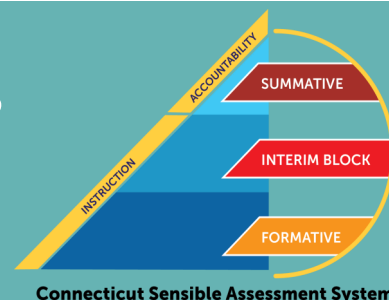




Student Assessment News

Connecticut State Department of Education
Performance Office



Connecticut Sensible Assessment System

December 2024

CTStudentAssessment@ct.gov

Smarter Balanced Innovation Awards

Use the quick links below to access articles and/or sections included in this newsletter.

The CSDE is inviting Connecticut public school districts to apply for the Smarter Balanced Teaching and Learning Innovation Awards. These awards celebrate the most innovative and effective practices that use resources from the Smarter Balanced Assessment System. Smarter Balanced will offer up to \$10,000 to a public school district in Connecticut. Awardees will be featured on Smarter Balanced platforms highlighting their innovations. For more information and to apply, visit the [awards website](#).

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Test Administration Training for District Administrators (DA's in TIDE)

The CSDE Performance Office will be delivering training on the spring 2025 administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessments, the NGSS Assessments, and the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System (CTAA and CTAS). 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. For additional information and to register please click on a session below.

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[Summative Assessment Calendar for 2024-25](#)

Date	Morning	Afternoon
January 22, 2025	In Person – 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	In Person – 12:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
January 23, 2025	NA	Virtual – 12:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
January 24, 2025	Virtual – 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	NA

CAAELP

CAAELP Office Hours The Performance Office hosted its first CAAELP Office Hours of the year on Thursday, November 7, 2024. If you missed the presentation and would like to view the recording or PDF (with transcript), these may be viewed from the Connecticut Sensible Assessment [training webpage](#).

Who should be designated to administer the CAAELP?

Educators or test administrators who are familiar with the student and their unique and specific needs and assistive technology. These educators 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 ELs/MLs.

District Administrators (DAs in TIDE) should ensure that designated test administrators have an account with a TEA user role in TIDE.

[Archived Student Assessment News](#)

Special Populations Updates

When will the CAAELP/Alt ELPA Training be available for educators and administrators?

The CAAELP/Alt ELPA training is now live through [ELPA21](#). 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).

TEAs and ELACs taking this training need to be aware that this training has been developed by [ELPA21](#), 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.

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](#)
- [Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Early Stopping Rule](#)

Additionally, responsibilities and suggested steps for the trained TEA are provided in the [Connecticut Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency \(CAAELP\) TEA Responsibility Checklist](#), available on the [CAAELP Resource page](#). More information is available in the recorded and PDF version of the [CAAELP Office Hours](#).

LAS Links Training

All LAS Links Trainings have been posted on the [CT DRC portal](#). These trainings, which include a recorded session and PDF with notes, are chunked into smaller portions for ELACs and EL/ML Educators.

LAS Links Accommodations

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](#)

CAAELP Domain Exemption Guidance

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:

- Students who are identified as D/deaf or hard of hearing 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](#) should be submitted by the District Administrator (DA) in TIDE between **December 2, 2024, through February 28, 2025**. Please ensure this form is submitted prior to testing the student and communicate this information and expectations clearly to all test administrators. Note: Late submissions will not be processed.

This **optional** [CAAELP Domain Exemption Form](#) may be used by the educator to assist with the collection of student information that will be reported by the DA in TIDE for approval by the CSDE. **Only domain exemptions entered into TIDE by the CSDE deadline are eligible for consideration and approval by the CSDE.**

For more information on CAAELP Domain Exemptions and how to submit them, please visit the [CAAELP Resources](#) page.

