



Student Assessment News

Connecticut State Department of Education • Performance Office

December 23, 2020

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

Summative Assessment Training Sessions

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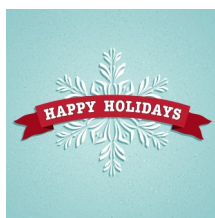
[COVID Resources for Educators and Families](#)

The CSDE Performance Office will be delivering virtual training on the spring 2021 administrations of Smarter Balanced, NGSS Assessments, CTAA and CTAS. There will be virtual sessions on 1) **General Test Administration Policies** and 2) **Special Populations**. District Administrators (DA's in TIDE) are encouraged to attend both sessions, while other district personnel are also welcome at the sessions. The sessions will also be recorded and posted to the portal. Below are session descriptions, session times and registration links.

- **General Test Administration Policies:** This session will review important policy and administration information for the Smarter Balanced, NGSS, CTAA, and CTAS assessments.
- **Special Populations:** This session will provide important information related to accommodations and supports for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), 504 Plans, and English Learner Plans. We will also cover details related to the Special Documented Accommodation procedures, medical exemptions, and the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System (CTAA and CTAS).

Please note that both sessions on the 22nd are intended for **new** DA's and thus, the sessions will be slightly modified.

	January 20	January 21	January 22
Special Populations	NA	9:00 – 10:00 a.m. Registration Link: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/registration/4274075887290326800	10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Registration Link: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/registration/8525791694388613648
General Test Administration Policies	9:00 – 10:30 a.m. Registration Link: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/registration/277715058673889295	12 – 1:30 p.m. Registration Link: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/registration/8729891838829867535	12 – 1:30 p.m. Registration Link: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/registration/2850362260948864783



The document titled [Connecticut's Commitment to Equity and Measuring Student Learning](#), provides a brief summary of the CSDE's approach to assessment and accountability in 2020-21. While affirming our commitment to administering the state assessments, it expresses our intent to seek federal approval to decouple school/district accountability from state test results in 2020-21.

The CSDE encourages districts to use the [Sensible Assessment Practices](#) guidance and discontinue district-established "mini-summative" large-scale survey assessments; instead, districts should prioritize small-scale, fine-grain assessments during the year so they can inform instruction. Please see the [memo from October 15, 2020, regarding Assessment and Accountability](#) for more information.



Connecticut Alternate Assessment



Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment



Connecticut SAT School Day



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Remote Proctoring Tool Pilot

The CSDE continues to strongly recommend that in-person test administration is the preferred method for NGSS and Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments this spring. This is recommended not only for in-person and hybrid students, but also for fully-remote students who can safely take state summative tests in-person. For those fully-remote students who are unable to test in-person, the CSDE is working to develop a remote proctoring option. Part of the development process is the *Remote Proctoring Tool Pilot* that is currently being conducted using the Smarter Balanced and NGSS Interim Assessments. A few important benefits of the new Remote Proctoring Tool that will be available for assessing fully-remote students include the ability for test administrators:

- to simultaneously observe all students in a remote test session at once or to select one remote student to observe;
- to communicate with **all** remote students in a test session simultaneously through a “Broadcast” feature on the test administration site;
- to communicate with individual remote students through a video and chat feature on the test administration site;
- to monitor the item completion status of all students in a remote test session; and/or
- to monitor and initiate any appeals for test irregularities for students in a test session.

These new features in the Test Delivery System will help to maintain the validity of summative testing in this new remote testing environment this spring. More information about remote proctoring for NGSS and Smarter Balanced will be issued after the New Year via virtual training and in manuals. **If districts are interested in participating in the Remote Proctoring Tool Pilot, please contact Abe Krisst at abe.krisst@ct.gov for more information.**

Connecticut SAT School Day Updates

Office Hours Scheduled

Two CT SAT School Day Office Hours meetings have been scheduled to assist school staff with preparing for the 2021 administration. The two meetings will provide attendees with an opportunity to get updates and ask questions about accommodations and preparing for the test. *These sessions are optional.*

To join the GoTo Meeting, simply click on the link below at the time of the meeting. No advance registration is required. You can even add the event link to your electronic calendar for easy access.

