



STUDENT ASSESSMENT NEWS

October 11, 2017

[Archived Student Assessment News](#)

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Educators Participate in Smarter Balanced Review Meetings

Use the quick links below to access articles or sections included in this newsletter.

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This is the second feature from Connecticut teachers who have attended meetings for English language arts and mathematics by the Smarter Balanced Consortium. In this newsletter, we feature Meghan Ferrara. Meghan is a Literacy Coach for Guilford who attended the Smarter Balanced Item Review, Listening, Grades 3-5; Item Writing, Research, Grades 3-5. This is what Meghan shared:



- *While one might think that item review and development could take place remotely, the collaboration and discussion around the review of items and development of items is invaluable. Listening to and understanding the perspective of different educators across the country provided me a great appreciation for collaborative conversation and direct, immediate feedback.*
- *The process for item development is an intricate process. There are specifications that have been developed for each item claim and target. Developing and reviewing these items requires close attention to the item specifications to make recommendations for revision of an item or rejection of an item. The items go through multiple layers of review prior to being field tested. This process is supportive of ensuring quality items are used as live items within the assessment administered with our students.*
- *Participation in the Item Review for Listening and Item Development for Research was an invaluable experience. Beginning the new school year, I will have the opportunity to share my experiences and gained knowledge with other district literacy coaches as well as with teachers to whom I provide professional development. The training protocols used to review and develop items can be used to review curriculum materials and resources used directly in classrooms. It will be beneficial to analyze materials through various complexity measures to ensure quality materials at specific grade levels, e.g. bias/sensitivity, meta-data, accessibility/engagement, and quality. This will benefit our students as we reflect on materials and resources used to benefit all students.*

Thank you Meghan for representing the interests of Connecticut's students and teachers at these national meetings!

SAVE THE DATE: Workshops for District Administrators regarding the 2018 Smarter Balanced Assessment, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Science, and Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) will be held the week of January 15, 2018. Connecticut SAT School Day workshops for Test Center Supervisors will be held on February 13 and 14, 2018. More details will follow.

CTAA

Connecticut Alternate Assessment



CMT/CAPT
SCIENCE

Connecticut SAT School Day



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Interim Assessment Updates

New! Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments: Guidance for Entering Designated Supports and Accommodations

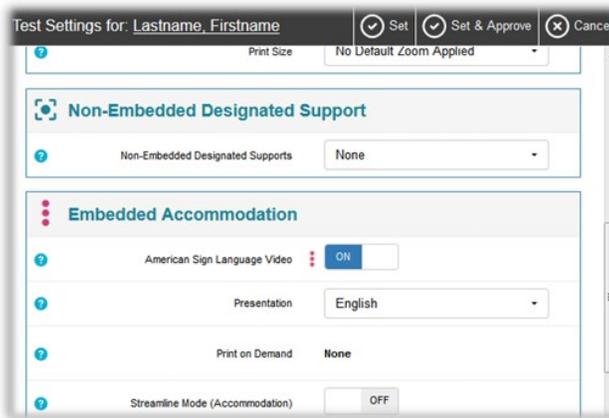
Now that the 2017-18 Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Blocks are available for administration, there are some considerations that impact the selection of **accommodations** prior to test administration. Because the selection of accommodations in TIDE is dependent on a student's special education and 504 status, accommodations will not be selectable in TIDE until the 2017-18 Public School Information System (PSIS) student batch upload into TIDE occurs on November 20, 2017. If your school or district expects to administer an Interim Assessment Block prior to November 20, 2017, accommodations will need to be selected in the Test Administrator (TA) Interface at the time of testing. Please see the guidance, below, for administering Interim Assessment Blocks, and entering Designated Supports or Accommodations, prior to November 20, 2017:

- 1. Designated Supports** should be entered directly into TIDE by the District Administrator or School Coordinator either manually or via the upload process. These supports will be immediately visible to the Test Administrator in the Test Administration (TA) Interface and will be immediately available to the student for use while taking the IAB. Once a designated support is set in TIDE, this setting will persist in TIDE.
- 2. While Designated Supports are persistent in TIDE over time, Accommodations** (both Embedded and Non-Embedded) should be entered manually by the Test Administrator using the Test Administration (TA) Interface prior to the approval/administration of an Interim Assessment Block see Figure 1).



Note: The Test Administrator will need to set accommodations for each applicable student every time an Interim Assessment Block is administered.

Figure 1. Test Setting Menu Available on the Test Administration Interface



After the PSIS upload on November 20, 2017, accommodations set in TIDE (for students with the Special Education Indicator) will be available to students taking the Interim Assessment Blocks, and the manual entry of these accommodations through the Test Administration (TA) Interface Test Setting Menu will no longer be required. It is still advised that the Test Administrator verify these supports prior to test administration and contact their District Administrator if there are questions or concerns about the student test settings.

The Bureau of Student Assessment will provide more information regarding the submission of test supports and accommodations in the upcoming weeks.

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Interim Assessment Updates

2017-18 Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Webinar Series

Since the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments were first made available to districts on September 26, 2017, over 14 districts have already administered at least one block. Over 2,800 individual interim assessments have been administered in the last two weeks.

Located on the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal, educators with a TIDE account can access the 2017-18 updated Interim Assessment Blocks for mathematics and English language arts using the Assessment Viewing Application (AVA). Supporting systems, such as the Teacher Hand Scoring System (THSS) and the AIR Ways Reporting System, also contain enhancements that make scoring and data analysis more user friendly.

This year, the Bureau of Student Assessment is planning on offering in-person training to support teacher hand scoring of interim assessment's open-ended items. We also plan to offer sessions on interim assessment best practices. Dates and locations will be announced soon.

For starters, however, we are pleased to present the 2018 Interim Webinar Series with two videos just released. A PDF of each webinar is also available on the [Student Assessment Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment](#) Web page and on the [Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal](#) under the *Resources* tab (See Figure 1 below). The yellow stars indicate where these resources are posted.

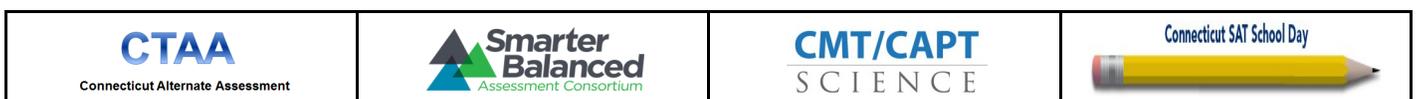
Figure 1. Snapshot of the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal Resource Tab



2018 Interim Assessment Webinar Series #1

The Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments

This [video](#) is designed for educators who may be new to the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment System, or to those returning educators who need a refresher. In this session, we discuss the purposes of the interim assessments, as well as how to navigate the systems on the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal that allow users to view, administer, and score interim assessment blocks. We also present updated test blueprints for mathematics and English language arts/literary, and highlight new enhancements to the Teacher Hand Scoring System.





Interim Assessment Updates

2017-18 Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Webinar Series (cont.)

[2018 Interim Webinar Series #2](#)

Using Interim Assessment Data

This [video](#) gives information about using the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments to inform instruction. In this session, we explain the score reporting process, as well as the various reporting platforms and reporting features available. We also identify resources and instructional tools available through the Digital Library that can directly support instruction based on interim assessment outcomes.

Teacher Hand Scoring System User Guide

The [Teacher Hand Scoring System User Guide](#) provides information on the Teacher Hand Scoring System (THSS) for Scorers and Score Managers responsible for human-scored item responses on the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments.

Assessment Viewing Application User Guide

The [Assessment Viewing Application \(AVA\) User Guide](#) provides an overview of how to access and use AVA. AVA allows teachers to view items on the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments for administrative or instructional purposes.

How to Activate a Test Session: Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments

The document [How to Activate a Test Session: Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments](#) provides instructions on how to activate a test session for the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments using the TA Interface.



Connecticut SAT School Day Updates

A webinar regarding updates to the 2018 Connecticut SAT School Day administration and accommodations for Special Populations will be held on **Monday, November 6, 2017, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.** This webinar is intended for Connecticut SAT School Day Test Center Supervisors and Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Coordinators. Please [register](#) for this event. Contact [Michelle Rosado](#) with any questions.



Special Populations Updates

Required ONLINE Administration for LAS Links

On August 30, 2017, English Learner Assessment Coordinators received a [memorandum](#) from Abe Krisst notifying them that all Kindergarten-Grade 12 students, identified as English learners be assessed ONLINE with the LAS Links Form C for the 2017-18 school year. This English Language Proficiency test window is **January 3-March 9, 2018**. To understand the specifications for online testing, the [LAS Links ONLINE Technology Requirements](#) are available.

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Special Populations Updates

Training Opportunity: Alternate Assessment Counts!

In response to new federal guidance, the CSDE is conducting multi-session trainings to provide needed understanding and the skills necessary to respond to increased monitoring of students with significant cognitive disabilities participating in Connecticut's Alternate Assessments. Each session has multiple dates and locations to choose from.

[Register for Session 1 in person: School-level leaders, Principals, Planning and Placement Team \(PPT\) Chairs](#)

[Register for Session 2 in person: District Administrator for testing, Special Education Directors, English Learner Coordinators, Department Leaders.](#) (For consistency and for federal accountability purposes, attendees for the *Alternate Assessment Counts! Session 2* **must have had** an individual from their school (or district if applicable) participate in *Alternate Assessment Counts! Session 1* training.)

[Session 3 Webinar: \(Registration Coming Soon\)](#) [District and school-level leaders, certified educators working with students with significant cognitive disabilities, certified educators in general education.](#)

2017-18 CSDE Usability, Accessibility and Accommodations Training and 2017-18 CSDE Alternate Assessment System Training

District Administrators were e-mailed a letter regarding the [2017-18 CSDE Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Training, and 2017-18 CSDE Alternate Assessment System Training](#). Like last year, both trainings are available as an online or live in-person option.

Additional Clarification for TEA role

Individuals with the Teacher Administering the Alternate (TEA) user role will be updated based on whether a teacher is current in their state required training. This will allow these educators to both submit the Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) and, therefore, to register students for the alternate assessments, as well as to administer the test in spring of 2018.

- If these individuals will be administering the Alternate Assessments in the 2017-18 school year **and** are current in their CSDE training they will receive an e-mail by November 10, 2017, from AIR to update their TEA accounts.
- Individuals who will be administering the Alternate Assessments in the 2017-18 school year and are **not** current in their CSDE training, will need to register for the [2017-18 Alternate Assessment System](#) training. These educator names will be added to the TIDE trained teacher list once they have completed and passed the course. At that time, they will receive an e-mail from AIR to create a password.
- TEA accounts are typically issued for specific schools based on school codes. If a trained educator will be administering the alternate assessments in multiple schools, they will need to contact the AIR helpdesk (1-844-202-7583)

Braille Requirements and Configuration Manual

The [Braille Requirements and Configuration Manual](#) includes information about supported operating systems and required hardware and software for braille testing. It provides information on how to configure Job Access with Speech (JAWS), navigating an online test with JAWS, and how to administer a test to a student requiring braille.

2017-18 Testing Designated Supports/Accommodations Form

The new [2017-18 Testing Designated Supports/Accommodations Form](#) is available online. You may use this form for students with an individualized education program (IEP), a Section 504 Plan and/or for English learners (ELs). As a reminder, there is no need to amend IEPs if you used last year's form and did not make any changes.





Summative Assessment Updates

Desmos Calculator on Smarter Balanced Assessments

As a reminder, beginning in the spring of 2018, all Smarter Balanced Mathematics assessments that require a calculator will include the use of the Desmos calculator. The Desmos calculator will be replacing the legacy calculator used for the last four years. In addition, beginning this fall, students taking the Smarter Balanced Interim assessment will be offered the Desmos calculator. As has been the past practice, there are no available calculators for students in Grades 3-5. However, students in Grade 6 will have the Desmos Four Function calculator made available to them and students in Grades 7-8 will have the Desmos Scientific Calculator made available to them. Information about the Desmos Assessment Calculators can be found on the [Desmos Testing](#) page. In addition, general information about Desmos Calculators can be found at www.Desmos.com.

Students can practice with the actual embedded calculators prior to testing by following these links:

[Grade 6 Smarter Balanced Mathematics Calculator](#)

[Grades 7-8 Smarter Balanced Mathematics Calculator](#)

Accessing TIDE

The brochure [Accessing TIDE](#) provides a brief overview of user management in the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) and how to log in to the system. School personnel will need to use TIDE account credentials to access all secure online systems used to administer Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program online assessments.

Secure Browser

The Windows and Mac OSX secure browser for the 2017-18 school year is now available. This new version of the secure browser is **required** for all 2017-18 online test administrations. **Note:** The secure browser for all desktop operating systems is available for [download from the portal](#). Both iOS and Chrome secure browsers have been updated and are available in the App Store and in the Google Play Store, respectively.

Secure Browser Installation Manual

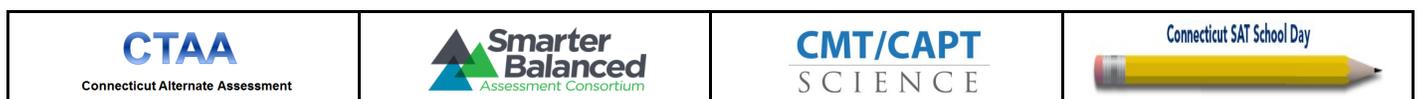
The [Secure Browser Installation Manual](#) provides instructions for downloading and installing the secure browser on supported operating systems used for all Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program online assessments.

User Role Permissions for Secure Online Systems

The brochure, [User Role Permissions for Secure Online Systems](#), outlines the user roles and permissions for each secure online testing system used to administer the online assessments for the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program. These systems include: Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE), Online Reporting System (ORS), Test Administrator (TA) Interface, Data Entry Interface (DEI), Teacher Hand Scoring System (THSS), Assessment Viewing Application (AVA), and AIR Ways.

Voice Pack Installation Guide

The [Voice Pack Installation Guide](#) (for Windows) provides information for downloading the NeoSpeech Voice Pack from TIDE. This voice pack can be used on Windows machines for English text-to-speech and audio glossaries.



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Summative Assessment Updates

Nexus School Reports

This year, for the first time, the shipment of paper score reports from the state included separate file folders containing reports for students for whom your district is fiscally responsible. These score reports are for students with disabilities who are educated in an “Other Public School District” (your nexus students outplaced to a public school or program in another district).

Districts that have such students will find in folders labeled “Nexus School,” paper score reports for the district’s nexus students that should be kept on file by the district. (Science reports are shipped separately from Smarter Balanced reports, but each shipment could include “Nexus School” file folders.)

These Nexus School reports do *not* need to be mailed home to parents even if districts receive multiple copies. The public school where these students *attend* received the reports that are to be mailed home. In most cases, the best thing for the District’s Testing Administrator to do with these folders is to put them in the hands of either, the district’s Director of Special Education or of the individual student’s planning and placement team (PPT) Chair.

2017–18 Summative Assessment Calendar			
Content Area(s)	Assessment	Grade(s)	Testing Window
English Language Proficiency: Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing	LAS Links	K–12	January 3–March 9, 2018
English Language Arts & Mathematics	Connecticut Smarter Balanced	3–8	March 26–May 25, 2018
	Connecticut SAT School Day	11	<i>Primary Test Date:</i> March 21, 2018 <i>Makeup Dates:</i> April 24 and 25, 2018
	Connecticut Alternate Assessment	3–8 and 11	March 26–May 25, 2018
Science	CMT	5 and 8	March 26–May 25, 2018
	CMT Skills Checklist	5 and 8	March 26–May 25, 2018
	Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessment Field Test	5, 8 and 11	March 26–May 25, 2018 (Grade 11) April 30–May 25, 2018 (Grades 5 and 8)
	NGSS Alternate Assessment Field Test	5, 8 and 11	April 30–May 25, 2018 (Grades 5, 8, and 11)

Register for email updates

To automatically receive the *Student Assessment News* and/or other announcements, [register for e-mail updates](#) on the Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal.

 Connecticut Alternate Assessment			
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