Student Assessment News
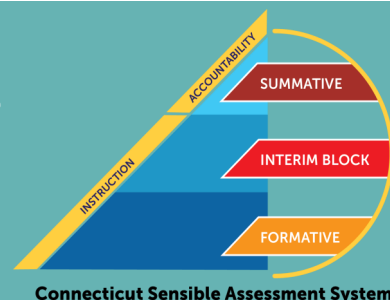
Connecticut State Department of Education
Performance Office

Connecticut Sensible Assessment System

December 2023

CTStudentAssessment@ct.gov

Spring Test Administration Training

The CSDE Performance Office will be delivering training on the spring 2024 administration of the Smarter Balanced, NGSS, and the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System. Each of the four repeated sessions covers general test administration policies and topics related to special populations. District Administrators (DA's in TIDE) are highly encouraged to attend, Special Education Directors and other district staff are also welcome to attend. Registration must be completed through the CSDE calendar.

"In-person" sessions will be held at 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, CT, in Plaza Rooms C/D. Paid parking is available at the Morgan Street garage or on the street. Registration is limited to 60 attendees for the in-person dates, **so please register early to guarantee a spot**. In the case of a weather cancellation on January 17, 2024, an email notification will be sent, and attendees will have the option of attending a virtual session on January 18 or 19, 2024.

Date	Morning	Afternoon
January 17, 2024	In Person – 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.	In Person – 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
January 18, 2024		Virtual – 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
January 19, 2024	Virtual – 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.	

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.

2024-25 Summative Assessment Calendar

To assist districts with planning their calendars, the CSDE is providing the State Summative Assessment Calendar for Connecticut public schools for the 2024-25 school year. Please direct any questions regarding this assessment calendar to CTStudentAssessment@ct.gov.

Archived Student Assessment News

CTAA Connecticut Alternate Assessment

CAAELP Connecticut Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency

Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

CONNECTICUT NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE ASSESSMENT

CONNECTICUT SAT School Day

CT SAT Updates

Interactive Checklist

College Board and CSDE launched a new tool to help Test Coordinators, SSD Coordinators, and Technology Coordinators stay on top of the tasks they need to complete to be prepared for the 2024 CT SAT School Day! The Interactive Checklist provides each school with a project plan and targeted task reminders, so you know what you need to do and when you need to do it. Through these task emails, you can easily mark your tasks as complete or in progress or, if you are stuck, let us know you need support. Test coordinators, SSD coordinators, and Tech Coordinators should have received an Interactive Checklist welcome email on December 12, which includes a school-specific link to your checklist. Be sure to bookmark your checklist link! If you have any questions, please contact the College Board Connecticut Helpline at 866-609-2205 or email CTSAT@collegeboard.org.

Training Sessions

The slides and recordings are posted for all CT SAT training sessions that have been held to prepare Test Coordinators, SSD Coordinators, and Technology Coordinators. There are additional sessions planned for February 2024.

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**
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

TDTK Access

For the 2024 CT SAT, schools will be using College Board's system to administer the test and not Cambium's TIDE. Test Day Toolkit (TDTK) is the system schools will use to manage testing. TDTK will be available for CT SAT on February 5, 2024. If your school administered PSAT in the fall, you are probably familiar with this system. For the 2024 CT SAT, more than one staff member at a school can be assigned to the Test Coordinator role in TDTK. The Test Coordinator and Backup Test Coordinator listed in the establishment file for the school will be assigned the Test Coordinator Role in Test Day Toolkit. Data from each school was gathered in September to create the establishment file.

Please make sure contact information for these roles is correct. Contact Michelle Rosado to make updates or to check on who is listed in these roles. College Board will pull data to create TC roles in TDTK on January 19, 2024. Test Coordinators can request to have additional staff added in the Test Coordinator role in Test Day Toolkit by calling College Board Customer Service after February 19, 2024, at 866-609-2205.

Connecticut SAT School Day Accommodation Submission Window

SSD Accommodation Request/Update Window	November 10, 2023-January 12, 2024
50% Extended Time for EL/ML Request in SSD Due	January 12, 2024

CT SAT Updates

CT SAT School Day Accommodations

SSD Coordinators should review approved accommodations in SSD Online for all students with accommodations to ensure that the selection is appropriate and still aligns to implemented IEP/Section 504 Plans in CT-SEDS. Do accommodations make sense? Are they still needed? If students' needs have changed, request changes to their accommodations in SSD Online. Additionally, submit new accommodation requests for students with disabilities who need them. If the SSD Coordinator receives a prompt from SSD Online requesting additional documentation, please submit this [form](#) to bypass the system. Please refer to the [Accommodations and Supports Handbook](#) ,the [Accommodations Crosswalk for Connecticut SAT School Day](#), and the [CT SAT School Day Accessibility Chart](#) for more information.

