



Connecticut is Seeking Flexibility from the U.S. Department of Education for its Science Assessment in 2017-18



What are Connecticut's science standards?

- Academic standards are a set of learning expectations for what students should know and be able to do in a given grade.
- Connecticut science standards are called the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).
- The State Board of Education adopted these standards in November 2015.
- These standards expect students to not only master challenging scientific concepts but also use information, observations, and data to think and act like scientists.
- Students need to master these standards in order to prepare them for success in college and 21st-century careers.

What are Connecticut's science assessments?

- They are the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) for students in Grades 5 and 8 and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) for students in Grade 10.

Are the CMT and CAPT aligned to the NGSS?

- No. They are not aligned to the NGSS. They are aligned to Connecticut's old science standards.

What is the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) doing about this?

- The CSDE is working closely with Connecticut science educators, science education partners, and test development experts to develop a new assessment that is aligned to the NGSS.
- The CSDE conducted a successful pilot of test questions in spring 2017.
- A broader field test is needed in spring 2018 so that the new assessment can be ready by spring 2019 for students in Grades 5, 8, and 11.

What flexibility is Connecticut seeking?

- In spring 2018, the CSDE wants to administer an NGSS-aligned field test to all students in Grades 5 and 8 in lieu of the CMT. Therefore, CSDE needs a waiver from sections 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(ii)(aa) and 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(ii)(bb) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
- The CSDE will also not issue any scores from the field test for students, schools, or districts. Therefore, the CSDE needs a waiver from section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(x) and related reporting sections of ESSA.
- Connecticut will not be administering the CAPT in spring 2018 because those students will take the new NGSS assessment as 11th graders in spring 2019. This is already permissible under current law.

Why is Connecticut seeking this flexibility?

- It will reduce testing time for students and teachers in Grades 5 and 8.
- Schools can continue to rework their curriculum/instruction to align to the NGSS.
- Teachers can begin teaching the new standards and not feel any pressure to prepare students for the CMT/CAPT science.
- Ultimately, when Connecticut students/teachers participate fully in a field test, it will ensure that *our* test reflects the needs of *our* students.

What will happen if this flexibility is received?

- All students in Grades 5, 8, and 11 will take an NGSS-aligned field test in the spring of 2018.
- No science scores will be issued for students, schools, or districts for 2017-18.
- Districts and schools will still be held accountable for participation in the 2017-18 field test.

How can I give my input on this flexibility request?

Please email ctstudentassessment@ct.gov by July 28, 2017.