



Student Assessment News

Connecticut State Department of Education • Performance Office

November 2023

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

New NGSS Assessment Interim Items

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Cambium Assessment will be adding additional items to the NGSS interim assessments in early December. About 7 to 10 items will be added to each grade band. These will include a mix of item clusters and stand-alone items across content areas. All NGSS interim assessment items currently available will remain in the system. Look for an updated [NGSS Interim Assessment Quick Guide](#) in early December with an updated list of all items available for use. A new [NGSS Interim Assessment Overview](#) is now available that provides basic information about this resource. If you have questions, please contact [Jeff Greig](#).

Performance Matters Forum



The Performance Matters Forum was held on October 12, 2023, at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford. Approximately 350 educators from around the state attended. The keynote topic was Guiding Your Schools to Optimize the Opportunities and Address the Risks of Artificial Intelligence by Pat Yongpradit Chief Academic Officer, Code.org. Pat discussed the opportunities and risks of artificial intelligence for education today as well as guidance and policies to implement to address the risks and capitalize on the opportunities. Commissioner Russell-Tucker and Jonathan Costa joined Pat for a follow-up discussion.

Nineteen breakouts were conducted by representatives from the following districts: Andover, Berlin, Coventry, CREC, Derby, East Hartford, East Lyme, EdAdvance, Hartford, LEARN, Madison, Middletown, New Britain, North Haven, Orange, Plainville, Region 18, Region 19, Thompson, Torrington, Wallingford, Waterbury, West Hartford, Westport, Windham.

Materials can be found on the conference program at [2023-PMF-Flier.pdf \(ct.gov\)](#)



Connecticut Alternate Assessment



Connecticut Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency



Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment



CONNECTICUT SAT School Day

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Connecticut SAT School Day 2024 Training Schedule

Who	Topic	Date	Venue
Coordinators Test	1. Digital SAT Overview	September 26 and 28	Slides and recording are posted
	2. Prep to Administer SAT	December 4, 10:00-11:00 AM	Register for Webinar
		December 6, 12:00-1:00 PM	Register for Webinar
	3. Test Day Tutorial	Tues, Feb 6, 12:00 – 1:30 PM	Register for Webinar
		Thurs, Feb 8, 9:30-11:30 AM	Register for 450 Columbus Blvd. Hartford
		Thurs, Feb 8, 12:30-2:30 PM	Register for 450 Columbus Blvd. Hartford
	4. Virtual Office Hours	Thurs, Feb 15, 11:30AM – 12:00PM	Join Office Hours
		Thurs, Feb 22, 11:30AM – 12:00PM	Join Office Hours
		Thurs, Feb 29, 11:30AM – 12:00PM	Join Office Hours
Coordinators Tech	Network, Device, and Room Tech Readiness Overview for Schools & Districts	November 2, 2023	Slides and recording are posted
Coordinators SSD	1. Connecticut SAT School Day Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Overview	Nov 16 12-1:30PM	Slides and recording are posted
	2. Virtual Office Hours	Thurs, Dec 7, 11:30AM – 12:00 PM	Join Office Hours
		Thurs, Dec 14, 11:30AM – 12:00 PM	Join Office Hours

CSDE Calendar



Access the [State Department of Education Calendar](#) and select Performance Office on the left-hand navigation bar under Calendars to register for additional upcoming events and learning opportunities.

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Connecticut SAT School Day Accommodations

The College Board SSD Online submission window for accommodations on the 2024 CT SAT School Day is open from **November 10, 2023-January 12, 2024**. To access SSD Online, SSD Coordinators will need to log on to: ssdonline.collegeboard.org. If you are a new SSD Coordinator and do not have an account, you will need to request an account and complete the SSD Coordinator Form available on www.collegeboard.org/ssd.

Students may have already been approved by the College Board for test accommodations if requests were made for other assessments such as the PSAT or SAT. Once students are approved for accommodations, they will remain available for use on subsequent SAT administrations including the CT SAT School Day. However, it is important for SSD Coordinators to review these accommodations to ensure they are still needed and supported per the student's implemented Individualized Education Program or Section 504 Plan.

SSD Coordinators should meet with their students with IEP and Section 504 Plans early on to review accommodations and determine the appropriateness of digital alternatives available on the new and shortened SAT. SSD Coordinators may need to submit new accommodation requests or make changes to those already approved in SSD from past test administrations. Please note the following:

- Students should take a shortened version of the digital [SAT Practice Test via Bluebook](#). (A full-length Practice Test is also available). This opportunity will provide students with access to the new test format, sample items, and exposure to the embedded universal tools and accommodations, if applicable.

