



# Student Assessment News

Connecticut State Department of Education • Performance Office

May 21, 2021

[Archived Student Assessment News](#)  
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## Summative Assessment Updates

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### Testing Window Closure and Tracking Test Completion

The summative testing window closes **on June 4, 2021**, for the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), Connecticut Alternate Assessments (CTAA), and Connecticut Alternate Science Assessments (CTAS). It is very important that districts and schools track test completion for students. The [Monitoring Test Progress: Test Status Code Report and Test Completion Rates](#) brochure provides instructions for generating Test Status Code Reports and Test Completion Rates in TIDE. These reports are excellent tools that should be used to track test completion for students at both the district and school level.

### 2021 Testing and Learning Experience Survey

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is administering a brief survey to students. It asks questions about students' testing experiences during Smarter Balanced English Language Arts (ELA) and Math testing in Grades 3-8 and Science testing for students in Grades 5, 8, and 11. The survey will also ask questions about students' learning experiences for the 2020-21 school year. The data collected from this survey will help the CSDE to evaluate the comparability of scores between tests administered remotely versus those administered in person. Results will be used to study the impact of a student's learning model during the 2020-21 school year (e.g., in person, hybrid, remote) on their academic performance and growth.

Although the survey is not mandatory, student participation across all tested grades and learning models is valuable and appreciated. Strong participation will provide important information about the 2020-21 test administration. There are nine questions on the survey, and it should take about 10 minutes to complete. The survey will remain open **until 5 p.m. on June 18, 2021**. For your viewing, a PDF version of the survey questions is available [here](#).

#### Survey Directions:

The survey link is here: <https://ct.tds.cambiumast.com/student/?session=CT-0069-39D>

- Students will need their SASID and first name to enter the survey.
- The survey can be taken with Chrome, Firefox, and Safari (and does not require a secure browser).
- The survey does not need to be "proctored" to complete.
- The Text-to-Speech tool has been made available to all survey participants to support greater independence in completion.



Connecticut Alternate Assessment



Connecticut SAT School Day



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### Summative Assessment Updates

#### The Public School Information System and State Summative Testing

The Public School Information System (PSIS) provides data to test delivery systems for state summative assessments administered to Connecticut public school students. These assessments include:

- Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS);
- Smarter Balanced;
- Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) in English language arts and mathematics;
- Connecticut Alternate Science (CTAS); and
- Connecticut SAT School Day.

**District PSIS Coordinators must work closely with Testing Coordinators to ensure that student information is being reported accurately.** The CSDE relies on districts to provide accurate reporting of PSIS student-level data. Select fields such as English Learner status, Special Education status, and Section 504 status must be updated prior to testing to ensure students eligible for specific assessments and/or accommodations can access them at the time of testing.

#### The PSIS Registration module includes the following Testing Demographic Fields

- Special Education (SPED) Status
- Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) Status
- English Learner (EL) Status
- Military Family
- Homeless
- Recently Arrived EL
- Section 504 Status

**These seven values must reflect the student's status at the time of testing for the 2020-21 school year.** The SPED, FRL, EL, Military Family, and Homeless were loaded with the values reported in the October PSIS Collection Freeze Zero file (i.e., freeze file from the collection generated on November 10, 2020). The values for Recently Arrived EL and Section 504 were not pulled from Freeze Zero because these data are not reported in the PSIS October collection. These values were set to "No" in the Registration Module and must be updated in the PSIS Registration Module for testing and reporting purposes.

Please note, that if the status of any the first five fields changed from the value reported in the October PSIS Collection Freeze Zero, or if the student being tested was not in the PSIS October Collection Freeze Zero, the District PSIS Coordinator must update the student's record in the PSIS Registration Module. Changes to the Testing Demographic data can be made via the "Edit Registration/Unregister" page in the PSIS Registration Module or by batch. The Testing Demographics Record Layout for batch uploads can be found in the [PSIS Reference Guide](#) located on the PSIS help site.

District PSIS Coordinators must make all changes to student enrollment and demographic information directly into the PSIS Registration Module. Student demographic values will be saved and the fields will be locked in PSIS on **June 4, 2021** (i.e., the last day of the summative testing window), so all changes to a student's status at the time of testing must be made by then.

The *Missing Connecticut Testing Demographic Status Values* report is available in PSIS Registration Module, and the *Active Roster* download has been updated to include the testing demographic values. Data from the PSIS Registration Module are updated on a nightly basis for the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) and Monday – Friday for Data Recognition Corporation (DRC's) INSIGHT System. Prior to the test window, the testing demographic fields are optional for all students; once testing begins, values will be required for students in Grades 3-8, and 11 and similarly for Grades K-12 for the LAS Links. **Again, these seven fields in the PSIS Registration Module must reflect the student's status at the time of testing.**



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Connecticut SAT School Day



### Summative Assessment Updates

#### 2021 Assessment Office Hours

The CSDE Performance Office staff is hosting *Office Hours* webinars each Thursday from 3-4 p.m. through June 3. 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.

