

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

About the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form

This FAQ document is intended to provide local education agencies (LEAs), parents, advocacy organizations and other interested parties with information regarding eligibility criteria for participation in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System.

1. Where can I access the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form?

Answer: The [Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#) is available for download on the [Connecticut State Department of Education \(CSDE\) Web site](#) and on the [Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal](#).

2. Who is responsible for completing the form?

Answer: The Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form should be completed in draft by the student’s primary special education teacher (case manager). The draft is then discussed at the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meeting to determine eligibility.

The student’s primary special education teacher must complete the required annual CSDE’s Alternate Assessment System training before the form can be submitted online.

Note: Once the form is completed and approved by the Planning and Placement Team, a copy should be provided to the Director of Special Education and the District Test Administrator prior to testing for necessary planning and action.

3. The PPT has determined that the student qualifies for the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System. What are the next steps?

Answer: The completed and approved Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form must be submitted electronically through the Data Entry Interface (DEI). The hard-copy eligibility form should be maintained with the student’s file.

4. What are the submission deadlines for entering the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form through the DEI to register the student to participate in the Alternate Assessment System?

Answer: The DEI will open on November 12, 2020, and close on June 4, 2021. It is recommended that the eligibility form be submitted through the DEI as soon as the PPT determines that a student meets eligibility criteria. To ensure that qualified students have access to the alternate assessments at the time of testing, the following deadline submissions were established.

Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form Submission Dates through the Data Entry Interface (DEI)	Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form Student Subgroup
November 12- January 15, 2021	Eligible Students in Grade 11; and Dually Identified (English Learner and Special Education) Students Grades 3-8 and 11
November 12- February 15, 2021	Eligible Students in Grades 3-8; and Extended deadline for newly eligible Grade 11 students

Educators must make every effort to meet these specified deadlines. The submission of the eligibility form through the DEI registers a student for the alternate assessment system. Without submission of the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form, the student will not have access to the alternate assessments. Reminder: Only CSDE trained teachers have the necessary permissions to enter the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form into the DEI.

5. What happens once the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form is submitted through the DEI?

Answer: Once the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form is submitted through the DEI by the specified deadlines (see the response to Question 4), the Alternate Assessment Indicator in the student's TIDE Test Setting account will be set to YES. Activation of the Alternate Assessment Indicator will provide the student with online access to the Connecticut Alternate Assessment for mathematics and ELA at the time of testing. Without this activation, the student will only have access to the online standard state-wide assessments (Smarter Balanced mathematics and ELA, and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessment (if the student is enrolled in Grades 5, 8, or 11)).

If the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form is submitted after the established due dates, the District Administrator (DA in TIDE) must contact the Connecticut Helpdesk (1-844-202-7583) or contact Janet Stuck (janet.stuck@ct.gov) or Deirdre Ducharme (deirdre.ducharme@ct.gov) to request the activation of the Alternate Assessment Indicator in TIDE.

6. Does an IQ score less than 70 assure eligibility on the alternate assessments?

Answer: No. If the results from a full scale IQ is less than 70, data from the IEP must also indicate that the results from the student's adaptive behavior is well below age-level expectations (composite/functional score must be more than 1.5 standard deviations below the mean). There must also evidence throughout the IEP that the student requires extensive, repeated instruction and support that is not of a temporary or transient nature, and that the student uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, demonstrate, and transfer skills.

7. Cognitive assessments were not administered to my student. Can he/she still participate in the alternate assessments?

Answer: Yes. However, in the absence of standardized, cognitive assessments, there must be evidence to substantiate the presence of an intellectual impairment. Evidence might include, but is not limited to, curriculum based assessment scores, detailed present levels of performance information, goals and objectives, and progress report data.

Upon review of the evidence submitted, the CSDE may contact districts for additional information.

8. What are the recommendations for administering adaptive behavioral assessments if no scores exist on the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP)??

Answer: There are a variety of adaptive behavior assessments used by Planning and Placement Teams including, but not limited to, the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales, the Scales of Independent Behavior, and the Adaptive Behavior Assessment Scale. When identifying the assessment on the Eligibility Form, include the full name and version as multiple editions may exist. Note: It is important that the PPT select a measurement that truly measures daily functional skills. It is not appropriate to use other types of assessments, such as language or behavioral assessments, in lieu of adaptive behavioral measurements.

9. Should my student with a primary disability category of Intellectual Disability participate in the Alternate Assessment System?

Answer: The Planning and Placement Team must review student specific evidence for all students, regardless of primary disability category, to determine if the student has barriers to access the standard summative assessment even if provided designated supports, accommodations, and assistive technology. The PPT must also ensure that the evidence explicitly documented throughout the student's Individual Education Program (IEP), in conjunction with the required data in the Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form, captures the student's intellectual impairment, adaptive behavior, and the confirmation that the student receives extensive, repeated, individualized instruction, and academic support across all academic and non-academic areas.

10. I have a student with a Primary Disability Category of Learning Disability, SLD/Dyslexia or Emotional Disturbance. Does this student qualify for the alternate assessments?

Answer: Only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are eligible for the Connecticut Alternate Assessment. For students to qualify for the alternate assessment, PPTs must provide evidence to support that the student:

- has an intellectual impairment;
- has adaptive behavior well below age level; and
- requires intensive instruction and significant supports.

Sections 34 CFR 300.309 (3)(a)(1) and (2) and 300.8(c)(4)(i) of the IDEA requires that intellectual factors/impairments be ruled out in order to qualify for special education services under the categories of a specific learning disability or emotional disturbance. Therefore, students with these primary disability types typically would not participate in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System unless there is evidence to substantiate the presence of a significant cognitive disability (see the indicators outlined by the [Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#)).

Additional Resources:

[How to Access the Data Entry Interface](#)

[The Annotated Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions and Answers about the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System](#)

[Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Training Materials](#)