CT SAT Office Hours

Thu, Jan 14, 2021 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (EST)

Join the meeting from your computer, tablet, or smartphone. <https://www.gotomeet.me/GoToSDE/ct-sat-office-hours>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: [+1 \(646\) 749-3122](tel:+16467493122)

Access Code: 768-702-141

CT SAT Office Hours

Tue, Jan 26, 2021 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (EST)

Join the meeting from your computer, tablet, or smartphone. <https://www.gotomeet.me/GoToSDE/ct-sat-office-hours-8>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: [+1 \(872\) 240-3212](tel:+18722403212)

Access Code: 504-185-373



Connecticut Alternate Assessment



Connecticut SAT School Day Updates

A [memo was sent to Superintendents on November 30, 2020](#), regarding the test dates for 2022 Connecticut SAT School Day test. The 2021 Connecticut SAT School Day will be a pencil and paper test. Additionally, another make-up date has been added to the 2021 Connecticut SAT School Day administration. In addition to the primary date of March 24 or April 13, 2021, schools are able to offer make-up testing on April 27 and 28, 2021, **and May 18, 2021**.

SSD Online Enhancements Now Available

The SSD online is used to manage all existing accommodations and request new accommodations for most College Board assessments including the Connecticut SAT School Day. This procedure allows students to receive their accommodation on the Connecticut SAT School Day and any subsequent College Board tests that a student may participate in.

During the week of December 14, 2020, the College Board released an enhanced SSD Online platform featuring:

- a modern, streamlined user experience;
- a user-friendly dashboard with improved filtering and access to student information;
- simplified accommodations request process; and
- updates to accommodation names for greater clarity.

The way SSD Coordinators access the online system remains the same. While it may look different, the review and approval process and submission deadlines for accommodations and EL 50% time and one-half remains the same. [A recording from a webinar](#) held on December 3, 2020, regarding the SSD Online is available as well as [the slides](#). A College Board [online demo is also available](#). Questions can be directed to [Deirdre Ducharme](#).

English Learner Supports

English learners will be able to use a variety of language supports for the Connecticut SAT School Day and receive college reportable scores. These supports are:

Time and One-Half (50%): English learners requiring time and one-half must be entered in SSD Online between **January 11 and February 12, 2021**. Students will be automatically approved and no supporting documentation is required. When approved, students will receive time and one-half on all sections of the SAT; however, students must sit for the entire time allotted and cannot go ahead in the test even if they are the only one testing. As a reminder when preparing for testing, English learners using time and one-half can be tested with other students testing with the same timing and test materials.

Use of an approved word-to-word bilingual dictionary: This list includes approximately 100 glossaries and does not require an approval by College Board. The [approved list](#) will be available on the [Connecticut SAT School Day webpage](#) in January.

Use of translated test directions: Use of translated test directions does not require approval by College Board and can be downloaded and printed in PDF format from the [Connecticut SAT School Day webpage](#) prior to testing. No printed test directions will come with test materials. Directions for the following languages will be available : Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese (Mandarin), French, Gujarati, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Urdu, and Vietnamese. College Board will also support “on the fly” translations of directions.

Special Populations Updates

LAS Links Test Administration Updates

A recent communication was provided to English Learner Assessment Coordinators and others describing changes for the 2020-21 LAS Links Test Administration. The communication may be viewed on the [Connecticut DRC LAS Links Website](#) under communications. The changes include a revision in the testing window. The current updated LAS Links testing window is now **January 4-March 31, 2021. The end date of testing is still subject to change depending on evolving conditions.** An additional change discussed in the memo describes the decision to use only LAS LINKS Form D for the 2020-21 testing. These changes occurred after the ELAC workshop was held in November.

