Reader Options for Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments

UNLOCKING *Lifelong* POTENTIAL

CONNECTICUT Education

2025–2026

Connecticut State Department of Education – SY 2025-26

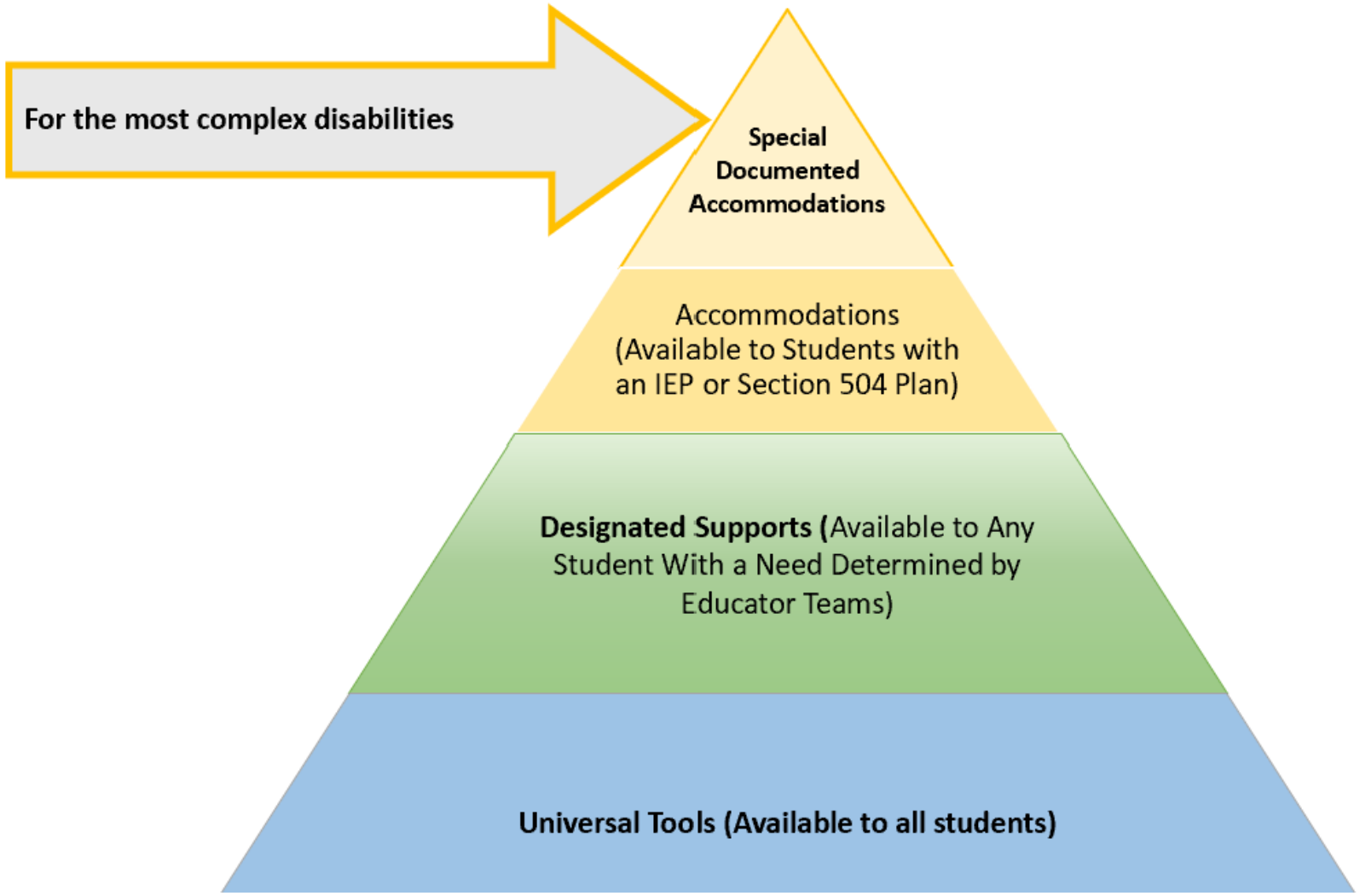
Expect Students to Achieve Grade-Level Standards

CONNECTICUT Education

- Understand the principles and applications of UDL.
- Practice the mindset of strengths-based planning.
- Incorporate accessibility supports to provide equitable access and empower students with choices that allow them to access instruction and assessment content with the greatest amount of confidence and independence.
- Remember that different assessments measure specific content and vary in the construct of knowledge, skills, and abilities –therefore some accessibility features and accommodations vary.
- Collaborate across classroom teachers, EL/ML teachers, and educator teams to promote effective, inclusive, and equitable instruction.

Who qualifies for reader supports and accommodations and how are they determined?

CONNECTICUT Education



Classifying Accessibility Supports

CONNECTICUT Education

Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations can be classified into two categories:

1. **Embedded**: Tools available through the online computer platform
2. **Non-Embedded**: Tools provided to the student by the school/test administrator

Accessibility Supports Versus Modifications

CONNECTICUT Education

Accessibility Supports	Modifications
Meets students' individual needs	Changes the underlying construct of a lesson or instructional materials
Reduces access barriers	Requires a student to learn less material/fewer learning objectives
Enables student work to be a valid measure of what they know and can do	Uses materials or instruction that is not aligned to grade-level content/standards
Does not reduce or change learning expectations or standards	Reduces/simplifies assessments (e.g., completing only the easiest questions)

How are accessibility supports determined?

CONNECTICUT Education

Based on a preponderance of evidence, educational teams should establish

- The learning or access strengths
- The learning or access barriers
- The points of access needed by the student
- Supplemental aids and services needed throughout the academic and non-academic school day
- Accommodations needed for the student with an IEP or Section 504 Plan to access district and statewide assessments

Teams should review sources to document and identify student strengths and needs:

- ❑ Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- ❑ Section 504 Plan
- ❑ Educational Evaluations
- ❑ Diagnostic Assessments
- ❑ Psychological Assessments
- ❑ Assistive technology Evaluations and Trials
- ❑ EL/ML Plan
- ❑ Other (formative assessments)
- ❑ SRBI Plans
- ❑ Educator(s) Recommendations

Quick Reminders!

CONNECTICUT Education

- Educator Teams (including IEP and 504 Teams) and those planning designated supports for students without formal plans, including Els/MLs, should understand the purpose and functionality for each accessibility support in the context of online testing in conjunction with the students' specific barriers and individualized learning profile before making a determination.
- Accessibility supports are not a one size fits all.
- "More" [accessibility supports] are not equated to a better test experience.
- Selecting conflicting supports may lead to confusion during the test set-up and student test experience and may lead to test irregularities. The Common conflicting accommodations include:
  - Embedded Text-to-Speech and Non-Embedded Read Aloud
  - Embedded Speech-to-Text and Scribe
  - Embedded Color Contrast and Non-Embedded Color Contrast or Color Overlay
  - Print Size and Large Print (Note: Large Print= Large Print Test Booklet

When identifying student need, teams should use a systematic and continuous process that considers barriers such as:

CONNECTICUT Education

- Executive Functioning (attention, cognition control, processing)
- Persistent Calculation Disability; Dyscalculia
- Reading Disability; Print Disability; Struggling Reader
- Language Disability
- Language Acquisition
- Significant Motor Difficulties; Recent Injury
- Visual Impairments; Blindness
- Hard of Hearing; Deafness

To determine appropriate reader supports, review the following:

CONNECTICUT Education

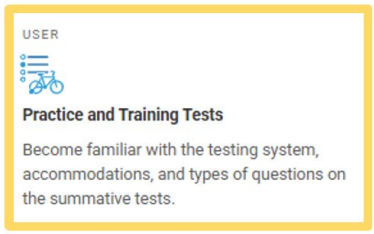
- Does the student have a documented print or visual disability?
- In the case of significant visual impairments, does the student have adequate braille skills?
- Does the student have an identified reading-based disability that affects decoding, fluency, or comprehension skills?
- Is there evidence of the persistence of the disability despite intensive, targeted instruction in the Science of Reading? (Note: Documentation of interventions data on each intervention is required.)
- Are interventions used to improve decoding, fluency, or comprehension skills?
- Does the student use assistive technology software, audio books, Bookshare, Accessible Educational Materials, or a read-aloud accommodation (human reader) during instruction?

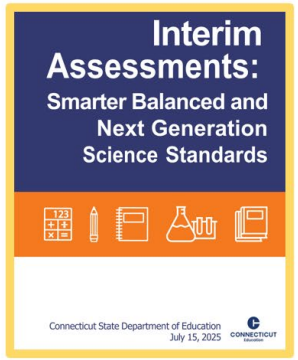
Using Accessibility Supports During Instruction and Assessments

CONNECTICUT Education

Bookshare

CAST
National Center on Accessible Educational Materials





- Provide opportunities for students to practice with accessibility features during instruction (e.g., Google Read/Write, Bookshare, accessible educational materials (AEM).
- Prior to summative testing, provide opportunities for students to practice with accessibility features using grade and subject specific Practice Tests or Smarter Balanced/NGSS Interim Assessments.

