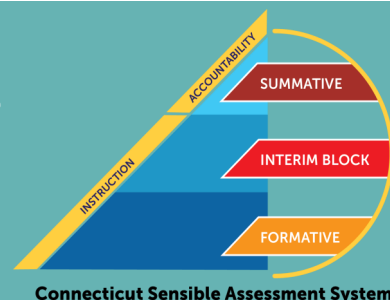# Student Assessment News

Connecticut State Department of Education
Performance Office

Connecticut Sensible Assessment System

October 2024

CTStudentAssessment@ct.gov

Advanced Placement Test Fee Waivers

The CSDE and College Board will cover the entire cost of the **2025 AP** exam fees for all students from low-income families who attend public school in Connecticut. The AP coordinators will indicate in the AP Registration and Ordering (APRO) site a student's low-income status. The CSDE will be directly billed for the cost of exams for students from low-income families as long as the AP coordinator indicates this in the APRO. 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.

Please note that the AP, PSAT, or SAT coordinator/counselors requesting access to FRPM eligibility data must complete the Disclosure Release Request for Free or Reduced Eligibility Status of Students in the School Nutrition Program to ensure they have an understanding of the USDA regulations and do not use this information for other purposes. The completed form must be reviewed and approved by the district or school's determining official (i.e., the person who processes FRPM applications). Once approved, the determining official can provide the coordinator/counselor with the FRPM eligibility status for the applicable students.

The process for obtaining fee waivers for eligible students for the College Board's Advanced Placement test has not changed. For 2025 Advanced Placement® (AP) testing, AP coordinators must order tests for students by **November 15, 2024**. This is the deadline to submit exam orders for all full-year and first-semester AP courses, and exam only sections. The late order fee applies for exams ordered after this date. A fee also applies for exams cancelled after this date. Please visit the College Board's AP Central for more information. The deadline for the AP coordinator to indicate in APRO students who are eligible for the fee waiver is **April 30, 2025**. Learn more about AP Exam fee reductions.

If you have any questions, please contact Michelle Rosado at michelle.rosado@ct.gov .

ChromeOS Secure Browser for 2025

With the upcoming release of ChromeOS version 133 on the Stable channel in early 2025, a required setting for the secure browser will no longer be enabled by default. Beginning now, and no later than December, district technology staff **must** utilize one or both of the options below to continue using the secure browser for student testing on ChromeOS devices.

1. Ensure all devices are on the Long-Term Support (LTS) channel or the Long-Term Support Candidate (LTC) channel. For more information on these channels, visit Long-term Support (LTS) on ChromeOS.
2. Enable the *NativeClientForceAllowed (NaCl)* setting in the ChromeOS Management Console. For more information on enabling NaCl, visit Chrome Enterprise Policy List & Management | Documentation.

Taking these actions now ensures that the ChromeOS Secure Browser will be usable for the remainder of the 2024-2025 school year.

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

Connecticut SAT Updates

While details will be shared shortly regarding the College Board SSD Coordinator Training in November, a few resources are available to support educator teams (Planning and Placement Team (PPT)/Section 504 Team) and SSD Coordinators as they prepare accommodations for eligible students taking the spring Connecticut SAT School Day. The following resources are available on the CT SAT School Day webpage and will be updated as new information becomes available during the school year.

2024-25 Connecticut SAT School Day Accessibility Chart -The Accessibility Chart identifies a range of universal tools (available to all students) and accommodations (available to students with implemented Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)/Section 504 Plans in CT-SEDS) when taking the Connecticut SAT School Day.

2024-25 Connecticut SAT School Day Accommodations Crosswalk - This resource is designed to help educators understand the relationship between the College Board accommodation options in SSD Online (SSDOL) and accommodations for the digital Connecticut SAT School Day for students with an implemented IEP or Section 504 Plan.

2024-25 SSD Form Upload for Documentation Requests - SSD Coordinators will use and upload this form when documentation is required during the SSD online request process.

CT SAT and PSAT Webinar

A webinar was held on September 19, 2024, regarding the CT SAT School Day and PSAT. The recording and slides have been posted to the CT SAT webpage.

New Contact: CSDE K-3 Literacy Assessment Contact

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) K-3 Literacy Assessment Contact is a new district-level role in the Contacts Manager application. This individual will be the district representative responsible for ensuring that the K-3 assessments from the approved menu are administered in accordance with CSDE guidance and testing protocols to all students in Grades K-3 in all districts. Districts should determine their K-3 Literacy Assessment Contact and have the Contacts Manager Writer assign this representative within the Contacts Manager application by **October 21, 2024**. The Contacts Manager Writer(s) for your district can be located in EdSight. Please contact ctstudentassessment@ct.gov with any questions.