LAS Links Office Hours Scheduled for ELACs

Two LAS Links Office Hour webinars have been scheduled for district administrators working with English Learners. The webinar will briefly describe current LAS Links guidance resources available for the 2020-21

January 12, 2021 from 12:00 to 1:00	January 27, 2021 from 3:00 to 4:00
Please register in advance	Please register in advance

administration including those for LAS Links Remote administration Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions of the English Learner Assessment Team.

English Learner Assessment Coordinator (ELAC) Workshop Revised PowerPoints

The ELAC Workshop PowerPoints have been revised due to recent changes. They are posted on the [Connecticut DRC LAS Links Website](#) under Assessment Administration.

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). For more information, refer to the [November 25, 2020 edition](#) of the Student Assessment Newsletter.

Text-to-Speech

The designated support of text-to-speech for items in ELA, math, and science is available to all students (Grades 3-8) for whom an educator has determined its appropriateness. However, special considerations must be made when determining if the text-to-speech of the ELA reading passages is appropriate as an accommodation. As a reminder, the construct of the ELA reading is to measure a student's reading comprehension of complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently. The provision of text-to-speech of the reading passages accommodation should only be provided in specific cases (i.e., dyslexia, a print, or visual) per an IEP or 504 Plan. Teachers and PPTs should refer to the [Text-to-Speech/Read Aloud Accommodation for ELA Reading Passages Flowchart](#), the [Smarter Balanced Guidelines for Choosing Text-to-Speech or a Read Aloud Accommodation](#), and the [Assessment Guidelines](#) for more information. If it is determined that a student is eligible for Text-to-Speech of the ELA Reading Passages as an embedded accommodation, review, complete, and electronically submit the [2020-21 Decision Guidelines for Text-to-Speech of the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages](#) using the embedded link contained in this form.

Special Populations Updates

Special Documented Accommodations

In exceptional circumstances, there may be a student whose disabilities are such that the allowable accommodations listed in the [Assessment Guidelines](#) would be insufficient to provide access an assessment (e.g., need for a scribe or human reader). In these cases, upon request, the District Administrator can request and complete a petition for a special documented accommodation. Please refer to the Assessment Guidelines, which specifies accommodations that are test specific and Appendix C for details about submitting special documented accommodations. Petitions are due no later than January 22, 2021. In some cases the approval of certain accommodations, such as the provision of a human reader or scribe, will require teachers to review specific test guidelines and complete test security/confidentiality protocols.

Students in PSIS who attend Out-of-State Facilities or In-State, Non-Approved Facilities

Connecticut public school districts are responsible to test students enrolled in the Public School Information System (PSIS) who are being educated in out-of-state facilities or in-state, non-approved schools. The document, [Students in PSIS who attend Out-of-State Facilities or In-State Non-Approved Facilities](#) includes information on how to administer the Connecticut statewide assessments for Smarter Balanced for English language arts and mathematics (Grades 3-8), the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) (Grades 5, 8, and 11), and the Connecticut SAT School Day (Grade 11). This document also includes information for administering the Connecticut Alternate Assessments (CTAA) for English language arts and mathematics (Grades 3-8 and 11) and the Connecticut Alternate Science (CTAS) Assessment (Grades 5, 8, and 11). For information about assessing students in these programs per in-person, hybrid, and remote learning environments, please refer to the Guidance for the 2020-21 Administration of the Connecticut Alternate Assessments for Math, English Language Arts and Science published in the [Student Assessment Newsletter](#) November 25, 2020, edition. Please direct any questions to Janet Stuck at janet.stuck@ct.gov or Deirdre Ducharme at deirdre.ducharme@ct.gov.

The **Data Entry Interface (DEI)** is 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.