The SSD Coordinator should work with the school's Test Coordinator and Technology Coordinator to make sure that student devices are appropriately configured to support any accessibility features or assistive technology that they may need. Be sure to provide students with an opportunity to take a practice test with their accommodations (including assistive technology, e.g., screen reader, text to speech, or voice recognition) in advance of test day to ensure that the accessibility features are appropriately set up and function properly.

Most students will take the digital CT SAT School Day. However, in rare cases where a student is unable to test using a computer, the SSD Coordinator should submit a request for paper testing through SSD Online. Please make these requests well in advance of any SSD deadlines to ensure timely approval and the delivery of necessary materials. Please note:

- The paper version of the digital SAT is not adaptive.
- The paper test is a longer testing experience (do not use digital timing guides for a paper test).
- SSD Coordinators or other testing staff will be responsible for transcribing the student's paper test responses into Bluebook and subsequently returning the paper test materials to the College Board.

Preparing Students for the CT SAT

Practice and preparation resources for students are available at: https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/sat/practice-preparation. On this page, you will find links to:

- Official SAT Prep, which is available through a direct partnership between Khan Academy and College Board. Students can access free resources, including thousands of practice questions, videos, lessons, helpful hints, and valuable test-taking tips and strategies.
- Full length practice tests, available in the Bluebook testing application, provide a test day-like experience. Practicing in Bluebook allows students to familiarize themselves with the tools and features they'll encounter on test day. Performance feedback is instant, offering insights into correct and incorrect answers.
- Full-length paper practice tests can be printed. These practice tests are not adaptive tests and are longer than

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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. 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. For more information about this, please refer to page 8 of the [November](#) edition of the SAN.

Special Populations Updates

Connecticut Alternate Assessment for English Language Proficiency Assessment (CAAELP)

The CAAELP is an assessment available to eligible students in Grades K-12 identified as EL/ML with a significant cognitive disability who meet eligibility criteria through PPT determination. Keep in mind these important dates:

♦ Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Eligibility Form Verification in CT-SEDS - Fully Implemented IEP by **December 29, 2023**
♦ Domain Exemption—**November 15, 2023-March 22, 2024**
♦ CAAELP window—**February 1-March 29, 2024**

CAAELP/Alt ELPA Training is Now Live

The CAAELP/Alt ELPA Training is accessed through ELPA21. This training is for any educator who is designated as a TEA in TIDE and will be administering the CAAELP Assessment this year. This training must be completed annually (each testing school year), and the certificate of training completion should be saved and shared with administrators as needed. There are separate training modules available for ELACs and TEAs. Please be aware that first time users will need to enter a district verification code, which is *elpa21* (all lowercase). Training guides:

- Directions for Accessing CAAELP Online Training for New Users
- Directions for Accessing CAAELP Online Training for Returning Users
- CAAELP Accessibility and Accommodations Manual
- 2023-24 Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Early Stopping Rule

TEAs and ELACs taking this training need to be aware that this training has been developed by ELPA 21, and that some policies and procedures may not mirror those of Connecticut. Teams should participate in a thorough review of the Connecticut specific CAAELP resources available to them as part of this training process. These resources are located on the CAAELP Resource page on the Connecticut Comprehensive Program Portal.

Additional training available: CAAELP Office Hours

For more information please contact:
Deirdre Ducharme or Katie Seifert

Who should be designated to administer the CAAELP?

Educators or test administrators are:
- determined by the district;
- those who support ELs/MLs;
- those who support special education; or
- both special education and EL/ML educators/administrators supporting EL/ML.

CAAELP Domain Exemptions

A small number of students with significant cognitive disabilities may be unable to participate in the Listening or Speaking domain of the Connecticut Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency (CAAELP) because of the complexities of their disability. Domain Exemptions are available on the Listening and/or Speaking subtests for the following students:

- If a student is identified as Deaf or hard of hearing, they may not be able to participate in the Listening subtest due to this disability.
- Students who are non-verbal and, even when provided assistive technology or augmentative and alternate communication supports, may not be able to participate in the Speaking subtest.

Domain Exemptions are submitted by the District Administrator (DA) in TIDE between November 15, 2023, through March 22, 2024. Please ensure this form is submitted prior to testing the student and communicate this information and expectations clearly to all test administrators. For more information on CAAELP Domain Exemptions and how to submit please visit the CAAELP Resources page.

