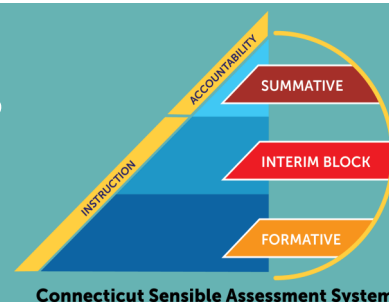




Student Assessment News

Connecticut State Department of Education
Performance Office



Connecticut Sensible Assessment System

January 2025

CTStudentAssessment@ct.gov

Connecticut Summative Assessment Calendar for 2025 – 26

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

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

Please see the recently distributed [memorandum](#) for the State Summative Assessment Calendar for the 2025-26 school year to assist districts with planning their calendars.

CSDE Assessment Guidelines

The [CSDE Assessment Guidelines](#) provide detailed information related to accessibility supports and accommodations on statewide assessments. Additionally, it provides guidance related to reader supports/accommodations, language supports for ELs/MLs, medical exemptions, information about non-standard special documented accommodations, and much more!

Early Stopping Rule (ESR)

The ESR is a process established for teachers to use with students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who have not established a consistent mode of communication. Guidelines and detailed information about this process is outlined in the [Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Early Stopping Rule and Student Response Check](#). Teachers will complete the [Student Response Check](#) document to determine if the student has the necessary observable communication skills to participate on the alternate assessments. Also note that the ESR submission is now open, and the deadlines are fast approaching. **Late submissions may not be processed or accepted by the CSDE.**

Early Stopping Rule Submission Deadlines for TEAs

	CAAELP	CTAA/CTAS
Administer the ESR Student Response Check (SRC)	December 2, 2024-January 3, 2025	December 2, 2024- February 1, 2025
If student meets eligibility, submit completed/signed SRC to District Administrator (DA)	No later than January 3, 2025	No later than February 1, 2025

Early Stopping Rule Submission Deadlines for District Administrators (DAs)

	CAAELP	CTAA/CTAS
Submit the ESR Request and Attestation Form via TIDE Forms	No later than January 13, 2025	No later than March 1, 2025

[Archived Student Assessment News](#)

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

Register for one of the 2025 Test Administration Training for District Administrator (DAs in TIDE) sessions via the [CSDE calendar](#). Two in-person trainings will be held on [January 22nd](#) and virtual trainings will be held on [January 23rd](#) and [January 24th](#). The virtual training will be recorded and posted to the [Student Assessment Training website](#) with the PowerPoint slides.

Special Populations Updates

Documenting Designated Supports for Students Without IEPs or Section 504 Plans

A variety of embedded and non-embedded universal tools and designated supports are available to students when taking the online Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments. Districts should establish a clear and established process for educator training on accessibility features and the determination of need to support student access to instruction and use on assessments. Students should always have opportunities to trial various accessibility supports to confirm the benefits or drawbacks when using these tools. It is important to ensure that tools intended to “enhance” or “improve” accessibility don’t actually perpetuate or create unintentional barriers for the student. To support districts in their planning and implementation of accessibility features (including universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations), please take a moment to review the [Accessibility Considerations](#) document.

Once supports are determined as appropriate for students, they need to be documented in TIDE so that they can be provided to the student either through the test delivery system as an embedded support or by the teacher as a non-embedded support. Designated supports and accommodations documented in implemented IEPs and Section 504 Plans sync with TIDE, however districts need to establish a process for

documenting designated supports in TIDE for students without documented plans. Refer to the first section of the [Documenting Designated Supports and Accommodations in TIDE](#) resource for recommendations. Once supports are added to the student’s TIDE dashboard, they will be visible in the Test Administration Interface and will be available for use while taking an interim or summative assessment. These settings will persist until the end of the school year unless otherwise adjusted. However, please note that many designated supports are not retroactive (e.g., text-to-speech or Spanish toggle), meaning that if the support is not reflected in TIDE prior to testing, it will not be available on the test form. This means that if a student begins testing before text-to-speech or the Spanish toggle is turned on, they will not have access to these supports even if they are added to TIDE after testing begins. In such cases, an appeal may need to be submitted through TIDE to generate a new test form with the updated test setting. If this occurs, refer to the Smarter Balanced or NGSS Test Administration Manual for additional information on test irregularities. Careful review and planning is critical to mitigate any possible test irregularities.