Special Populations Updates

and [CT DRC Portal](#). For the 2024-25 LAS Links administration, the following accommodations resources and supporting documents are available:

- [LAS Links Form F Test Administration Manual \(Appendix C\)](#)
- [LAS Links Reader Options Table](#)
- [LAS Links Read Aloud Accommodation Guidelines](#)
- [LAS Links Decision Guidelines for Text-to-Speech Accommodation for the Reading Domain \(Passages and Items\) and Writing Domain \(Stimuli and Items\)](#)
- [LAS Links Documented Evidence for a Read Aloud Accommodation for the Reading Domain \(Passages and item prompts\) and Writing Domain \(Stimuli and Items\)](#)
- [LAS Links Scribe Accommodation – Protocol and Security/Confidentiality Form](#)

Accommodations for LAS Links must be in a finalized and implemented IEP or Section 504 Plan for the current grade of enrollment prior to the ELAC entering them into the DRC INSIGHT Portal. If an accommodation is not accurate, is missing, or is not designated for the current grade of enrollment, the ELAC should work with the special education case manager or the Section 504 case manager to either update the plan through an amendment or conduct a meeting to revise the plan to accurately reflect the needed accommodations.

Public School Information System (PSIS)

TIDE has been updated to include refreshed student demographic data from PSIS. These demographics include: Special Education (SPED) Status, Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) Status, English Learner/Multilingual Learner (EL/ML) Status, Military Family, and Homeless. However, 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. It is particularly important that PSIS Coordinators update the Section 504 status in PSIS as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are syncing daily from implemented plans in CT-SEDS.

Consider the following if there is an issue with accommodations syncing from CT-SEDS:

- 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.

LAS Links Domain Exemption

A small group of ELs/MLs may not be able to access a specific tested domain on the LAS Links due to a disability. For example, some English learners/multilingual learners may also have a primary disability category of deaf or hard of hearing and are unable to access the Listening subtest of the LAS Links due to this disability. Similarly, some ELs/MLs with an IEP or Section 504 Plan may be non-verbal, and due to their disability, even when provided assistive technology or augmentative and alternate communication supports, may not be able to participate in the Speaking subtest.

To communicate to the CSDE about these students, the ELAC will submit the student specific information using the [Domain Exemption Form](#) between **November 12, 2024, and December 20, 2024**. If submitting after December 20, 2024, you must also notify Michael Sabados at Michael.Sabados@ct.gov.

The CSDE will review these Domain Exemption requests and reserves the right to verify information submitted during the approval process. Using the information provided to the CSDE by the ELAC, an overall score will be calculated for the student based only on the subtests taken. This overall score will only be reported in the CSDE's student reporting portal, EdSight Secure.

Special Populations Updates

Public School Information System continued

- Does the current IEP/Section 504 Plan list the accommodations for the student's grade of enrollment? If these were not selected at the PPT/Section 504 Team meeting last school year, that may explain why accommodations are not syncing to TIDE. As a reminder, in the State Testing Tile within the IEP/Section 504 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 providing the option to set the accommodations. If the accommodations were only set for one year, then the user could make an amendment, or hold a Review/Revise PPT/Section 504 Plan meeting to set the accommodations for this year.
- Is your student's IDEA/Section 504 Plan 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 and Supplemental Services and Aids sections of the plan, but these will not sync with TIDE.

Connecticut-SAT School Day Accommodation Updates

On November 14, 2024, the College Board presented its annual SSD Presentation to school coordinators and SSD Coordinators. They announced two new and important updates to accommodations for eligible students taking the spring CT SAT School Day. A copy of the presentation will be posted to the CT SAT School Day webpage.

First, the College Board is offering an embedded text-to-speech accommodation for students with a documented need. What to know:

- If a student is already approved for screen reader or text-to-speech in SSD Online, nothing needs to be updated in SSD Online this year. The student will receive a test form in Bluebook that permits them to use the embedded TTS or use their screen reader (set up through the student's operating system on their testing device or as provided by third party software). However, educators should work with eligible students in advance to determine the most appropriate means for accessing the test content (embedded TTS or screen reader). This accommodation should match how the student is accessing content during instruction and on district and state-wide assessments. As a reminder, TTS is commonly used for students with visual/print/reading disabilities, whereas the screen reader is utilized by students with significant visual disabilities, including blindness.
- If you are requesting text-to-speech as a new accommodation in SSD Online (e.g., for new students), consider if the student can test with standard time or if a separate request of extended time (e.g., 50% time and one-half) is needed.
- Text-to-speech is listed in CT-SEDS as an available accommodation on the CT SAT School Day. CT-SEDS currently indicates that the TTS is provided through the operating system on the student's test device. The roll out of the College Board's embedded TTS does not change the accommodation, only how the accommodation is delivered.