UNLOCKING *Lifelong* POTENTIAL

CONNECTICUT Education

Accessibility Tools to Support Struggling Readers and Students with Related Reading, Print, and Visual Disabilities

Accessibility Chart for Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments

CONNECTICUT Education

2025-26 Accessibility Features for Connecticut Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments

Universal Tools Available to All Students		Designated Supports Available to Any Student With a Need Determined by Educator Teams		Accommodations Available to Students with an IEP or Section 504 Plan	
Embedded	**Non-Embedded**	**Embedded**	**Non-Embedded**	**Embedded**	**Non-Embedded**
Digital Notepad	Scratch Paper/ whiteboard with marker	Print Size Online	Magnification	Permissive Mode (compatible third-party accessibility software)	
English Glossary ^		Color Contrast	Color Contrast	Refreshable Braille	
Expanded Passages/ Stimuli/Items		Masking	Color Overlay	Braille Type (UEB/UEB Nemeth)	Braille Booklet (UEB/UEB Nemeth)
Highlighter		Mouse Pointer			Large Print Booklet
Keyboard Commands		Streamline		American Sign Language Video (ELA Listening, Math) ^	Human Signer/Visual Support for ELA Items and Math/Science Stimuli and Items # ~ +
Line Reader		Text-to-Speech- ELA Items (NOT ELA Reading Passages), Math and Science Stimuli and Items	Read Aloud (English) ELA Items, Math and Science Stimuli and Items ~ + Review Read Aloud Guidelines; NGSS Read Aloud Guidelines		Human Signer/Visual Support for ELA Reading Passages (Grades 3-8) # ~ + ^
Mark for Review		Text-to-Speech-Spanish (Math, Science Stimuli and Items) *	Read Aloud in Spanish (Math, Science) * ~ + Review Guidelines for Spanish Read Aloud of Stimuli and Items	Braille/Audio Transcription (ELA Listening) + ^	
Math Tools		Spanish Presentation (Math, Science) (Toggle) *		Closed Captioning (ELA Listening) ^	
Writing Tools		Translations Glossary (Math) (Includes Illustration Glossary as an available language support) * ^	Translation Glossary (Math) (Includes Illustrative Glossary as an available language support) **(Note: Requires large-print test booklet and must be requested through CAI Help Desk.)** * ^	Text-to-Speech ELA Reading Passages (Grades 3-8); Complete the Decision Guidelines for Text-to-Speech of the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages	Read Aloud ELA Reading Passages (Grades 3-8) # ~ + Complete the Documented Evidence for a Read Aloud of the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages
Strikethrough		Turn off any universal accessibility tool			Alternate Response Options
Zoom			Smarter Balanced Translated Test Directions (Math, ELA) * ^	Word Prediction ^	
Desmos Calculator (Math Segment 1 ONLY, Grades 6-8; Science Grades 5, 8, and 11)	Calculator (Science Grades 5, 8, & 11)		Bilingual Dictionary (Science) *	Speech-to-Text + ^	Scribe # ~ +
			Simplified Test Directions (Test Administration Manual for Math and ELA) *^ +		Abacus
NGSS Periodic Table (Grades 8 & 11) English and Spanish*	NGSS Periodic Table (Grades 8 & 11) English and Spanish *		Native Language Reader of Test Directions (Test Administration Manual for Math, ELA, Science) * +		(Braille/Talking) Specialized Calculator (Math Grades 6-8 Segment 1 ONLY; Science Grades 5, 8, & 11) +
Breaks			Translated Test Directions in ASL (Test Administration Manual for Math, ELA, Science) +		Calculator (Math Grades 6-8 Segment 1 ONLY) #
					Multiplication Table (Grades 3-8) ^
					100s Number Table (Grades 3-8) ^
					Math Manipulatives (Grades 3-8) # + ^
			Printed Test Directions in English (Test Administration Manual for Math, ELA, Science)		Print on Demand # + (Contact the CSDE)
			Separate Setting		Medical Device (e.g., glucose monitor)
			Amplification +		Customized Medical Accommodations # ~ + (Contact the CSDE)
			Noise Buffer		

For detailed information on universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations, refer to:

- CSDE Assessment Guidelines
- Embedded and Non-Embedded Designated Supports for English Learners/Multilingual Learners
- Description of Designated Supports and Accommodations for Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards Assessments

Welcome to the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal

Smarter Balanced Assessments

NGSS Assessments

Alternate Assessment System

Key

^ NOT available for Science

*** Suggested for English learners/multilingual learners (ELs/MLs)**

+ Individual Test Setting

 # Special Documented Accommodation

~ Requires Trained Educator

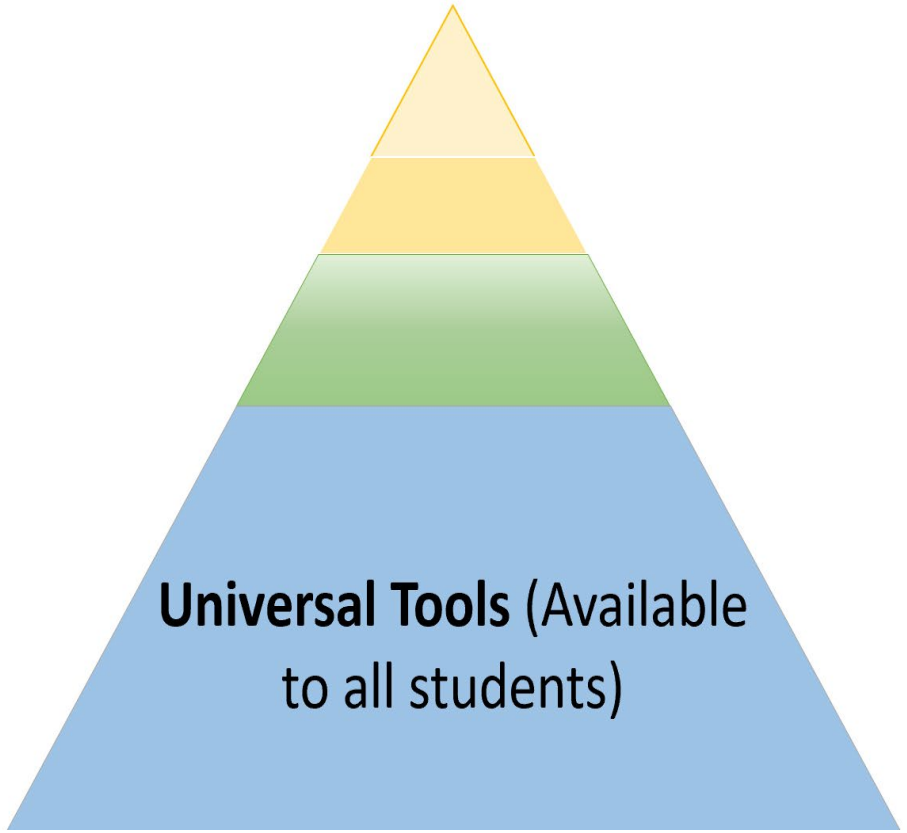
Updated 6/2/25

Universal Tools to Support Struggling Readers and Students with Print/Visual Disabilities

CONNECTICUT Education

- Embedded Universal Tools include:
  - Digital Notepad
  - English Glossary
  - Expandable Passages
  - Highlighter
  - Line Reader
  - Mark for Review
  - Strikethrough
  - Writing Tools

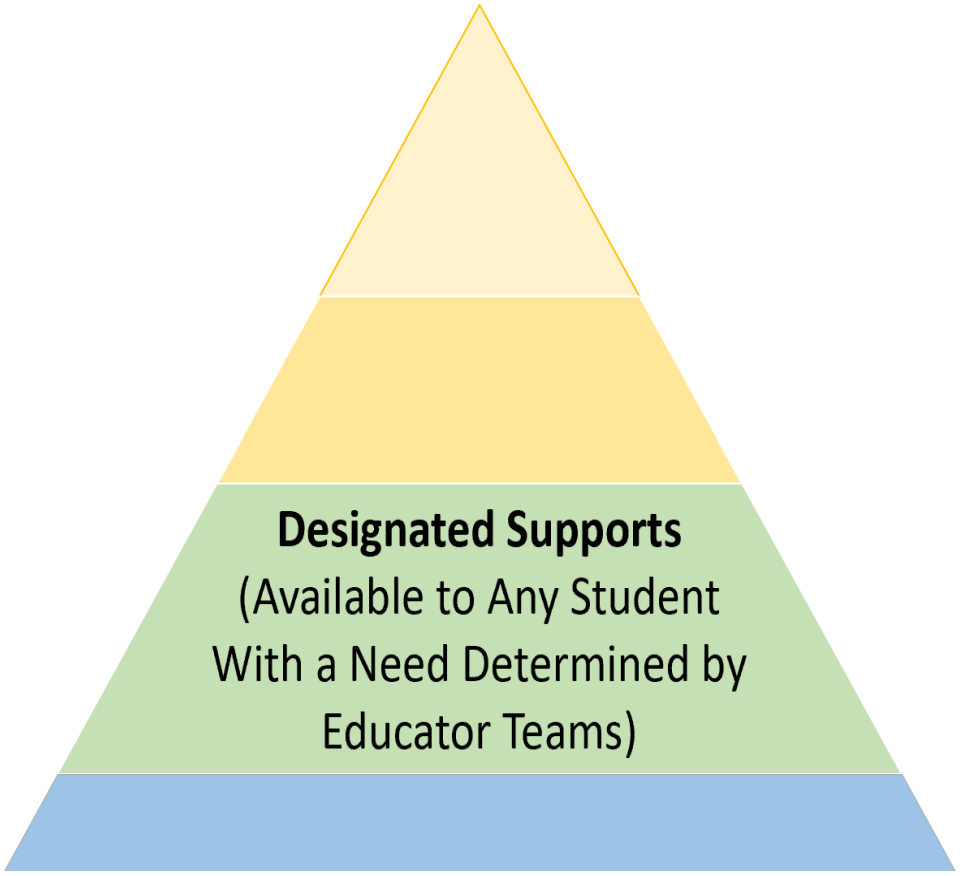
- Non-Embedded Universal Tools include:
  - Breaks
  - Scratch Paper
  - White Board with Marker



