



2026-2027 LAS Links Domain Exemption Guidance

LAS Links Domain Exemption Purpose

The CSDE created the Domain Exemption process for a small group of English learners/multilingual learners (ELs/MLs) who are dually identified and due to the nature of their disability may not be able to access or participate in a specific domain. If approved for a Domain Exemption, the CSDE can calculate an Overall score for these students so that they have the opportunity to meet the Mastery Standard and exit EL/ML status.

Note: Domain Exemptions on the LAS Links are scoring exemptions approved by the CSDE and should not be included in IEPs (or Section 504 Plans). For information on Domain Exemptions from the Bureau of Special Education, please see the [Bureau of Special Education Update, March 2026](#).

Eligibility Criteria

A small number of students who are dually identified as EL/ML and either Section 504 or Special Education may be unable to participate in the Listening or Speaking Domains of LAS Links because of the complexities of their disability. Domain Exemptions are available on the Listening and/or Speaking subtests for the following students:

- Students who are identified as D/deaf or hard of hearing, and even with accessibility supports or amplification, may not be able to participate in the Listening subtest due to this disability.
- Students who are non-verbal/non-speaking, unintelligible, deaf and non-oral and, even when provided with assistive technology (AT) or augmentative and alternate communication supports (AAC), may not be able to participate in the Speaking subtest.

What does it mean to be non-verbal/non-speaking, unintelligible, or deaf and non-oral?

Some students, based on the nature of their disability, may have speech and language sound disabilities that significantly impact their intelligibility. Additionally, some students may have minimal or beginning communication systems due to the severity of their disability. It is important when considering a Speaking Domain Exemption to work in collaboration with Speech and Language Pathologists that are working with the student.

Unintelligibility: Unintelligibility refers to speech that is difficult for familiar or unfamiliar listeners to understand. This may occur consistently or situationally, and can be caused by a variety of factors, including but not limited to articulation or phonological disorders, motor speech impairments (e.g., apraxia or dysarthria), structural differences (e.g., cleft palate), or hearing loss. Teams should consider how intelligibility affects a student's ability to participate in classroom activities and demonstrate their knowledge through spoken responses. For more information on unintelligibility teams can refer to the [American Speech-Language-Hearing Association](#).

Non-verbal/non-speaking: Please note, some professionals and communities are moving toward terms like minimally verbal, non-speaking, or uses alternative communication, depending on the individual's profile and communication strengths. Non-verbal or non-speaking refers to students who are not currently using spoken words or connected speech as their primary means of communication. These students may communicate using gestures, facial expressions, sign language, picture-based systems, or augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices. This term does not imply an absence of communication or intent. Teams should consider a student's full range of expressive communication abilities, including any emerging spoken language. Additionally, teams should note that non-verbal/non-speaking is different than the "silent period" that students who are identified as EL/ML may experience as a common aspect of second language acquisition.

Deaf and non-oral communicators: For students who are deaf, and their primary mode of communication is American Sign Language, and due to the nature of their disability the student has no oral communication means.

What are the LAS Links Critical Due Dates?

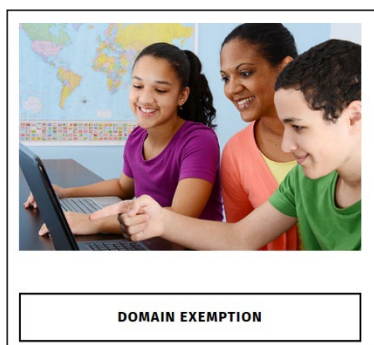
- The window to submit Domain Exemptions for LAS Links is **November 30, 2026–February 26, 2027**.
- The LAS Links testing window is **January 4–March 5, 2027**.

Note: Submissions must be made by the English Language Assessment Coordinator (ELAC) in the DRC Domain Exemption Form by these dates. Submissions after this deadline **may not be processed**. Please contact [Katie Seifert](#) (860) 713-7622 if a LAS Links Domain Exemption is submitted after the submission deadline.