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

Required Training for Teachers Administering the Alternate Assessment

The [November 25, 2020 edition](#) of the Assessment Newsletter has information about the required training for the alternate assessments. Additionally the required training, resources, and brochures are available on the [Alternate Assessment](#) section of the [Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal](#).

Preparing for Testing for Students Who Do Not Qualify for Alternate Assessments

Students qualify for participation on the Connecticut Alternate Assessments if they meet all three evidence-based criteria specified by the [Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#). Without this required evidence, students are expected to participate on the standard assessments: Smarter Balanced Math and English Language Arts (Grades 3-8), the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments (Grades 5, 8, and 11), and the Connecticut SAT School Day (Grade 11). In certain instances, some students who may have historically taken the alternate assessment may not qualify for the alternate assessment and thus have to take the standard statewide assessment. Therefore, the CSDE encourages educators, including those at Approved Private Special Education Programs (APSEPs) to plan to administer the standard assessment if necessary.

This planning may require that institutions educating students in Grade 11 work with the CSDE and College Board to ensure they have an Attending Institution (AI) Code and a designated test coordinator and Students with Disabilities (SSD) coordinator to manage tasks specifically related to the Connecticut SAT School Day. These logistics need to be established now, so that test coordinators receive regular updates and communication specific to the Connecticut SAT School Day. The SSD Coordinators will also need access to the College Board SSD Online for the submission of accommodation requests.

For students in Grades 3-8, this means that teachers should be familiar with universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations available to students who may be participating on the Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments. Supports and accommodations must be set in TIDE in advance of testing. Furthermore, educators should provide students with an opportunity to experience the online test format, and use of tools and supports, using the Practice Tests prior to spring test administration.

Recordings and slides from the virtual **2020 Performance Matters Forum** are available on [our web site](#). Check out the variety of sessions that were presented. Thank you to all the district and CSDE staff for sharing your expertise!

[Sign up to receive the CSDE's EducateCT Newsletter!](#)

The newsletter is published every two weeks with updates from the CSDE.

Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Interim Assessments

Many teachers are using interim assessments to support classroom instruction, both formally and informally, in all types of learning environments-in person and remote. While there aren't any updates to the in-person test administration, the resources for remote testing have been updated and are available on the CSDE's [Interim Assessment webpage](#).

[Administering Interim Assessments Remotely](#): This presentation provides recommendations on procedures, proper uses, and tips for administering Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Interim Assessments remotely.

[Remote Interim Assessments Checklist](#): This checklist provides key tasks for test administrators as they prepare for and deliver interims remotely.

Direct any questions related to Interim Assessments to Cristi Alberino at cristi.alberino@ct.gov or Deirdre Ducharme at deirdre.ducharme@ct.gov.

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. Questions can be directed to Michelle Rosado at Michelle.rosado@ct.gov.

2020-21 FAFSA Challenge

Governor Ned Lamont issued a challenge to all Connecticut school districts to increase by at least 5% their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion rates among the Class of 2021. The statewide FAFSA Challenge, a partnership between the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and the Connecticut College and Career Readiness Alliance (CCCRA), aims to strengthen postsecondary access and enrollment by raising FAFSA completion rates among high school seniors. Additionally, the partnership seeks proposals for the FAFSA Completion Challenge from 21 eligible Connecticut school districts in which 10 will be selected for additional support and resources towards this goal.

In September 2021, Governor Lamont and Commissioner Cardona will publicly recognize four school districts who have demonstrated the greatest percentage point growth in high school FAFSA completions for the Class of 2021, compared to the Class of 2020. Two winning districts and two runners-up will be publicly recognized, with the winning district from a cohort of ten receiving a grant award of \$10,000. Please visit the [CSDE web site](#) to review details about eligibility determination, selection criteria, grant awards, and application/challenge timelines.

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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 31, 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 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/or 28, 2021, May 18, 2021 Accommodations Request Window: November 24, 2020-February 2, 2021 EL Time and One Half Request Window: January 11, 2021-February 12, 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.