Special Populations Updates

The Selection of Special Documented Accommodations for Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments

It is critical that the *Decision Guidelines for TTS of the ELA Reading Passages* and *Documented Evidence for a Human Reader for ELA Reading Passages* be reviewed at the time of the PPT/Section 504 Planning Meeting to ensure eligibility. These forms will help determine if the accommodation is appropriate for the student based on the constructs being measured on the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Assessment. As a reminder, TTS and a Human Reader of ELA Reading Passages are only permitted for students with significant print and visual disabilities.

Other reader options/designated supports are described in these documents:

- Connecticut Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments Reader Options Table (cambiumast.com)

- Reader Designated Supports and Accommodations for Smarter Balanced Mathematics and English Language Arts and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments (cambiumast.com)

We also require that teachers/educator teams/test administrators follow the critical guidelines that describe the provision of non-standard accommodations (e.g., math manipulatives, scribe, human reader) for eligible students with the most complex needs. There is a webpage that is dedicated to explaining the resources needed for review in preparation for providing these accommodations, if determined necessary by the PPT/Section 504 Team: Process for Requesting Special Documented Accommodations (cambiumast.com). As a reminder, non-standard accommodations are *rare* and should be selected *sparingly* for only those students with the most significant and complex disabilities whose needs cannot be met with the standard embedded and non-embedded accommodations described by the Accessibility Chart and Assessment Guidelines.

Smarter Balanced

2023-24 Populating Designated Supports in TIDE for Students Without IEP/Section 504 Plans

As districts plan and prepare for the Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) summative assessments, please determine which process will be used to populate TIDE with designated supports for eligible students in the general education population. (Note: these are students without a formal IEP or Section 504 Plan). The 2023-24 test setting templates are available in TIDE. Districts can use this template to populate designated supports for students, including multilingual learners that qualify for language supports (Note: these are students without a formal IEP or Section 504 Plan). Refer to the TIDE User Guide for additional information.

For students with an implemented IEP/Section 504 Plan in CT-SEDS, keep the following in mind:

- Accommodations for students with an implemented IEP or Section 504 Plan will automatically sync from CT-SEDS to TIDE. (Note: the grade associated with the student's statewide accommodations in CT-SEDS must match the student's current grade of enrollment.)

- The "IDEA" or "504" indicator must be set to "Yes" in the PSIS Registration Module for designated supports and accommodations to sync to TIDE.

- Any changes made to a student's accommodation in CT-SEDS will be reflected in TIDE during the nightly sync. Manual adjustments should not be made in TIDE for students with finalized IEPs/504 Plans in CT-SEDS. Instead, PPTs must make the edit(s) directly in CT-SEDS.

Special Populations Updates

Updates for Planning and Placement Teams and Section 504 Teams Regarding CT-SEDS, Accessibility Features and Accommodations for Statewide Assessments

New! The Office of Student Assessment posted a PDF of Office Hours: Best Practices for Determining Accommodations for Statewide Assessments, held on December 12. This session includes information on understanding accessibility features to provide access to student learning in the classroom and on assessments along with best practices for establishing a systematic process for identifying, implementing, and evaluating accessibility supports.

New! The Connecticut Statewide Assessment Participation Guidance for Planning and Placement Teams can be used to support discussions related to choosing the most appropriate statewide assessment based on student need and eligibility.

If you have questions about the syncing of accommodations from CT-SEDS to TIDE, please refer to page 6-7 of the November edition of the SAN.

Connecticut Alternate Assessment System
Early Stopping Rule for CTAA, CTAS, and CAAELP

Teachers who are responsible for teaching students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are also *non-verbal* and *do not show an observable mode of communication* should follow the process for determining if their student qualifies for the Early Stopping Rule (ESR).

Often, these students *do not use* oral speech, *nor do they have an established communication system*. For example, the goals outlined in their IEP may include learning cause and effect to utilize augmentative or alternative communication supports. Additionally, these students do not currently use objects/textures, regularized gestures, pictures, signs, etc., to communicate with consistency.

If you think you have a student that meets these descriptions, please have their primary teacher refer to the ESR Guidelines. These guidelines include the administration of a Student Response Check, which should be administered to the student on three separate days between **December 1, 2023, through February 1, 2024**, to determine if a student qualifies. Details about eligibility, the process, and deadlines are included in this guide, along with steps for the DA to submit the ESR Attestation form by **March 1, 2024**, for students who meet qualifications.

As a reminder, the ESR does not apply to students who refuse testing or have behavioral issues that interrupt testing.

