



Student Assessment News

Connecticut State Department of Education • Performance Office

March 4, 2021

[Archived Student Assessment News](#)
CTStudentAssessment@ct.gov

Remote Proctoring Tool

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The Remote Proctoring Tool is now available for all districts when using the Cambium Assessment, Inc. Test Delivery System (TDS). The Remote Proctoring Tool is a system enhancement to the TDS to improve test administration and monitoring for students who are participating in testing remotely. This tool can be used currently by remote learners when taking Smarter Balanced Interims, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Interims, and the practice tests. Additionally, teachers and students can use the remote tool on the Smarter Balanced and NGSS summative assessments starting April 19, 2021.

Below are links to some optional resources customized for teachers, technology coordinators, and students/families to support the remote administration of the NGSS and Smarter Balanced Assessments.

- [Quick Guide for Teachers to Start or Schedule Smarter Balanced and NGSS Interim Assessments Remotely for Students](#)
- [Quick Guide for Teachers Administering the Smarter Balanced and NGSS Interim Assessments Remotely](#)
- [Quick Guide for Students/Families Taking Smarter Balanced & NGSS Interim Assessments Remotely](#)
- [Quick Guide for Technology Coordinators to Prepare Teachers to Administer Connecticut Assessments Remotely](#)
- [Remote Interim Assessment FAQ for Parents/Guardians](#)
- [Connecticut Remote Testing for the Smarter Balanced & NGSS Interim Assessments – Students and Families Training Module \(PPT\)](#)

These materials can also be found on the [Connecticut Comprehensive Portal](#). In addition to these resources, there is an optional [Training Course for Remote Test Administrators](#).

Please note that new resources specific to remote summative testing will be released at the end of March. If you have any questions, contact CTStudentAssessment@ct.gov.

LAS Links Testing Window Extension and Test Completion Progress

Superintendents were informed on February 4, 2021, that the LAS Links Testing Window has been extended to **April 30, 2021**. Documentation and resources have been revised on the **Connecticut DRC LAS Links Website** <https://laslinks.com/connecticut-information/>.

Many districts have made significant progress in completing testing already. As of March 1, approximately 43% of English learner (EL) testers statewide had completed testing and approximately 60 % of EL testers statewide had completed at least one of the four subtests.



Connecticut Alternate Assessment



Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment



Student Assessment News: March 4, 2021

Summative Assessment Updates

2021 Assessment Office Hours

The CSDE Performance Office staff is hosting Office Hour webinars. The CSDE staff and their partner vendor, Cambium Assessment Inc., will provide assessment updates on various topics. Below are the details of the Office Hours and the focus on some of the dates. All webinars will be from 3 – 4 p.m. with the exception of March 15, which will begin at 3:30. [Attendees must register for the series](#) and may attend all or some sessions as needed.

March 15: Connecticut Alternate Assessments/Accessibility and Accommodations

April 1 and Every Thursday after until June 3: Standard Office Hours

April 8: This will be dedicated to the Remote Proctoring tool for remote testing of NGSS/Smarter Balanced.

These webinars are targeted for any district/school staff who oversees state summative testing for Smarter Balanced, NGSS, CTAA or CTAS.

2021 Summative Test Manuals Available - (Printed Materials to be Shipped in March)

[Test Coordinator Manual \(TCM\)](#)

[Smarter Balanced Summative Test Administration Manual \(TAM\)](#)

[NGSS Test Administration Manual \(TAM\)](#)

[Connecticut Alternate Assessment \(CTAA\) Test Administration Manual](#)

[Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment \(CTAS\): Test Administration Manual](#)

The staff at **MetaMetrics**, creators of the Lexile Framework for Reading and the Quantile Framework for Mathematics, are making themselves available for questions and answers during their Office Hours. More information about connecting with them via Zoom is below. Or, feel free to email Matt Copeland [mcpeland@lexile.com](mailto:mcopeland@lexile.com) and Jane Scott jscott@lexile.com to make arrangements for a one-on-one conversation.

