

Embedded and Non-Embedded Designated Supports for English Learners/Multilingual Learners

Students who are advancing toward English language proficiency (including identified English learners/multilingual learners (ELs/MLs) and dually identified ELs/MLs with disabilities) may benefit from using designated supports that promote language access when participating in the Connecticut state-wide assessments. Districts should establish a systematic and consistent process for identifying, determining, recording, and providing these supports for those students that require them based on documented needs. Accessibility supports should be consistently embedded and accessed in the student's instructional setting for familiarization, otherwise they may be a distraction and impede student performance on assessments.

Communication, organization, and careful planning among test administrators, English Language Assessment Coordinators, Directors of Special Education (if applicable), and teachers are critical aspects of promoting fair, reliable, and appropriate test opportunities for students. Refer to the [CSDE Assessment Guidelines](#) for information on how to determine if these supports are appropriate for your students.

What are designated supports?

Designated supports for the Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments are features available to **any student** for whom the need has been indicated by a team of educators in consultation with the parent/guardian and student.

- **Embedded designated supports** are accessibility features provided directly *through the test delivery interface*.
- **Non-embedded designated supports** are accessibility features provided *by the teacher/test administrator* during testing (as permitted by the CSDE and as defined by the Assessment Guidelines).

Which designated supports enhance access to language?

[Table 1](#) on the following page indicates the embedded and non-embedded designated supports available for the *Smarter Balanced Assessments* for ELs/MLs in Grades 3-8.

[Table 2](#) indicates the embedded and non-embedded designated supports available for the *NGSS Assessments* administered to students in Grades 5, 8, and 11.

It is important to note that the designated supports described in this document are those accessibility features that may promote access for language learners, and ELs/MLs may benefit from additional designated supports not listed in this resource. The [CSDE Assessment Guidelines](#) contain a complete list and description of universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations.

Table 1. Smarter Balanced Mathematics and English Language Arts Embedded and Non-Embedded Designated Supports

Designated Support	Available Subjects	Available Format of Designated Support
<p>Translation (Glossary) A language support provided for selected construct-irrelevant math terms. Translations (with an audio recording) appear on the computer screen when students click on the word (marked by an underscore). Only students with the <i>language glossary</i> setting enabled in TIDE can view the translated glossary. Includes Illustration Glossary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics 	Embedded
Text-to-Speech (English)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language Arts (ELA) items only (Does NOT include ELA Reading Passages) • Mathematics items & stimuli 	Embedded
Text-to-Speech (Spanish) Note: Presentation must be set to <i>Spanish Toggle</i> . Student should be orally fluent in Spanish.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics items & stimuli 	Embedded
Spanish Presentation (Toggle) Language support allows students who are literate Spanish speakers to toggle between the full Spanish translation of items and stimuli to the English version of the stimuli and items.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics 	Embedded
Read Aloud (English) (Refer to the Smarter Balanced Read Aloud Guidelines)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELA items (NOT ELA Reading Passages) • Mathematics items & stimuli 	Non-Embedded
Read Aloud (Spanish) (Refer to the Smarter Balanced Mathematics and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments: Guidelines for Spanish Read Aloud of Stimuli and Items)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics items & stimuli 	Non-Embedded
<p>Translated Navigation Directions (for select languages only) available on the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal Note: Developed by Smarter Balanced, this is a word-to-word translation of the on-screen directions and functions a student may encounter when using the online test delivery system (TDS).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language Arts • Mathematics 	Non-Embedded Universal Tool
<p>Guidelines for Simplified Test Directions Simplified Test Directions (as scripted in the Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language Arts • Mathematics 	Non-Embedded



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<p>Translated Test Directions (Non-Embedded Designated Support) (as scripted in the Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual)</p> <p>An on-the-fly native language reader of the script from the Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual can be provided to the student if a teacher is available who speaks that language.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• English Language Arts• Mathematics	Non-Embedded
<p>Translated Test Directions (printed in English PDF) (as scripted in the Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual)</p> <p>This language support provides the student with a visual reference in English for test directions/script within the SAY boxes in the Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• English language Arts• Mathematics	Non-Embedded