Testing Windows for the K-3 Universal Screening Reading Benchmark Assessments

The CSDE is providing all districts with the following testing windows for the administration of the district-selected K-3 Universal Screening Reading Benchmark Assessment from the approved menu.

Testing Windows for K-3 Universal Screening Reading Benchmark Assessments		
Beginning of Year (BOY)	Middle of Year (MOY)	End of Year (EOY)
September 9, 2024 to October 11, 2024	December 9, 2024 to January 31, 2025	April 22, 2025 to May 30, 2025

These windows should accommodate differences in district instructional calendars. For the BOY benchmark, it is recommended that districts test students about 1-2 weeks *after* the start of school. This will:

- allow for recouping of any regressed skills;
- aid in establishing routines and relationships;
- ensure that students needing higher levels of support are identified and their interventions are in place early in the year.

A district's testing windows should align with both the CSDE calendar and their selected screener's suggested timeframes for administration. Additionally, they should ensure at least 12 weeks of instruction between screenings. If you have any questions about this calendar, please contact the Performance Office at ctstudentassessment@ct.gov.

Summative Assessment Updates - Public School Information System (PSIS) and State Assessments Update

The Public School Information System (PSIS) provides data to test delivery systems for state summative assessments administered to Connecticut public school students. These assessments include the LAS Links, the Connecticut Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency (CAAELP), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessment, Smarter Balanced Assessment, Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) in English language arts and mathematics, Connecticut Alternate Science (CTAS) Assessment, and the Connecticut SAT School Day.

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. The state relies on districts to provide accurate reporting of PSIS student-level data. Select fields such as English learner/multilingual learner (EL/ML) status, Special Education status, and Section 504 status must be updated prior to testing to ensure students eligible for accommodations may access them. These select fields need to be updated frequently in PSIS for accommodations to sync between CT-SEDS and TIDE as well as to populate the Alternate Assessment Indicator. Data are used for public/secure reporting of statewide test results and as part of Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System.

In November 2024, the PSIS Registration module will be updated to include the following Testing Demographic fields:
- Special Education (SPED) Status,
- Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) Status,
- English Learner/Multilingual Learner (EL/ML) Status,
- Military Family,
- Homeless,
- Recently Arrived EL/ML, and
- Section 504 Status.

These seven values must reflect the student's status at the time of testing for the 2024-25 school year. The SPED, FRL, EL/ML, Military Family, and Homeless fields will be loaded to TIDE with the values reported in the October PSIS Collection Freeze Zero file (i.e., freeze file). The values for Recently Arrived EL/ML and Section 504 **will not** pull from Freeze Zero because these data are not reported in the PSIS October collection. These values will be set to "No" in the Registration Module and must be updated in the PSIS Registration Module for testing and reporting purposes **after** Freeze Zero.

District PSIS Coordinators must make all changes to student enrollment and demographic information directly into the PSIS Registration Module. Student demographic values will be saved, and the fields will be locked in PSIS on the following dates for accountability calculations:
- March 7, 2025, for LAS Links;
- March 7, 2025, for the CAAELP;
- April 23, 2025, for the Connecticut SAT School Day; and
- May 30, 2025, for Smarter Balanced Assessments, the NGSS, and the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Assessments (CTAS and CTAA).

For accommodations to sync from CT-SEDS to TIDE, students must be identified as Special Education or Section 504 in the PSIS Registration Module. Similarly, for a student to access a LAS Links assessment in the DRC Insight system, a student must be identified as an EL/ML in the PSIS Registration Module. Additionally, a student may be identified as both an EL/ML and a student with disabilities and should be reflected as such in the PSIS testing demographic fields prior to the opening of the LAS Links and CAAELP testing window.

PSIS Registration student data is sent to CT-SEDS and TIDE nightly. Therefore, a student eligible for testing should be rostered in TIDE the day after a PSIS Registration is created. Designated supports and accommodations for students with a finalized and implemented plan in CT-SEDS syncs to TIDE daily. However, depending on when the plan is finalized and implemented, it could take up to 48 hours for the sync to occur. More information will be forthcoming following the October PSIS Collection Freeze Zero file.

Special Populations Updates

What is the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System?