- As applicable, SSD and Technology Coordinators should work with students to test the functionality of Assistive Technology Devices or AT software on the testing device with the digital practice test to ensure a seamless test experience on test day. This includes, but is not limited to, the provision of a screen reader, text-to-speech, and voice recognition software for students with visual, print, or communication needs per an IEP/Section 504 Plan.
- The expectation is that most students will complete the CT SAT School Day online with accommodations. If due to a significant visual, medical, or physical disability, the student is unable to take the assessment online with accommodations, a paper test can be requested in SSD. To do so,
 - * SSD Coordinator will request Large Print 20 point and **ADD** Paper testing using the "Other" accommodation category in SSD. Use the text field to specify the rationale for paper testing. However, there must be some rationale (not student preference) to support why the student cannot test digitally using the equally effective alternatives.
- English Learners/Multilingual Learners may be eligible to receive 50% time and one-half on the CT SAT School Day. This support must be requested in SSD by January 12, 2024.
- The College Board will populate approved accommodations from SSD Online to the Test Day Toolkit. Coordinators will have access to this information prior to testing so that they can set up test rooms and staff to provide accommodated test settings as appropriate.

If you have any questions, please reach out to [Deirdre Ducharme](#). College Board's Connecticut Customer Service contact info is 866-609-2205 and CTSAT@collegeboard.org

Special Populations Updates

Resources to Support Accommodations on the 2024 CT SAT School Day

- ✓ [Accommodations Crosswalk](#) - this resource provides the relationship between College Board accommodation options in SSD Online and accommodations available on the digital SAT School Day for students with an IEP/Section 504 Plan.
- ✓ [CT SAT School Day Accessibility Chart](#) - this resource identifies the available universal tools, accommodations, and EL/ML supports available on the CT SAT School Day.
- ✓ [SSD Form Upload for Documentation Requests](#) - use this form as documentation if requested by SSD Online. This form does not take the place of evidence that may be needed for paper test requests.

Alternate Assessment System Early Stopping Rule

Connecticut Alternate Assessments measure the knowledge and skills of eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). These assessments are designed to support student independence to the greatest extent possible by making academic and language content accessible and the expected achievement levels appropriate. A small percentage of students with the most significant cognitive and adaptive behavioral needs, eligible for the Alternate Assessment System, are reported by their teachers to have no observable way to communicate responses to participate in classroom or large-scale assessments.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) developed a method for identifying those students **prior** to the testing window who might qualify for a special test code status called the Early Stopping Rule (ESR). Please refer to the [2023-24 Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Early Stopping Rule](#), particularly the defined steps in the process. Teachers can complete the Student Response Check and complete the attestation form between December 1, 2023, and February 1, 2024. DAs in TIDE should submit applicable attestation forms in TIDE by March 1, 2024.

Connecticut Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency (CAELP) Resources

CAELP Resources: DAs, ELACs, Special Education Administrators, and educators can access CAELP resources on the [CAELP Resources page](#) on the Connecticut Comprehensive Portal.

CAELP Practice Tests: The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) encourages educators responsible for administering the CAELP to access the [CAELP Practice Tests](#) with eligible students. [The Alt ELPA Practice Test: Test Administrator Directions and Scoring Rubrics Booklets](#) should be used for the administration of the CAELP Practice Test and are available for Grades Kindergarten, 1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, and 9-12. The domain and grade specific practice tests may be accessed on the [Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal](#). Sign in as Guest User/Guest Session. Educators can set accommodations while signing onto the practice site.

CAELP Annual Training: Coming Soon! We anticipate the annual CAELP training will be live around mid-December on the [ELPA 21](#) training page. More information will be shared once the training is live.

CAELP Domain Exemptions: The CAELP Domain Exemption window will be open from November 15, 2023, to March 22, 2024. Please see the [CAELP Resources page](#) for additional information.

Special Populations Updates

New Designated Supports and Accommodations for 2023-24

Printed Test Directions in English is a Non-Embedded Designated Support. This language support provides the student with a visual reference in English for test directions/script within the SAY boxes in the Summative Test Administration Manual (TAM). For applicable students, this designated support must be set in TIDE and the directions should be downloaded and printed from the portal and distributed to the student at the time of testing.

Translated Test Directions in American Sign Language is a Non-Embedded Designated Support intended for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. This language support allows a qualified test administrator to sign or provide visual language support of the test directions script within the SAY boxes in the Summative Test Administration Manual (TAM).

