

STUDENT ASSESSMENT NEWS

Connecticut State Department Of Education

[Archived Student Assessment News](#)

CTStudentAssessment@ct.gov

January 15, 2015

860-713-6860

English Learner (EL) Consideration for English Language Arts (ELA) Exemption

In accordance with Federal and State regulations, if an EL student has enrolled for the **first time** in a U.S. school and has attended for fewer than 12 months, the student **may** be exempted from the **ELA** portions of the Smarter Balanced Assessments and the Connecticut Alternate Assessments (CTAA).

All EL students must take the math and science portions of state assessments regardless of how long they have been enrolled in a U.S. school. This means EL students will participate in either the Smarter Balanced Assessments or CTAA for math. EL students in Grades 5 and 8 will participate in Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Science. EL students in Grade 10 will participate in Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Science. These students may be provided supports and accommodations as described in the [Assessment Guidelines 2014 - 2015 Edition](#).

To be eligible for an EL exemption, the student must be administered an appropriate language proficiency assessment (a component of the identification process) AND be identified in the Public School Information System (PSIS) as an English learner.

To assist with determining the appropriate date for EL exemption, refer to the table below.

2015 Smarter Balanced Assessments/CTAA English Learner Dates for Consideration for ELA Exemption

Assessment	Grade(s)	Test Window	EL Exemption if student entered a U.S. school for first time AFTER date indicated
CTAA	Grades 3-8 and 11	March 30-May 15, 2015	March 30, 2014
Smarter Balanced	Grades 3-8	March 17-June 12, 2015	March 17, 2014
Smarter Balanced	Grade 11	April 27-June 12, 2015	April 27, 2014

Accommodations Collection Reminders for Special Education, Section 504 and EL Students

All designated supports/accommodations for the 2015 administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessments and for the CMT/CAPT Science must be entered into the [CSDE Accommodations Collection Web site](#) by **February 13, 2015**. This includes the submission of the [CTAA and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklists Science Eligibility & Learner Characteristics Inventory \(LCI\)](#) for students who will be administered the CTAA and Skills Checklist Science. This information will be transferred to TIDE for those students who will be administered the Smarter Balanced assessments. Those students taking the CTAA will have their information uploaded to the CTAA/NCSC portal and to [Measurement Incorporated \(MI\) portal](#) for students taking the Skills Checklist Science. Although the [CSDE Accommodations Collection Web site](#) remains open after the date to enter information, staff will be required to take additional steps to register students in order to participate in this year's state assessments.

Special Accommodations

Refer to Appendix B of the [Assessment Guidelines 2014-2015](#) for a description of the procedures to petition for special accommodations. It is recommended that these petitions be initiated by **February 13, 2015**, or earlier to provide time to process them before testing. These petition requests are initiated by a phone call from the District Test Coordinator to Janet Stuck (860-713-6837) or Joe Amenta (860-713-6855). Examples of special accommodations include, but are not limited to, Scribe, Read Aloud (ELA Passages Grades 6 - 8 and 11), Print on Demand and Smarter Balanced Large Print.



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Reminder Regarding Required Training for Teachers Administering Alternate Assessments

On June 20, 2014, District Test Coordinators were informed about [Required Training for Connecticut Alternate Assessments](#). All special education teachers with the primary responsibility for assessing students with significant cognitive disabilities are required to receive training by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) before March 1, 2015. Currently 1,400 teachers have accessed the online training and 400 have participated in the live training. The MI portal application *CAPT Skills Checklist Certified Users* or *CMT Skills Checklist Certified Users* shows teachers who have received training and are eligible to administer the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science and CTAA. Trained teachers should also have individual documentation indicating they have completed the training and may administer the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science and the CTAA in 2015.

Digital Library: Featured Assessment Literacy Module

[Understanding the Smarter Balanced Assessment System](#)

Summary: This module provides an introduction to the three core components of the Smarter Balanced Assessment System — summative assessments, interim assessments, and formative assessment practices — by describing how evidence generated by each core component may be used and how the comprehensive system enhances teaching and learning. Educators then apply what they have learned in the module by reflecting and planning to use evidence of student learning generated by the Smarter Balanced Assessment System in their educational setting.

Access the [Smarter Balanced Digital Library](#) to engage in this Assessment Literacy Module.

Digital Library Accounts

The CSDE is managing the Digital Library user accounts. To modify existing accounts (i.e., first/last name and e-mail address changes) or to delete accounts, District Test Coordinators should send an email to Joe Di Garbo (Joe.DiGarbo@ct.gov). To create new accounts, prepare a spreadsheet that contains the First Name, Last Name, and E-mail Address for each new user (see sample spreadsheet below). E-mail addresses must be professional (district/school) e-mail addresses.