The Connecticut Alternate Assessment System is designated for students with significant cognitive disabilities. This system includes:

- the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) for English language arts and mathematics for eligible students in Grades 3-8 and 11;
- the Connecticut Alternate Science (CTAS) Assessment for eligible students in Grades 5, 8, and 11; and
- the Connecticut Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency (CAAELP) for students identified as an English learner/multilingual learner (EL/ML) with significant cognitive disabilities in Grades K-12.

Resources: CT-SEDS to TIDE Designated Supports/ Accommodations Sync FAQ, Overview for Teachers Administering the Alternate

How is eligibility determined?

The Planning and Placement Team (PPT) will determine if the student meets eligibility criteria by completing the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Eligibility Form within the Special Education Data System (CT-SEDS). A paper version of this form is available for reference on the portal, along with access to a variety of resources listed below.

- Annotated Alternate Assessment System Eligibility Form
- FAQ Alternate Assessment System
- FAQ Alternate Assessment System Eligibility Form
- Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Participation Guidelines for Planning and Placement Teams Flowchart

Important Considerations

Teams should plan early! During the PPT meeting, plan for all grades covered by the duration of the IEP. For example, if the PPT meeting is occurring in April for a third grader and the implementation date is prior to the end of the school year, the team should plan the IEP to span from April to April and ensure correct assessment determination for both Grade 3 and Grade 4.

For students to receive the most appropriate summative assessment and be rostered to the correct assessment, districts should make a determination for alternate assessment eligibility at the annual PPT. Assessment decisions for 2024-25 should be determined by the dates below.

When the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Eligibility Form is completed and verified, and the IEP is finalized and implemented in CT-SEDS, the alternate assessment data will sync with TIDE. Through this process, the Alternate Assessment Indicator will be activated in TIDE and give the student access to the alternate assessment at the time of testing. This data will also be used by the CSDE to remove the student from certain data files used for the CT SAT School Day and the LAS Links, if applicable.

If the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Eligibility Form is not completed and verified through a finalized and implemented IEP in CT-SEDS, the student will be rostered to the standard assessments (e.g., LAS Links, CT-SAT School Day, Smarter Balanced, and/or the NGSS).

If the PPT makes a determination for testing or amends the assessment section of the IEP during the testing window, please postpone the student's test administration until the plan is finalized and implemented.

Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Eligibility Form Verification in CT-SEDS	
CT-SEDS Implementation Date	**Assessment**
Fully Implemented IEP by December 20, 2024	Eligibility forms must be approved, verified, finalized, and implemented within the IEP in CT-SEDS for the following assessments for the students to be correctly registered for: • CAAELP (students identified as EL/ML in Grades K-12); and • CTAA and CTAS (Grade 11)
Fully Implemented IEP by February 1, 2025	Eligibility forms must be approved, verified, finalized, and implemented within the IEP in CT-SEDS for the following assessments for the students to be correctly registered for the: • CTAA (Grades 3-8, and newly identified students in Grade 11); and • CTAS (Grades 5, 8, and newly identified students in Grade 11)

Special Populations Updates

Tasks for District Administrators

Please take time to review the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Training- Overview for District Administrators.

Work with your Special Education Director to determine which students qualify for alternate assessments.

Work with your English Language Assessment Coordinators to determine which ELs/MLs in Grades K-12 qualify for alternate assessments.

Identify which teachers will be responsible for administering alternate assessments and make sure that they have a TEA user account in TIDE. All teachers administering CTAA, CTAS, and CAAELP will need a TEA user role.

Communicate with TEAs regarding the required training and important deadlines associated with alternate assessments. There are separate training courses for CTAA/CTAS and the CAAELP. Details will be posted in subsequent editions of the SAN.

Required Alternate Assessment System Training (CTAA & CTAS) for TEAs is Now Available!

The required, annual, online Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Training is now available on the portal for teachers who have the primary responsibility for assessing students with significant cognitive disabilities on the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System. Teachers must be assigned a TEA user role in TIDE and should complete the training early in the year for CTAA (math and ELA) and CTAS (science).

Sessions can be accessed as many times as needed. Teachers must complete and pass the associated quiz to attain trained status for administration of the CTAA and CTAS. Refer to the Alternate Assessment webpage and training resources for more information.

A separate required teacher training for the CAAELP will be provided online later this fall.

