanced Read Aloud Guidelines, and complete the Security/Confidentiality Agreement (Appendixes B and C).

A read aloud is available in Spanish for the math and science stimuli and items if the school can provide a certified teacher who is literate and fluent in Spanish and is trained in test administration.

The reader must review the Smarter Balanced Mathematics and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments: Guidelines for Spanish Read Aloud of Stimuli and Items.

The link on the bottom of this slide is to the Smarter Balanced and NGSS Reader Options Table.

## Slide 26:

No script.

## Slide 27:

Students who are easily distracted, or who may distract others in environments such as group testing, may need an alternate location to be able to take the assessment. The separate setting may be in a different room that allows them to work individually or among a smaller group, or in the same room, but in a specific location (for example, away from windows, doors, or pencil sharpeners, in a study carrel, with a whisper phone, near the teacher's desk, or in the front of a classroom). Some students may benefit from being in an environment that allows for movement, such as being able to walk around. In some instances, students may need to interact with instructional or test content outside of school, such as in a hospital or their home. A specific adult, employed by the school and trained in a manner consistent with the interim/summative Test Administration Manual, including security procedures, may act as test proctor (test administrator) for the student. Some designated supports or accommodations require students to be assessed individually. These students would also require a separate setting. Examples include students accessing the Read Aloud designated support or accommodation, talking calculator, or scribe/speech-to-text.

If Separate Setting is documented in an IEP/Section 504 Plan, refer to details in the plan that specify the type of setting needed.

## Slide 28:

No script.

## Slide 29:

No script.

## Slide 30:

No script.

## Slide 31:

Here is our contact information. Please reach out with any questions as we are here to support you and your teams.

Abe Krisst, Bureau Chief, Connecticut Education – Performance Office; Direct Line: 860-713-6894; Mobile Phone: 860-690-0650; Email: <mailto:Abe.Krisst@ct.gov>

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### Slide 32:

The CSDE would like to thank you for attending and for all you do for your students.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer.