



Student Assessment News

Connecticut State Department of Education • Performance Office

April 8, 2021

[Archived Student Assessment News](#)
CTStudentAssessment@ct.gov

Smarter Balanced Educator Opportunities for 2021

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

Page 2

[Connecticut SAT School Day Updates](#)

Page 3

[Special Populations Updates](#)

Page 6

[2020-21 Assessment Calendar](#)

[COVID Resources for Educators and Families](#)

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and Smarter Balanced are recruiting qualified educators to support the following assessment activities in 2021:

- English/Language Arts Item Review for Content, Fairness, and Accessibility
- Mathematics Item Review for Content, Fairness, and Accessibility
- English/Language Arts Passage Review
- Mathematics Achievement Level Descriptors Review

[Applications are due by May 3, 2021.](#) The meetings will be held virtually. Participants will receive training and relevant digital materials prior to meeting. The meetings are expected to occur on Zoom and accessibility accommodations will be available for participants who need them.

More information including eligibility, logistics, reimbursement, and dates are available on [our web site](#). Educators selected to participate will be contacted directly by Smarter Balanced.

2021 Assessment Office Hours

The CSDE Performance Office staff is hosting Office Hour webinars each Thursday from 3-4 p.m. The CSDE staff and their partner vendor, Cambium Assessment Inc., will provide assessment updates on various topics. [Attendees must register for the series](#) and may attend all or some sessions as needed. The **April 8 and April 15**, webinars will be dedicated to the **Remote Proctoring Tool** for remote testing of Next General Science Standards (NGSS)/Smarter Balanced.

Remote Proctoring

On April 19, 2021, the Cambium Assessment Incorporated Test Delivery System will open the Remote Proctoring Tool to allow remote administrations of the Smarter Balanced and the NGSS Summative Assessments. To support this remote administration, there is a list of available [resources](#). They can also be accessed on the [Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal](#) by selecting *Remote Administration* under the *Resources tab*. While many of these resources are optional, we recommend that you share them with your teachers, Technology Coordinators, and families as appropriate. Resources include parent/teacher videos, an online Remote Proctor Training Certification course, FAQs, user guides, checklists, and the Remote Proctoring Test Administration Manual.



Connecticut Alternate Assessment



Connecticut SAT School Day



Connecticut SAT School Day Updates

Ordering Make-Up Materials for April 27/28, and May 18

You must order makeup materials for any makeup date that you wish to use. Test coordinators will receive an email that includes a link for the makeup materials survey. **Test Coordinators must answer this survey even if make-up materials are not required.**

This year, test coordinators can order both non-accommodated materials and accommodated materials in the makeup survey.

- Schools with a March 24th primary test date received an email on March 23rd to order materials for April 27th/28th. That survey closed on March 26th.
- Schools with an April 13th primary test date will receive an email on April 12th to order materials for April 27th/28th. That survey closes on April 15th.
- All schools will receive an email on April 26th to order materials for May 18th. That survey closes on April 29th.

Makeup Test Days

April 27 and 28, 2021

May 18, 2021

Makeup Accommodated Testing Window

April 27 – April 29, 2021

May 18 – May 20, 2021

Did you know that since the **AP, PSAT, and SAT** are considered part of a CSDE State Educational Program, the AP, PSAT, and SAT coordinator can be given access to a student's income eligibility status? It is always a good idea to have the coordinator complete the [Disclosure Release form](#) to ensure that they have an understanding of the USDA regulations and do not use this information for other purposes. Note that each district's AP, PSAT, and SAT coordinator should use the student's free, reduced-price and paid eligibility status that is posted in the Public School Information System (PSIS) instead of requesting this data directly from the determining official or the food service director. **AP coordinators must indicate a student's fee reduction status by April 30, 2021, in AP Registration and Ordering.** Questions can be directed to Michelle Rosado at michelle.rosado@ct.gov.

2021 CT SAT Results

March 24—Results available on April 18

April 13—Results available on May 8

Student Assessment News: April 8, 2021

Special Populations Updates

Accessing Supports for English Learners Taking Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments

There are a variety of designated supports, including language supports, which English learners (ELs) may benefit from. The [Assessment Guidelines](#) provides a description of how these supports work, while the following brochures provide additional context for how these supports function for specific subject areas: the [Translation Glossary Brochure](#) and the [Embedded and Non-Embedded Designated Supports for English Learners](#).

Like all designated supports and accommodations, it is recommended that teachers explore these supports using the Smarter Balanced and NGSS Practice Tests to learn how they function. Teachers should also work alongside their students during a Practice Test administration to try out these supports to confirm their appropriateness and benefit to the student. Student use of the practice materials' show students how to navigate and use the designated supports creating greater independence and confidence. As a reminder, these designated supports must be activated in the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE).

As a quick reference, the tables below (published in the Embedded and Non-Embedded Designated Supports for English Learners brochure) show available supports for English Learners for each assessment. Contact [Deirdre Ducharme](#) or [Janet Stuck](#) for more information.