MetaMetrics Office Hours Information:

Each Monday: 3:00PM-5:00PM

Join with this Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/95027749445>

Each Friday: 11:00AM-1:00PM

Join with this Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/92206409606>



Connecticut Alternate Assessment



Connecticut SAT School Day Updates

Test Coordinator Training

A [recorded version](#) and the [slides](#) from the test coordinator session are posted to [our web site](#). A [spreadsheet with answers to questions](#) asked during test coordinator training is available.

Testing Flexibility

Flexibility with testing is available and does not require permission.

Flexible start times: Schools can start testing earlier and/or later in the day than usual and split their students into different testing groups on a single day. All testing must start before the first group to test completes testing. In other words, no group of students can begin testing after another group has completed the test.

Off-site testing: Schools don't need to submit an offsite plan if they need to use an offsite location, like a district office, to test students who are expelled, enrolled in remote learning, etc. You will need to appoint a staff member to be the offsite test coordinator who will be responsible for overseeing testing and materials at the locations. Materials will be sent to your school; store them securely and transport them to the offsite the morning of the test. Return the offsite test materials with the materials from your primary location. Take steps to ensure the testing experience for students is not disrupted or negatively affected by their environment. If this is not possible for a given location, consider a different one. This is especially critical if a school chooses an outdoor site.

Testing Dates: Schools may test students on their primary test date (March 24 or April 13) AND/OR any or all of the three make-up test dates, April 27, 28 and May 18, 2021.

Accessing the Nonstandard Administration Report (NAR)

The NAR provides a list of all students with approved accommodations and will be available approximately four weeks prior to test day for the state-provided SAT administration.

The College Board will process registration data and match it to the student information in SSD Online in order to populate the NAR for the school day administration. In some cases, you may have additional students approved for accommodations that we were unable to match to the provided pre-ID data. SSD coordinators will be able to add additional students with approved accommodations to the NAR, in order to build a complete list of those testing with accommodations.

To Generate the NAR for SAT School Day

From [SSD Online](#), select **Non Standard Administration Report** from the navigation bar on your dashboard. Please note that a printed NAR won't be mailed to you.

Late Accommodations Request

For students who transfer to your school after the accommodations request deadline, submit a request as soon as possible. The College Board will review requests after the request deadline for the following scenarios:

- Students who are newly enrolled at the school
- Students who have a newly identified disability

If a student isn't approved by the primary test date, monitor their approval status and if eligible, test the student later in the accommodated testing window or on the makeup test dates.

New CT SAT Resources Available

[Proctor Training Slides](#)

[Hall and Room Monitor](#)

[Training Slides](#)

[Translated Directions](#)

[Approved Glossaries](#)

Special Populations Updates

Connecticut SAT School Day Accommodations

As you prepare your testing schedules, keep in mind the flexibilities for accommodated testing:

- Students approved to test using the 1-2 day testing (using the blue test booklet) benefit from the two-week accommodated testing window. This offers flexibility for remote or hybrid learners, as well as the staggering of testing. The two week accommodated window is specific to the district-selected primary test day:

March 24-April 6, 2021

April 13-April 27, 2021

- There are extended test dates attached to the make-up dates for those who qualify to test within the accommodated testing window and includes:

April 27 – April 29, 2021

May 18 – May 20, 2021

- Based on the primary test date selected by your district (March 24 or April 13), you will complete a make-up survey to order the test materials that correspond with the make-up date chosen.
- To allow for additional social distancing opportunities, schools can choose to start testing earlier and/or later than usual and/or split students into different testing groups and stagger start times. (Note: Testing should begin no later than 10:00 am.)
- All timing and break rules will still apply, and all testing must be completed within the same day (unless students are approved for a multi-day testing accommodation.)
- All cohorts must have started their testing sessions before the first cohort completes testing.

Note: Flexible start times do not need to be requested through SSD online assuming the statements above are followed accordingly.

Frequently Asked Questions About the Data Entry Interface (DEI)

Q. When I log into the DEI, I get a message that there are no available tests. What does this mean?

A. This could occur for several reasons. Verify that the student is indicated as IDEA in the PSIS/TIDE system. Verify that the teacher has a TEA user role and that he/she completed the required annual training. The TEA needs their Trained TEA status activated in TIDE to access an eligibility form in the DEI.

Q. How do I revise the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form if it was already submitted?

A. The District Administrator for Testing (DA) must file an appeal in TIDE to revise a submitted Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form.