Please contact Deirdre Ducharme or Katie Seifert if you have any questions.

Special Populations Updates

LAS Links Important Dates

Accommodations Entry open in DRC INSIGHT Portal for ELACs	December 4, 2023-March 1, 2024
ELs/MLs Eligible for the Alternate Assessment Form 2023-24	November 15, 2023-December 22, 2023
LAS Links Domain Exemption Registration	November 15, 2023-December 22, 2023
Accommodated/Paper Form Order Submission	By December 15, 2023, for January 5, 2024, delivery By December 22, 2023, for January 12, 2024, delivery

LAS Links

The LAS Links Accessibility Chart identifies a range of universal tools and accommodations available to students on the LAS Links Assessment. This chart can be found on the English Language Proficiency Assessment - LAS Links page and CT DRC Portal.

For the 2023-24 LAS Links administration, the following accommodations are available for students with an IEP or Section 504 Plan:

•**LAS Links Text-to-Speech (TTS) Accommodation for the Reading Domain (Passages and Item Prompts):** The passages and item prompts for the Reading subtest are read to the student, who has a documented print or visual disability, via embedded TTS technology.

•**LAS Links Read Aloud Accommodation for the Reading Domain (Passages and Item Prompts):** The passages and item prompts for the Reading subtest are read to the student by a human reader. This accommodation is for students who have a documented print or visual disability but cannot access TTS through the online test delivery system.

•**LAS Links Read Aloud of Directions and Item Prompts ONLY Accommodation for the Reading Domain and Writing Domain:** A trained and qualified human reader reads **only** directions and item prompts for both the Reading and Writing subtests aloud to the student in an individual test setting.

This clarification of our current guidance reflects what has been the protocol in past administrations as well. The Performance Office has updated the following resources to reflect the clarifications regarding the *LAS Links Read Aloud/Text-to-Speech (TTS) Accommodations*:

- •LAS Links Form E Test Administration Manual
- •LAS Links Reader Options Table
- •LAS Links Read Aloud Accommodation Guidelines
- •LAS Links Decision Guidelines for Text-to-Speech Accommodation for the Reading Domain
- •LAS Links Documented Evidence for a Read Aloud Accommodation for the Reading Domain (Passages and item prompts)

Important! For those students who already have a finalized IEP or Section 504 plan where **Text to Speech** has been chosen for LAS Links, the English Language Assessment Coordinator should get clarification from the PPT or Section 504 team to determine which reader accommodation (from above) should be entered into the DRC testing platform.

The ELP accommodations within CT-SEDS are being updated to align with LAS Links accommodation language from the testing manuals. For now, if you have an upcoming annual review meeting, review/revise meetings or amendments in progress, teams can note the appropriate language of the LAS Links accommodations in the Recommendations Section and Present Levels, Goals, Supplemental Aids and Services Section of the IEP Module and in the Recommendations Section and 504 Plan Components of the Section 504 Module.

If you have any questions regarding assessment, please email ctstudentassessment@ct.gov. Questions related to the IEP or Section 504 plan please contact the CT-SEDS Help Desk.

Special Populations Updates

Using EdSight to Support Students who are EL/ML Video Series (Videos average 20 minutes)

The Performance Office recently created a video series to for educators who support EL/ML students.

Video 1: Introduction to Using EdSight Secure to Support Students who are EL/ML

This video provides brief descriptions of Connecticut's EL/ML population. It identifies four key areas in which EdSight can help districts support their students:

1. Rostering and tracking EL/ML students;
2. Obtaining the EL/ML status of students including those who are newly registered with the district;
3. Accessing and assessing district EL/ML student assessment outcomes; and
4. Programmatic planning for district EL/ML students.

Video 2: Student Summary Report in EdSight Secure

This video demonstrates how the Student Summary Report can be used to:

1. Generate district and school level rosters of EL/ML students;
2. Access EL/ML students' LAS Links results, their results from other standardized assessments, along with the list of any language support services they received (e.g., ESL, bilingual education); and
3. Obtain the EL/ML status of students including those who are newly registered with the district.

