



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Connecticut District Test Coordinators

FROM: Janet Stuck
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Academic Office

DATE: August 5, 2014

SUBJECT: National Center and State Collaborative Phase 2 Pilot Test

In spring of 2015 Connecticut will be administering a new alternate assessment in English language arts/literacy and mathematics to our eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities. We have been working with a national consortium called the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC). The NCSC is a project funded by the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, and is led by five organizations and 24 states to develop this alternate assessment. Many of Connecticut's teachers along with administrators and consultants from the Academic Office and the Bureau of Special Education have been active participants in this process. The goal of the NCSC project is to ensure that all students achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for a greater variety of post-secondary options.

Last April approximately 100 students across districts participated in the NCSC Phase 1 Pilot Test to provide information about the items and the testing platform. These students and their teachers provided valuable feedback regarding teacher training, test items, and the test administration process. This communication was considered in the development process for the Phase 2 Pilot Test.

The upcoming Phase 2 Pilot Test will inform the operational test which will be administered in the spring of 2015. The 2015 operational test in Connecticut, also referred to as the Connecticut Alternate Assessment or CTAA will ultimately replace the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist for English language arts/literacy and mathematics in Grades 3 through 8 and 11. Districts are strongly encouraged to participate in the Phase 2 Pilot Test being conducted between **October 20-Novemebr 14, 2014**, for eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities only in Grades 4 through 9 and 12. These grades reflect the fact that students will be exposed to items from the previous grade since the Phase 2 Pilot Test is being given at the beginning of this school year.

The purpose of the NCSC Phase 2 Pilot Test is to: (a) understand how the items are functioning, (b) investigate administration conditions, and (c) investigate the proposed scoring procedures for student writing products. Students will not receive individual scores. The data collected from the Phase 2 Pilot Test will inform the construction of test forms, administration procedures, and training for the spring 2015 operational test.

Student participation in the NCSC Phase 2 Pilot Test is critical to finalizing the NCSC operational test and will also serve as a transition to our statewide implementation in spring 2015 when the NCSC/CTAA will be administered to all eligible students in Connecticut. Please share this information with the appropriate staff in your district.

Districts will be contacted by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) based upon the number of students previously assessed with alternate assessments. Districts are also encouraged to contact the CSDE immediately to request participation in this important Pilot opportunity. Connecticut's target number of students is 50 per grade based upon the NCSC research design.

Please visit the [NCSC informational Web site](#) for information about the NCSC. The [NCSC Pilot 2 Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) document is available for your reference.

Thank you in advance for participating in the NCSC Phase 2 Pilot Test.

If you would like to participate, have questions, or need additional information please do not hesitate to contact me at 860-713-6837 or via e-mail at Janet.stuck@ct.gov.