Q. How do I invalidate a Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form that was already submitted for a student who is no longer eligible?

A. The DA must submit an appeal in TIDE if a student is no longer eligible.

Q. What should I do if I submit the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form after the established deadlines?

A. If the Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form is submitted after February 15, 2021, the TEA or DA must contact the CAI Help Desk (1-844-202-7583; cthelpdesk@cambiumassessment.com) so that the Alternate Assessment Flag can be activated.

Special Populations Updates

Speech-to-Text Accommodations

The new embedded speech-to-text tool is available for students with a documented Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan who require the use of voice recognition software when responding to open-ended items on the Smarter Balanced Assessments. The Cambium Assessment Incorporated (CAI) embedded Speech-to-Text tool:

- Is embedded in the Test Delivery System, which means it can be configured and governed like any other embedded accessibility resource;
- Does not require any software to be installed on the device, or prior setup;
- Is cross-platform compatible, and has consistent presentation and functionality (i.e., desktop, chrome, iOS, etc.);
- Only appears on the item interactions that should have it. This tool is only on the short answer items that are on the ELA (CAT) and Math (PT) tests; and
- Must be selected in TIDE.

How it works:

- When the accommodation is enabled in TIDE, a microphone icon will appear in or near the response space for constructed-response items (e.g., the Math Performance Task or ELA open-ended responses for reading and/or writing);
- The student will click on the microphone icon and begin speaking;
- As the student speaks, the transcribed text will appear in the provided response area; and
- The student is permitted to dictate up to 5 minutes of speech at a time.

Considerations:

- Students should try this accommodation using the Math Performance Task Practice Test or the Brief Write Interim Assessment Block (IAB) in advance of summative testing to ensure that the student knows how to operate this function; and
- This feature auto punctuates and capitalizes as it transcribes a student's dictation. Students should proof read and edit responses before moving onto the next item.
- Must test in a separate 1:1 setting. To try this out, make sure the accommodation is entered in TIDE. Then, have your student log in to a Practice Math Performance Task using their SASID.

Special Populations Updates

Embedded Text-to-Speech: When is it a designated support? When is it an accommodation?

The following options are considered embedded designated supports:

- Text-to-Speech of math and science stimuli and items; must be activated in TIDE
- Text-to-Speech of ELA test items (does not include ELA Reading Passages); must be activated in TIDE

The embedded text-to-speech of the ELA Reading Passages is considered an accommodation and is available for students with visual or print disabilities. It must be activated in TIDE. It also requires the completion of the [Decision Guidelines for Text-to-Speech of the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages](#) and online submission by selecting the submission link included within the guidelines.

Generally, these students should also have the embedded designated support of text-to-speech for ELA, math, and science (if applicable) activated in TIDE as well. As a reminder, students can control the speed, as well as raise or lower the volume of the voice via a volume control within the student interface. Direct any questions to Deirdre Ducharme (deirdre.ducharme@ct.gov) or Janet Stuck (janet.stuck@ct.gov).

2020-21 Decision Guidelines for Text-to-Speech of the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages
 Use this form to help determine the need for the embedded text-to-speech of the reading passages assessment accommodation. This accommodation is only for students in Grades 3-8 with a documented print disability, or for blind students who do not yet have adequate braille skills. Please [submit this form electronically to usub@doe.ct.gov](#).