Word Prediction (for open-ended responses on Smarter Balanced Math and ELA items) is often used in conjunction with speech to text. It allows students to begin writing a word and choose from a list of single words that have been predicted from word frequency and syntax rules. Word prediction is delivered via CAI's embedded software program. The program only uses single word prediction. Functionality such as phrase prediction, predict ahead, or next word is not available.

Who Benefits from Word Prediction?

Students who have documented motor or orthopedic impairments, which severely impairs their ability to provide written or typed responses without the use of assistive technology, may benefit from using word prediction. Students with moderate to severe learning disabilities that prevent them from recalling, processing, or expressing written language may also benefit from word prediction. Students will need to be familiar with the software (if it is incorporated within their AT), and have had many opportunities to use it in daily instruction. Students should also practice the functionality on a practice test with open-ended items before determining its use on state-wide testing.

How Does it Work?

Use of word prediction does require that students know writing conventions and that they have the review and editing skills required of all students. It is important that students who use word prediction also be able to develop planning notes and review their writing with or without text-to-speech and/or speech-to-text. When this accommodation is turned on for students who need and use this accommodation during instruction, it will appear in the list of tools with the item response box associated with open-ended items. As students type their responses, the software will predict the word that the student may be intending to use via a pop-up menu. Until the updated Assessment Guidelines is published, please refer to the [TA User Guide](#) with a description and screenshots of the Word Prediction functionality.

Special Populations Updates

Connecticut Alternate Science (CTAS) Assessment Materials

In an effort to replenish the 2018 hardcopy Connecticut Alternate Science (CTAS) Assessment used by districts, Cambium Assessments reprinted CTAS materials and mailed them to District Administrators during the week of October 24, 2023. Materials were also sent to Approved Private Special Education Programs.

Different quantities of the CTAS materials were allocated to districts based on student participation in the CTAS during spring of 2023. These CTAS materials include Performance Tasks and grade specific Resource Packets. [Student Score Worksheets](#) should be downloaded and printed from the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal.

It is important that upon receipt of these materials, districts create a system to share materials across the district and store them for future use. There is no difference between these materials and those used during previous administrations except for the reprint date on the front cover of the test materials. Additionally, electronic copies of all test materials, resources, and manuals are available on the portal.

CT-SEDS Updates

TIDE has been updated to include refreshed student demographic data from PSIS following Freeze Zero. This means that all students in PSIS whose IDEA or Section 504 Indicator is activated to Yes will have their designated supports and accommodations from finalized plans in CT-SEDS sync with TIDE. However, there are a few exceptions listed below.

Common Issues Preventing the Sync of Accommodations from CT-SEDS to TIDE

If records are not syncing between CT-SEDS and TIDE, check for the following possible issues:

- * Does your student have an implemented IEP or Section 504 Plan in CT-SEDS? Only implemented plans (marked with a blue star) will sync to TIDE.
- * Does the current IEP list the accommodations for the student's grade of enrollment? If these were not selected at the PPT last school year, then that may explain why accommodations are not syncing to TIDE. As a reminder, in the State Testing Tile within the IEP Module, the user is able to check both grades to set the accommodations for two grade levels. After the user checks those boxes, the additional panels would appear to then set those accommodations. If the accommodations were only set for one year, then the user could make an amendment, or hold a Review/Revise PPT to set the accommodations for this year.

Statewide Assessment Information

Indicate the grade the student will be in during the next statewide assessment testing window whether the student is being considered for the Connecticut Alternate Assessment system. [Placement Teams and Frequency Asked Questions and Answers about the Connecticut Alter](#)

What grade will the student be in during the next statewide assessment testing window?

5th Grade
 6th Grade

English Language Proficiency Assessment is required for all English Learners Grades K-12.

Has the student been identified as an English Learner?

Yes
 Yes

English Language Proficiency Assessment is required for all English Learners Grades K-12.

Is the student being considered for participation in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment system?

Yes No

Best Practices for Determining Accommodations for Statewide Assessments Office Hours:

With Planning and Placement Teams (PPTs) and Section 504 Teams as our targeted audience, the Performance Office is hosting Office Hours on Best Practices for Determining Accommodations for Statewide Assessments. This webinar will be held on Tuesday, December 12, 2023 from 9-10AM. For more information and to register click [here](#).

Special Populations Updates

CT-SEDS Updates, Continued

- * Is your student's IDEA/Section 504 Indicator set in TIDE? If not, that may mean that accommodations won't sync until these indicators are set in PSIS.
- * Is the SSID reported in CT-SEDS accurate? If dummy IDs are created in CT-SEDS, and not updated prior to implementation, the record will be rejected.
- * Refer to the [CT-SEDS to TIDE Designated Supports/Accommodation Sync FAQ](#) for more information about this recently implemented sync.
- * Is your student in Grades K-2, 9-10, or 12? If so, there are no academic statewide assessments (e.g., Smarter Balanced, NGSS) administered in these grades and therefore there are no drop-down menus to capture accommodations for these assessments. Accommodations can be documented under the local/district-wide assessment section, but these will not sync with TIDE.

