



ASSESSMENT

GUIDELINES

for Administering the

Smarter Balanced Assessments

Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT)-Science

Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)-Science

Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) SKILLS CHECKLIST-Science

Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) SKILLS CHECKLIST -Science

Connecticut Alternate Assessments (CTAA)

Academic Office- 2015-2016



to:

- Students Who Receive Special Education Services
- Students Identified as Disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Students Identified as English Learners
- Students Receiving Designated Supports

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Dannel P. Malloy, Governor

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Allan B. Taylor, Chairperson
Theresa Hopkins-Staton, Vice Chairperson

Erin Benham
William P. Davenport
Terry H. Jones
Estela López
Maria I. Mojica
Joseph J. Vrabely
Stephen P. Wright

Susannah M. Beyl (student member)
Timothy J. Noel-Sullivan (student member)

Gregory W. Gray (ex officio)
President of the Board of Regents for Higher Education
Robert Trefry (ex officio)
Chair of the Connecticut Technical High School System Governing Board

Dianna Wentzell
Commissioner of Education

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
I. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: Expect Students with Disabilities to Achieve Grade-Level Academic Content Standards	2
II. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONNECTICUT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM	4
A. Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessments	4
B. Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) - Science	5
C. Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) - Science	5
D. Connecticut Alternate Assessments System	6
E. English Learner Assessments	7
F. National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)	7
III. WHO SHOULD BE TESTED?	10
A. Underlying Intent of the Legislative Mandates and Policy Directives	10
1. Students Who Receive Special Education Services	10
a. Approved Private Special Education Programs, Unified School District (USD) 2, Public Agency Placement in a Private Residential Facility	10
b. Private Non-state Approved Special Education Programs	10
c. Nonpublic Schools	11
d. Out-of-state Private Special Education Programs	11
2. Students Identified as Disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	11
3. Students Identified as English Learners (EL), Also Referred to as English Language Learners (ELL) or Student Who Have Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	12
4. Home-schooled Students	12
5. Students Placed in Judicial Juvenile Residential Service Facilities (Juvenile Detention Centers)	12
6. Students Hospitalized or Homebound Due to Illness	13
7. Students on Homebound Instruction Due to Suspension or Expulsion	13
8. Nonpublic School Students	13
IV. GRADE LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS, CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS AND SCIENCE	14

V. GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION IN AN ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT	15
A. Historical Perspective	15
B. National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC)	16
C. Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) Participation Guidelines	16
D. CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science	18
E. Required Training for Teachers Administering Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) & CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science	19
VI. ACCOMMODATIONS FOR TESTING	19
A. General Information about Accommodations	20
B. Who May Receive Accommodations?	20
1. Students Who Receive Special Education Services	20
2. Students Identified as Disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	21
3. Students Identified as English Learners (EL), Also Referred to as Students Who Are English Language Learners (ELL) or Students Who Have Limited English Proficiency (LEP) for CMT Science and CAPT Science	21
4. Students with Broken Fingers, Arms, Shoulders, etc.	21
VII. GUIDELINES FOR MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT SUPPORTS/ACCOMMODATIONS	22
A. Description of Smarter Balanced Supports/Accommodations Categories	22
B. Designated Supports	23
1. Embedded Designated Supports	23
a. Color Contrast	23
b. Masking	24
c. Text-to-Speech	24
d. Turn off any universal tools	24
2. Non-Embedded Designated Supports	24
a. Color Contrast	24
b. Color Overlay	24
c. Magnification	24
d. Noise Buffering	25
e. Read Aloud (Mathematics & ELA-NOT reading passages)	25
f. Separate Setting	25
C. Additional Designated Supports for Students Identified as English Learners (EL)	25
a. Translations Glossary- (Mathematics Glossaries-For large print)	25

b. Translations- (Mathematics Glossaries-Embedded)	26
c. Translations Stacked in Spanish- (Mathematics)	26
d. Read Aloud in Spanish- (Mathematics)	26
e. Translation Test Directions (Mathematics)	26
f. Bilingual Dictionary- Word-to-Word	26
D. Documentation of Testing Related Accommodations	27
E. Selecting Appropriate Test Accommodations	27
F. Allowable Accommodations for Special Education and 504 Students Only	28
a. Refreshable Braille Devices, Braille Embossers	28
b. Sign Language (ELA- Listening, Mathematics)	28
c. Text-to-Speech for the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages	28
d. Closed Captioning for the Smarter Balanced ELA Listening)	29
e. Streamlined	29
f. Read Aloud for the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages)	29
g. Print on Demand	30
h. Scribe	30
i. Speech-to-Text, Voice-recognition Software, Dragon Dictate or Others	30
j. Alternate Response Options	31
3. Other Accommodations	31
a. Specialized Calculator	31
b. Abacus	31
c. Multiplication Table (Grade 4 and above only)	31
G. Science Accommodations for Special Education, 504, EL	31
1. Presentation Accommodations	32
a. Braille and Large Print)	32
b. Sign Language	32
c. Text-to-Speech and Read Aloud	33
2. Response Accommodations	33
a. Circle Answers in CMT/CAPT Science	32
b. Braille Response	32
c. Test Mode: Computer Response CMT/CAPT Science	33
d. Bubblers(Science Test Booklet Only)	33
e. Time Extension (Science)	34
f. Native Language Reader Directions Only (Science)	34

g. Bilingual Dictionaries- Word-to-Word Translation (Science)	35
h. Time Extension (Science)	35
i. Time Extension (Science)	35
I. Special Consideration and Special Accommodations	36
1. Students who are Present but Do Not Take the Test	36
2. Reluctant Students	36
3. Students who become Agitated or Disruptive	36
4. Accommodation Provision Error	37
J. Additional Considerations Related to Accommodations during Assessment	37
1. Planning for Test Day	38
2. Administering Assessments with Accommodations	38
3. Ethical Testing Practices	38
4. Standardization	38
5. Test Security	39
6. Connecticut’s Test Security Policy	39
APPENDIX A — Medical Exemption	40
APPENDIX B — Special Accommodations	47

INTRODUCTION

This document includes revisions through September 2015 and is intended to provide guidance for Connecticut school district personnel who must make decisions about testing special student populations on the Smarter Balanced Assessments, Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Science, the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Science, Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Skills Checklist Science, the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Skills Checklist Science, and the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA). These special student populations include students identified as eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), students identified as disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and students who are identified as English learners (EL), also referred to as English language learners (ELL) or students who have limited English proficiency. This decision making also includes general education students who may require additional supports.

If after reviewing this document you have questions about the special student populations, the criteria for participation in various assessment options or allowable supports or accommodations, please contact the Academic Office at 860-713-6855 or 860-713-6837.

