



Student Assessment News

Connecticut State Department of Education • Performance Office

May 3, 2021

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

Connecticut Accountability Waiver Request Approved

Use the quick links below to access articles and/or sections included in this newsletter.

The U.S. Department of Education has approved Connecticut’s request for a waiver from implementing district/school accountability for the 2020-21 school year. Therefore, Connecticut will not issue a summative rating (i.e., the Accountability Index), not categorize schools into 1-5 categories, and not identify new Turnaround or Focus schools (categories 4 and 5) in Fall 2021 based on data from the 2020-21 school year. Please see the [Next Generation Accountability web page](#), as well as the [April 8, Commissioner memo](#) to Superintendents for more information.

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The Performance Office has received many questions over the last week related to Remote Summative Testing for Smarter Balanced and NGSS. **Before** administering remote summative assessments, please closely consider the information below and share these recommendations with your school coordinators and test proctors:

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- The [Remote Test Administration Manual](#) provides overall guidance for Remote Summative Testing. This document includes the recommended teacher script that must be read or provided to students before and during testing.
- All materials to support remote testing can be located on the [Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal](#).
- Be sure that the Secure Browser, Mobile App, or Kiosk App is downloaded on the student’s testing device.
- Be sure that all students who test remotely have “**remote**” chosen in the Remote Proctoring Indicator in TIDE (see TAM pg. 25). Please remember that students that are not tested in person with a teacher in the classroom for testing should have the Remote Proctor Indicator on before testing.
- The Performance Office strongly recommends that all proctors train for Remote Summative Testing using the [Remote Testing Training Course](#).
- Parent communications are available on the [Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal](#) and have been translated into multiple languages.

Tips for Active Remote Proctoring

- As noted in the [Remote Test Administration Manual](#), the CSDE recommends test administrators only allow groups of 10 or less in their remote test sessions. This promotes the proper and active monitoring of testers.
- The teacher should read the script to students at the time of testing (see Appendix D of the Remote Proctoring Test Administration Manual for details).
- Student cameras **MUST** remain on continuously during the entire test session. If the camera is turned off for any reason the testing session must be stopped for that student.



Connecticut Alternate Assessment



Connecticut SAT School Day



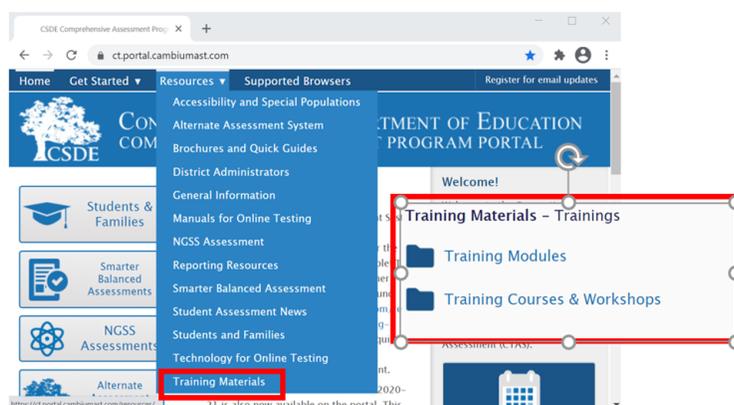
Summative Assessment Updates

2021 Assessment Office Hours

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Performance Office staff is hosting Office Hour webinars each Thursday from 3-4 p.m. The CSDE staff and their partner vendor, Cambium Assessment Inc., will provide assessment updates on various topics. [Attendees must register for the series](#) and may attend all or some sessions as needed.

Access to Smarter Balanced and NGSS Training Materials

Access recordings and the PowerPoints for previous Office Hours on the [CSDE Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal](#) under the Resources drop-down menu. Choose Training Materials. Additional materials are available in the Training Courses & Workshops folder.



Defining a Small Group Setting

A small group setting is defined by the purpose for the small group:

- A student's need to be in a group smaller than the typical class size;
- Accommodation requirements such as a human reader; and
- Remote testing requirements.