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- If there is concern about the most appropriate reader option, please carefully review the student's IEP/Section 504 Plan and schedule time for your student to trial the TTS and/or screen reader using a Practice Test on Bluebook.

The College Board is also offering a flexibility to students approved for extended time (e.g., 50% time and one-half or double). Students using this accommodation can end their test early. What to know:

- Students must sit (at a minimum) for the standard time for each module.
- Break times will not change (including extra and nutrition breaks). Students must take full break time(s).
- Students approved for multi-day testing will still test over two or more days. Division of sections/days will be the same.
- Students can move ahead at the module level once standard time has expired, including:
 - ♦ From one section to the next if ending the second module early.
 - ♦ From their final section to submission.
- Students can't go back once they've moved forward into the next module, even if time was remaining.

Finally, the SSD Online accommodation submission window for the CT-SAT School Day will remain open through January 13, 2025. Please keep in mind that it may take up to four weeks for accommodations to be reviewed and approved. Plan early to review existing accommodations in SSD Online, update requests if applicable, and submit requests for new students. Extended time for ELs/MLs must be requested in SSD by January 13, 2025 as well. Additional resources including the updated Accommodations Crosswalk and CT SAT School Day Accessibility Chart are available on the [CT SAT School Day webpage](#) as well as the 2024-25 SSD Form Upload for Documentation Requests.

Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Early Stopping Rule (ESR)

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 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 2024-25 [Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Early Stopping Rule](#) to review and conduct the defined steps in the process. Within this document, teachers will follow the directions to administer three student response checks at different points in time to determine eligibility. If the student does not meet eligibility, they will be administered the alternate assessment during the testing window. If the student meets eligibility, the teacher will complete an attestation form (included in the ESR Guidelines) and return it to their DA for submission in TIDE. There are specific timelines that both teachers and DAs should be aware of:

- December 2, 2024, through January 3, 2025 for CAAELP and December 2, 2024, through February 1, 2025, for CTA and CTAS. DAs in TIDE should submit applicable attestation forms in TIDE by January 13, 2025 for CAAELP and March 1, 2025 for CTA and CTAS. Please note late submissions may not be processed or accepted by the CSDE.

As a reminder, the ESR does not apply to students who refuse testing or have behavioral issues that interrupt testing. To help support DAs in the submission of the ESR, the CSDE has developed the [How to Submit the Early Stopping Rule \(ESR\) Request and Attestation Form in TIDE for District Administrators](#).

Please contact [Deirdre Ducharme](#) or [Katie Seifert](#) if you have any questions.

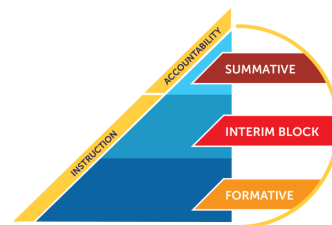
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2024 - 25 State Summative Assessment Calendar			
Content Area(s)	Assessment	Grade(s)	Testing Window
English Language Proficiency: Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing	LAS Links	K-12	January 2 - March 7, 2025
	Connecticut Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency (CAAELP)	K-12	January 13 - March 7, 2025
English Language Arts (ELA) & Mathematics	Connecticut Smarter Balanced	3-8	March 24 - May 30, 2025
	Connecticut SAT School Day	11	March 3 - April 23, 2025*
	Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA)	3-8 and 11	March 24 - May 30, 2025
Science	Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessment	5, 8, and 11	February 3 - May 30, 2025 (Grade 11) March 24 - May 30, 2025 (Grades 5 and 8)
	Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment (CTAS)	5, 8, and 11	Dates to upload to the DEI: March 24 - May 30, 2025 The CTAS can be administered all year.
Physical Fitness	Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment	4, 6, 8, and once during high school	September 3, 2024, to May 30, 2025
Language, Literacy, Numeracy, Physical/Motor, Creative/Aesthetic, and Personal/Social	Kindergarten Entrance Inventory	Kindergarten	Snapshot Date: October 17, 2024 Submission Due Date: December 13, 2024

*Within the testing window, schools can choose their primary and make-up test dates. Schools can use as many or as few days in the testing window as they would like. They can choose to test all students on a single day, or they can test smaller groups of students over multiple days.

Register for email updates

To automatically receive the *Student Assessment News* and/or other announcements, [register for e-mail updates](#) on the CT Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal.



Connecticut Sensible Assessment System