In addition to this document, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) continues to prepare teachers to administer the Smarter Balanced Assessments for English language arts/literacy and mathematics to all students in Grades 3-8. One component of the Smarter Balanced Assessment system includes understanding, selecting and providing access to the assessment. To assist administrators and all teachers working with general education students, students with disabilities and students who are English learners, we have created two methods to access optional professional learning opportunities for these topics. These links will provide you with more information:

LIVE-[2015-16 CSDE Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility & Accommodations Training](#)

ONLINE-[2015-16 CSDE Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility & Accommodations Training](#)

I. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: EXPECT STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TO ACHIEVE GRADE-LEVEL ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS

Federal legislation, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), requires that each state institute challenging content and performance standards for its public school students. These performance standards establish the level at which students are expected to master the material included in the state's content standards. ESEA requires that all states have quality assessments in place in reading, mathematics and science to determine the extent to which students have mastered the material outlined in the state's content standards. This requirement addresses a key element of the Title I program, i.e., a high-quality assessment system that is aligned with a state's content and performance standards to ensure that all students are held to the same high academic standards.

With the passage of Public Law 105-17 Individuals with Disabilities Education ACT (IDEA) Amendments of 1997 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004, this same theme of improved student performance and increased accountability was fully incorporated into federal special education legislation. The 1997 amendments to IDEA in particular represented a subtle but important shift of emphasis in federal special education legislation. Historically, this legislation has been considered by many to be a "procedural" act. That is, the emphasis has been on a detailed set of procedures intended to ensure that students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least-restrictive environment (LRE). Earlier versions of this act were essentially silent on questions of specific curriculum content, with the development of an individualized education program (IEP) and decisions related to the provision of FAPE left to the IEP team. Similarly, student progress on the goals and objectives in the IEP was assessed by this team and reported privately to parents. Students with disabilities typically did not participate in districtwide or statewide assessments used with their nondisabled peers.

Although Connecticut has long advocated that, to the extent possible, students with disabilities should participate in both the general education curriculum and the standard administration of the state assessments; this has often not been the case nationally. It was only with the 1997 reauthorization of IDEA that having high expectations for students with disabilities became a national priority. The 1997 IDEA amendments required that these students be included in appropriately challenging curriculums and in districtwide and statewide assessments, and that states and school districts publicly account for the progress of these students. Clearly, two goals of IDEA are: 1) the participation of a high percentage of students with disabilities in standard districtwide and statewide testing and related accountability efforts, and 2) the availability of an alternate assessment for those few students who cannot appropriately participate in the standard assessment program.

Federal legislation, in the form of both ESEA and the IDEA, and state legislation in the Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-14, and relatively recent implementation of the Connecticut Core Standards is consistent in the vision that is being promoted, i.e., high expectations, uniform standards and public accountability for the performance of all students, including those with disabilities and limited English proficiency. Connecticut's statewide assessment program is just one component of an overall accountability system that is intended to assess the effectiveness of Connecticut schools and lead to greater success for all students.

To understand this educational accountability system, one must consider the progress of all students on a number of key indicators. For more information, the publication [*The Condition of Education in Connecticut*](#) is available for download.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONNECTICUT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

A. SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

In the 2014 – 15 school year, Connecticut as a member of the [Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium](#), administered assessments for English language arts/literacy and mathematics to students in all Grades 3-8 and 11, with the exception of special education students with significant cognitive disabilities participating in Connecticut’s Alternate Assessments. The Smarter Balanced assessment system was developed by the member states of the Consortium, including Connecticut, to align to the Common Core State Standards. Beginning with the 2015-16 school year the Smarter Balanced Assessments will be provided to students in Grades 3-8.

Additionally, it is important to understand the Smarter Balanced summative test design and the activities associated with the test-taking situation. The Smarter Balanced summative assessment for English language arts/literacy and mathematics requires students to:

- participate in an online assessment comprised of two components, a computer adaptive test (CAT) and a Performance Task for each content area. The tests are not timed, however, recommended test session lengths of 40 to 120 minutes, depending upon content area and grade level, is provided in the Test Administration Manual
- demonstrate critical-thinking and problem solving skills;
- accurately respond to various item response types using a keyboard and mouse or touchpad

B. CONNECTICUT MASTERY TEST (CMT) - SCIENCE

Beginning with the March 2008 test administration, the CMT Science was added to assessments for Grades 5 and 8. Content of the criterion-referenced CMT Science represents the most essential science skills at each grade level tested and is aligned with the [Core Science Curriculum Framework](#).

Additionally, it is important to understand the CMT Science test design and the activities associated with the test-taking situation. The CMT Science requires students to:

- participate in up to a 70-minute testing session;
- follow multiple-step directions as presented by the test examiner or as written in the test booklet;
- accurately shade in an answer bubble; and
- write legibly in the test booklet for open-ended questions.

For a more comprehensive explanation of the test design and content, refer to the [Fourth Generation Science Handbook and Science Test Format](#).

C. CONNECTICUT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE TEST (CAPT) - SCIENCE

The Second Generation CAPT was administered for the first time in the spring of 2001 assessing and reporting on student performance in Science. A third generation of the CAPT was first introduced in 2007. This third generation is aligned with the [Core Science Curriculum Framework](#).

Science Test results from Grades 10 become part of the students' permanent school records and are reported on their official school transcripts. Thus graduation requirements must be defined and addressed when reviewing scores.

Similarly, students who do not participate in the standard grade-level version of the CAPT will need to review graduation requirements since there may be important consequences for employment or postsecondary educational opportunities. Parents and students should be fully informed by the IEP team of the possible consequences of failing to participate in the standard CAPT when the IEP team recommends testing with the CAPT Science Skills Checklist.

Understanding a student's ability to manage the activities associated with the test-taking situation is as important as understanding test content. The CAPT Science requires students to:

- participate in two testing sessions of 50 minutes each, with a break of at least 15 minutes between test sessions;
- follow multiple-step directions as presented by the test examiner or as read in the test booklet;
- accurately shade in an answer bubble;
- write legibly in the answer booklet for open-ended questions; and

- read a variety of materials and write extended responses.

For a more comprehensive explanation of the test design and content, refer to [CAPT Third Generation Handbook for Science](#).

D. CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

For a small group of students with significant cognitive disabilities, who meet the eligibility criteria, Connecticut provides an alternate assessment. This alternate assessment includes the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) and the CMT Skills Checklist Science or the CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

Connecticut Alternate Assessments (CTAA)

The CTAA is designed exclusively for special education students with significant cognitive disabilities. This alternate assessment includes English language arts (ELA) and mathematics (MA) and is available for students in Grades 3-8 and 11. This assessment is presented to each student individually, via a computer platform by CSDE trained teachers. The CTAA and supporting resources was developed with the participation of Connecticut teachers and administrators working closely with other national state members and experts in the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC). More information and resources about NCSC can be found at <http://www.ncscpartners.org/> . More information about the CTAA can be found on the [Connecticut Alternate Assessment System](#) Web page

CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science

The CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science is an alternate assessment available for students in Grades 5, 8 and 10. It is designed exclusively for special education students with significant cognitive disabilities. As such, it is one component of Connecticut’s alternate assessment system. Only identified special education students meeting specific eligibility criteria may participate in this alternate assessment and only if determined on an individual basis by an individualized education program (IEP) team.

The purpose of the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science is to provide an accountability measure to determine the extent to which students with significant cognitive disabilities have been given the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the general education curriculum. The CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science has been designed to align with the skills and objectives outlined in the [Core Science Curriculum Framework](#) for Grades 5, 8 and 10. Each indicator on the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science corresponds to a content standard and expected performance statement found in the curriculum frameworks. However, each indicator reflects a downward extension of the grade-level skill that allows it to be more accessible to students with significant cognitive disabilities.

Copies of each grade-level CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science are available on the CSDE Web site at: [Connecticut Alternate Assessment System](#).

E. ENGLISH LEARNER ASSESSMENTS

Historically, Connecticut's students identified as English learners (EL) have participated in statewide assessments with designated supports or accommodations if needed. These students acquiring English as a second language are required to meet the same academic performance standards expected of students whose first language is English. In addition to statewide assessment participation in Grades 3-8 and 11 (and Science in Grades 5, 8, and 10), all ELs must annually participate in an English language proficiency test. Connecticut ELs are assessed using the LAS Links test to demonstrate their level of English language proficiency. ELs must meet mandated exit requirements on the LAS Links assessment to exit bilingual and/or ESOL programs.

F. NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), is often called the "Nation's Report Card." It is the only measure of student achievement in the United States that allows for the comparison of Connecticut students to their peers in all other states. NAEP, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, has been conducted since 1969 and produces results that are widely reported by the national and local media.

Every year, some Connecticut schools are selected to participate in the NAEP. For each NAEP administration, representative samples of fourth, eighth and twelfth-graders in states and territories of the United States are tested in selected content areas. In odd-numbered years (e.g., 2015, 2017), the number of participating schools increases and the results are used to assess achievement for the state as a whole. Since it is critical that participants accurately represent Connecticut's public school population, students with disabilities and English learners must be included in the testing.

School personnel are expected to make every effort to include all selected students with disabilities and English learners in the assessments. Many of the accommodations that are provided for the Smarter Balanced assessments and CMT and CAPT Science are also available for the NAEP. As school personnel make specific decisions regarding how to include students in NAEP, there are several important factors to consider:

- NAEP does not produce scores for individual students and participation is anonymous;
- The NAEP assessments do not impose any consequences for students, teachers, schools, or districts and are intended solely to provide an overall measure of educational achievement for the nation and individual states;

- Participating students are not required to complete the entire test and may skip any test question. Even when a student does not complete the entire test, valuable information is obtained from the responses provided; and
- Schools send a notification letter home to families of selected students. The letter explains the importance of NAEP and lets parents know that they may decide that their child will not participate.

Annually, Connecticut’s NAEP State Coordinator provides the schools selected to participate in the NAEP with detailed information about available accommodations specific to the assessments that will be administered. Currently, NAEP is transitioning from a paper/pencil format to a digitally-based format that will use tablets. In 2015-16, both modes of testing will be implemented in Connecticut. The table on the following pages shows the overall relationship between the test supports and accommodations for Connecticut’s state assessments (Smarter Balanced and CMT/CAPT Science) and what is available for students with disabilities and English learners selected to take the NAEP.

Test Supports/Accommodations for Students with Disabilities and English Learners

State Assessment Supports/Accommodations	Availability for NAEP
Braille	Yes
Large Print or magnification	Yes, this is available for the NAEP paper/pencil test. For digitally-based assessments, zooming and magnification are available.
ASL Presentation of Items	Yes, except for the reading test. This accommodation must be administered by school personnel.
Text-to-Speech	Yes, for digitally-based assessments. However, in the case of the reading test, text-to-speech can be used for directions only.
Read Aloud by Certified Staff	Yes, except for the reading test.
Closed Captioning	Yes
Color Contrast- Online	Yes
Masking- Online	No
Color Overlay- Non-Embedded	Yes
Available on Computer or Tablet	Available only for digitally-based versions of the assessment. Paper/pencil tests cannot be presented electronically.
Circle Answers in Test Booklet	Yes, this is available for the NAEP paper/pencil test.
Bubbler-Test Booklet Only	Yes, this is available for the NAEP paper/pencil test.
Speech-to-Text	Yes, this is available for the paper/pencil version of the assessment. This accommodation is treated as a typed response.
Alternate Response Options (Includes adapted keyboard/mouse, touchscreen, etc.)	This may be allowable for students taking the digitally-based assessment, depending on the specific device needed and compatibility with NAEP-provided tablets.
Specialized Calculator	This accommodation may be allowable for calculator-active sections of the NAEP mathematics assessment, depending on the specific device used by the student.

State Assessment Supports/Accommodations	Availability for NAEP
Abacus	No
Multiplication Table	No
Time Extension	Yes
Separate Setting	Yes
Bilingual Dictionary	Yes, but not available for the reading test.
Native Language Reader-Directions Only	Available in Spanish for paper/pencil versions of mathematics, reading, and science.
Translation Glossary-Online	No
Audio Translation Glossary-Online	No
Translation (Stacked-Spanish Only)-Online	NAEP offers a “bilingual booklet” in Spanish for mathematics and science. The “bilingual booklet” is available for students selected for the paper/pencil version of NAEP in Grades 4 and 8 only.

Specific questions concerning NAEP accommodations should be directed to Renée Savoie, NAEP State Coordinator, at 860-713-6858.

III. WHO SHOULD BE TESTED?

A. UNDERLYING INTENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE MANDATES AND POLICY DIRECTIVES

1) Students Who Receive Special Education Services

As described earlier, Public Law 105-17, the IDEA amendments of 1997, introduced new requirements with regard to the participation of special education students in statewide and districtwide assessment programs. For states to be eligible for funding under IDEA, ***students with disabilities must be included in general statewide and districtwide assessment programs with appropriate supports and accommodations, when necessary.***

Additionally, under Section 612(a) (17) of this act, state or local agencies, as appropriate, were required to develop guidelines for the participation of children with disabilities in alternate assessments for children who could not participate, even with accommodations, in the standard statewide or districtwide assessment programs and to begin conducting such alternative assessments by no later than July 1, 2000.