How to Submit the LAS Links Domain Exemption Form

The ELAC will be able to submit LAS Links Domain Exemption Form located on the [Connecticut DRC LAS Links Website](#). The LAS Links Domain Exemption Form can be located by navigating to [Connecticut DRC LAS Links Website](#), and selecting the Domain Exemption Card (refer to [Figure 1](#)).

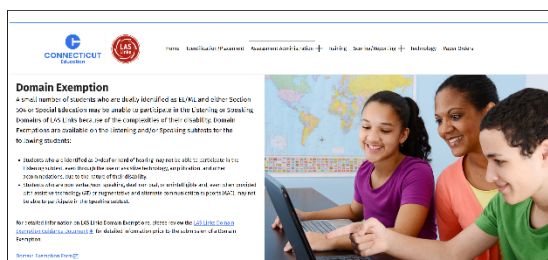
Figure 1.



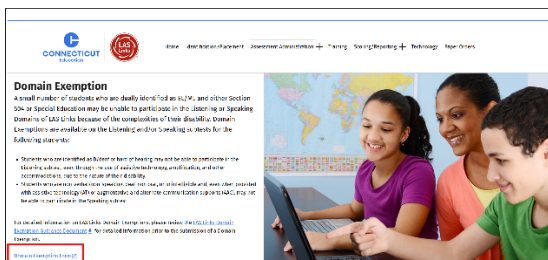
Please ensure that the Domain Exemption Form is submitted on the LAS Links Domain Exemption Form **prior to testing the student** and communicate this information and process clearly to all test administrators.

What is the process used by ELACs to submit the LAS Links Domain Exemption Form?

1. Navigate to [Connecticut DRC LAS Links Website](#).
2. Go to the [LAS Links Domain Exemption Page](#).



3. On the Domain Exemption Page, scroll down and click on Domain Exemption Form.



4. Once you click on the form, the LAS Links Domain Exemption form will populate.

5. Complete and submit the form. Please remember, if the student qualifies for more than one Domain Exemption, the form must be submitted **separately for each subtest**.
6. Once the Domain Exemption Form is submitted, the CSDE will review the submission for approval.



7. The CSDE will then approve, deny, or request additional information if needed to process the Domain Exemption. Please note, the CSDE reserves the right to verify IEP information within the Connecticut Special Education Data System (CT-SEDS).
8. The ELAC who has submitted the Domain Exemption Form will be notified by email from CSDE indicating the status of the submission.
9. If approved, the ELAC should communicate this information to EL/ML staff administering the LAS Links. The approved Domain Exemption should not be tested if approval from CSDE is sent.

How can the ELAC gather the required information needed for the LAS Links Domain Exemption Form?

The new **optional** [LAS Links Domain Exemption Collection Form \(DISTRICT USE ONLY\)](#) may be used to assist districts with the collection of information at the district level that will aid in ensuring the required data is available for entry into LAS Links Domain Exemption Form by the ELAC. **Only Domain Exemptions entered in LAS Links Domain Exemption Form by the CSDE's deadline of February 26, 2027, are eligible for consideration and approval by the CSDE.**

How will I know if the LAS Links Domain Exemption was approved?

Once the CSDE receives the LAS Links Domain Exemption Form Submission, the CSDE will review the form. Please note, the CSDE reserves the right to verify information presented on the submission in CT-SEDS. The CSDE will contact the ELAC listed in the form submission on the status. If approved, the ELAC should communicate this approval to educators administering the LAS Links to ensure the student is assessed on the accurate domains.

How is a student's test scored if LAS Links Domain Exemption was approved?

The CSDE will adjust student scores appropriately for students who have a LAS Links Domain Exemption approval. Students with approved Domain Exemptions will not have an Overall score in DRC's reporting system, INSIGHT, or their DRC individual student reports. English Language Assessment Coordinators should note that the Overall score will only be calculated by the CSDE and will only be available in EdSight Secure.

Contact Information

If you have any questions, please contact [Katie Seifert](#) (860) 713-6722, [Cristi Alberino](#) (860) 713-6862, or CTstudentassessment@ct.gov.

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