Table 1. Smarter Balanced Assessments – Embedded and Non-Embedded Designated Supports

Designated Support	Available Subjects	Available Format of Designated Support
Translation (Glossary)	Mathematics	Embedded
Text-to-Speech	English Language Arts items (Does NOT include ELA Reading Passages ¹) Mathematics items & stimuli Science items & stimuli	Embedded
Spanish Presentation (Stacked)	Mathematics	Embedded
Read Aloud in Spanish for Directions and Items	Mathematics	Non-Embedded
Translated Test Directions (for Select Languages Only) Available on the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal	English Language Arts Mathematics	Non-Embedded
Read Aloud in English for Directions and Items	English Language Arts (Not Reading Passages ²) Mathematics	Non-Embedded
Simplified Test Directions Guidelines for Simplified Test Directions	English Language Arts Mathematics	Non-Embedded

Table 2. NGSS Assessments – Embedded and Non-Embedded Designated Supports

Designated Support	Available Subjects	Available Format of Designated Support
Spanish Presentation (Toggle ³)	Science	Embedded
Text-to-Speech in English	Science	Embedded
Text-to-Speech in Spanish ⁴	Science	Embedded
Native Reader of Test Directions (Any Language)	Science	Non-Embedded
Read Aloud in English	Science	Non-Embedded
Read Aloud in Spanish	Science	Non-Embedded
Bilingual Dictionary ⁵	Science	Non-Embedded

³Spanish Presentation for NGSS functions differently from Spanish Presentation (stacked) for mathematics. For NGSS, the translation is presented in Spanish or English based on the selection of the toggle icon set by the student on the test screen. Language is defaulted to Spanish when Spanish is set in TIDE in the Presentation section.

⁴Text-to-Speech in Spanish for NGSS functions when both Spanish Presentation (Toggle) for NGSS and Text-to-Speech for NGSS are activated in TIDE.

⁵The resource [Glossaries Authorized for Use by English Language Learners on MCAS](#) provides potential resources for bilingual word-to-word dictionaries allowed on Connecticut's statewide assessments.

Embedded Speech-to-Text Tool

Available for students who use voice-recognition software per their Individualized Education Program (IEP)/504 Plan to support written communication on Smarter Balanced open-ended items. It only appears on the item interactions that should have it (e.g., ELA (CAT) and Math (PT) tests). It is not available for NGSS as there are no open-ended items on the science assessment.

The student must test in a 1:1 setting. When the accessibility resource is enabled, a microphone icon will appear in or near the response space for constructed-response items. The student will click on the microphone icon and begin speaking. As the student speaks, the transcribed text will appear in the provided response area. This feature auto punctuates and capitalizes as it transcribes a student's dictation. Students should proof read and edit responses before moving onto the next item. The student is permitted to dictate up to 5 minutes of speech at a time.

Students should try this accommodation using the Math Performance Task Practice Test or the Brief Write Interim Assessment (IAB) in advance of summative testing to ensure that the student knows how to operate this function.

Special Populations Updates

Tips for Teachers Administering the Alternate Assessments

Teachers Administering the Alternate Assessments (TEAs) can now access the Directions for Test Administration (DTA) in TIDE. As a reminder, these are secure test documents that are grade and test specific. The TEA should download and print DTAs for both math and ELA. These documents must be used in conjunction with the [CTAA Test Administration Manual](#) at the time of testing. Additionally, if students require the use of paper copy tests, secure CTAA test materials can be accessed in TIDE by the District Administrator. As a reminder, these materials must be securely maintained and stored in a safe and locked location. Once testing is complete, DTAs and any secure test material must be shredded. Please refer to these two resources when setting up test sessions.

- ⇒ [CTAA Responsibility Checklist](#) to prepare for testing
- ⇒ [CTAS Responsibility Checklist](#) to prepare for testing (for students in Grades 5, 8, and 11)

Invitation for New Community of Practice

On April 1, 2021, a [memo](#) was sent to ELACs, DAs and Special Education Directors encouraging district staff respond to a survey by **April 12, 2021**. The survey will provide information to allow CSDE to select members for a new Community of Practice specific to creating the Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessment for students identified as English learners with significant cognitive disabilities.



The [Connecticut Smarter Balanced and NGSS Reader Options Table](#) is a new resource that defines the purpose, test requirements, and necessary documentation (if applicable) for various embedded and non-embedded Smarter Balanced and NGSS reader supports and accommodations.

*Did you know that students should **not** be entered by districts into the DRC Insight portal?*

English learners are uploaded into the Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) Insight Portal nightly from PSIS. If student profiles are modified or students are added manually, rather than through the nightly PSIS upload, significant issues occur and generally lead to the students test scores and reports being removed.