Connecticut state statutes have been amended to comply with the federal regulations that require **all** special education students enrolled in public schools in Grades 3-8 and 11 participate in the statewide assessments or the Connecticut Alternate Assessments. Additionally, students in Grades 5, 8 and 10 must also participate in the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Science, the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Science or the CMT/ CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

a. **Approved Private Special Education Programs, Unified School District (USD) 2, Public Agency Placement in a Private Residential Facility**

Students **placed by their local school districts** in approved private special education programs or students who have been placed by a public agency in a private residential facility and who attend the facility's special education program, are considered public school students and must be tested. The private approved special education programs within Connecticut are required to conduct the testing for students enrolled in their programs. However, the local sending school district is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the appropriate testing occurs for each eligible student. Scores for these students are reported back to the responsible district.

b. **Private Non-state Approved Special Education Programs**

Students **placed by their local school districts** in private special education programs that have **not** been approved by the state are the responsibility of the placing district for assessment purposes. Districts placing students in non-approved private special

education programs must make a **good faith effort** to assess students in the non-approved program either by bringing the student back to the district for testing or by sending a certified staff member to the non-approved program to test the students. The certified school staff member must be fully trained in the proper test administration and security procedures for the applicable assessment(s) for the student. Due to teacher training requirements and the nature of how the assessment is completed, students identified as being eligible for the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science are not required to be assessed. Non-approved programs are **prohibited** from administering this statewide assessment to students.

c. Nonpublic Schools

Students **unilaterally placed in nonpublic schools by their parents** (including approved and non-approved private special education programs) are not considered public school students. Nonpublic schools are **prohibited** from administering the tests to students. If, at a later date, the local district agrees to assume educational responsibility,(i.e., agrees to provide FAPE), for a student unilaterally placed by their parents, then the student becomes a public school student at that point in time and the local district is responsible for ensuring that the student participates in Connecticut statewide testing.

d. Out-of-state Private Special Education Programs

For students placed in private special education programs in other states who are the educational responsibility of a local school district, the local school district may make a **good faith effort** to have the student tested by a certified staff member in the local district. The certified school staff member must be fully trained in the proper test administration and security procedures for the applicable assessment(s) for the student. Out-of-state special education programs and their teachers are **prohibited** from administering any of the Connecticut Statewide assessments.

2) Students Identified as Disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights statute that states, in part, that no otherwise-qualified handicapped individual shall, solely by reason of his or her handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Beyond guaranteeing access to the testing program, Section 504 offers equity in participation by making accommodations available to those students with disabilities so they may have an equal opportunity to perform at a level commensurate with their abilities.

Students who are not identified for special education services, but who are identified as disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 **must participate in the standard grade-level Smarter Balanced summative assessments in Grades 3-8 and the high school assessment in Grade 11, as well as CMT or CAPT Science in Grades 5, 8 or 10.** These students may be provided allowable test supports and accommodations as identified in the students' 504 plans. See Section VII for information about test accommodations.

3) Students Identified as English Learners (ELs), Also Referred to as Students Who Are English Language Learners (ELL) or Students Who Have Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Programs of English language instruction help students who are English language learners acquire the necessary spoken and written English skills. Both bilingual and transitional English as a Second Language (ESL) programs provide accommodations to make instruction in English understandable. The bilingual education program uses the student's native language as well as English for instruction in content areas, pursuant to Section 10-17e of the C.G.S., while EL programs focus on developing English literacy rather than instruction in content areas, per se.

The United States Department of Education (USED) granted additional flexibilities with respect to "recently arrived" English learners (ELs). Connecticut has been granted permission to extend the time that ELs can be considered "recently arrived." ELs in Grades 3 through 8 whose initial entry date in a U.S. school is less than two years (i.e., 24 months) prior to the academic achievement (status) measure in the State's accountability system for both ELA and mathematics will not be included in a school's academic achievement (status) measure for accountability purposes for two years.

Instead, Connecticut must include student growth of "recently arrived" ELs from the first to the second year in both ELA and mathematics in school and district accountability calculations in the student's second year. This flexibility requires that all "recently arrived" ELs test in **all** content areas annually. Assessment scores for ELs who have attended U.S. schools for more than two years will be used in the achievement status and growth measures of the accountability system.

4) Home-schooled Students

Local school districts are **not required** to test students being home-schooled. Home-schooled students may **not** be tested using the Smarter Balanced assessment, CMT Science, CAPT Science, CTAA or CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

5) Students Placed in Judicial Juvenile Residential Service Facilities (Juvenile Detention Centers)

Both regular and special education students placed in Judicial Juvenile Residential Service Facilities (Juvenile Detention Centers) in Bridgeport, Hartford and New Haven are considered public school students and must be tested. The Bridgeport Board of Education (Bridgeport), CREC (Hartford) and ACES (New Haven) are responsible for providing the educational services for students in these facilities. They are also required to conduct the testing for each eligible student. Individual student scores are reported back to the school district in which the student would otherwise be enrolled if they were not placed in a Judicial Juvenile Residential Service Facility.

6) Students Hospitalized or Homebound Due to Illness

Students who are hospitalized or homebound due to illness should be tested unless there are medical constraints. These students may have the test administered at home or in the hospital, provided the test is administered by a certified school staff member who is fully trained in the proper test administration and security procedures for Smarter Balanced, CMT Science, CAPT Science or CTAA and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

7) Students on Homebound Instruction Due to Suspension or Expulsion

Students who are receiving homebound instruction due to a suspension or expulsion **must** be tested either at home or, preferably, at the school district's central administrative offices by a certified school staff member who is fully trained in the proper test administration and security procedures for the Smarter Balanced, CMT Science, CAPT Science, CTAA and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

8) Nonpublic School Students

In instances where students are enrolled in nonpublic schools at the parent's expense, the students are not considered public school students and may **not** participate in Connecticut's statewide testing program.

IV. GRADE LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN SMARTER BALANCED SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS, CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS AND CMT/CAPT SCIENCE

For purposes of Connecticut's statewide testing program, there are no ungraded school programs. Each student must be enrolled in a specific grade or assigned to a specific grade based on his or her age. This grade assignment should be specified in the Public School Information System (PSIS). Students in Grades 3-8 comprise the eligible population for participation in the Smarter Balanced summative assessments and Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) testing. In addition, students in Grades 5 and 8 participate in the CMT Science test or CMT Skills Checklist Science. In Grade 10, students will ONLY participate in the CAPT Science test or CAPT Skills Checklist Science. Students in Grade 11 will participate in the standard High School assessment or the Connecticut Alternate Assessment in English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics. If there is any question as to the grade level for a particular student, district administrators are advised to verify how the student was reported in the PSIS and in the Special Education Data Application and Collection (SEDAC). Districts and private approved special education facilities are advised to work closely on the identification of students in the grades to be tested to avoid testing students in the wrong grade or not testing students in a required grade.

