

Description of Designated Supports and Accommodations for Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards Assessments

This quick guide was developed for Planning and Placement Teams and Section 504 Teams to provide an explanation of the types of accessibility supports available and a general description of designated supports and accommodations available for state-wide testing. Please refer to the [CSDE Assessment Guidelines](#), and other resources included in this document, for a more detailed explanation of accessibility features.

What are designated supports and how can they help students with access needs on the Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards Assessments?

The diversity of student needs is complex. Therefore, accessibility supports for state-wide assessments are also extensive. There are three categories for grouping supports based on student characteristics, need, and independence. They include Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations. Within each of these groups there are two general types of accessibility features: digitally embedded and non-embedded.

Universal Tools are accessibility features of the assessment that are either provided as digitally delivered embedded components of the Test Delivery System or provided separately from the digital platform as a non-embedded tool. Universal tools are available to all students based on student preference and selection. Use of universal tools yield valid scores that meet the requirements for participation and assessment identified in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) when used in a manner consistent with state guidelines (refer to the [CSDE Assessment Guidelines](#) for more information). Embedded universal tools are automatically built into the student's online test, therefore they do not need to be pre-set in the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE). However, use of these tools is optional and can remain unselected if they are a distraction to the student.

Designated Supports are those accessibility features available for use by any student for whom the need has been indicated by an educator team with input from the parent/guardian and student. If these supports are selected for use on statewide assessments, they should also be consistently embedded and accessed in the student's instructional setting. It is recommended that a consistent process in each district be used to determine and communicate decisions regarding these supports for individual students. All educators making these decisions should be trained by their School or District Administrator in this determination process and should be made aware of the range and types of designated supports available.

Accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that increase equitable access during assessment. Unlike universal tools or designated supports, accommodations are available only for students for whom there is documentation of the need in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan. Assessment accommodations generate valid assessment results for students who need them; they allow these students to show what they know and can do. These accommodations should be consistently embedded and accessed in the student's instructional setting.

In exceptional circumstances, there may be a student whose disabilities are such that the allowable embedded and/or non-embedded accommodations described in this document provide insufficient access to the content in the assessment. In such cases, non-standard accommodations may be appropriate. The provision of such accommodations is based on documented need in an IEP or 504 Plan and must be requested for use on statewide assessments. While these accommodations may be considered "non-

standard” in a standardized test setting, they may be quite appropriate for use during instruction and outside the classroom setting. These non-standard accommodations, also known as special documented accommodations, include but are not limited to the provision of a human reader or signer, or a scribe to support written communication when the embedded speech-to-text accommodation is not appropriate. These accommodations require testing in an individual test setting and may require additional training for the test administrator.

Refer to

Table 1 for a description of designated supports and accommodations. Please note, items are listed alphabetically and are not in any hierarchy of accessibility or need.

Table 1

Description of Designated Supports and Accommodations			
Accessibility Feature	Type	Description	Resources
100 Numbers Table	Non-Embedded Accommodation	A paper-based table listing numbers from 1-100 is available from Smarter Balanced for reference. Students with math related disabilities, visual processing, or spatial perception needs, may find this beneficial, as documented in their IEP or 504 Plan.	100s Number Table (cambiumast.com)
Abacus	Non-Embedded Accommodation	A tool used in place of scratch paper for a student who typically use an abacus.	
Alternate Response Options	Non-Embedded Accommodation	Students with some physical disabilities may need to use alternate response options. These are external devices that must be plugged in and be compatible with the assessment delivery platform (e.g., adapted keyboards, large keyboards, adapted mouse, touch screen, head wand, and switches).	
American Sign Language Video	Embedded Accommodation	Displays videos translating test content	

Description of Designated Supports and Accommodations			
Accessibility Feature	Type	Description	Resources
		into American Sign Language.	
Audio Transcription	Embedded Accommodation	Displays audio content transcripts of the ELA Listening Assessment that can be read by braille devices or by a qualified adult to a student who is deaf or hard of hearing.	
Braille Booklet	Non-Embedded Accommodation	This is a fixed braille test booklet (ordered in TIDE by the DA) that provides raised-dot code that individuals read with \ fingertips. Graphic material (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, and illustrations) is presented in a raised format (paper or thermoform).	
Braille Type	Embedded Accommodation	Sets the type of braille used for test content.	
Calculator	Non-Embedded Special Documented Accommodation	This special documented accommodation allows an eligible student in Grades 6-8 to use a handheld calculator on calculator-allowed items only (Smarter Balanced Math).	CSDE Assessment Guidelines Special Documented Accommodations
Closed Captioning	Embedded Accommodation	Displays caption for audio content in select tests.	
Color Contrast	Embedded Designated Support	Sets the color of the text and background in the test.	
Color Contrast	Non-Embedded Designated Support	Enables alternate screen background or font color based on student needs or preferences.	
Color Overlay	Non-Embedded Designated Support	Color transparencies (provided by the teacher) are placed over	