Designated Supports for Struggling Readers and Students with Print/Visual Disabilities

CONNECTICUT Education

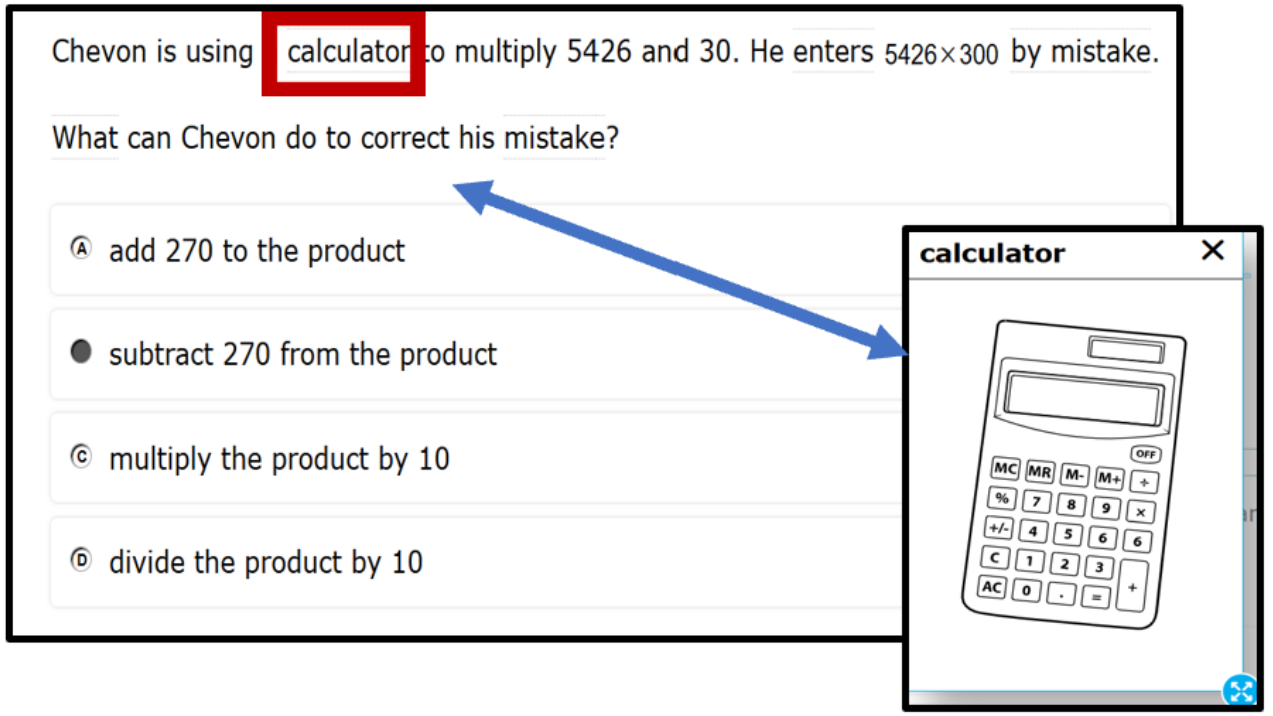
- Embedded Designated Supports Include:
  - Color Contrast
  - Illustration Glossary (Math)
  - Masking
  - Streamline
  - Text-to-Speech (TTS) (items, NOT ELA Reading Passages)
  - Text-to-Speech Spanish (Math, Science) (Note: TTS and Spanish toggle must be activated in TIDE.)
  - Spanish Presentation (Math, Science)
  - Translation Glossary (Math)
- Non-Embedded Designated Supports Include:
  - Printed Test Directions (Student Version from the Test Administration Manual)
  - Read Aloud for Math and ELA (Items, NOT ELA Reading Passages)
  - Read Aloud for Science
  - Read Aloud of Math and Science Items in Spanish (Note: Spanish toggle must be activated in TIDE)
  - Separate Setting
  - Simplified Test Directions (Math, ELA)



Embedded Illustration Translation Glossary for Math

CONNECTICUT Education

- The Translation Glossary (including Illustration) is a language support provided for selected construct irrelevant math terms. Depending on the student's need, the translation can be set to include the student's native language (if available), English, and Illustration.
- Students who are deaf/hard of hearing and use sign systems other than American Sign Language may benefit from Illustration Glossary.
- When activated in TIDE, a dotted line above or below a word or phrase indicates an available translation or illustration.



Embedded Text-to-Speech of ELA Items and Math/Science Stimuli and Items

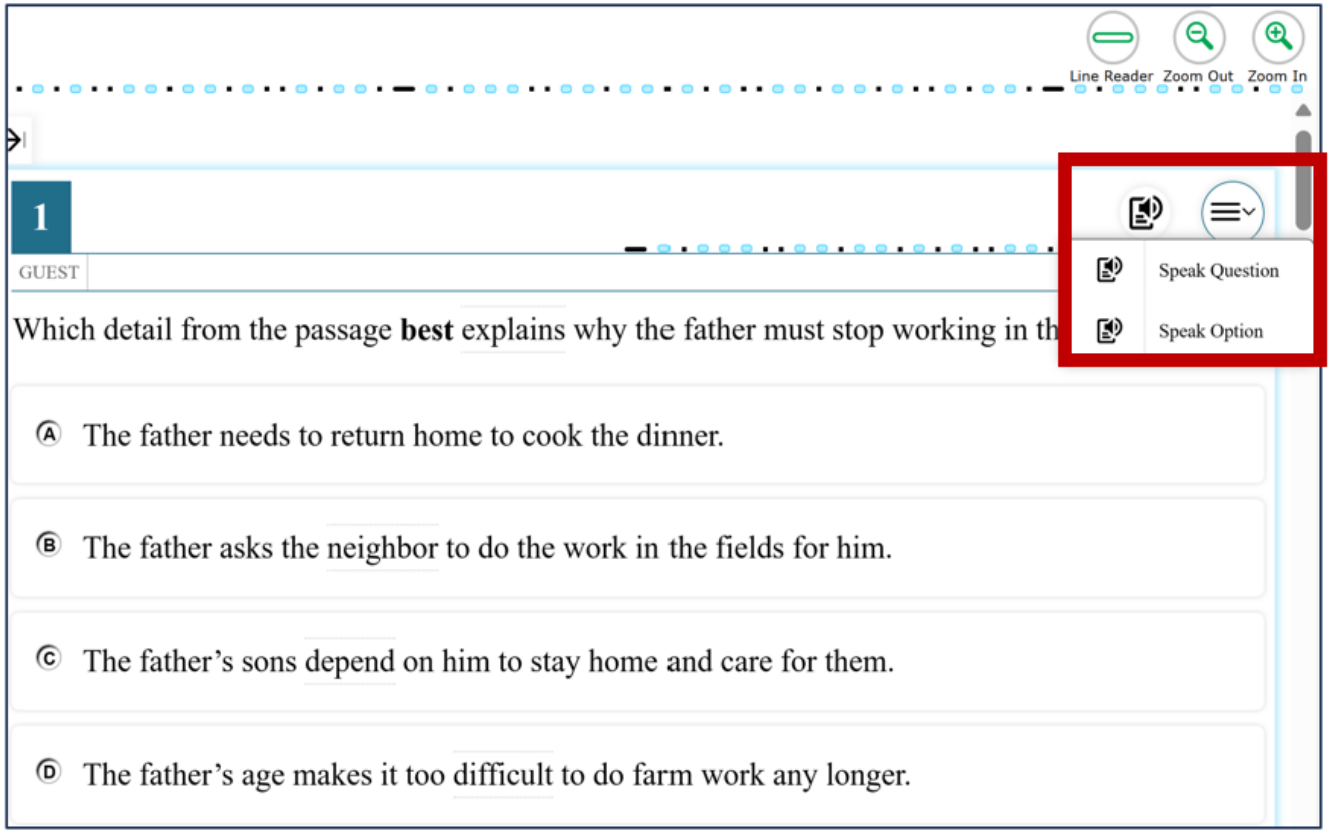
CONNECTICUT Education

- Text-to-speech (TTS) is an embedded designated support is intended for:
  - Struggling readers
  - Students with related reading disabilities or print or visual disabilities
  - English learners/multilingual learners
- Allows text to be read aloud to the student via embedded (TTS) technology.
- The student controls the speed, as well as raise or lower the volume of the voice via a volume control.
- Student must wear a headset unless testing in an individual test setting.

