



Student Assessment News

Connecticut State Department of Education • Performance Office

November 25, 2020

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

The Public School Information System and State Summative Assessments

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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:

- LAS Links;
- 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, English Language Assessment Coordinators (ELACs), and SAT Test 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. 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 (EL) Status,
- Military Family,
- Homeless,
- Recently Arrived EL, and
- Section 504 Status.



Connecticut Alternate Assessment



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The Public School Information System and State Summative Assessments (cont.)

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 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 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 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](#) 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. For LAS Links accountability calculations, **a freeze of the fields will be taken on March 5, 2021**, which is the **final date of the LAS Links in-person Form E testing window and may be subject to change.**

The *Missing CT 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 DRC’s INSIGHT System. Currently, the testing demographic fields are optional for all students; once the Smarter Balanced 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.**

In order to enter accommodations in TIDE, students must be identified as Special Education or Section 504 in the PSIS Registration Module. Similarly, in order for a student to access a LAS Links Assessment in the DRC Insight system, a student must be identified as an English 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, January 4, 2021.

MetaMetrics has scheduled informal office hours to help individuals with specific questions regarding **Lexile®** and **Quantile®** measures. Feel free to connect with **MetaMetrics** at the following times:

Each Monday: 3 - 5 P.M. Join with this Zoom Link: <https://go.lexile.com/e/813303/j-95027749445/6kkz8/55922147?h= Z1IZiEAESUkzOBMUZWLsQRqL8fNCCIEE-FqbSe2jQ>

Each Friday: 11A.M. - 1 P.M. Join with this Zoom link: <https://go.lexile.com/e/813303/j-92206409606/6kkzb/55922147?h= Z1IZiEAESUkzOBMUZWLsQRqL8fNCCIEE-FqbSe2jQ>

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Connecticut SAT School Day Updates

The recording and slides from the recent webinar about updates for the 2021 Connecticut SAT School Day are available on [our web site](#). Additionally, the [2021 Coordinator Implementation Handbook](#) is also available. This document provides information for preparing for the 2021 Connecticut SAT.

A follow-up webinar has been scheduled on **Thursday, December 3, 2020, 2:00-3:00 PM** to give SSD coordinators an overview of the redesigned College Board SSD website which is used to enter accommodations for students who are eligible. You must register in advance for this Zoom webinar: https://collegeboard.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_NmuXSFu2Tb2FnmRaRd7N6A After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Updating Operating Systems for Testing

Cambium Assessment, Inc. (CAI) provides updates to the Secure Browser for the operating system for testing. CAI actively tests the Secure Browser with supported operating systems to ensure compatibility and provides Secure Browser updates as needed when the supported operating systems are updated or as bugs in the Secure Browser are detected and fixed. The document [Operating System Support Plan for Test Delivery System](#) describes CAI's plan for supporting operating systems during the upcoming test administration and following years. This plan helps districts and schools manage operating system deployments based on the support timelines. Additionally, the list of all supported operating systems and browsers can be found on the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal [Supported Browsers](#) page.

The Performance Office recently posted guidance on [Rating Fully Remote Students on the Kindergarten Entrance Inventory \(KEI\)](#) as a result of questions received during the [Assessment and Accountability in 2020-21](#) webinar hosted on October 22, 2020. In addition to this new guidance, please see the [KEI Help Site](#) for other resources and documentation about the KEI.

Special Populations Updates

2020-21 Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Training

The Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Training—Required for Teachers Administering the Alternate (TEAs) for the 2020-2021 school year is now available. The training course link, along with all other relevant training resources, can be found on the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal's [Alternate Assessment card](#). This course is annually required for any educator responsible for administering any alternate assessment.

2020-21 CSDE Assessment Guidelines

The [CSDE Assessment Guidelines](#) for 2020-21 is available. This document provides guidance about testing special student populations on Connecticut statewide assessments.

Special Populations Updates

Test Information Distribution Engine Open for the Submission of Designated Supports/Accommodations

The TIDE system is now accepting the entry and/or batch upload of designated supports and accommodations for interim and summative assessments. A CSV or Excel template is available for download in TIDE for those using the batch upload process. As a reminder, accommodations can only be submitted for those students who have an activated IDEA or Section 504 Indicator in the Public School Information System (PSIS). Given that the PSIS provides data to test delivery systems for state summative assessments administered to Connecticut public school students, District PSIS Coordinators must work closely with District Administrators (DAs) responsible for statewide student testing, to ensure that student information is being reported accurately. Select data fields such as English learner (EL) status, Special Education status, and Section 504 status must be updated in PSIS prior to selecting or uploading accommodations in TIDE.

Additional Resources

- [Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#)
- [Annotated Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#)
- [Annotated Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form Communication](#)
- [Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Training Required for Teachers Administering the Alternate Overview for Teachers Administering the Alternate](#)
- [The Connecticut Alternate Science \(CTAS\) Assessment TEA Responsibility Checklist](#)

The Data Entry Interface

The Data Entry Interface (DEI) is now accepting submissions of the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form by the trained TEA. While the timely submission of eligibility forms ensures that students will have access to the Alternate Assessment at the time of testing, please note the DEI deadlines specific to the student's enrolled grade and subgroup. Refer to the [How to Access the Data Entry Interface](#) brochure (available on the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal) for detailed instructions.

Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form Submission Deadlines through the Data Entry Interface (DEI)	Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form Student Subgroup
November 12, 2020-January 15, 2021	Eligible students in Grade 11; and Dually identified (English learner and Special Education) students Grades 3-8 and 11
November 12, 2020-February 15, 2021	Eligible students in Grades 3-8; and Extended deadline for newly eligible Grade 11 students

Special Populations Updates

Connecticut SAT School Day Accommodation Reminders

Students with an active Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan are eligible to receive accommodations on the Connecticut SAT School Day. Additionally, a variety of supports are available to identified English learners. In preparation for the upcoming Connecticut SAT School Day, start by reviewing the accommodations and English Learner Plans for existing Grade 11 students. SSD Coordinators should plan to meet with students in advance of testing to explain accommodation options, review plans to determine if there are any changes based on their IEP, 504, or EL Plan, and submit any changes or new requests using the SSD Online. Students should understand how their accommodations/EL supports function in accordance to timing regulations and test procedures.

Additional reminders:

- As SSD Coordinators review/create student accounts in SSD Online, they should select the disability category that is as closely aligned to the student's primary disability category listed on Page 1 of the Individual Education Program or as described by the 504 Plan. Selecting "Other" as a disability category will delay approval.
- The IEP or 504 Plan provides the "parental approval" to apply for accommodations; therefore, no additional permissions are required by the College Board.
- Students who elect to test without accommodations require a written statement signed by a parent/guardian or by the student, if over 18 years of age. These letters should be filed and maintained locally, and are not sent to the College Board.
- The accommodation Change Form should be faxed to the College Board to permanently remove accommodations for all College Board tests.
- Students must have approval of their accommodations on the SSD Online before taking the test with accommodations.
- English learners may be eligible for time and one-half (50% Extended Time). This support must also be entered on SSD Online. If approved, English learners will receive the extended time on the entire assessment. The use of accommodations without College Board prior approval results in the cancellation of test scores.
- Students who were denied a request for accommodations for a previous College Board test should reapply for accommodations for the Connecticut SAT School Day. Questions regarding accommodations can be directed to [Deirdre Ducharme](#).
- The window to submit accommodations for students with an active Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan for the 2020 Connecticut SAT School Day will be from November 24, 2020, to February 2, 2021. The English Learner Time and One-Half (+50%) Request Window opens in January 2021.

Special Populations Updates

Guidance for the 2020-21 Administration of the Connecticut Alternate Assessments for Math, English Language Arts and Science

The Connecticut Alternate Assessments (CTAA) for math and English language arts will be administered to eligible students in Grades 3-8 and 11 during the spring testing window of March 29-June 4, 2021. Given that these secure assessments are online and require the provision of extensive scripted supports and accommodations by a trained Teacher Administering the Alternate (TEA), the CTAA should be administered to students who can be tested in person within the school or district setting.

The Connecticut Alternate Science (CTAS) Assessment is administered to eligible students in Grades 5, 8, and 11. Grade level science knowledge and skills are assessed throughout the school year by a trained teacher the TEA using scripted [Performance Tasks and associated resource materials](#), which are manipulated by the TEA as described in each Performance Task and by the [CTAS Test Administration Manual](#). The TEA provides both embedded and non-embedded supports and accommodations described in the student's individualized education program over multiple sessions based on the students' needs and stamina.

Eligible students may begin the CTAS assessment process now. As a reminder, teachers will need to complete the required training before any alternate test administration.

Below is the hierarchy for the delivery of the assessment depending on the learning model the student maybe using.

- Following established district safety protocols, for eligible students in a fully in person or hybrid model, TEAs can administer the CTAS and CTAA per the CSDE training and manuals in the school setting (and submit student scores for CTAS, if applicable) as required during the testing/DEI upload window (March 29-June 4, 2021).
- Following established district safety protocols, districts may bring students who are currently participating in remote instruction into a secure district location to test if the TEA is available for proctoring. Multiple administrations would most likely be required.
- Following established district safety protocols, TEAs may administer the CTAS to a student who is currently participating in remote instruction in the student's home. Multiple administrations may be required. Due to the significant needs of these students and the test design (including the manipulation of required test resources, the provision of supports and accommodations and the time required for the TEA and families), the CSDE does not recommend a remote administration.

The College Board is hosting a webinar, **Unlocking the Power of the PSAT/NMSQT Score Report**, on November 30, 2020, at 1pm. [Register in advance](#) for the webinar that will share how you can help your students make the most of the opportunities the PSAT/NMSQT provides.



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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 https://ct.portal.cambiumast.com/secure-browsers.stml
LAS Links	January 4, 2021–March 5, 2021
Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form Deadlines	January 15, 2021—students in Grade 11 and dually identified students in Grades 3-8 and 11; and February 15, 2021—students in Grades 3-8 and newly identified Grade 11 students
NGSS Assessment	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	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/or 28, 2021 Accommodations Request Window: November 24, 2020–February 2, 2021 EL Time and One Half Request Window: January 2021

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.

