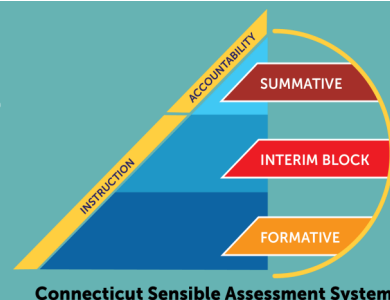




Student Assessment News

Connecticut State Department of Education
Performance Office



Connecticut Sensible Assessment System

May 2024

CTStudentAssessment@ct.gov

Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment

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

The Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment (CPFA) Individual Student Collection is open for the entry of 2023-24 CPFA results. Enhancements to the collection system were implemented this year to aid in the management of record submissions. Districts should enter, process, and certify all records by **June 14, 2024**. The CPFA file will be frozen at **4 p.m. on July 18, 2024**. After that point, no data will be accepted and no changes to the data can be made. As a reminder, CPFA Individual Student Collection resources can be found on the [CSDE website](#).

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[Summative Assessment Updates](#)

Out of State Testing Reminders for Smarter Balanced, NGSS and CT Alternate Assessments

If your out-of-state tester completed the CTAA, please have a trained TEA transcribe the student responses from the CTAA Math and ELA using the Secure Browser. This process will mimic the test administration process using the two test devices: The Test Administration Interface and the Secure Browser. Instructions are included with shipment of materials.

Page 3

[Special Populations Updates](#)

For out-of-state testers that completed the Smarter Balanced and/or NGSS, please have a trained teacher transcribe the student responses from the test booklet into the Data Entry Interface by May 31, 2024, for scoring and reporting.

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[Summative Assessment Calendar for 2023-24](#)

Non-secure testing materials can be shredded (i.e. test administration manual). All secure test materials must be returned to Measurement Incorporated using the shipping labels provided in your shipment. Please email [Deirdre Ducharme](mailto:Deirdre.Ducharme@ct.gov) or [Katie Seifert](mailto:Katie.Seifert@ct.gov) with any questions.

[2024-25 Summative Assessment Calendar](#)

Sensible Assessment Community of Practice Virtual Meetings

Join us on May 29, 2024, from 3:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. for the [Community of Practice Meeting on Using Smarter Balanced/NGSS Interim Results and District Sharing](#). This will be an overview of ways that these assessment results can be analyzed using the Centralized Reporting System (CRS). Connecticut educators will share their experiences and provide tips on analyzing interim results using the CRS. All previous sessions can be accessed on the [Student Assessment Training](#) page.

[Archived Student Assessment News](#)

LAS Links Results

The 2024 Form E LAS Links results are now final in [DRC's INSIGHT](#) secure portal. To receive a refresher on how to generate and interpret reports, review the [Online Post-Test Activities](#) training and/or [video](#). If users would like more details on Interactive Reports, the [DRC Interactive Reports Training](#) Presentation and [LAS Links Guide to Interactive Reporting](#) go into more depth. A complete district level PDF of Individual Student Reports was created in English and Spanish for easy local printing. Instructions on how to find these reports are available on page 18 of the [Online Post-Test Activities](#) training.

Summative Assessment Updates

Summative Assessment Verification and Attestation

When test administrators log on to the Test Administration Interface and choose a Summative Assessment from the test menu (Figure 1) they will receive a pop-up message (Figure 2).

Figure 1

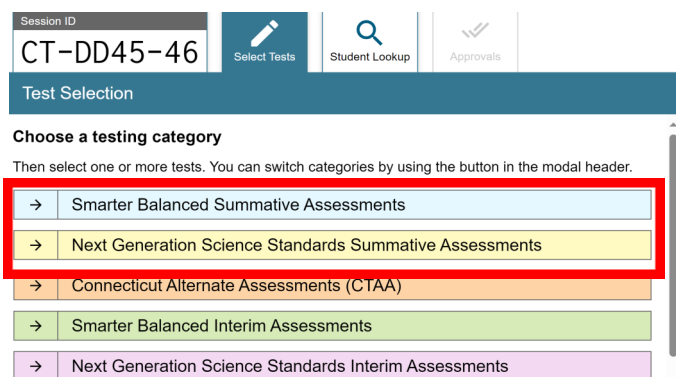
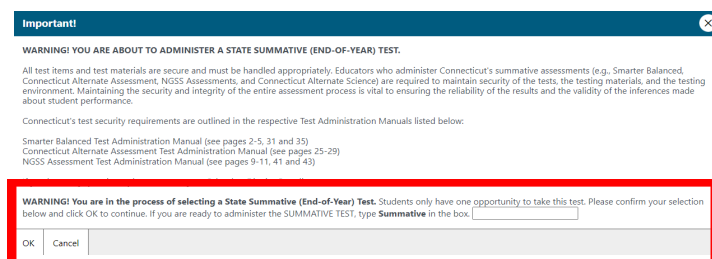