Embedded Text-to-Speech Options for ELA Math, and Science

CONNECTICUT Education

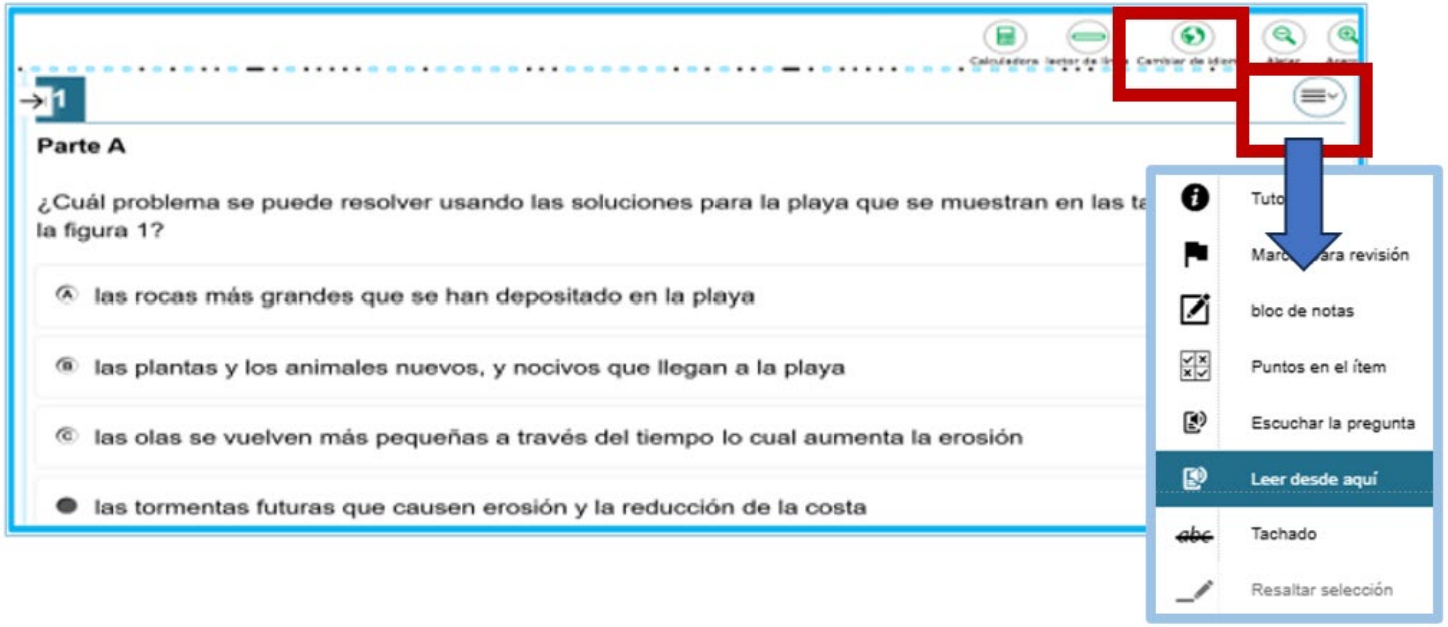
- Text-to-speech (TTS) in English is available for ELA items (not reading passages) and math/science stimuli and items by selecting the speaker icon.
- TTS reads questions, responses, and certain places in the stimuli/item by placing the mouse in front of the text and right-clicking. Choose “Start Speaking from Here.”
- Verify that TTS is documented for applicable content areas in TIDE.



Embedded Text-to-Speech in Spanish for Math and Science

CONNECTICUT Education

- TTS is available in Spanish for the math and science stimuli and items by selecting the speaker icon.
- 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.”
- Work with your technology department to download the applicable Spanish voice pack to the student's testing device.
- Verify that TTS of stimuli & items and Spanish toggle is documented for math and science in TIDE.
- Student should be fluent and literate in Spanish if selecting this support.



Non-Embedded Read Aloud of Items (NOT ELA Reading Passages)

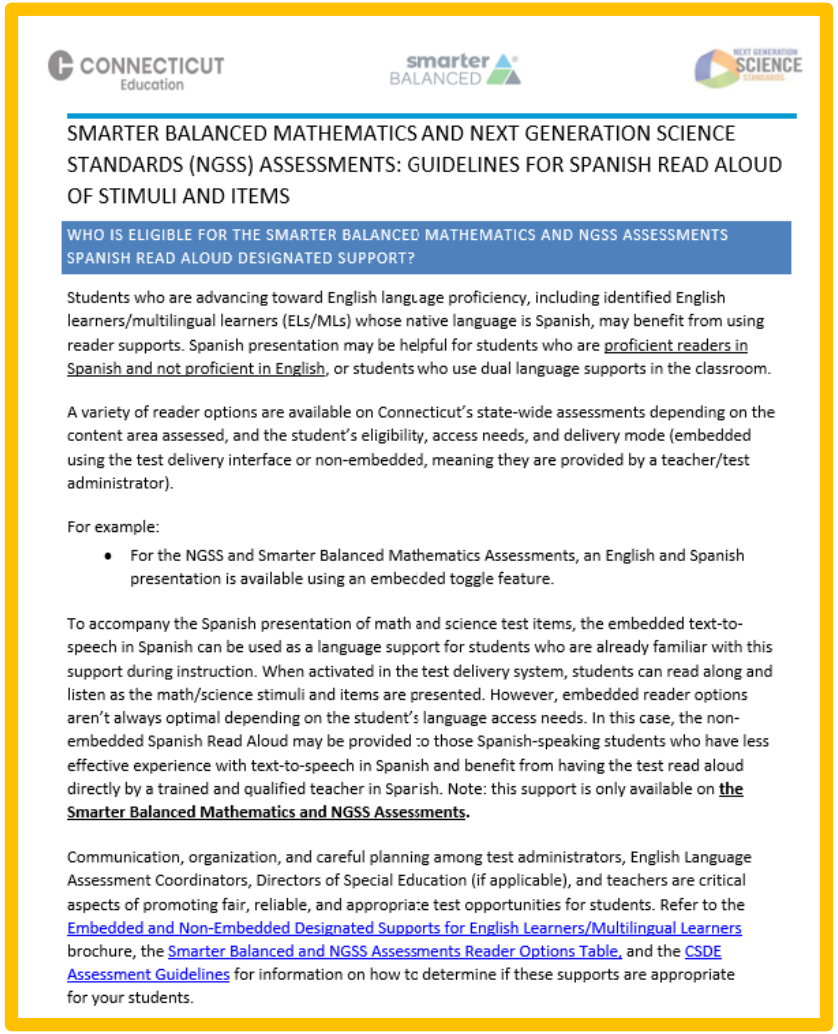
CONNECTICUT Education

- This designated support is intended for struggling readers, those with reading disabilities, or ELs/MLs who are unable to use the embedded TTS technology due to specific barriers.
- If providing the non-embedded read aloud of items, teachers must review the following guidelines as applicable:
  - Read Aloud (English) ELA Items, Math and Science Stimuli and Items -Review Read Aloud Guidelines; NGSS Read Aloud Guidelines
  - Read Aloud in Spanish (Math, Science) -Review Guidelines for Spanish Read Aloud of Stimuli and Items
- Student must test in an individual test setting.

Non-Embedded Read Aloud Options for ELA (NOT Reading Passages), Math, and Science

CONNECTICUT Education

- 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 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.
  - Spanish Toggle must be activated in TIDE. The teacher will read the Spanish presentation from the student's test screen.



CONNECTICUT Education | smarter BALANCED | NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS

SMARTER BALANCED MATHEMATICS AND NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS (NGSS) ASSESSMENTS: GUIDELINES FOR SPANISH READ ALOUD OF STIMULI AND ITEMS

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE SMARTER BALANCED MATHEMATICS AND NGSS ASSESSMENTS SPANISH READ ALOUD DESIGNATED SUPPORT?

Students who are advancing toward English language proficiency, including identified English learners/multilingual learners (ELs/MLs) whose native language is Spanish, may benefit from using reader supports. Spanish presentation may be helpful for students who are proficient readers in Spanish and not proficient in English, or students who use dual language supports in the classroom.

A variety of reader options are available on Connecticut's state-wide assessments depending on the content area assessed, and the student's eligibility, access needs, and delivery mode (embedded using the test delivery interface or non-embedded, meaning they are provided by a teacher/test administrator).

For example:

- For the NGSS and Smarter Balanced Mathematics Assessments, an English and Spanish presentation is available using an embedded toggle feature.

To accompany the Spanish presentation of math and science test items, the embedded text-to-speech in Spanish can be used as a language support for students who are already familiar with this support during instruction. When activated in the test delivery system, students can read along and listen as the math/science stimuli and items are presented. However, embedded reader options aren't always optimal depending on the student's language access needs. In this case, the non-embedded Spanish Read Aloud may be provided to those Spanish-speaking students who have less effective experience with text-to-speech in Spanish and benefit from having the test read aloud directly by a trained and qualified teacher in Spanish. Note: this support is only available on **the Smarter Balanced Mathematics and NGSS Assessments**.

Communication, organization, and careful planning among test administrators, English Language Assessment Coordinators, Directors of Special Education (if applicable), and teachers are critical aspects of promoting fair, reliable, and appropriate test opportunities for students. Refer to the Embedded and Non-Embedded Designated Supports for English Learners/Multilingual Learners brochure, the Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments Reader Options Table, and the CSDE Assessment Guidelines for information on how to determine if these supports are appropriate for your students.