Description of Designated Supports and Accommodations			
Accessibility Feature	Type	Description	Resources
		a paper-provided assessment.	
Customized Medical Accommodation	Special Documented Accommodation	A special documented accommodation that allows the eligible student to use an accommodation currently not listed in the Assessment Guidelines document. Contact the CSDE to request this accommodation.	CSDE Assessment Guidelines CSDE Contact Information: Deirdre Ducharme 860-713-6859 Katie Seifert 860-713-6722
Glossary	Embedded Designated Support	A language support provided for selected construct-irrelevant terms for Mathematics tests only.	
Human Signer/Visual Support	Non-Embedded Special Documented Accommodation	This special documented accommodation allows a qualified test administrator to sign or provide visual language support for the test directions and/or test content to a student who is deaf or hard of hearing.	Documented Evidence of a Read Aloud of the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages Smarter Balanced Assessments: Read Aloud Guidelines Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessment: Guidelines for Read Aloud of Stimuli and Items Special Documented Accommodations
Large Print	Non-Embedded Accommodation	This is a non-embedded fixed-form test booklet (ordered in TIDE by the DA) that provides enlarged content (12pt Verdana) by 140% (16.8 Verdana). It is printed on 12x18 paper and corner stapled.	
Magnification	Non-Embedded Designated Support	This non-embedded magnifier allows the size to be increased to a	

Description of Designated Supports and Accommodations			
Accessibility Feature	Type	Description	Resources
		level not provided for by the Zoom universal tool.	
Masking	Embedded Designated Support	Allows student to cover a distracting area of the test page.	
Math Manipulatives (3-8)	Non-Embedded Special Documented Accommodation	This special documented accommodation allows an eligible student to use concrete mathematical tools supplied by the district to support decision making. Tools may not include numbers, formulas, or labels. Refer to Math Manipulatives brochure before selecting this accommodation.	Math Manipulatives Brochure (cambiumast.com)
Medical Device	Non-Embedded Accommodation	Allows student to use medical related software/device (e.g., glucose monitor) during testing in accordance with test security guidelines. Contact the CSDE for more information.	CSDE Contact Information: Deirdre Ducharme 860-713-6859 Katie Seifert 860-713-6722
Mouse Pointer	Embedded Designated Support	Sets the size and color of the mouse cursor.	
Multiplication Table	Non-Embedded Accommodation	A paper-based (digits 1-12) Multiplication Table is available for a student in Grades 3- 8 for the Smarter Balanced Mathematics Assessment.	Multiplication Table Grades 3-8 (cambiumast.com)
Native Language Reader Directions	Non-Embedded Designated Support	A native language reader can be provided if a student needs the translation of test directions/script within the SAY boxes in the Summative Assessment Test Administration Manual (TAM) if a	

Description of Designated Supports and Accommodations			
Accessibility Feature	Type	Description	Resources
		school has a reader available who speaks that language.	
Noise Buffer	Non-Embedded Designated Support	Non-embedded ear mufflers, white noise, whisper phone, and/or other equipment used to block external sounds.	
Permissive Mode	Embedded Accommodation	Allows certain accessibility software to be used with the secure browser. (Note: Only select this if student is using external assistive technology.)	
Printed Test Directions in English	Non-Embedded Designated Support	This language support provides the student with a visual reference in English for test directions/script within the SAY boxes in the Summative Test Administration Manual (TAM).	
Print on Demand (Items)	Non-Embedded Special Documented Accommodation	This special documented accommodation allows the proctor to print paper copies of items for a student with complex physical/neurological needs that can't be met using other accessibility features and accommodations. Contact the CSDE to request more information before selecting this accommodation.	CSDE Contact Information: Deirdre Ducharme 860-713-6859 Katie Seifert 860-713-6722
Print on Demand (Stimuli & Items)	Non-Embedded Special Documented Accommodation	This special documented accommodation allows the proctor to print paper copies of either passages/stimuli and/or items for a student with	CSDE Contact Information: Deirdre Ducharme 860-713-6859 Katie Seifert