Figure 2



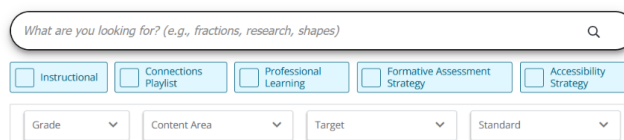
All test administrators must verify that they understand the security protocols as outlined in the attestation statement and confirm that they are ready to administer the end-of-year summative assessment by typing the word “Summative” into the box in order to proceed with testing.

If the intent was to administer an interim or practice test, they should select “Cancel” and close the Test Administration Interface. To administer an interim, reenter the Test Administration Interface and choose either the Smarter Balanced or NGSS Interim Assessments from the menu. Practice tests can be accessed via the [TA Practice and Training Test site](#).

Tools for Teachers Search Updates

On Friday, April 26, Tools for Teachers launched a new and improved search experience. Get ready to zoom through search! The filter process has been streamlined, putting the power of quick and targeted searches at educators' fingertips. Plus, search results are now laser-focused, making key data points instantly scannable with a new three-column design. Finding what you need just got a whole lot faster! Visit [Tools for Teachers](#) on the web.

Discover **classroom resources** you can use today.



Entering Designated Supports for Students who are not Identified as Special Education or Section 504

Designated Supports for students who are not identified as Special Education or Section 504 can be entered directly into TIDE by the District Administrator (DA), District Coordinator (DC), or School Test Coordinator (SC) either manually or via the upload process prior to testing. If uploading student data, be sure to remove any students that have documented IEP or Section 504 Plans in CT-SEDS. (In this case, these testing accommodations will sync directly to TIDE from CT-SEDS.)

Once a designated support is set in TIDE for students who do not have an IEP or Section 504 Plan, this setting will persist until the end of the school year unless otherwise revised. Please refer to the [Manually Entering Designated Supports for Students Without IEPs and Section 504 Plans](#) for additional information.

Special Populations Updates

Designated Supports and Accommodations for Students with Implemented Plans in CT-SEDS

Designated supports and/or accommodations in finalized/implemented plans in CT-SEDS sync daily with TIDE. If you find a discrepancy with a student's accommodations or supports, please contact the student's Case Manager. All edits must be made through the amendment or reconvening process in CT-SEDS. Please refer to page 3 of the [April Student Assessment News](#) for additional guidance.

Clarifications on Text-to-Speech (TTS)

Educator teams (including PPT and Section 504 Teams), please review this guidance regarding the appropriateness of providing text-to-speech (TTS), including TTS for the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages.

Is TTS of Test Items a Universal Tool?

For the purposes of Connecticut's standardized assessments, text-to-speech of test items is NOT a universal tool, nor should it be activated for all students. To do so is a violation of test administration procedures. Rather, TTS of items is a designated support intended for students with an identified need who use and benefit from using TTS to support access to reading, seeing, or language communication. Furthermore, students should be familiar with using TTS during (and even outside of) instruction and find it beneficial and necessary when accessing text. Please note the following:

- Before use on a summative assessment, trial TTS on a practice or interim assessment.
- Adjust TTS settings on the student's testing device as prompted by the Test Delivery Interface prior to testing.
- Model how to activate TTS using the task model on the student's test screen. The TTS must be manually activated for each test question and item responses.
- Ask your student if they find TTS beneficial or distracting.
- Headsets are required unless the student is testing in a 1:1 setting.
- If the student requires a reader support and TTS is not appropriate, a human reader of items may be appropriate. For more information, refer to the [Connecticut Smarter Balanced and NGSS Reader Options Table](#) for a comprehensive listing of reader supports available on Smarter Balanced and NGSS interim and summative assessments.

Who is Eligible for Text-to-Speech of the Smarter Balanced ELA Passages?

For the purposes of Connecticut's standardized assessments, text-to-speech of the Smarter Balanced ELA Passages is an accommodation for students who cannot access print or text due to a significant visual or print disability. To determine eligibility, the team should complete the [Decision Guidelines for Text-to-Speech of the ELA Passages](#). PPT and Section 504 team responses must show a preponderance of evidence based on their student's vision/print disability that confirms that TTS is used throughout the student's daily instruction to access instructional materials.