For more information on available accessibility features, refer to the [Accessibility Chart](#) and the [Embedded and Non-Embedded Designated Supports for English Learners/Multilingual Learners](#).

Reminders

- **Accommodations should not be manually set or batch uploaded in TIDE for students with a documented plan (IEP/Section 504)** as CT-SEDS and TIDE sync daily. Please refer to the [CT-SEDS to TIDE Designated Supports/Accommodations Sync Frequently Asked Questions \(cambiumast.com\)](#) for information on the sync between CT-SEDS and TIDE.
- Districts must remove records from data files for students with IEPs/Section 504 Plans if they are manually uploading designated supports to TIDE.

CAAEELP Domain Exemption

Reminder, the CAAELP 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.** For guidance on CAAELP Domain Exemptions and how to submit in TIDE please refer to the [CAAEELP Domain Exemption Guidance](#) document.

Special Populations Updates

Reminders for TEAs Administering the CTAA ELA to Students in Grades 3 and 4

A verbal and non-verbal form is available to students in Grades 3 and 4 taking the CTAA English language arts subtest. These forms differ in the presentation of the foundational word identification or open response items. Prior to testing, the TEA should select the most appropriate option based on the student's communication mode on the student's dashboard in TIDE. The non-verbal form presents the open-response items in a selected-response format for students who do not respond:

- with oral speech;
- are blind, deaf, or deaf-blind; or
- use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC).

Please refer to the [Connecticut Alternate Assessment Test \(CTAA\) Test Administration Manual](#) for details.

Ordering Large Print or Braille Test Booklets for Smarter Balanced and NGSS

District Administrators can order large-print and braille kits for Smarter Balanced and NGSS in TIDE any time after January 26, 2025. Confirm that the non-embedded accommodation is set properly in TIDE for eligible students who are unable to access the online assessment with designated supports and accommodations. For example if "Print Size" was selected instead of "Large Print", the team will need to amend the plan and allow up to 48 hours for the update to sync to TIDE. If the accommodation is missing or is incorrectly reported, contact the student's Case Manager in CT-SEDS.

- From the Orders task menu on the TIDE dashboard, the DA selects Paper Orders.
- Search for orders by District or School.

CAAELP Training

The CAAELP Alt ELPA Summative Assessment Training (SY 24-25) is available through [ELPA21](#). This training must be completed annually (each testing school year) by educators who will administer the CAAELP to eligible

students in Grades K-12. Please see the [CAAELP Training Announcement](#) for additional information.

Alt Assessment Training Reminder for Teachers Administering Alternate Assessments

Training for the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System is live and available on the [Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal](#). These trainings must be completed every school year prior to testing. They cover information related to purpose and eligibility, test design, and administration procedures for the CTAA and CTAS, as well as Alternate Assessment System resources and the Early Stopping Rule (ESR). The training and quiz must be completed before teachers with the TEA user role can access secure materials required for test administration. Related resources are listed below.

- [Connecticut Alt. Assessment System Training Resources](#)
- [Overview for District Administrators](#)
- [Overview for Teachers Administering the Alternate](#)
- [CTAA Test Administration Manual](#)
- [CTAS Test Administration Manual](#)
- [Connecticut Alt. Assessment System Training Course](#)

PSIS/CT-SEDS/TIDE Update

On November 5, 2024, student demographic data values were updated from PSIS to TIDE, including the EL/ML and IDEA indicator. 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. PSIS Coordinators should update the PSIS system to reflect new additions reported from ELACs/504 Teams. It is important that Section 504 Teams provide their PSIS Coordinators with the SASIDs of students who have an active 504 Plan in CT-SEDS to enable the syncing of designated supports and accommodations to TIDE prior to testing. English Language Assessment Coordinators (ELACs) should provide their PSIS Coordinators with the SASIDs of students who are newly arrived ELs/MLs. In summary, all student demographics in PSIS should accurately represent the student at the time of testing since that data is used for reporting purposes.

