

## 2013 Common Core State Standards aligned “Practice Assessment” Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Purpose: The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has developed a 2013 Common Core State Standards aligned “Practice Assessment” (CCSS APA) in response to requests from district superintendents for an assessment that would provide an indication of how well students are learning the content aligned with the CCSS.

The answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about this assessment follow:

Questions	Answers			
What are the benefits to school districts of administering the practice assessment?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The results will help to gauge the progress of CCSS implementation at the district level.</li> <li>2. Students will gain some familiarity with CCSS aligned test items and use a computer to respond to test items.</li> <li>3. The assessment allows districts to conduct an online, district-wide trial run for the upcoming mandated computer-based assessment.</li> </ol>			
For which grades and content areas is the practice assessment available?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Grades 3-5 in Reading and Mathematics.</li> <li>2. Grades 6-8 and 11 Writing and Mathematics.</li> </ol>			
How long will it take to administer each session?	<b>Content and Grade</b>	<b>Testing Time</b>	<b>Time for Directions</b>	<b>Total Time</b>
	<b>Reading</b> Grades 3-5	60 minutes	10 minutes	70 minutes
	<b>Mathematics</b> Grades 3-8	60 minutes	10 minutes	70 minutes
	<b>Writing</b> Grades 6-8 and 11	90 minutes	10 minutes	100 minutes
	<b>Mathematics</b> Grade 11	90 minutes	10 minutes	100 Minutes
Do students need calculators for the Mathematics portion of this assessment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students in grade 11 must use a handheld calculator, preferably a graphing calculator. No calculator is provided by the MIST application at grade 11.</li> <li>• For students in grades 6, 7, and 8 the calculator is provided by the MIST application for those items on which a calculator is allowed. Students may not use their own calculator.</li> <li>• For students in grades 3, 4, and 5 no calculator may be used.</li> </ul>			
Must districts adhere strictly to the time limits listed above?	No. For the purposes of scheduling, the above time estimates are appropriate. Test Examiners may halt testing at the end of each session accordingly. However, it is permitted to allow students who wish additional time to use it to finish testing if that does not disrupt the school’s schedule.			
How many test sessions will be administered to each participating student?	Each student will be administered only a single test session. For example a sixth-grade student taking writing will not also be required to take mathematics.			
What will be reported from the practice assessment?	An overall score for writing, reading, or mathematics will be reported by district. Where possible, further scores by reporting category (e.g., The reading categories informational and literary) will also be reported.			

Questions	Answers
What is the test delivery system for the practice assessment?	The Measurement Incorporated Secure Testing (MIST) system will be used to administer the practice assessment. The same applet used for the standard testing in March 2013 will be used for this assessment.
What are the technical requirements to administer the practice assessment?	This assessment is administered only on the computer. Each tested student must have access to a computer connected to the Internet and running the MIST software to test. There is no pencil-and-paper component to this test. Please refer to the <a href="#">MIST Technical Guide</a> for testing requirements.
What is the administration window for the practice assessment?	April 22, 2013 to May 17, 2013
What are the scheduling requirements for the practice assessment?	Students may be tested at any time during the administration window. While it would be preferred, there is no strict requirement for students in the same grade and session to be tested at the same time as one another.
How does a school district notify the CSDE of its participation?	Each district must complete the <i>Memorandum of Collaboration</i> indicating district participation.
Which students will participate in the practice assessment?	Individual students will be selected by the CSDE in Grades 3, 4, 5, and 11 by content area. These student names will appear on rosters in the MIST system alongside the assigned test. Due to the differences in test administration times, Grades 6, 7, and 8 students will be assigned to both writing and mathematics on the rosters; however, each student is only expected to be administered one of these two test sessions. The district is asked to assign students to a particular test with roughly half the students at the school taking Mathematics, and the other half taking Writing. (Note: Students currently administered the Skills Checklist should <i>not</i> participate in this practice assessment.)
Should students with special needs participate in the CCSS APA?	Students who require accommodations are encouraged to take the practice assessment. This includes students who previously participated in the Modified Assessment System. Accommodations can be provided to these students. There is no need to enter test accommodations in the data collection Web site for this administration. There are, however, certain limitations as to what accommodations are available for this online assessment. In certain individual cases, it would be impractical for the district to provide an accommodation. In these cases, a student may be exempted from taking this practice assessment.
Which common testing accommodations will be available for the practice assessment?	Most common accommodations that are available on the census CMT and CAPT will be available for this practice assessment with the exception of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Braille</li> <li>• Large Print</li> <li>• Text Reader of Test Items</li> <li>• Test Booklet</li> </ul>
Do students who have an extended time accommodation need to be tested in a separate setting?	No. While the Test Examiner's Manual for the CCSS APA provides guidance for testing groups of students with similar time limits together, it is permissible of this assessment to include students who may require additional time in the same testing room as students who do not.

Questions	Answers	
How will schools be able to access the MIST system for this assessment?	Measurement Incorporated will provide secure, school-level <b>Usernames</b> and <b>Passwords</b> for the CCSS APA to each district's test coordinator. The anticipated date to receive this information is April 17.	
How will schools know which test form each student is assigned to take?	The MIST system will provide school-level <b>rosters</b> that can be accessed using the school-level passwords. The anticipated date that rosters will be available is April 18.	
What happens if a student is absent on a day that he or she was scheduled to test?	Districts may schedule make-up testing sessions for absent students as long as they occur during the test window (April 22 to May 17).	
When will results be available?	Summer of 2013	
What are the similarities and differences between the practice assessment and the 2013 Smarter Balanced Pilot Test?	CCSS aligned Practice Assessment	Smarter Balanced Pilot Test
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Items are aligned to the Common Core</li> <li>• Administered online</li> <li>• Provides performance feedback at the district level</li> <li>• These items will not appear on the Smarter Balanced Assessment but are similar in content to items that will</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Items are aligned to the Common Core</li> <li>• Includes Technology Enhanced items and Performance Tasks</li> <li>• Administered online</li> <li>• Provides no performance feedback</li> <li>• These items will be evaluated for inclusion on the 2014 Field Test and the 2015 operational Smarter Balanced Assessment</li> </ul>

Please call the Student Assessment office at 860-713-6860 or 860-713-6890 with any further questions.