Students enrolled in high school present additional issues for consideration beyond age and years in school. Each local school district establishes its own policy for the determination of grade levels. Many high schools establish grade levels based on the accumulation of earned credits. However, this system and/or its timing must not result in a student not being tested. For example, based on earned credits, a student may be in Grade 9 one year and in Grade 11 by the following administration of the CAPT Science, thus skipping Grade 10 altogether. In this instance, the student must participate in the Grade 10 CAPT Science at the most logical time (e.g., in the year following his or her Grade 9 year).

V. GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION IN AN ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

A. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In a commentary to the proposed Federal Regulations (*Federal Register*, October 1997, p. 55055), the United States Department of Education estimated that approximately 1 to 2 percent of the total school population would require an alternate assessment. This translates into an expectation that the vast majority of special education students will participate in the standard grade-level version of statewide tests.

Section 602 (3) of IDEA '97 required states to create an alternative assessment that was aligned with their academic content standards, promoted access to the general curriculum and reflected professional judgment of the highest achievement standards possible. In 2007, the Connecticut State Department of Education implemented the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science for students with significant cognitive disabilities and for whom a standard statewide assessment was not appropriate. This assessment was intended to be used with approximately 1 percent of the total population. Since then, the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science has included a variety of enhancements and aims at providing an accurate picture of student achievement. The Skills Checklist Science is a working document that teachers complete throughout the school year. The document is used to assist in planning instruction, monitoring student growth, and progress and documenting achievement. Teachers rate students on grade-level academic skills and submit results for state/federal reporting purposes during the CMT/CAPT testing window.

In addition to our alternate assessment for science, Connecticut has developed the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA). Connecticut was a member of the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) consortium to develop this alternate assessment. Similar to the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, NCSC also developed a system of valid, reliable and fair next-generation assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards in English language arts/literacy (ELA/literacy) and mathematics for Grades 3-8 and 11 for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Thus, this new alternate assessment is the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) and replaced the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist in English language arts and mathematics beginning in 2015.

B. NATIONAL CENTER AND STATE COLLABORATIVE

The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) applied the lessons learned from the past decade of research on alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS) to develop a multi-state comprehensive assessment system for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The project draws on a strong research base to develop an AA-AAS that is

built from the ground up on powerful validity arguments linked to clear learning outcomes and defensible assessment results, to complement the work of the Race to the Top Common State Assessment Program (RTTT) consortia.

The long-term goal is to ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for post-secondary options. A well-designed summative assessment alone is insufficient to achieve that goal. All partners shared the commitment to the research-to-practice focus of the project and the development of a comprehensive model of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and supportive professional development. These supports are intended to improve the alignment of the entire system and strengthen the validity of inferences of the system of assessments. More Information and resources are available at the [NCSC Wiki](#).

C. CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT (CTAA) AND CMT/CAPT SKILLS CHECKLIST SCIENCE PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

CTAA and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklists Science Eligibility & Learner Characteristics Inventory

The criteria for participation in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science reflect the **pervasive** nature of a significant cognitive disability. All content areas should be considered when determining eligibility for this assessment. Thus, a student who participates in the CTAA participates in this assessment and the CMT Skills Checklist Science for Grades 5 and 8. Students in Grade 10 participate in the CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

In addition, evidence for the decision for participating in the CTAA or CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science is **not** based on:

1. A disability category or label
2. Poor attendance or extended absences
3. Native language/social/cultural or economic difference
4. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment
5. Academic and other services student receives
6. Educational environment or instructional setting
7. Percent of time receiving special education
8. English learner (EL) status
9. Low reading level/achievement level
10. Anticipated student's disruptive behavior

- 11. Impact of student scores on accountability system
- 12. Administrator decision
- 13. Anticipated emotional duress
- 14. Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/AAC) to participate in assessment process

Participation Requirements for Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science (all responses must be indicated Yes)

Participation Criteria	Participation Criteria Descriptors	Agree (Yes) or Disagree (No)? Provide documentation for each
1. The student has a significant cognitive disability	Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. <i>*Adaptive behavior is defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.</i>	Yes / No
2. The student is learning content linked to (derived from) the Connecticut Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Connecticut Science Curriculum Framework. (CSCF)	Goals and instruction listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade level CCSS and CSCF which address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student.	Yes / No
3. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measureable gains in the grade- and age-appropriate curricula.	The student (a) requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of a temporary or transient nature and (b) uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across multiple settings.	Yes / No

Students in Grade 5 and 8 who are eligible for the CTAA would also be eligible for the CMT Skills Checklist Science assessment. Therefore all students who meet the eligibility criteria for the CTAA in Grades 5 and 8 must also participate in the CMT Skills Checklist Science assessment. Students in Grade 10 who respond in the affirmative to all three criteria elements above would be eligible to participate in the CAPT Skills Checklist Science assessment.

D. CMT/CAPT SKILLS CHECKLIST SCIENCE

The alternate assessments available for students with significant cognitive disabilities in science are the CMT Skills Checklist Science or the CAPT Skills Checklist Science. Only those students who qualify for the CTAA assessments in Grades 5 and 8 will participate in the CMT Skills Checklist Science. Students in Grade 10 with significant cognitive disabilities will participate ONLY in the CAPT Skills Checklist Science. These alternate Science assessments are designed for those students with significant cognitive disabilities whose educational program centers on the general education curriculum, but also may include a functional/daily living/self-help/social skills components. These students, who may participate in inclusive classrooms and in general education activities typically, have academic goals, as well as other goals with a functional focus.

Criteria for Including Students in the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science

In determining whether a special education student should be assessed with the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science, the IEP team should consider the criteria described in the [CTAA and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklists Science Eligibility & Learner Characteristics Inventory](#) described above. While there are no specific IQ requirements for participation in the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science, students who are assessed with the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science typically score two or more standard deviations below the mean in terms of overall cognitive ability and have significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social and practical adaptive skills. Frequently these students have been identified as having an intellectual disability (ID); however, students with other types of disabilities (e.g., autism, multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injury, etc.) who have evidence in their files of a significant cognitive disability may also satisfy the criteria for participation in the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

The following factors **may not** serve as the sole basis for the determination to include a student in the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science:

- the student's disability category (e.g., intellectual disability, autism, etc.);
- the student's placement (e.g., self-contained classroom, regional program, etc.);
- the amount of time spent with nondisabled peers (e.g., 20 percent of the time, 10 percent of the time, etc.); and
- an expectation that, even with accommodations, the student will not score well on the standard version of the CMT or CAPT Science.