Additionally, students that qualify for this accommodation are those who in spite of intensive and extensive instruction/intervention in the science of reading or in braille acquisition, are unable to access print materials without the provision of more extensive accommodations (e.g., audio books, screen readers/text-to-speech, Book Share, or other types of alternate educational materials).

If there is evidence of a specific word reading disability that impacts their ability to decode/encode words and phonological processing, TTS might be an appropriate accessibility support used during instruction and on assessments. However, attributes of a specific word disability or dyslexia should be evidenced in the student's current evaluation results and programming. In the context of assessing reading comprehension on a statewide assessment, TTS of the Smarter Balanced ELA reading passages should only be provided as an access point/tool to the text. Otherwise, the provision of this accommodation alters the constructs being measured and reading comprehension becomes listening comprehension.

Special Populations Updates

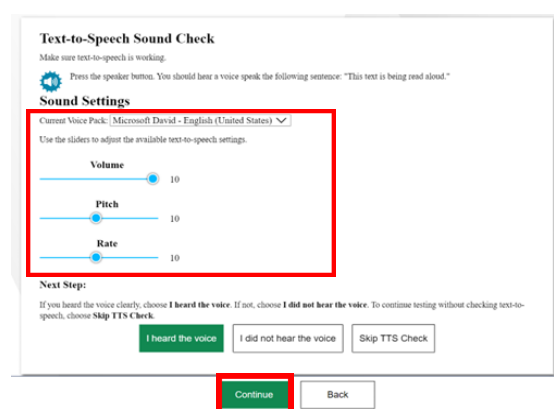
Text-to-speech does not work on all of my student's ELA items. Is something wrong with the test delivery interface?

Certain writing items on the Smarter Balanced ELA assessment are not keyed to TTS because they measure grammar usage/punctuation that otherwise might cue a student if "read" via text-to-speech. The items are specifically coded to perform this way. If your student inquires about their TTS not functioning correctly, encourage them to try their best and ensure that the TTS will work on other items that do not measure grammar usage/punctuation. If in doubt, feel free to contact the CAI Help Desk for guidance.

The TTS sounds robotic and does not read as fluently as a human reader. How can I verify that the TTS functionality is set up correctly on my student's testing device?

While TTS does not use a human voice, there may be different voice options available on the operating system of your student's device. Please refer to the tip shown to the right. Contact the CAI Help Desk for technical assistance at 1.844.202.7583 cthelpdesk@cambiumassessment.com.

Show students how to check the voice pack and settings on their device prior to testing.



Reader Support Resources

This is a list of resources that delineate the various reader supports, such as TTS (or a human reader) of test items, which may be more appropriate for struggling readers taking standardized assessments.

- [Decision Guidelines for Text-to-Speech of the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages \(cambiumast.com\)](#)
- [Documented Evidence for a Read Aloud of the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages \(cambiumast.com\)](#)
- [Reader Designated Supports and Accommodations for Smarter Balanced Mathematics and English Language Arts and the Next Generation Science Standards \(NGSS\) Assessments \(cambiumast.com\)](#)
- [Connecticut Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments Reader Options Table \(cambiumast.com\)](#)

Braille and Large Print Material Orders and Returns, and the Data Entry Interface

The District Administrator (DA) in TIDE is responsible for ordering paper materials for students requiring Large Print or Braille test booklets. Remember that although the English Language Arts Performance Task (PT) may appear in the provided paper materials, it should **NOT** be administered.

Please refer to the [How to Access the Data Entry Interface](#) brochure for instructions on submitting completed tests through the DEI.

Paper Braille and Large Print Smarter Balanced and NGSS assessment responses must be transcribed from their booklets by the teacher (or appointed staff) no later than May 31, 2024, and the materials must be returned to Measurement Incorporated (MI) by the end of the test window.

The Connecticut Alternate Science (CTAS) Assessment responses should also be submitted through the DEI. Again, all student responses must be submitted to the DEI no later than May 31, 2024.

Special Populations Updates

English Learner/Multilingual Learner Language Supports

In preparation for testing, please work with your educational teams to determine if certain language supports/designated supports are appropriate for your English learner/multilingual learner(s). If the student does not have an IEP or Section 504 Plan, supports should be uploaded or manually entered in TIDE prior to testing. For information on available language supports, refer to the Embedded and Non-embedded Designated Supports for English Learners [brochure](#).

Spanish Presentation in Math and Science

Students who are fluent and literate in Spanish may be eligible for the following language supports:

- Spanish Toggle must be turned on in TIDE prior to testing (shown on upper right).
- When Spanish Toggle is selected for science or math, students can switch the presentation to English using the “globe” icon (shown on the right).