Teachers working closely with students should be able to determine the needs and requirements for each individual student. In a remote setting, the student will only have access to the teacher but student groupings should be thoughtfully established. Use the practice test as an opportunity to determine the group size needs for both in-person and remote test sessions, as well as review students' needs with the parent or guardian.

Educator Appreciation Week is May 3-7

To all of the administrators, teachers, school nurses, food service workers, paraprofessionals, school counselors and other educators thank you for the work that you do for students and families. This year has been especially challenging but educators have risen to the challenges and provided the support for academics and social emotional support that students so desperately needed. You are true heroes! Thank you also for the work you do in support of assessment!



Special Populations Updates

Clarification of Native Language Directions for English Learners Taking the Remote NGSS

English learners that are eligible to have the NGSS Test Directions read to them in their native language can have this conducted remotely if you are able to establish a 1:1 test session or homogeneous small group for same native language speakers. The directions that are read to the students by the proctor are those published in the [Remote Proctoring Test Administration Manual](#) (Appendix D).

Reminder about Large Print and Braille Accommodations

District Administrators (DAs) for testing should place orders for Large Print or Braille material for the Smarter Balanced or NGSS in the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) system under Preparing for Testing/Orders. Please reference pages 47-48 of the [Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment Test Coordinator's Manual](#) for more information. As a reminder, students should not complete the Smarter Balanced English Language Arts (ELA) Performance Task. After testing is complete, student responses must be entered into the Data Entry Interface (DEI) by June 4, 2021, for scoring and reporting.

Late Submissions for the Connecticut Alternate Assessments and Other Reminders

If you recently submitted the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form for your student, be sure to contact the Connecticut Help Desk to request the activation of the Alt Flag Indicator at 1-844-202-7583 or cthelpdesk@cambiumassessment.com.

Prior to testing, Teachers Administering the Alternate (TEAs) must download and print the Directions for Test Administration (DTA) in TIDE. As a reminder, these are secure test documents that are grade and test specific. The TEA should download and print DTAs for both math and ELA. These documents must be used in conjunction with the Connecticut Alternate Assessments ([CTAA](#)) [Test](#)

[Administration Manual](#) at the time of testing.

If students require the use of paper-copy tests, secure CTAA test materials can be accessed in TIDE by the District Administrator. These materials must be securely maintained and stored in a safe and locked location. Once testing is complete, DTAs and any secure test material must be shredded. Refer to the [CTAA Responsibility Checklist](#) and the Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment ([CTAS](#)) [Responsibility Checklist](#) to prepare for testing. (Note: Do not shred the CTAS Test Materials. These are to be shared by teachers and used year after year.)

Set up test schedules. Make sure the test environment and accommodations are appropriate for testing.

Connecticut Alternate Assessment Early Stopping Rule

The [Connecticut Alternate Assessment \(CTAA\) Test Administration Manual](#) (Section IV.III Early Stopping Rule (ESR)) provides guidance for students who have not yet established a mode of communication. Please follow the process defined in the [Alternate Assessment System Early Stopping Rule Flow Chart](#). As a reminder:

- The Math and ELA tests must be PAUSED after the fourth item is administered without a student response.
- If the student is in Grade 5, 8 or 11, please administer the first activity in the CTAS Performance Task for CTAS to determine if the student can provide a response. If so, test administration should continue. If not, select NR on the paper copy of the Student Score Worksheet and stop testing.
- Contact the Office of Student Assessment to determine next steps for ESR for CTAA and CTAS.

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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
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	Makeup Date: May 18, 2021



Contact the Connecticut Helpdesk (1-844-202-7583) to request the activation of the Alt Flag Indicator for any Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form submitted after February 15.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) continues to emphasize that access to in-person learning opportunities is a priority, both for educational access and the importance of the social-emotional support provided to students in the school building. The [Interim Guidance for Remote Learning 2021-2022 School Year](#) confirms that at this time, the Connecticut State Department of Public Health (DPH) and the CSDE do not anticipate the need to mandate, due to public health necessity, continued voluntary remote learning options next year. The CSDE is already engaging with stakeholders to provide future detailed guidance around the innovative and deliberate use of technology in concert with in-person learning, so we may move forward and learn from our experience during the pandemic.

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.