E. REQUIRED TRAINING FOR TEACHERS ADMINISTERING CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT (CTAA) & CMT/CAPT SKILLS CHECKLIST SCIENCE

The administration of both the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) and the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science requires that the teacher who is primarily responsible for the student's academic instruction receive training through the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). Training will be provided through an online course or through workshops made available by the CSDE at the beginning of each school year. This link will provide you with more information:

[2015-16 LIVE or ONLINE CSDE CTAA & CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science](#)

VI. ACCOMMODATIONS FOR TESTING

In this document, the term “test accommodations” refers to procedures in the areas of presentation, response and other areas during test administration that provide equitable access during the assessment for students with disabilities. These accommodations should not affect how scores are interpreted. Changes in test content generally are considered to be “test modifications.” Test modifications are changes in test administration or content such that the resulting test scores cannot be interpreted in the same way as scores from the original test administered in the standard manner.

A. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT ACCOMMODATIONS

Both constitutional and statutory laws have shaped policy regarding the testing of students with disabilities. The 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is viewed as being particularly relevant to assessment issues. Specifically, the 14th Amendment guarantees equal protection under the law which, in the educational domain, translates into a guarantee of equal educational opportunity. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 are civil rights statutes that prohibit discrimination and guarantee access and equity. Together, these acts entitle students with disabilities to participate in, and receive the benefits to be derived from, statewide testing efforts.

Accommodations provided to a student during statewide testing must be the same accommodations provided for classroom instruction and other assessments given throughout the school year. It is critical to note that although some accommodations may be appropriate for instructional use, they may not be appropriate for use on a standardized assessment. There may be consequences (e.g., invalidating a student's test score) for the use of some

accommodations during state assessments. It is very important for educators to become familiar with state policies regarding accommodations during statewide assessments.

Typically, accommodation use does not begin and end in school. Students who use accommodations will generally also need them at home, in the community, in postsecondary education and at work. Accommodations for instruction and assessment should be integrally intertwined.

Accommodations for test administration are provided to allow students with disabilities the opportunity to demonstrate their aptitude and achievement in testing situations rather than reflect their impairments. Although test accommodations provide students with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge, they do not guarantee equal outcomes. Again, an appropriate or reasonable accommodation should not interfere with the use of interpretation of a student's scores.

B. WHO MAY RECEIVE ACCOMMODATIONS?

1) **Students Who Receive Special Education Services**

Accommodations are available for the Smarter Balanced assessments and the CMT/CAPT Science. The student's IEP must specify which accommodations will be used during testing. The decisions regarding accommodations are made by the IEP team and should not be individual teacher decisions made immediately before or during test administration. These accommodations should be recommended by a student's teachers in consultation with one another and a principal/supervisor and the rationale for the decision should be documented in the student's IEP. These accommodations are also documented on [Test Information and Distribution Engine \(TIDE\)](#) (Allowable accommodations for special education students are outlined in Section VII E.)

2) **Students Identified as Disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

Accommodations are available for the Smarter Balanced and CMT/CAPT Science assessments. The student's 504 plan must specify which accommodations will be used during testing. The decisions regarding accommodations are made by the 504 planning team and should not be individual teacher decisions made immediately before or during test administration. These accommodations should be recommended by a student's teachers in consultation with one another and a principal/supervisor and the rationale for the decision should be documented in the student's 504 plan. These accommodations are also documented on the [Test Information and Distribution Engine \(TIDE\)](#). (Allowable accommodations for 504 students are outlined in Section VII E.)

3) **Students Identified as English Learners (EL)** for CMT Science and CAPT Science (For Smarter Balanced Assessments these students may be provided Designated Supports).

Programs of English language instruction help students who are English language learners

acquire the necessary spoken and written English skills.

Both bilingual and transitional English as a second language (ESL) programs provide accommodations to make instruction in English understandable. The bilingual education program uses the student's native language, as well as English for instruction in content areas, pursuant to Section 10-17e of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) while ELL programs focus on developing English literacy rather than instruction in content areas, *per se*.

English learner accommodations for science must be entered on the [Test Information and Distribution Engine \(TIDE\)](#) . Allowable supports/accommodations available for EL students in Science are outlined in Section VIII G.

4) Students with Broken Fingers, Arms, Shoulders, etc.

A student who is injured (broken arms, shoulder, fingers, etc.) in the days just before or during test administration has a temporary disability and *may* be eligible for accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This determination of temporary disability is made by a 504 planning team at a meeting in which the injury is documented, the student is determined eligible for Section 504 status, and a plan is developed outlining the accommodations necessary, if any, for the student to participate in instructional activities and the statewide assessment. Once identified as eligible for Section 504 status, students with broken fingers, arms, shoulder, etc., are allowed to use a variety of accommodations. In many cases delaying testing until later in the test window allows the swelling to go down sufficiently, so that the students can still write or type responses in spite of a cast, splint, etc. In other instances, as the students become adjusted or acclimated to a cast, splint, etc., they find creative ways to perform routine tasks, including providing a written or typed response on the test.

VII. GUIDELINES FOR MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT DESIGNATED SUPPORTS/ACCOMMODATIONS

A. DESCRIPTION OF SMARTER BALANCED DESIGNATED SUPPORTS/ACCOMMODATIONS CATEGORIES

In September 2013, Smarter Balanced Governing States unanimously approved the Smarter Balanced [Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines](#) for the assessment system. The guidelines were developed in collaboration with member states and nationally recognized experts on English language learners and students with disabilities. The research-based policy outlines three categories of resources to ensure that the assessments meet the needs of all students. These categories of resources are universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations for the Smarter Balanced assessments of English language arts/literacy and mathematics. The Guidelines are intended for school-level personnel and decision-making teams, particularly individualized education program (IEP) teams, as they prepare for and implement the Smarter Balanced assessment. The guidelines provide information for classroom teachers, English development educators, special education teachers, and related services personnel to use in selecting and administering universal tools, designated supports and accommodations for those students who need them. The guidelines are also intended for assessment staff and administrators who oversee the decisions that are made in instruction and assessment.

There are however, some differences for implementation for some of the designated supports/accommodations, as they are applied in Connecticut based upon historical policy. This section will include both, similar information provided in the Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines and those differences as they apply to students in Connecticut who participate the Smarter Balanced Assessments.