Spanish Text-to-Speech in Math and Science

To access Text-to-Speech in Spanish:

- Set presentation to Spanish Toggle.
- Download/install voice pack available on the student’s device.
- Trial on a practice test.
- Model to student how to activate the TTS of passages, items , and item responses by selecting the task model icon and activating TTS from the drop-down menu (shown on the right).

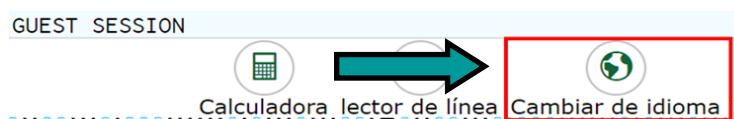
If using a Chromebook, please note version 119 does not support the Spanish voice pack. Upgrade to version 121 or 123 if possible.

Below is a Snapshot of a Student’s Dashboard with TTS and Spanish Toggle Selected.

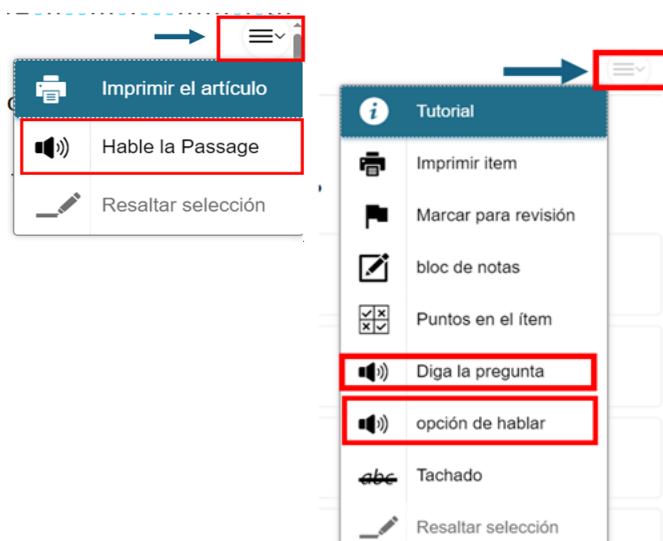
Embedded Designated Support	1) EEA	2) Math	3) Science
Voice Prompt	(System Default)	(System Default)	(System Default)
Permissive Mode	OFF	OFF	OFF
Print Size	No Default Zoom Applied	No Default Zoom Applied	No Default Zoom Applied
Streamline Mode	OFF	OFF	OFF
Text-To-Speech (Designated Supports and Accommodations)	Items	Stimul & Items	Stimul & Items
Translation (Glossary)	English Glossary	English Glossary	English Glossary

Embedded Accommodation	1) EEA	2) Math	3) Science
American Sign Language Video	OFF	OFF	OFF
Audio Transcriptions	OFF	OFF	OFF
Braile Type	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Closed Captioning	OFF	OFF	OFF
Customized Medical Accommodation	OFF	OFF	OFF
Exempted Domains	OFF	OFF	OFF
Math Manipulatives	OFF	OFF	OFF
Presentation (Designated Supports and Accommodations)	English	Spanish (toggle)	Spanish (toggle)

Below is a Snapshot of the Icon that Provides the Spanish Presentation. The Student has the Ability to Toggle Between English and Spanish.



Below is a Snapshot of the Icon to Activate TTS of [Math/Science] Stimuli and items.



Student Assessment News: May 2024

Summative Assessment Calendar for 2023-24

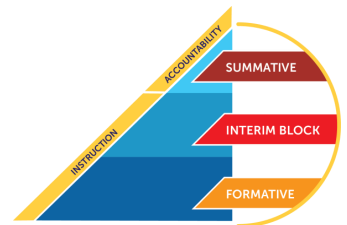
Assessment	Dates
Secure Browser for Smarter, NGSS, and CTAA	Please ensure you have updated the secure browser on each staff and student device for the 2023-24 school year. Please access the Technology Resources to support this process.
NGSS	February 5– May 31, 2024 (Grade 11) March 25– May 31, 2024 (Grades 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.

Summative Assessment Office Hours

The Performance Office team and our partner vendor, Cambium Assessment Inc. (CAI), will provide brief assessment updates and answer any questions about Smarter Balanced, Next Generation Science Standards, CTAA, and CTAS testing. The Office Hour will run every week on Thursday from 3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. beginning on March 28, 2024, and ending on May 30, 2024. Please [register here](#) to join these sessions.

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