Student Name:	SABID:	IEP	504 Plan	District:	School:	Grade:	Date:
Responses in shaded boxes may indicate a need for the embedded text-to-speech of the ELA Reading Passages. A preponderance of evidence should still be noted. Enter one or two marks in shaded boxes to support the eligibility of a student in Grades 3-8 for this segment of the reading passages accommodation.							
Question:	Answer:	For students with an IEP or 504 Plan	Yes	No			
1a. Is the student blind or does the student have a significant visual impairment?	• Page 1 — COVER PAGE WITH DISABILITY CATEGORIES • Page 4 & 6 — PRESENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE						
1b. If the student is blind or has a significant visual impairment, is the student learning to read braille?	• Page 10 — SPECIAL FACTORS: PROGRESS REPORTING, EXIT CRITERIA						
2. Does the student have an identified reading-based disability that affects the student's decoding, fluency, or comprehension skills?	• Page 10 — SPECIAL FACTORS: PROGRESS REPORTING, EXIT CRITERIA						
3. Does the student's disability impact the student's ability to access the curriculum across all assessment subjects?	• Page 4 & 6 — PRESENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE • Page 7 — GOAL B OBJECTIVES						
4. Are interventions being utilized to improve the student's decoding, fluency, or comprehension skills?	• Page 4 & 6 — PRESENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE • Page 7 — GOAL B OBJECTIVES						
5. Does the student use text-to-speech (computer), assistive technology software or audio books during instruction?	• Page 8 — PROGRAM ACCOMMODATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS • Page 11 — SPECIAL EDUCATION, RELATED SERVICES, AND REGULAR EDUCATION						
6. Does the student belong to (parents) or similar organization or use identified accessible educational material? (See Connecticut's Plan for Accessibility, Educational Materials (AEM) and Accessible AEM from the Assessable Issues for Print Accessibility)	• Page 8 — PROGRAM ACCOMMODATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS • Page 11 — SPECIAL EDUCATION, RELATED SERVICES, AND REGULAR EDUCATION						
7. Does the student use text-to-speech (computer) during Smarter Balanced Assessments or other state or district assessments?	• Page 8 — PROGRAM ACCOMMODATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS • Page 9 — STATE AND DISTRICT TESTING AND ACCOMMODATIONS						
By the submission of this form, we acknowledge that the student qualifies to receive the Smarter Balanced Assessments accommodation of Text-to-Speech of ELA Reading Passages.							
Teacher Name: _____		Special Education Director Name: _____		District Administrator Name (CA or TIDE): _____		Print / Signature: _____	

Updated 6/30/20

Guidance for LAS Links Remote Out -of-District Testing

The new Guidance for LAS Links Remote Out -of-District Testing and associated LAS Links Remote Out-of-District Test Administrator Request Form is now posted on the [Connecticut DRC LAS Links Website](#) under LAS Links Remote Test Administration.

Dually Identified Students eligible for Alternate Assessments/Accommodations

Significant caution should be used with students identified as eligible for an Alternate Assessment. These students should NOT be tested on the LAS Links. If a PPT meeting is scheduled and the student is being considered for an alternate assessment, wait until after the PPT to begin testing. If a dually identified students is eligible for an alternate assessment is tested on LAS, the parent must be contacted and the student must be removed from the LAS system through the appeals process.

The CSDE is working with DRC to remove students identified as eligible for an alternate assessment so the potential for error is reduced. This process requires the Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form to be submitted for eligible students in Grades 3-8 and 11 and for students in K-2, 9, 10 or 12 the [English Learners with Significant Cognitive Disabilities Potentially Eligible for Alternative Assessments Form](#) must be submitted. Districts should maintain a list of these students to ensure they are not placed in test sessions. Students eligible for accommodations should continue to be reflected by the ELAC in the DRC INSIGHT Portal. If student profiles are modified or students are added manually rather than through the nightly PSIS upload, significant issues occur and generally lead to the students test scores and reports being removed.

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Summative Assessment Calendar for 2020-21

Assessment	Dates
The Cambium secure browsers for the 2020-21 school year must be downloaded for all 2020-21 online tests.	Available for download https://ct.portal.cambiumast.com/secure-browsers.stml
LAS Links	January 4, 2021–April 30, 2021
NGSS Assessments	February 1–June 4, 2021 (Grade 11) March 29–June 4, 2021 (Grades 5 and 8)
Connecticut Alternate Assessment - CTAA	March 29–June 4, 2021
Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment - CTAS (Administered throughout the year)	(Upload Window for Submission through the DEI) March 29–June 4, 2021 (Grades 5, 8, and 11)
Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessments	March 29–June 4, 2021
Connecticut SAT School Day	Primary Test Dates: March 24, 2021, OR April 13, 2021 (Based on school selection) Makeup Dates: April 27 and 28, 2021, May 18, 2021

2021 Lt. Governor’s Computing Challenge

The **2021 Lt. Gov.’s Computing Challenge** is open to students in Grades 3-12. Submissions will be accepted until **April 30, 2021**. Additional information can be found [on the website](#).

Register for email updates

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