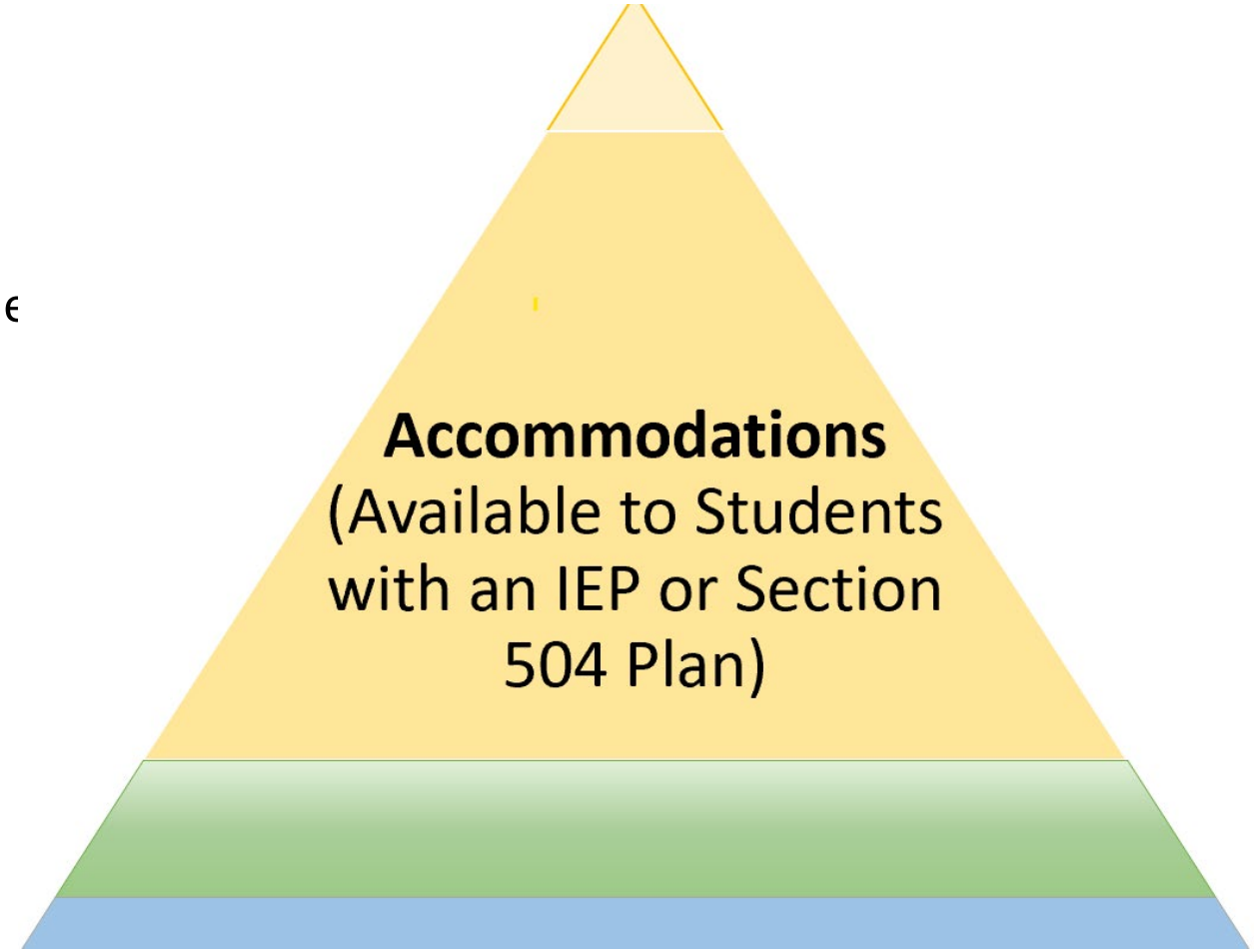
Accommodations for Students with Visual/Print, Disabilities

Accommodations to Support Students with Print/Visual Disabilities

CONNECTICUT Education

Embedded Accommodations:

- Text-to-Speech (ELA Reading Passages)
- Word Prediction (for open-ended items)
- Speech-to-Text (for Math/ELA open-ende items)



Student Eligibility for Text-to-Speech for ELA Reading Passages

CONNECTICUT Education

For the purpose of measuring College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading measured by the Smarter Balanced ELA Summative Assessments:

- PPTs/Section 504 Teams should complete the Decision Guidelines for Text-to-Speech of the ELA Passages as a screener for eligibility determination.

- Responses must show a **preponderance of evidence** based on their student's vision/print disability that confirms that text-to-speech is used throughout the student's daily instruction to access instructional materials. Text-to-speech should not be considered for use *only* on statewide testing.

Student Eligibility for Text-to-Speech for ELA Reading Passages - Continued

CONNECTICUT Education

- Students that qualify for this accommodation are those who in spite of intensive and extensive instruction/intervention in the science of reading or in braille acquisition, are unable to access print materials without the provision of more extensive accommodations (e.g., audio books, screen readers/text-to-speech, Book Share, or other types of alternate educational materials).

- This accommodation is intended for students with evidence of a specific word reading disability that impacts their ability to decode/encode words and phonological processing. However, attributes of a specific word disability or dyslexia should be evidenced in the student's current evaluation results and programming.

Decision Guidelines for Text-to-Speech of the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages

CONNECTICUT Education

- When TTS of the ELA Reading Passages are being considered, PPTs/Section 504 Teams should complete the **Decision Guidelines for Text-to-Speech of the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages** during the annual convening to establish the extent of need based on the student's access barriers due to a print or visual disability.

- This accommodations is intended for students
  - with a documented print disability,
  - with significant visual disabilities, or for those
  - who are blind with inadequate braille skills.

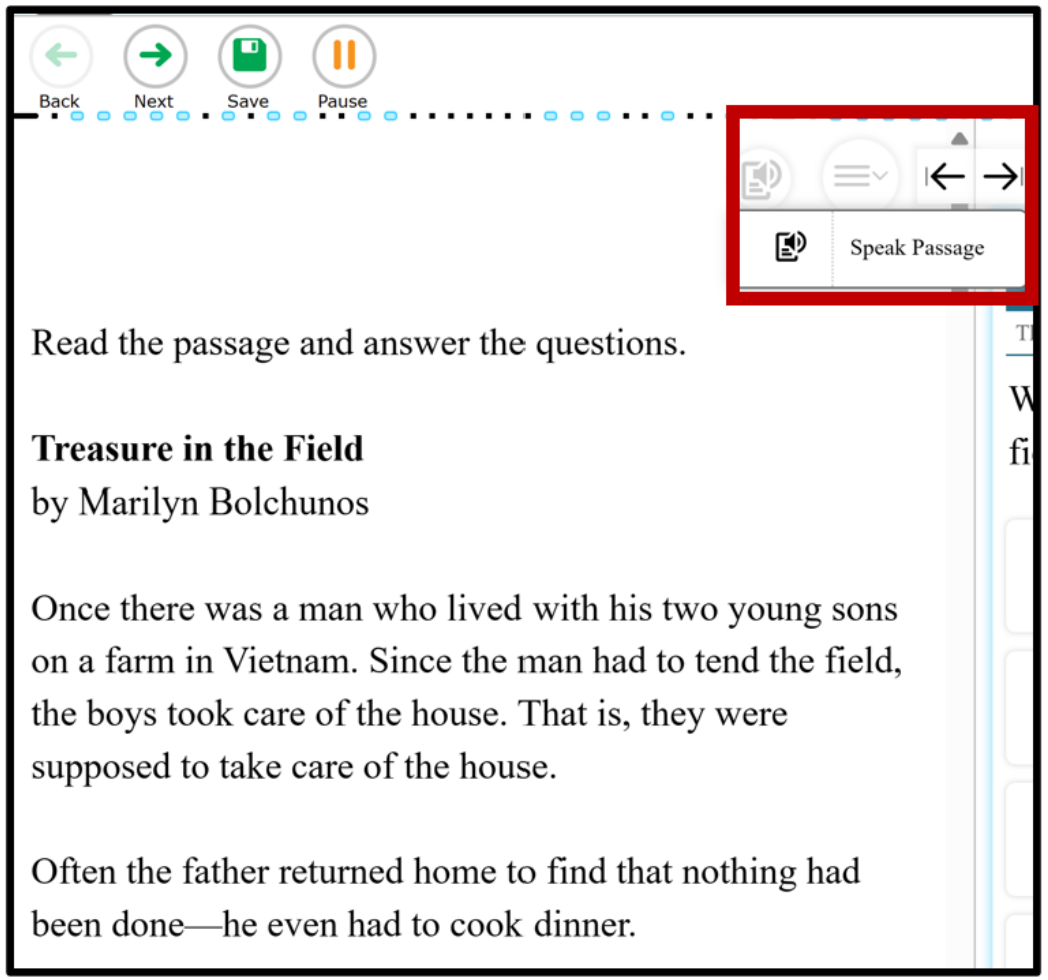
- Complete and maintain this form locally with the student's record.

Question	Assurance: Evidence may be found in the following sections of CT-SEDS (refer to the IEP or Section 504 Plan as applicable).	Circle YES if Evidence Exists	Circle NO if No Evidence Exists
1a. Is this student blind or does this student have a significant visual impairment?	Evidence may be found in: • Student Information section (refer to Primary Disability category) • Special Considerations • Present Levels, Annual Goal, and Supplementary Aids and Services • Section 504 Determination of Eligibility	YES	NO
1b. If the student is blind or has a significant visual impairment, is the student learning to read braille?	Evidence may be found in: • Student Information section (refer to Primary Disability category) • Special Considerations • Present Levels, Annual Goal, and Supplementary Aids and Services • Section 504 Determination of Eligibility	YES	NO
2a. Does this student have an identified reading-based disability that affects the student's decoding, fluency, or comprehension skills?	Evidence may be found in: • Student Information section (refer to Primary Disability category) • Present Levels, Annual Goal, and Supplementary Aids and Services • Section 504 Determination of Eligibility	YES	NO
2b. Is there evidence of the persistence of the reading-based disability despite intensive, targeted instruction in the Science of Reading. (Note: There should be documentation of the interventions used and formative assessment data on the effect of each intervention.)	Evidence may be found in: • Student Information section (refer to Primary Disability category) • Present Levels, Annual Goal, and Supplementary Aids and Services • Section 504 Determination of Eligibility	YES	NO
3. Does the student's disability impact the student's ability to access the curriculum across **all** academic subjects?	Evidence may be found in: • Present Levels, Annual Goal, and Supplementary Aids and Services • Section 504 Plan Details	YES	NO

Embedded Text-to-Speech for Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages

CONNECTICUT Education

- Text-to-speech (TTS) in English is available for ELA Reading Passages by selecting the speaker icon.
- TTS reads the ELA Reading Passages, questions, responses, and certain places in the stimuli/item. To listen to the reading passage, select the “Speak Passage” icon shown below.”
- Verify that TTS for items is documented for ELA in TIDE.
- Verify that TTS of stimuli & items is documented for math and science in TIDE.
- 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.”