Special Populations Updates

CT SAT School Day Accommodation Updates

SSD Coordinators should be reviewing implemented IEPs/Section 504 Plans to confirm eligibility for accommodations on the Connecticut SAT School Day. All accommodations should be reviewed (and/or requested) in the College Board's SSD Online system before January 13, 2025. As a reminder, accommodations do not sync between CT-SEDS and SSD Online.

Updates for students and SSD Coordinators:

Extended Time: Students approved to use extended time (time and one-half, double time, or more) will have the option of moving to the next part of the test before their full extended time expires, once the standard testing time has passed.

Students are encouraged to use all of the time that they need and are approved for, however they will not be required to stay for their full extended time if they finish testing or are ready to move on sooner. This new policy also applies to students who are approved for extended time as an EL/ML support.

Once a student has reached standard test time, the Bluebook app will ask the student to verify that they are ready to move on and confirm that they understand they cannot go back to the module once they are done. Students will need to use their entire break.

The New Embedded Text-to-Speech (TTS): Text-to-speech helps students "read" digital print or text on a computer. Students who benefit from a reader accommodation often have a documented visual, print, or reading/learning disability and often rely on technology during instruction and for other academic/non-academic purposes. Additionally, these are students that typically qualify for text-to-speech on the Grade 11 NGSS.

Effective this spring, eligible students can take the CT SAT School Day using an embedded text-to-speech built into Bluebook. This built-in tool eliminates the need for external technology, reducing configuration issues and providing a more standardized experience for students across different devices. No configuration will be required. Extended time will not be provided automatically for this new accommodation.

TTS What to Know: If you are requesting new accommodations for a student who hasn't been previously approved to use accommodations on a College Board assessment, or if you are updating an existing account in SSD Online to include a reader - accommodation, you will select Text-to-Speech. If extended time is needed, you will request this separately in SSD.

If a student was previously approved to use screen reader, College Board will automatically update SDMS to include text-to-speech and screen reader so that the student has the flexibility to use the most appropriate accommodation at the time of testing. In most cases, students qualify for and use text-to-speech. For this specific scenario, students may use up to time and one-half on their test. To ease the burden for SSD Coordinators this will not need to be requested separately in SSD Online. Again, this only applies to students who were already approved to use screen reader in SSD.

Screen Reader: Screen readers will continue to be an available accommodation to students that use it per their documented IEP/Section 504 Plan. To clarify, this is a much more complex technology often used by students who are blind and rely on a technology that aids in "seeing" print or text. This technology requires students to be proficient using and navigating the technology and various keyboard commands. Screen reader technology includes third-party software programs such as JAWS, NVDA, or Voiceover. If applicable, please work with your technology coordinator and student to ensure that the operating system/testing device has the appropriate configurations and that it is trialed on a Bluebook Practice Test to confirm functionality. Students approved for "Screen Reader (Non-Embedded)" in SSD Online are also approved for time and one-half extended time.

For questions please contact deirdre.ducharme@ct.gov.
[SSD Coordinator Recorded Training November 2024](#)
[SSD Coordinator Q&A Recorded Session January 2025](#)
[CT SAT School Day Resources](#)
[SAT Practice Tests](#) (student and faculty access)
[Official College Board SAT Prep Course through Khan Academy](#)

Student Assessment News: January 2025

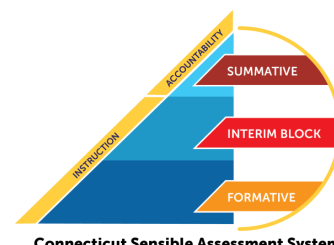
2024 - 25 State Summative Assessment Calendar			
Content Area(s)	Assessment	Grade(s)	Testing Window
English Language Proficiency: Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing	LAS Links	K-12	January 2 - March 7, 2025
	Connecticut Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency (CAAELP)	K-12	January 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.

Connecticut Summative Assessment Calendar for 2025 - 26

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