Video 3: LAS Links Growth Report in EdSight Secure

This video includes a description of the CSDE's Growth Model for LAS Links, the English language proficiency assessment. The video explains the development of the Growth Model and the individual student growth targets and details how the LAS Links growth results are incorporated in the CSDE's Next Generation Accountability System. This video also includes a demonstration on how to:

1. Obtain district, school, and individual student level LAS Links Oral and Literacy growth results and how to download this information and generate graphs that can also be downloaded; and

2. Identify areas of strength and weakness that may be useful for programmatic planning.

Video 4 : LAS Links Achievement/Mastery Report in EdSight Secure

This video demonstrates how to obtain district, school, and individual student-level LAS Links Domain (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) and Composite (Overall, Oral, Literacy, Productive, and Comprehension) Performance Level and Scale Score results as well as information on students meeting the English Mastery Standard. Directions are provided on how to download this information and generate graphs that can also be downloaded. In addition, information on how to identify areas of strength and weakness that may be useful for programmatic planning and on how to obtain the EL/ML status of students including those newly registered with the district is presented.

Video 5: English Learner (EL) Status Report in EdSight Secure

This video demonstrates how the Student Summary Report can be used to:

1. Generate district and school level rosters of EL/ML students;
2. Obtain the EL/ML status of students including those who are newly registered with the district; and
3. Access the list of district students who met the CSDE's English Mastery Standard and exited EL/ML status in the prior school year.

Video 6: Public EdSight

This video demonstrates how to use the aggregate state and district-level reports available in Public EdSight to access information about EL/ML students, including:

1. LAS Links reports (Achievement, Growth, Participation/Mastery and LAS Growth Trajectory Tool);
2. Standardized ELA, Math and Science assessments and Next Generation Accountability metrics;
3. Graduation Rates; and
4. Student access to various instruction.

Sensible Assessment Community of Practice Virtual Meetings

Sensible Assessment Community of Practice Virtual Meetings

Beginning in January, the Performance Office will host a monthly Community of Practice (COP) meeting to share ideas about implementing sensible and balanced assessment systems. The purpose of this COP is to foster a deeper understanding of the variety of assessments and tools available to districts through the CSDE's Statewide Sensible Assessment System so that assessments are only used for their intended purposes and any redundant assessments are trimmed or eliminated. In these virtual meetings, the Performance Office team and select school districts will share resources from the CSDE's Statewide Sensible Assessment System that can be used (or are currently being used) to support classroom teachers to target instruction and learning.

The Performance Office also invites Connecticut districts to share their efforts in promoting the sensible and balanced use of assessments and tools within the context of the State's assessment system. If your district would be interested in sharing effective local practices that align with any of the topics below or in other ways to promote sensible and balanced use of assessments, please complete this form.

To register for these meetings, please click on the links in the "Time/Topic" column below. These meetings will be recorded and posted to the CSDE website for those who cannot attend.

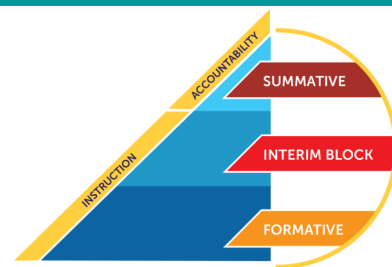| Time/Topic	Topic Description
January 31, 2024 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. **Non-Standard Uses of Smarter Balanced/NGSS Interim Assessments and District Sharing**	This virtual meeting will provide an overview of some of the non-standard uses of the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments. There will be a demonstration of the various ways the interim assessments can be used other than just formally administering them to students and analyzing results. Connecticut educators will share their experiences implementing interims in non-standard ways.
February 28, 2024 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. **Tools for Teachers and District Sharing**	In this virtual meeting, participants will learn about Tools for Teachers (T4T), a free, online collection of resources aligned with the Connecticut Core Standards in Mathematics and English Language Arts. These resources support K–12 teachers in their use of the formative assessment process to adjust teaching and improve learning for all students. Connecticut educators will share their experiences and suggestions related to T4T.
March 27, 2024 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. **NGSS Interims and District Sharing**	This virtual meeting will provide an update on the new item clusters and stand-alone items added to the NGSS Interims in December 2023. Additionally, participants will review resources and updated information to support the use of the NGSS Interims. Connecticut educators will share strategies that incorporate the NGSS Interim Assessments as tools to inform curriculum and instruction.
April 24, 2024 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. **Smarter Balanced Interims and District Sharing**	This virtual meeting will review some of the resources and updated information available for the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments. Connecticut educators will share strategies that incorporate the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments as tools to inform curriculum and instruction.
May 29, 2024 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. **Using Smarter Balanced/NGSS Interim Results and District Sharing**	This virtual meeting will present an overview of some of the ways that Smarter Balanced/NGSS Interim Assessment results can be analyzed using the Centralized Reporting System. Connecticut educators will share their experiences and provide tips on analyzing Smarter Balanced/NGSS Interim results using the Centralized Reporting System.

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 (Connecticut 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.

Connecticut Sensible Assessment System