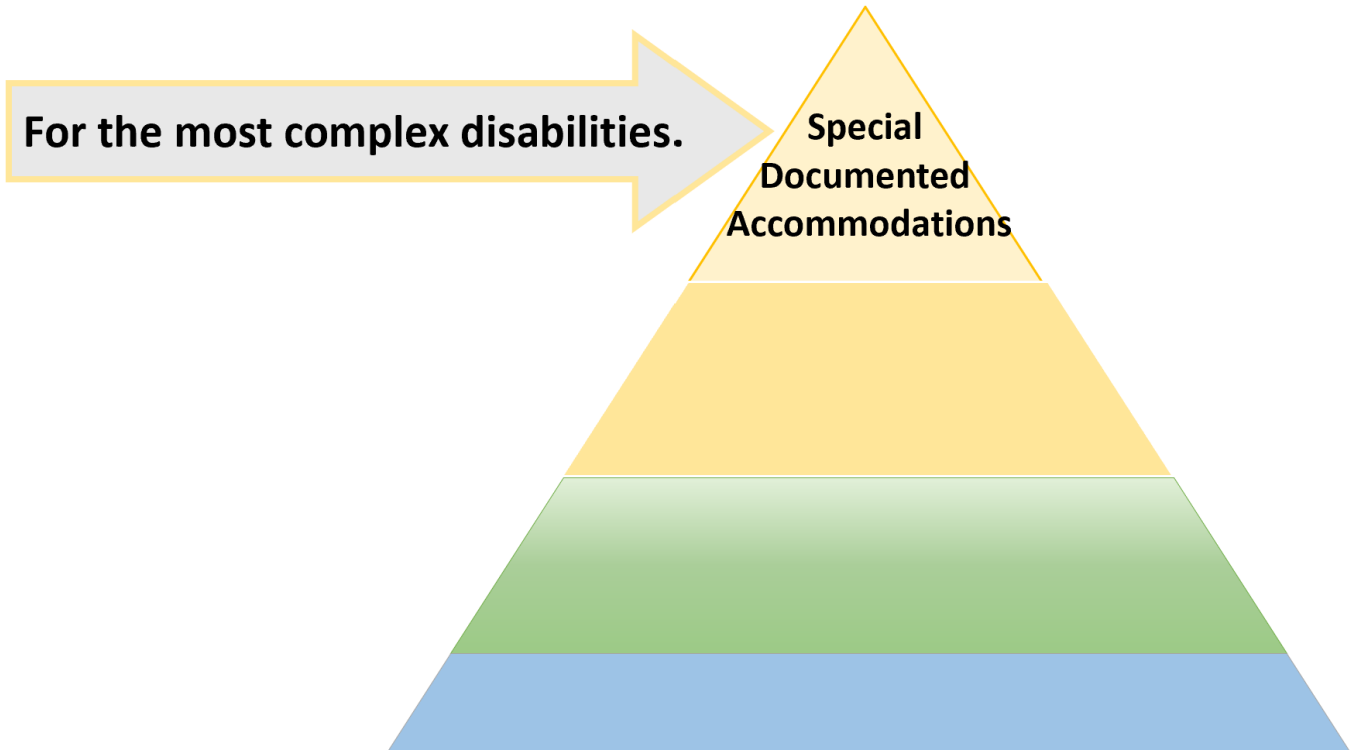
Special Documented Accommodations for Students with Visual/Print Disabilities

Special Documented Accommodations for Students with Visual/Print Disabilities: Read Aloud

CONNECTICUT Education

Non-Embedded Special Documented Accommodations include:

- Read Aloud (ELA Reading Passages)



Determining Eligibility for a Read Aloud Special Documented Accommodation

CONNECTICUT Education

- PPTs/Section 504 Teams should provide documentation of need in present levels of performance, reading/communication goals and objectives, and in supplementary aids and services/program accommodations sections.
- Psychological assessments and/or academic performance assessments referenced showing processing disabilities related to visual, print, or reading disabilities and understanding/use of language. Skills related to listening, thinking, speaking, reading, writing, or spelling may also be reflected.
- Teams must complete the Documented Evidence for a Read Aloud of the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages as a screener for eligibility and maintain locally with the student's record.

CONNECTICUT Education

Question	Assurance: Evidence may be found in the following sections of CT-SEDS (refer to the IEP or Section 504 Plan as applicable).	Circle YES if Evidence Exists	Circle NO if No Evidence Exists
1a. Is this student blind or does this student have a significant visual impairment?	Evidence may be found in: • Student Information section (refer to Primary Disability category) • Special Considerations • Present Levels, Annual Goal, and Supplementary Aids and Services • Section 504 Determination of Eligibility	YES	NO
1b. If the student is blind or has a significant visual impairment, is the student learning to read braille?	Evidence may be found in: • Student Information section (refer to Primary Disability category) • Special Considerations • Present Levels, Annual Goal, and Supplementary Aids and Services • Section 504 Determination of Eligibility	YES	NO
2a. Does this student have an identified reading-based disability that affects the student's decoding, fluency, or comprehension skills?	Evidence may be found in: • Student Information section (refer to Primary Disability category) • Present Levels, Annual Goal, and Supplementary Aids and Services • Section 504 Determination of Eligibility	YES	NO
2b. Is there evidence of the persistence of the reading-based disability despite intensive, targeted instruction in the Science of Reading. (Note: There should be documentation of the interventions used and formative assessment data on the effect of each intervention.)	Evidence may be found in: • Student Information section (refer to Primary Disability category) • Present Levels, Annual Goal, and Supplementary Aids and Services • Section 504 Determination of Eligibility	YES	NO
3. Does the student's disability impact the student's ability to access the curriculum across **all** academic subjects?	Evidence may be found in: • Present Levels, Annual Goal, and Supplementary Aids and Services • Section 504 Plan Details	YES	NO

Determining Eligibility for a Read Aloud Special Documented Accommodation - Continued

CONNECTICUT Education

- If eligible for a Read Aloud, document in CT-SEDS for associated tests and grades covered by the duration of the plan.
- The qualified individual acting as the reader should review the Smarter Balanced Assessments Read Aloud Guidelines and sign the Test Security/Confidentiality Agreement Form (Appendix B of document). The signed security/attestation form should be maintained locally.

Optional Resources to Use with Students on a Practice or Interim Assessment

Student Training Resources

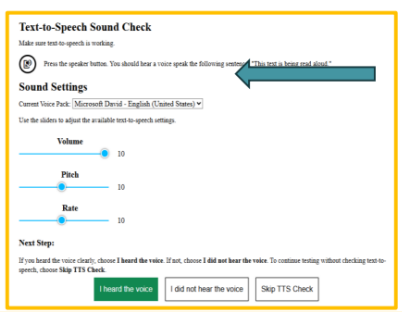
CONNECTICUT Education

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

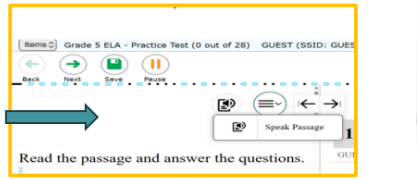
CONNECTICUT Education

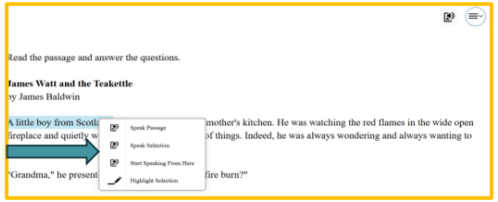
How to use Text-to-Speech for ELA Reading Passages & Questions

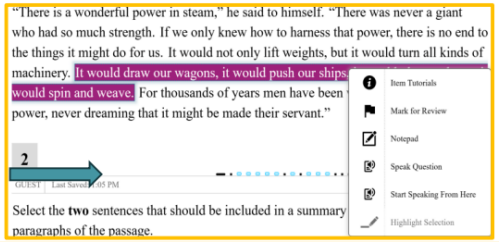
If you use text-to-speech (TTS) on the ELA reading passages and questions, you can set the voice, volume, pitch, and rate (speed) when you sign in to your test. You can also change these by clicking ⚙ on the top of your screen.



1. To start TTS, click 🔊 above the reading passage. Then, choose 🔊 Speak Passage .
2. To stop TTS, click ■ Stop Speaking .
3. To begin TTS from a certain place in the passage or question, place your mouse in front of the text and right-click. Choose 🔊 Start Speaking From Here .
4. You can also highlight a word with your mouse and click 🔊 Speak Selection . The computer will read that word.
5. To listen to a question, click 🔊 . Then, choose 🔊 Speak Question .
6. To listen to the options, choose 🔊 Speak Option .







Student Training Resources - Continued

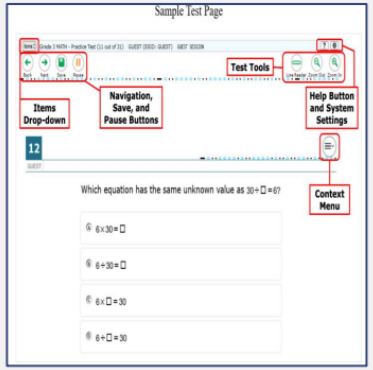
CONNECTICUT Education

Teachers can model or share this optional student resource on a practice or interim assessment so that students are familiar with the tool icons and their functionality (e.g., line reader, zoom).