LAS Links students eligible for Alternate Assessments

As described in the communication [Dually Identified English Learner Procedures for the 2021 LAS Links Assessment](#) provided to English Learner Assessment Coordinators (ELACs) on December 17, 2020, students who are English learners with a significant cognitive disability may be considered for an Alternate Assessment. Eligible students meeting criteria were communicated to the CSDE using the *English Learners with Significant Cognitive Disabilities Potentially Eligible for Alternative Assessments Survey* if in Grades K-2, 9, 10 or 12. Students in Grades 3-8 or 11 also qualify if they had the *Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form* submitted via the Date Entry Interface.

These students have been removed from the DRC Insight Portal to ensure they are not accidentally tested. If you learn the testing status for a student previously identified for an alternate assessment who was already communicated to CSDE is no longer eligible for an alternate assessment, you should contact the CSDE to remove the student from the Alternate Assessment Eligibility file and test the student on the LAS Links. This process will require an appeal.

Student Assessment News: April 8, 2021

Special Populations Updates

Return Date for LAS Links Paper/Accommodated Forms

Due to the extension of the LAS Links Testing window to April 30, 2021, the new date for the last day to call the United Parcel Service (UPS) for pickup of completed accommodated/paper forms is **April 7, 2021**. Large Print and Braille materials received must be transcribed into a standard-sized Form C Answer Book provided with your Large Print or Braille materials, prior to returning to DRC. Large Print or Braille tests which are not transcribed into a standard-sized Form C Answer Book cannot be processed for scoring. More information was provided in the [Receipt and Return of 2021 Accommodated/Paper Test Materials](#) provided on December 18, 2020.

Remote LAS Links Test Administration International

There are students who are currently registered in the CSDE's Public School Information System (PSIS) who are participating in remote instruction from a location outside of the continental United States. For those students who are also English learners, districts may use the LAS Links Remote Guidance available on the [Connecticut DRC LAS Links Website](#) to administer the LAS Links Assessments. Please note that due to security protocols for the United States or the country in which the student is located, the Remote Administration DRC provided link for LAS Links Test Administration may not function. English learners who are abroad and cannot access the LAS Links remotely can still take the LAS Links if they return to Connecticut prior to the close of the assessment window on April 30, 2021. While accountability will most likely be waived for SY 2020-21, English learners who are registered in PSIS who do not take the LAS Links will be treated as non-participants in any CSDE reporting.

Connecticut SAT Reminders for Students with Accommodations

Use the Nonstandard Administration Report (NAR) to determine the correct color test book to distribute to each student testing with accommodations. The NAR includes students that must test on the primary day and students that test in the accommodated window and what test book color and the script name the student should use. The NAR also includes students approved for EL time and one-half (+50%).

If you have students approved for the MP3 audio streaming you must do the following steps:

- * Install the MP3 streaming application on the school-provided testing device prior to test day.
- * If computers at your school are set up to require staff or students to sign in, the application has to be installed on the user profile for the computer that the student will be signed into on test day.
- * The MP3 streaming application will be visible as a desktop icon only on the user account on which it was originally installed.
- * Detailed instructions are available on the [College Board's SSD Online](#).

Updating District Administrator or ELAC Information

If there is a change in the District Administrator (DA), the individual responsible for statewide testing for the district, please contact Marlene Chameroy at marlene.chameroy@ct.gov to establish the user role and associated permissions for the new DA. If there is a change in the role of English Learner Assessment Coordinator, please contact your district's LEA Security Manager and Contact's Writer. The ELAC is the one individual representing the district who will be the point of contact for CSDE and is responsible for ensuring the English Language Proficiency (ELP) Assessment is administered appropriate to all identified English learners in Grades K-12.

Student Assessment News: April 8, 2021

Summative Assessment Calendar for 2020-21

Assessment	Dates
The Cambium secure browsers for the 2020-21 school year must be downloaded for all 2020-21 online tests.	Available for download https://ct.portal.cambiumast.com/secure-browsers.stml
LAS Links	January 4, 2021–April 30, 2021
NGSS Assessments	February 1–June 4, 2021 (Grade 11) March 29–June 4, 2021 (Grades 5 and 8)
Connecticut Alternate Assessment - CTAA	March 29–June 4, 2021
Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment - CTAS (Administered throughout the year)	(Upload Window for Submission through the DEI) March 29–June 4, 2021 (Grades 5, 8, and 11)
Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessments	March 29–June 4, 2021
Connecticut SAT School Day	Primary Test Dates: March 24, 2021, OR April 13, 2021 (Based on school selection) Makeup Dates: April 27 and 28, 2021, May 18, 2021



Contact the Connecticut Helpdesk (1-844-202-7583) to request the activation of the Alt Flag Indicator for any Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form submitted after February 15.

2021 Lt. Governor's Computing Challenge

The **2021 Lt. Gov.'s Computing Challenge** is open to students in Grades 3-12.
Submissions will be accepted until **April 30, 2021**.
Additional information can be found [on the website](#).

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.