Description of Designated Supports and Accommodations			
Accessibility Feature	Type	Description	Resources
		complex physical/neurological needs that can't be met using other accessibility features and accommodations. Contact the CSDE to request more information before selecting this accommodation.	860-713-6722
Print Size	Embedded Designated Support	Sets the zoom level for test content.	
Read Aloud	Non-Embedded Designated Support	Text is read aloud to the student by a trained and qualified human reader who follows the test administration manual, security procedures, and the Read Aloud Guidelines.	<p>Reader Designated Supports and Accommodations for Smarter Balanced Mathematics and English Language Arts and The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments</p> <p>Documented Evidence of a Read Aloud of the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages</p> <p>Smarter Balanced Assessments: Read Aloud Guidelines</p> <p>Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessment: Guidelines for Read Aloud of Stimuli and Items</p> <p>Smarter Balanced Mathematics and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments: Guidelines for Spanish Read Aloud of Stimuli and Items</p>

Description of Designated Supports and Accommodations			
Accessibility Feature	Type	Description	Resources
Read Aloud of ELA Passages	Non-Embedded Special Documented Accommodation	This is a special documented accommodation that allows the ELA Reading Passages to be read aloud to the student by a trained and qualified human reader who follows the Test Administration Manual, CSDE security procedures, and the Read Aloud Guidelines.	Smarter Balanced Assessments: Read Aloud Guidelines Reader Designated Supports and Accommodations for Smarter Balanced Mathematics and English Language Arts and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessments Special Documented Accommodations
Scribe	Non-Embedded Special Documented Accommodation	This special documented accommodation allows student to dictate their responses to a qualified person who records verbatim what they dictate.	Scribing Protocol for Smarter Balanced Assessments
Separate Setting	Non-Embedded Designated Support	Students accessing select accommodations require a separate setting. A student who is easily distracted, or who may distract others in a group testing, may require an alternate location to participate in the assessment.	
Sign Language for Test Items	Non-Embedded Special Documented Accommodation	This special documented accommodation allows a qualified test administrator to sign or provide visual language support for the test directions and/or test content to a student who is deaf or hard of hearing.	Special Documented Accommodations Smarter Balanced Assessments: Read Aloud Guidelines
Simplified Test Directions	Non-Embedded Designated Support	This support simplifies the test directions script within the SAY boxes in	Guidelines for Simplified Test Directions in the Test

Description of Designated Supports and Accommodations			
Accessibility Feature	Type	Description	Resources
		the Summative Test Administration Manual (TAM).	Administration Manual (cambiumast.com)
Spanish Toggle	Embedded Designated Support	Sets the language presentation for the math or science test content to Spanish. Choose only if student is Spanish literate.	
Specialized Calculator	Non-Embedded Accommodation	A specialized calculator (Braille/Talking Calculator) is typically used during instruction for a student who is blind. It may also be used for a student who accesses calculators with assistive technology devices. This is only available in Grades 6-8 on calculator-allowed items.	
Speech-to-Text	Embedded Accommodation	Allows student to orally dictate their responses to open-ended items using Cambium Assessment's internal speech-to-text software.	
Streamline	Embedded Designated Support	Displays test content vertically for enhanced accessibility.	
Text-to-Speech	Embedded Designated Support	Text (test items and responses) is read aloud to the student via embedded text-to-speech technology.	
Text-to-Speech of ELA Passages	Embedded Accommodation	Text (ELA Reading passages and all ELA test items and responses) is read aloud to the student via embedded text-to-speech technology.	Decision Guidelines Text-to-Speech of the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages
Translated Test Directions	Non-Embedded Designated Support	Available for math and ELA, this is a word-to-word translation of the directions and functions	Translated Test Directions (cambiumast.com)

Description of Designated Supports and Accommodations			
Accessibility Feature	Type	Description	Resources
		a student will encounter when using the online Test Delivery System (TDS). This language support should only be selected if the student is literate in their native language.	
Translated Test Directions in American Sign Language	Non-Embedded Designated Support	Intended for a student who is deaf or hard of hearing, this language support allows a qualified test administrator to sign or provide visual language support of the test directions script within the SAY boxes in the Summative Test Administration Manual (TAM).	
Translation Math Glossary	Embedded Designated Support	Allows student to view a glossary for certain words in the test content.	Translation (Glossary) – Embedded Designated Support (cambiumast.com)
Word Prediction	Embedded Accommodation	Word prediction allows a student to begin typing a word and choose from a list of words that have been predicted from word frequency and syntax rules. Word prediction is delivered via an embedded accommodation for open-ended items.	

CSDE Contact Information

Table 2

CSDE Contact Information Special Populations, Accessibility & Accommodations		
Name	Email	Phone
Deirdre Ducharme	Deirdre.Ducharme@ct.gov	860-713-6859



Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program

Katie Seifert	Katherine.Seifert@ct.gov	860-713-6722
---------------	--	--------------

Contact the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Help Desk for additional guidance.

Email: cthelpdesk@cambiumassessment.com Phone: 1.844.202.7583