Online Universal Global Tools for Math, ELA, & Science Tests

Global Tool	Description
Help Button	To see the on-screen Help Guide, click the upper-right corner of your test page.
Calculator	To use the on-screen calculator, click . You can use this on all NGSS tests and the Grade 6-8 calculator-portion of math, including the math Performance Task.
End Test Button	When you answer all test questions, you will see . Click this button to end your test.
Items Drop-Down List	To quickly move to an item, select an item number from Items in the upper-left corner of your screen. • If you see a next to the item, it was marked for review. • If you see a next to the item, it was skipped or not answered.
Masking	To cover a part of the test page, click and drag . To close the tool, click the button again and choose **x** in the upper-right corner.
Navigation Button	To move between test pages, use in the upper-left corner of your test page.
Pause Button	To pause a test, click .
System Settings	Click in the upper-right corner of your test page to change the volume, pitch, and speed of text-to-speech.
Line Reader	To highlight text line by line, click and change the line by using the arrows. To close, click again.
Zoom	To make text and picture larger, click . To undo, click .
Periodic Table	The Periodic Table is for the Grade 8 and 11 Science.

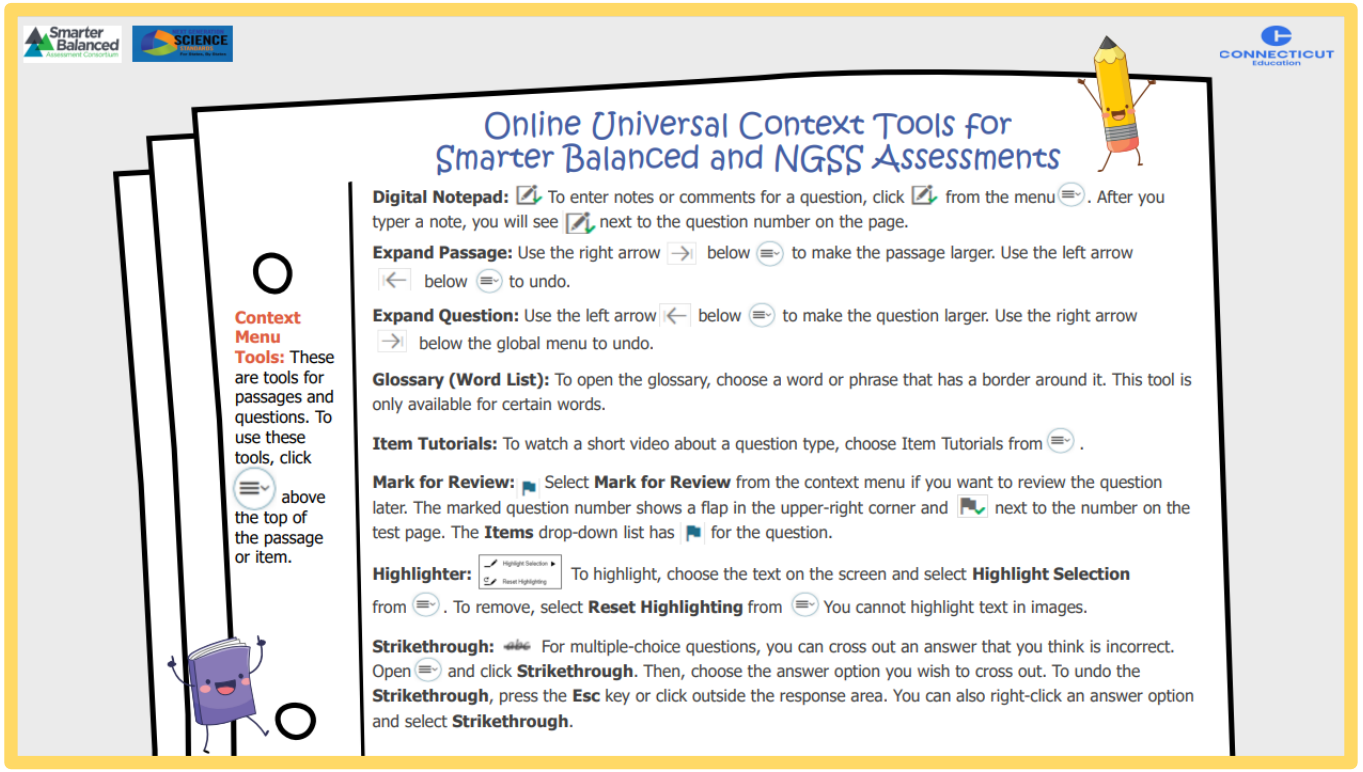
Global Tools: These appear on the top of your math, ELA, or science test page.



Student Training Resources – Universal Context Tools

CONNECTICUT Education

The optional Universal Context Tools resource shows students how to access online tools such as the digital notepad and expanding passages/questions when taking state assessments.



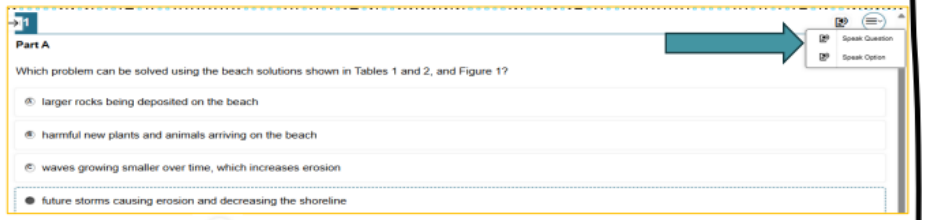
Student Training Resources – TTS for ELA Items and Math/Science Stimuli & Items

CONNECTICUT Education

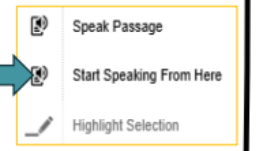
How to use Text-to-Speech for Math and Science Passages & Questions, and ELA Questions

If you use text-to-speech (TTS) on your math and science passages & questions, or ELA questions, you can set the voice, volume, pitch, and rate (speed) when you sign in to your test. You can also change these by clicking ⚙ on the top of your screen.

1. To start TTS, click 🔊 above the math or science passage. Then, select Speak Passage .
2. To listen to a math, science, or ELA question, click 🔊 . Then, choose Speak Question .
3. To listen to the options, choose Speak Option .



4. To stop TTS, click 🔊 . Then choose ■ Stop Speaking .
5. To begin TTS from a certain place in the passage or question, place your mouse in front of the text and right-click. Choose 🔊 Start Speaking From Here .



Student Training Resources – Spanish Toggle and TTS in Spanish for Math/Science

CONNECTICUT Education

Spanish Toggle & Text-to-Speech in Spanish for Math and Science

You can take the Smarter Balanced Math or the Science (NGSS) tests in Spanish because you can read Spanish. Do you know that you can also hear the tests in Spanish? If you use Spanish Toggle and Spanish text-to-speech (TTS) on your math and science tests, you can set the voice, volume, pitch, and rate (speed) when you sign in to your test. You can also change these by clicking ⚙ on the top of your screen.

1. After you sign in to your test, click from the top of your screen to change your test from Spanish to English. Click again to change it back to Spanish.

2. To start TTS, click above the math or science passage. Then, select

3. To listen to a math or science question, click . Then, choose

4. To listen to the options, choose

5. To stop TTS, click . Then choose

6. To begin TTS from a certain place in the passage or question, place your cursor in front of the text and right-click. Choose

Alternar al español & Texto a Voz en español para los exámenes de Matemáticas y Ciencias

Si usted habla español, puede realizar los exámenes Smarter Balanced de Matemáticas y Ciencias (NGSS) por sus siglas en inglés, en este idioma. ¿Sabía usted que también puede escuchar los exámenes en español? Si usa los iconos Alternar al español y Texto a Voz (TTS) por sus siglas en inglés, en su examen de Matemáticas y Ciencias, usted puede seleccionar la voz, el volumen, el tono y la velocidad, una vez que inicie sesión en su examen. También puede cambiarlos pulsando ⚙ en la parte superior de la pantalla.

1. Una vez que incie sesión en su examen, pulse en la parte superior de la pantalla para cambiar su examen de español a inglés. Pulse una vez más, para cambiarlo de nuevo al español.

2. Para comenzar el Texto a Voz, pulse encima del pasaje de Matemáticas o Ciencias. Luego seleccione

3. Para escuchar una pregunta de Matemáticas o Ciencias, pulse Luego seleccione

4. Para escuchar las opciones, pulse

5. Para detener el Texto a Voz, pulse . Luego seleccione

6. Para comenzar el Texto a Voz desde un lugar específico en el pasaje o la pregunta, coloque su cursor en frente del texto, pulse click derecho y seleccione

Resources

The Reader Options Table

CONNECTICUT Education

- **Connecticut Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments Reader Options Table**

- This resource provides a quick glance at reader supports by accessibility type and assessment. PPTs and Section 504 Teams should review this resource to determine if and which designated supports and accommodations are most appropriate for the student.