CT-SEDS Resources

The CSDE Resources for PPTs and 504 Teams- CT SEDS and Statewide Assessments webpage is included on the CT-SEDS dashboard under the CSDE State tab. The webpage includes a variety of resources including two highlighted [Assessment Resources for PPT and Section 504 Teams](#)- This resource provides various informational tools available for decision making purposes.

[Description of Designated Supports and Accommodations](#)- This quick guide provides an explanation of the types of accessibility supports available along with a brief description of their purpose and functionality.

[CT-SEDS to TIDE Designated Supports/Accommodation Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Reminders

Currently, the sync between CT-SEDS and TIDE is a one-way import. That means that if designated supports and accommodations sync to TIDE, then are removed at a later time in CT-SEDS, the accommodations will remain in TIDE unless the District Administrator turns them off in TIDE. The CSDE is working with PCG to develop off-codes to remove accommodations in TIDE based on changes to the student's plan. Details will be forthcoming.

Also keep in mind that the CSDE is still working with PCG to populate a nightly file from CT-SEDS to TIDE for students that qualify for the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System. It is expected that the Alt Flag Indicator in TIDE will be activated for students that qualify in early-mid December.

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2023-24 Public School Information System (PSIS) and State Assessments

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 the LAS Links, the Connecticut Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency (CAAELP), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessment, Smarter Balanced Assessment, Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) in English language arts and mathematics, Connecticut Alternate Science (CTAS) Assessment, and the Connecticut SAT School Day. **District PSIS Coordinators must work closely with Testing Coordinators, English Language Assessment Coordinators (ELACs), and SAT Test Coordinators to ensure that student information is being reported accurately.**

The state 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 accommodations may access them. These select fields need to be updated frequently in PSIS for accommodations to sync between CT-SEDS and TIDE as well as to populate the Alternate Flag Indicator. Data are used for public/secure reporting of statewide test results and as part of Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System.

The PSIS Registration module has been updated to include the following Testing Demographic fields:

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

These seven values must reflect the student's status at the time of testing for the 2023-24 school year. The SPED, FRL, EL/ML, Military Family, and Homeless have been loaded with the values reported in the October PSIS Collection Freeze Zero file (i.e., freeze file from the collection generated on November 1, 2023). 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 have been 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 Record Layout](#) 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 the following dates for accountability calculations:

- March 1, 2024, for LAS Links;
- March 29, 2024, for the Connecticut Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency (CAAELP);
- April 19, 2024, for the Connecticut SAT School Day; and
- May 31, 2024, for Smarter Balanced Assessments, the Next Generation Science Standards Assessments, and the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Assessments (CTAS and CTAA).

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 in both the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) and is forthcoming for DRC's INSIGHT System. Again, these seven fields in the PSIS Registration Module must reflect the student's status at the time of testing.

For accommodations to sync from CT-SEDS to TIDE, students must be identified as Special Education or Section 504 in the PSIS Registration Module. Similarly, for a student to access a LAS Links assessment in the DRC Insight system, a student must be identified as an English learner/multilingual learner in the PSIS Registration Module. Additionally, a student may be identified as both an English learner and a student with disabilities, and should be reflected as such in the PSIS testing demographic fields prior to the opening of the LAS Links testing window, December 29, 2023.

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Summative Assessment Calendar for 2023-24

Assessment	Dates
Secure Browser for Smarter, NGSS and CTAA	To prepare for the 2023-24 school year please ensure you have updated the secure browser on each staff and student device. Please access the Technology Resources to support this process.
English Language Proficiency Assessment-LAS Links	January 2—March 1, 2024
CAAELP (Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency)	February 1—March 29, 2024
Connecticut SAT School Day	March 4 – April 19, 2024 (Within the test window, schools can choose primary and make-up test dates.)
NGSS	February 5– May 31, 2024 (Grade 11) March 25– May 31, 2024 (Grades 5 and 8)
Connecticut Alternate Assessment—CTAA	March 25– May 31, 2024
Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment—CTAS (Administered throughout the year)	(Upload Window for Submission through the DEI: CTAS Student Score Worksheet) March 25-May 31, 2024 (Grades 5, 8, and 11)
Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessments	March 25-May 31, 2024
Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment	Anytime during the school year.

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.