Smarter Balanced Universal Tools, Designated Supports and Accommodations are grouped into two broader categories based upon how they are provided to the student. They are:

- **Embedded:** Available through the online computer platform.
- **Non-Embedded:** Provided to the student by the school.

Universal tools are available to all students based on student preference and selection for the Smarter Balanced assessments. Universal tools are access features of the assessment that are either provided as digitally delivered components of the test administration system or provided separately from the digital platform.

Designated Supports for the Smarter Balanced assessments are those features that are available for use by any student including English learners for whom the need has been

indicated by an educator (or team of educators with parent/guardian and student). It is recommended that a consistent process be developed and used to determine these supports for individual students. All educators making these decisions should be trained on the process and should be made aware of the range of designated supports available.

Accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that increase equitable access during the Smarter Balanced assessments. The accommodations are available for students for whom there is documentation of the need for the accommodations on an individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 accommodation plan. Assessment accommodations generate valid assessment results for students who need them; they allow these students to show what they know and can do.

B. DESIGNATED SUPPORTS

What Are Designated Supports?

Designated supports are those features available for use by **any student** for whom the need has been indicated by an educator (or team of educators with parent/guardian and student). Scores achieved by students using designated supports will be included for federal accountability purposes. It is recommended that a consistent process be used to determine these supports for individual students. All educators making these decisions should be trained on the process and should be made aware of the range of designated supports available. Two general types of designated supports are identified, digitally-embedded and non-embedded.

Designated supports need to be identified prior to assessment administration. Embedded and non-embedded supports must be entered into the [Test Information and Distribution Engine \(TIDE\)](#). Any non-embedded designated supports must be acquired prior to testing with the assumption the student is using it during instruction.

Who Makes Decisions About Designated Supports?

Informed adults make decisions about designated supports. Ideally, the decisions are made by all educators familiar with the student's characteristics and needs, as well as those supports that the student has been using during instruction and for other assessments. Student input to the decision, particularly for older students, is also recommended.

1) EMBEDDED DESIGNATED SUPPORTS

a. Color Contrast

Enable students to adjust screen background or font color, based on student needs or preferences. This may include reversing the colors for the entire interface or choosing the color of font and background. Black on White; Yellow on Blue; Medium Gray on

Light Gray; Reverse Contrast.

b. Masking

Masking involves blocking off content that is not of immediate need or that may be distracting to the student. Students are able to focus their attention on a specific part of a test item by masking.

c. Text-to-Speech

Text is read aloud to the student via embedded text-to-speech technology. The student is able to control the speed as well as raise or lower the volume of the voice via a volume control. (Science, Math and ELA items, not for ELA reading passages) Text-to-speech is currently available only in English.

d. Turn off any universal tools

Disabling any universal tools that might be distracting or that students do not need to use, or are unable to use.

2) NON-EMBEDDED DESIGNATED SUPPORTS

a. Color Contrast

Test content of online items may be printed with different colors. Requires Print on Demand Accommodation. Students with attention difficulties may need this support for viewing the test when digitally-provided color contrasts do not meet their needs. Some students with visual impairments or other print disabilities (including learning disabilities) also may need this support. Choice of colors should be informed by evidence of those colors that meet the student's needs.

b. Color Overlays

Color transparencies are placed over a paper-based assessment. Students with attention difficulties may need this support to view test content. This support also may be needed by some students with visual impairments or other print disabilities (including learning disabilities). Choice of color should be informed by evidence of those colors that meet the student's needs.

c. Magnification

The size of specific areas of the screen (e.g., text, formulas, tables, graphics, and navigation buttons) may be adjusted by the student with an assistive technology device. Magnification allows increasing the size to a level not provided for by the Zoom universal tool. Students used to viewing enlarged text or graphics, or navigation buttons may need magnification to comfortably view content. This support also may meet the

needs of students with visual impairments and other print disabilities. The use of this designated support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

d. Noise Buffering

Ear mufflers, white noise, whisper phone, and/or other equipment used to block external sounds. Student (not groups of students) wears equipment to reduce environmental noises. Students may have these testing variations if regularly used in the classroom. Students who use noise buffers will need headphones unless tested individually in a separate setting.

e. Read Aloud (Mathematics & ELA- NOT reading passages)

Read Aloud in English is available as a non-embedded designated support for students taking the mathematics and for ELA (not for ELA reading passages). A student should have the option of asking a reader to slow down or repeat text. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment. Requires that a trained educator follow [Guidelines for Read Aloud, Test Reader](#).

f. Separate Setting

Students who are easily distracted (or may distract others) in the presence of other students, for example, may need an alternate location to be able to take the assessment. The separate setting may be in a different room that allows them to work individually or among a smaller group, or in the same room but in a specific location (for example, away from windows, doors, or pencil sharpeners, in a study carrel, with a whisper phone, near the teacher’s desk, or in the front of a classroom). Some students may benefit from being in an environment that allows for movement, such as being able to walk around. In some instances, students may need to interact with instructional or test content outside of school, such as in a hospital or their home. A specific adult, trained in a manner consistent with the TAM, can act as test proctor (test administrator) when student requires it.

**C. ADDITIONAL DESIGNATED SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS
IDENTIFIED AS ENGLISH LEARNERS (EL)**

a. Translation Glossary- (Mathematics- Only for large print paper/pencil assessments- Non-Embedded)

The Translation Glossary for students requiring a large print booklet is a language support for Math only. This support is available for the very small group of students who may need it. District test coordinators can call the Academic Office to obtain these grade specific documents.

b. Translations Math Glossary (Embedded)

Translations Math Glossary are a language support. Translated glossaries are provided for selected construct-irrelevant terms for math. Students with the language glossary setting enabled can view the translated glossary. Students can also select the audio icon next to the glossary term and listen to the audio recording of the glossary. Students who have limited English language skills (whether or not designated as ELLs or ELLs with disabilities) can use the translation glossary for specific items. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

c. Translations Stacked in Spanish- (Mathematics-Embedded)

Stacked translations are a language support available for selected Spanish speaking students. In a stacked translation the full translation of each math test item appears above the original English version. Students can see test directions in Spanish as well.

d. Read Aloud in Spanish- (Mathematics-Non-Embedded)

Spanish text is read aloud to the student by a trained and qualified human reader who follows the administration guidelines provided in the Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual and the [Guidelines for Read Aloud, Test Reader](#). All or portions of the content may be read aloud. Students receiving the Translations (stacked) Designated Support and who are struggling readers may need assistance accessing the assessment by having all or portions of the assessment read aloud. This support also may be needed by students with reading-related disabilities. If not used regularly during instruction, this support is likely to be confusing and may impede the performance on assessments. A student should have the option of asking a reader to slow down or repeat text. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment. The student **must** be tested alone.

e. Translation Test Directions- (Mathematics-Non-Embedded)

Translated Test Directions is a language support available prior to beginning the actual test items. Students can be provided a downloaded PDF in selected languages to be read to them by a qualified person fluent in that language or they may read them independently if they are literate in the selected language. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

f. Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionary- (ELA performance task full write- Non-Embedded)

A bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary is a language support. A bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary can be used for the full write portion of an ELA performance task. The full write is the second part of a performance task.