Sample Spreadsheet

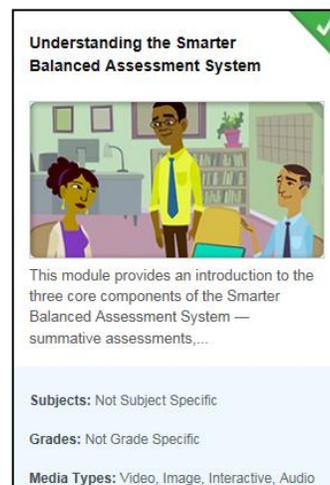
	A	B	C
1	First Name	Last Name	E-mail Address
2			

The completed spreadsheet should also be sent to Joe Di Garbo (Joe.DiGarbo@ct.gov) only **by the District Test Coordinator**. Once the template is uploaded, each listed educator will receive a "Welcome to the Smarter Balanced Digital Library" e-mail (from Smarter-DoNotReply [Smarter-DoNotReply@opentestsystem.org]) with access information.

District Technology Upgrades to Support the Transition to the New Standards Request for Proposal

The [District Technology Upgrades to Support Transition to the New Standards](#) Request for Proposal (RFP) was released by the Connecticut State Department of Education. The RFP seeks proposals for alterations, repairs, improvements, technology, equipment and capital start-up costs, including acquisition costs to expand the availability of high-quality school models and assist in the implementation of common core state standards and assessments. The submission date for proposals is February 13, 2015.

Please note that a [FAQ](#) has been created to support districts/schools as it relates to questions about the RFP. Additionally, the CSDE is seeking grant reviewers for March 3 and 4, 2015. If interested, see the [Technology Grant Review Team Invitation](#) for more information.



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Student Assessment Participation

By federal and state law, universal student assessment is required in ELA and Mathematics in Grades 3-8 and once in high school annually. Also by federal and state law, an assessment is required in science once in each school level (elementary, middle, and high school). In Connecticut, students participate in the Smarter Balanced assessments in ELA/literacy and mathematics. These assessments are given in Grades 3 - 8 and 11. In science, students participate in the Science CMT in Grades 5 and 8 and the Science CAPT in Grade 10. Some students with disabilities participate in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment and the CMT Science Skills Checklist or CAPT Science Skills Checklist. Both the CSDE and each LEA are legally responsible to administer these assessments to all students.

Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments

Introductory information about the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments is now available. The Interim Assessments will be released in late January 2015. The CSDE has compiled a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQ) document. More information about the Interim Assessments is available on the [Interim Assessments page](#) of the Smarter Balanced Web site.

reminder

Connecticut State Department of Education Smarter Balanced Portal

The [CSDE Smarter Balanced Assessment Portal](#) is now available. It will house all test administration resources for Test Coordinators, Test Administrators, Technology Coordinators, as well as for parents and families. The portal also displays Recent Announcements and allows users to register for E-mail Alerts when new resources and announcements are added to the portal. The 2014 Field Test Portal will not be functioning for the operational test so it should not be utilized anymore.

The [Secure Browsers](#) page provides information about supported operating systems and links for downloading the new secure browsers for the Spring 2015 test administration. Refer to the *Secure Browser Installation Manual* and *Technical Specifications Manual for Online Testing* located on the [Technology Coordinators](#) page for information about installing the secure browsers. In some cases, the new secure browser will override any previous versions, but in other cases the previous version needs to be uninstalled. It is recommended that the directions in the *Secure Browser Installation Manual* be followed so that the current secure browser is used during testing.



reminder

District Test Coordinator Workshops Registration Reminder

District Test Coordinator (DTC) Workshops are scheduled for January 21 – 23, 2015, at the Institute of Technology and Business Development (ITBD) in New Britain. Training will be provided for the administration of the Smarter Balanced assessments for English language arts/literacy and mathematics, CMT/CAPT Science, CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science Assessment, and the Connecticut Alternate Assessments (CTAA) for English language arts and mathematics. These trainings **are** intended for District Test Coordinators. Information will be provided to support the training of School Coordinators and Test Administrators. Registration is limited to two attendees per district. District Test Coordinators can register for a workshop using this [LINK](#). *Registration to the workshop will close on Friday, January 16, 2015, at 5 p.m.*

Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut State Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of **race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws.** The Connecticut State Department of Education does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction. Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

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