CONNECTICUT Education

Connecticut Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments Reader Options Tables

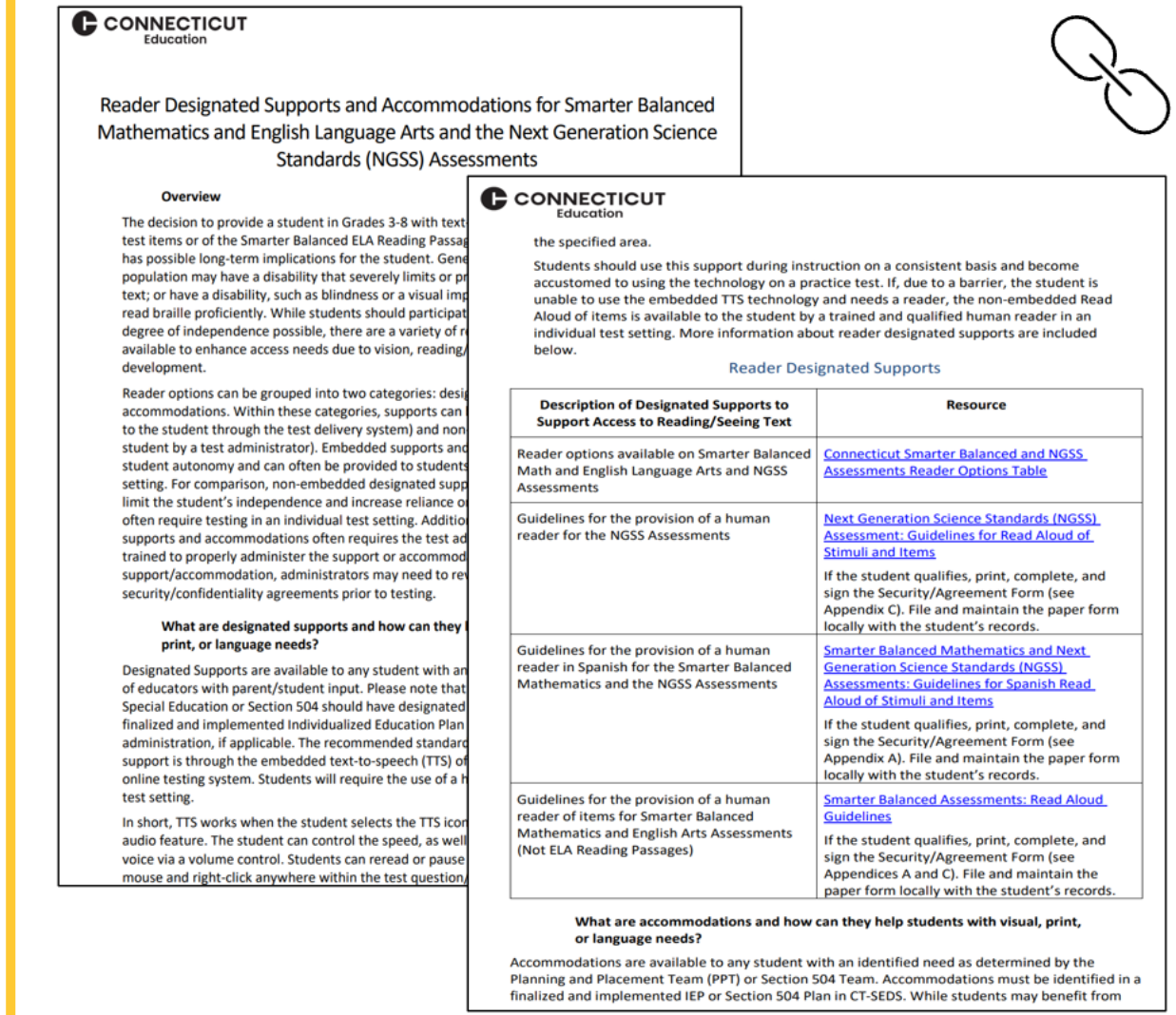
Available for students who benefit from using supports that promote access to print/language when participating on Connecticut state-wide assessments. For detailed information on each specific accessibility feature please see the Reader Designated Supports and Accommodations for Smarter Balanced Mathematics and English Language Arts and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments document. Teams should refer to the Documenting Designated Supports and Accommodations in TIDE brochure for more information on how to record these supports for students with and without an IEP or Section 504 Plan.

Designated Supports

Accessibility Option	Type	Description	Documentation
Text-to-Speech (TTS) of ELA Items Only	Embedded	The text for only the ELA test items is read to the student via embedded TTS technology. Provided only in English.	No additional documentation required.
TTS of Math and Science Stimuli & Items	Embedded	The text for math and science stimuli and test items are read to the student via embedded TTS technology. Available in English and Spanish (Spanish Presentation and Voice pack is required.)	No additional documentation required.
Read Aloud of ELA Items (Not ELA Reading Passages)	Non-Embedded	ELA test items (not the ELA Reading Passages) are read aloud to the student in an individual test setting by a trained and qualified human reader. Provided only in English.	The qualified educator acting as the reader should review the *Smarter Balanced Assessments: Read Aloud Guidelines* and sign the Security/Confidentiality Agreement to ensure standardization and proper administration during testing. This signed form should be maintained locally by the district.
Read Aloud of Math and Science Stimuli & Items	Non-Embedded	The math and science stimuli and test items are read aloud to the student in an individual test setting by a trained and qualified human reader. Available in English and Spanish. To view and read the test in Spanish, Presentation must be set to Math or Science Toggle in TIDE. The teacher will read the Spanish presentation from the student's computer in a 1:1 test setting.	The qualified educator acting as the reader should review the *Smarter Balanced Assessments: Read Aloud Guidelines* or the *Smarter Balanced Mathematics and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments: Guidelines for Spanish Read Aloud of Stimuli and Items* and sign the Security/Confidentiality Agreement to ensure standardization and proper administration during testing. This signed form should be maintained locally by the district.

Reader Designated Supports and Accommodations for Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments Brochure

CONNECTICUT Education



CONNECTICUT Education

Reader Designated Supports and Accommodations for Smarter Balanced Mathematics and English Language Arts and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments

Overview

The decision to provide a student in Grades 3-8 with text
test items or of the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passag
has possible long-term implications for the student. Gene
population may have a disability that severely limits or pr
text; or have a disability, such as blindness or a visual imp
read braille proficiently. While students should participat
degree of independence possible, there are a variety of r
available to enhance access needs due to vision, reading/
development.

Reader options can be grouped into two categories: desig
accommodations. Within these categories, supports can
to the student through the test delivery system) and non
student by a test administrator). Embedded supports and
student autonomy and can often be provided to students
setting. For comparison, non-embedded designated supp
limit the student's independence and increase reliance o
often require testing in an individual test setting. Additio
supports and accommodations often requires the test ad
trained to properly administer the support or accommod
support/accommodation, administrators may need to re
security/confidentiality agreements prior to testing.

**What are designated supports and how can they
print, or language needs?**

Designated Supports are available to any student with an
of educators with parent/student input. Please note that
Special Education or Section 504 should have designated
finalized and implemented Individualized Education Plan
administration, if applicable. The recommended standard
support is through the embedded text-to-speech (TTS) of
online testing system. Students will require the use of a h
test setting.

In short, TTS works when the student selects the TTS icon
audio feature. The student can control the speed, as well
voice via a volume control. Students can reread or pause
mouse and right-click anywhere within the test question/

CONNECTICUT Education

the specified area.

Students should use this support during instruction on a consistent basis and become accustomed to using the technology on a practice test. If, due to a barrier, the student is unable to use the embedded TTS technology and needs a reader, the non-embedded Read Aloud of items is available to the student by a trained and qualified human reader in an individual test setting. More information about reader designated supports are included below.

Reader Designated Supports

Description of Designated Supports to Support Access to Reading/Seeing Text	Resource
Reader options available on Smarter Balanced Math and English Language Arts and NGSS Assessments	Connecticut Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments Reader Options Table
Guidelines for the provision of a human reader for the NGSS Assessments	Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessment: Guidelines for Read Aloud of Stimuli and Items If the student qualifies, print, complete, and sign the Security/Agreement Form (see Appendix C). File and maintain the paper form locally with the student's records.
Guidelines for the provision of a human reader in Spanish for the Smarter Balanced Mathematics and the NGSS Assessments	Smarter Balanced Mathematics and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments: Guidelines for Spanish Read Aloud of Stimuli and Items If the student qualifies, print, complete, and sign the Security/Agreement Form (see Appendix A). File and maintain the paper form locally with the student's records.
Guidelines for the provision of a human reader of items for Smarter Balanced Mathematics and English Arts Assessments (Not ELA Reading Passages)	Smarter Balanced Assessments: Read Aloud Guidelines If the student qualifies, print, complete, and sign the Security/Agreement Form (see Appendices A and C). File and maintain the paper form locally with the student's records.

What are accommodations and how can they help students with visual, print, or language needs?

Accommodations are available to any student with an identified need as determined by the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) or Section 504 Team. Accommodations must be identified in a finalized and implemented IEP or Section 504 Plan in CT-SEDS. While students may benefit from

[Reader Designated Supports and Accommodations for Smarter Balanced Mathematics and English Language Arts and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments]

Additional Resources

CONNECTICUT Education

Key Resources:

- CSDE Assessment Guidelines
- Accessibility Considerations
- Embedded and Non-Embedded Designated Supports for English Learners/Multilingual Learners
- The CSDE Learning Series includes the following PowerPoint Presentations and are located on the Training tab of the Sensible Assessments webpage:
  - Special Documented Accommodations [PPT] New!
  - English Learner Designated Supports and Accommodations [PPT] New!

CSDE Performance Office Contacts

CONNECTICUT
Education

Name	Title	Email Address
Abe Krisst	Bureau Chief, Performance Office	Abe.Krisst@ct.gov
Deirdre Ducharme	Special Populations	Deirdre.Ducharme@ct.gov
Katie Seifert	Special Populations	Katherine.Seifert@ct.gov
Kimberly Johnson	Education Support Technician	Kimberly.Johnson@ct.gov
Cristi Alberino	Interim & Summative Assessments	Cristi.Alberino@ct.gov
Jeff Greig	NGSS Interim & Summative Assessments	Jeff.Greig@ct.gov

Thank You for Your Participation!