Table 2. NGSS Assessments – Embedded and Non-Embedded Designated Supports

Designated Support	Available Format of Designated Support
Bilingual Dictionaries and Glossaries Authorized for Use by English Learners/Multilingual Learners (Provides resources for bilingual word-to-word dictionaries allowed on Connecticut’s NGSS Assessment.)	Non-Embedded
Text-to-Speech (English)	Embedded
Text-to-Speech (Spanish) Note: Presentation must be set to <i>Spanish Toggle</i> . Student should be orally fluent in Spanish.	Embedded
Spanish Presentation (Toggle) Language support allows students who are literate Spanish speakers to toggle between the full Spanish translation of items and stimuli to the English version of the stimuli and items.	Embedded
Read Aloud (English) (Refer to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessment: Guidelines for Read Aloud of Stimuli and Items)	Non-Embedded
Read Aloud (Spanish) (Refer to the Smarter Balanced Mathematics and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments: Guidelines for Spanish Read Aloud of Stimuli and Items)	Non-Embedded
Translated Test Directions (as scripted in the NGSS Test Administration Manual (any language)) An on-the-fly native language reader of the script from the NGSS Test Administration Manual can be provided to the student if a teacher is available who speaks that language.	Non-Embedded
Translated Test Directions (printed in English PDF) (as scripted in the NGSS Test Administration Manual) This language support provides the student with a visual reference in English for test directions/script within the SAY boxes in the NGSS Test Administration Manual.	Non-Embedded
NGSS Periodic Table English or Spanish for Grades 8 and 11	Embedded and Non-Embedded Universal Tool

How are designated supports activated?

Individuals with a teacher (TE) status in the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) can view student test settings, while only those with higher-level administrative access to TIDE, such as School or District Coordinator, can add or edit a student’s test settings. Refer to the [TIDE User Guide](#) and the [Manually Setting Designated Supports and Accommodations](#) brochure for more information.

Once the team identifies the designated support(s) appropriate for a student, they must be manually activated in the student’s TIDE test settings dashboard or entered using a batch upload process to TIDE **prior to testing**.

Important: Designated supports and accommodations approved in CT-SEDS for dually identified ELs/MLs with an

active/implemented IEP or 504 Plan will be automatically uploaded to TIDE by the CSDE and do not need to be set in TIDE by the district/school.

Staffing/Training Considerations:

Certain staffing considerations may be required when providing specific designated supports to students; for example, when a student cannot access text-to-speech and needs to work with a test reader. Optimally, this support should be provided by a person that knows the student and is familiar with their unique language needs.

Read Aloud supports must be provided in a 1:1 test setting—not to a group of students, because each student depends on the test reader to read the test questions from the students screen accurately, pronounce words correctly, and speak clearly throughout the test, while meeting the appropriate pace preferred by that individual student. The student should have the option of asking a reader to slow down or to repeat text. When preparing the testing schedule, it is important to determine how many staff are needed to serve as readers based on the number of students eligible and the language supports needed as well as an appropriate number of testing locations.

The teacher/reader, including biliterate adults serving as a human reader, must be employed by the school district and must participate in local training on statewide assessments as provided at the district or school level prior to test administration. This is to ensure appropriate adherence to test security protocols and test administration standardization.

Readers should review the [Smarter Balanced Read Aloud Guidelines](#) and the [Next Generation Science Standards \(NGSS\) Assessment: Guidelines for Read Aloud of Stimuli and Items](#) prior to testing.

Test Time Considerations:

Though Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments are untimed, test-timing considerations may be required when providing certain supports to students on these assessments. For example, the provision of a translation glossary requires additional scrolling and reviewing of translated test content. Be considerate of the increased reading and cognitive load. Best practice is to schedule a Practice Test in advance of summative testing to provide students with an opportunity to practice supports. Teachers should meet with the student to discuss their experience and adjust if necessary.

Breaks, a universal tool available to participating students for Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments, can be set by the test administrator or provided on demand by the student (as appropriate). Breaks of more than 20 minutes will prevent the student from returning to items already attempted. There is no limit on the number of breaks a student might be given, though it may result in the student needing additional time overall to complete the assessment.

What reader options are available?

Students who are advancing toward English language proficiency, including students who are not identified as EL/ML, may need assistance accessing the assessment by having all or portions of the assessment read aloud by the computer (TTS) or by a teacher. This support can be confusing and may impede the performance of students who **do not regularly use this support during instruction**.

Refer to the [Connecticut Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments Reader Options Table](#) to learn more about reader supports and accommodations available on Connecticut assessments.

For more information:

Visit the [Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal](#) or email the Performance Office:

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