#### Remote Summative Testing for Smarter Balanced and NGSS

Before administering remote summative assessments, please closely consider the information below and share these recommendations with your school coordinators and test proctors:

- The [Remote Test Administration Manual](#) provides overall guidance for Remote Summative Testing. This document includes the recommended teacher script that must be read or provided to students before and during testing.
- All materials to support remote testing can be found on the [Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal](#).
- Be sure that the Secure Browser, Mobile App, or Kiosk App is downloaded on the student's testing device.
- Be sure that all students who test remotely have “**remote**” chosen in the Remote Proctoring Indicator in TIDE (see TAM pg. 25). Please remember students that are not tested in person with a teacher in the classroom for testing, should have the Remote Proctor Indicator on before testing.
- The Performance Office strongly recommends that all proctors train for Remote Summative Testing using the [Remote Testing Training Course](#).
- Parent communications are available on the [Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal](#) and have been translated into multiple languages.

#### Tips for Active Remote Proctoring

- As noted in the [Remote Test Administration Manual](#), the CSDE recommends test administrators only allow groups of 10 or less in their remote test sessions. This promotes the proper and active monitoring of testers.
- The teacher should read the script to students at the time of testing (see Appendix D of the Remote Proctoring Test Administration Manual for details).
- Student cameras **MUST** remain on continuously during the entire test session. If the camera is turned off for any reason, the testing session must be stopped for that student.

### Special Populations Updates

#### Medical Exemptions

In rare cases, there may be a student who experiences a medical emergency just prior to (or during) the testing window and the student is unable to receive hospital or homebound instruction due to the student's health condition. There is a process whereby, the student may receive an exemption from testing due to the emergency nature of the medical condition, if the criteria for exemption are met. In Connecticut, the exemption determination for a medical emergency rests primarily on the following criteria:

**The student is unable to attend school and is medically/emotionally unavailable for homebound/hospitalized instruction for the entire testing window.**

Medical Exemption forms for the **Connecticut SAT School Day** are due by **May 25, 2021**, and for the **Smarter Balanced, the NGSS, and the Connecticut Alternate Assessments (CTAA/CTAS)** are due by **June 11, 2021**. Please contact [Janet Stuck](#) or [Deirdre Ducharme](#) for more information.

#### Reminder to Planning and Placement Teams Considering the Connecticut Alternate Assessments

As annual Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings are conducted to develop Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for the 2021-22 school year, please remind members to discuss assessment options and [supports](#), and [accommodations](#). Additionally, if the student is being considered for the Alternate Assessment System, the eligibility requirements for participation must be discussed.

Using the [Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#), the PPT must verify that the student has a significant cognitive disability by providing the following evidence:

1. Student has an intellectual impairment with supporting evidence per cognitive testing, or other details/evidence exist to substantiate the existence of an intellectual impairment;
2. Student's adaptive behavior is well below age-level expectations with supporting evidence per adaptive behavior assessment(s) (e.g., scored more than 1.5 standard deviations below average); and
3. Student requires intensive instruction and significant supports.

Eligible students participating in the alternate assessments

represent a relatively small group of students who, due to their disability cannot meaningfully participate in standard assessments (Smarter Balanced, Connecticut SAT School Day, NGSS Standard Assessment), even when provided accommodations. The CSDE continues to monitor the characteristics of students participating in the alternate assessments in accordance with federal guidance. Only these students, meeting all three criteria, should be participating in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System. Students who do not meet all three criteria for eligibility would be expected to participate in the standard assessment, typically with designated supports, accommodations, and assistive technology (if applicable) as indicated on page 8 of their IEP.

#### Resources:

- [Frequently Asked Questions and Answers about the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System](#)
- [Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Participation Guidance for Planning and Placement Teams](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions and Answers about the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#)
- [Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#)
- [Annotated Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#)

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### 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<br><a href="https://ct.portal.cambiumast.com/secure-browsers.stml">https://ct.portal.cambiumast.com/secure-browsers.stml</a> |
| NGSS Assessments   | February 1–June 4, 2021 (Grade 11)<br>March 29–June 4, 2021 (Grades 5 and 8)  |
| Connecticut Alternate Assessment - CTAA  | March 29–June 4, 2021   |
| Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment - CTAS<br>(Administered throughout the year)                    | (Upload Window for Submission through the Data Entry Interface (DEI))<br>March 29–June 4, 2021 (Grades 5, 8, and 11)                                |
| Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessments   | March 29–June 4, 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.**

### Connecticut Alternate Assessment Early Stopping Rule

The [Connecticut Alternate Assessment \(CTAA\) Test Administration Manual](#) (Section IV.III Early Stopping Rule (ESR)) provides guidance for students who have not yet established a mode of communication. Please follow the process defined in the [Alternate Assessment System Early Stopping Rule Flow Chart](#). As a reminder:

- The Math and ELA tests must be PAUSED after the fourth item is administered without a student response.
- If the student is in Grade 5, 8 or 11, please administer the first activity in the CTAS Performance Task for CTAS to determine if the student can provide a response. If so, test administration should continue. If not, select NR on the paper copy of the Student Score Worksheet and stop testing.
- Contact the Office of Student Assessment to determine next steps for ESR for CTAA and CTAS.

**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.