Resources for Planning and Placement Teams and Section 504 Teams

A variety of resources are available for Planning and Placement Teams and Section 504 Teams to assist with making informed decisions about accessibility features and accommodations for students with disabilities participating on state summative assessments. Many of these resources offer shortened descriptions and excerpts from the CSDE Assessment Guidelines and other publications. If greater detail is needed, teams are welcome to search by topic on the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal Resources or the CSDE Resources for PPTs and Section 504 Teams page.

Determining Student Participation on Connecticut Statewide Summative Assessments - This flowchart provides educator teams with guidance on student participation on statewide summative assessments based on individual student profile.

Assessment Resources for Planning and Placement and Section 504 Teams Quick Guide - This resource provides teams with information on accessibility features available on the Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments for students with an IEP/Section 504 Plan.

Description of Designated Supports and Accommodations for Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards Assessments - This resource provides a brief description of the designated supports and accommodations available on the Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments available to students with an IEP/Section 504 Plan.

CT-SEDS/TIDE Sync

Documented designated supports and accommodations for students participating in optional interim assessments (fall 2024) and summative assessments (spring 2025) are captured in the TIDE system. If you find that certain supports are not listed in TIDE for a student with an IEP/Section 504 Plan, consider the following:

1) Did the PPT/Section 504 Team plan accommodations for the student's current grade of enrollment?
2) Is the plan finalized and implemented?
3) Is the student's IDEA/Section 504 indicator activated in TIDE? This data would have been populated from PSIS based eligibility in spring 2024.

Refer to the CT-SEDS to TIDE FAQ for specific information about the syncing of accommodations from CT-SEDS to TIDE.

Special Populations Updates

English Language Proficiency Assessment
LAS Links and CAAELP

Collaboration between EL/ML educators, ELACs, Special Education teams and Section 504 teams is key to determine if any Kindergarten or newly arrived/enrolled students have been identified as EL/ML. These students will take the English Language Proficiency Assessment (LAS Links) or the Connecticut Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency (CAAELP) in winter 2025. Educators should collaborate early within the school year to ensure the following:

- Discuss and share if any Kindergarten or newly arrived/enrolled students have been identified as EL/ML.
- PPT or Section 504 Team meetings should be planned once this designation is updated in PSIS and CT-SEDS to ensure correct designations and supports are in place prior to the testing windows.
- Review ELP designation and accessibility supports designated for the current grade level.
- PPTs should determine which ELP assessment is most appropriate for the dually identified student. Teams can refer to the Connecticut Statewide Assessment Participation Guidance for Planning and Placement Teams flowchart that provides the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) with guidance on statewide assessment participation discussions and for the selection of accommodations applicable for each assessment system.
- Accessibility features and ELP assessment determination are within finalized and implemented plans prior to the opening of the ELP assessment windows.

Exit Criteria for ELP

In order for students to exit English learner/multilingual learner (EL/ML) status and no longer receive English language acquisition support, the student must reach the state mandated exit requirements as described in the Connecticut English Learner/Multilingual Learner Exit Criteria Grades K-12. The Linguistic Standard selected for Connecticut is measured by the LAS Links Assessment or by the Connecticut Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency (CAAELP) as documented in their implemented Individualized Education Program (IEP). For additional information on exiting and monitoring ELs/MLs please refer to the English Learners in Connecticut's Public Schools: Guidelines for Administrators Manual.

Planning for the Use of Designated Supports and Accommodations

In recognition of the complex and individual needs of all students, the Accessibility Considerations document was created to support educator planning when determining accessibility features that can be incorporated into the instructional and assessment setting to promote student access and independence.

Refer to the Documenting Designated Supports and Accommodations in TIDE brochure for information about ensuring that the appropriate test settings and accessibility supports are available to students participating on interim assessments.

Resources:
- Accessibility Chart (Smarter Balanced and NGSS)
- LAS Links Accessibility Chart

CAAELP Office Hours

The Performance Office will be hosting Office Hours: Focusing on the Connecticut Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency (CAAELP) on November 7, 2024, from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm. To register please visit the CSDE calendar. This training is intended for ELACs, District Administrators in TIDE (DAs), Special Education Administrators, and both EL/ML and special education educators that will be determining participation in and administration of the CAAELP.
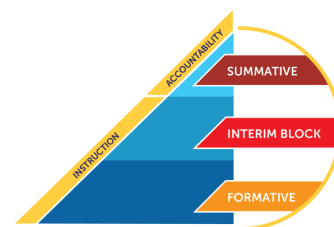
2024 - 25 State Summative Assessment Calendar

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 16, 2024 Submission Due Date: December 6, 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