D. DOCUMENTATION OF TESTING RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE IEP OR SECTION 504 PLAN

All designated supports/accommodations recommended for students identified as special education, Section 504 or English learner (EL) **must** be entered on [Test Information and Distribution Engine \(TIDE\)](#) **prior to testing**.

Documentation on [Test Information and Distribution Engine \(TIDE\)](#) **prior to testing** for every student assessed with the CTAA and the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science, requires submission of the [CTAA and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklists Science Eligibility & Learner Characteristics Inventory \(LCI\)](#).

For questions about the CSDE Accommodations Collection Web site, contact the Student Assessment Office at 860-713-6855 or 860-713-6837.

E. SELECTING APPROPRIATE TEST ACCOMMODATIONS

Deriving useful and meaningful interpretations from student responses is a major goal of any testing program. No accommodation should interfere with the accurate interpretation of a score. Professional judgment and experience play important roles in any decision concerning which support or accommodation is needed, the extent to which it is needed, and for which student. Listed below are some general guidelines for the IEP or 504 team to consider in determining accommodations for students.

- Does the accommodation fit the student's areas of strength and weakness, rather than the category of disability? (For example, not all students with learning disabilities have reading problems and, therefore, not all require that the math test be read to them.)
- Does the student's IEP or Section 504 plan call for the same or a similar accommodation for class work?
- Does the student use this accommodation regularly during classroom activities?
- Is the student sufficiently skilled to use this accommodation with ease or will the accommodation serve as an impediment? This question is especially pertinent when considering the use of technology or assistive technology devices. (For example, if a student is allowed to use text-to-speech, but has not experienced a digital voice during classwork, this accommodation may hamper his or her performance.)
- Is the accommodation necessary for this child? (For example, a student with a visual impairment who reads well may not need math problems read to him or her, but may require streamline view to better navigate enlarged text.)

F. ALLOWABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AND 504 STUDENTS ONLY

All students taking the Smarter Balanced and CMT/CAPT Science summative assessments are allowed the use of various accessibility tools both embedded and non-embedded when appropriate for the content area test they are taking. All students are also allowed access to designated supports if a determination has been made through a student's needs profile. In this section accommodations are discussed which are allowed only for students with disabilities with an Individualized education Program (IEP) or Section 504 plan.

Embedded

a. Refreshable Braille Devices, Braille Embossers

Braille is a raised-dot code that individuals read with their fingertips. Graphic material (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, and illustrations) is presented in a raised format (paper or thermoform). For all tests, contracted and non-contracted braille is available; Nemeth code is available for math. More information is available at: [Technical Specifications Manual for Online Testing](#) and [Technology Requirements for Text-To-Braille](#) . Permissive mode must be indicated within the TIDE system to access this accommodation.

b. Sign Language (ELA- Listening, Mathematics)

Test content is translated into American Sign Language (ASL) via video. The ASL human signer and the signed test content are viewed on the same screen. Students may view portions of the ASL video as often as needed. Some students who are deaf or hard of hearing and who typically use ASL may need this accommodation when accessing text-based content in the assessment. The use of this accommodation may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment. For many students who are deaf or hard of hearing, viewing signs is the only way to access information presented orally. It is important to note, however, that some students who are hard of hearing will be able to listen to information presented orally if provided with appropriate amplification and a setting in which extraneous sounds do not interfere with clear presentation of the audio presentation in a listening test. This document provides instructions on how to access and use the American Sign Language (ASL) embedded accommodation for the Smarter Balanced Assessments [Embedded Accommodation – American Sign Language \(ASL\) Instructions](#)

c. Text-to-Speech for the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages

This accommodation allows the reading passages text to be read aloud to the student via embedded text-to-speech technology. This accommodation is only for students in Grades 3-8 with a documented print disability or blind students who do not yet have

adequate braille skills. Text to-speech for ELA reading passages is not available for ELs (unless the student has an IEP or 504 plan). The Test to Speech for ELA Reading Passages accommodation is intended for a small group of students. The [Text-to-Speech and Read Aloud Decision Guidelines 2015-2016](#) must be submitted to CSDE prior to testing for each student being provided this accommodation. When text-to-speech is used, appropriate headphones must be available to the student, unless the student is tested individually in a separate setting.

d. Closed Captioning for the Smarter Balanced ELA Listening

This accommodation provides printed English text on the computer screen while audio materials are presented. Students who are deaf or hard of hearing and who typically access information presented via audio by reading words that appear in synchrony with the audio may benefit from this accommodation.

e. Streamlined

This accommodation allows any tests to be presented without a split screen. Items are presented sequentially.

Non-Embedded

f. Read Aloud for the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages

The Read Aloud accommodation for ELA reading passages may only be provided through the [Special Accommodations Procedure](#). Text is read aloud in English to the student by a trained and qualified human reader who follows the [Guidelines for Read Aloud, Test Reader](#) and who has submitted a signed [Read Aloud Protocol for Smarter Balanced Assessments Security/Confidentiality Agreement Form](#). All or portions of the content may be read aloud. Reading passages of the ELA assessment may be read aloud to students in Grades 3-8 with a documented print disability or blind students who do not yet have adequate braille skills. These students must be tested individually. In addition, the [Text-to-Speech and Read Aloud Decision Guidelines 2015-2016](#) must be submitted to CSDE prior to testing for each student being provided this accommodation.

Table 1 TEXT-TO-SPEECH & READ ALOUD SUPPORTS/ACCOMMODATION SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS

TEST	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS		MATHEMATICS	
	Text-to-Speech	Read Aloud	Text-to-Speech	Read Aloud
Computer Adaptive Test (CAT)	Yes*	Yes**	Yes	Yes
Performance Task (PT)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Classroom Activity		Yes		Yes

* Reading passages of the ELA assessment for Grades 3-8. [Text-to-Speech and Read Aloud Decision Guidelines 2015-2016](#) needs to be completed and submitted to CSDE.

** Reading passages of the ELA assessment for students in Grades 3-8 is provided through the [Special Accommodations Procedure](#) and [Text-to-Speech and Read Aloud Decision Guidelines 2015-2016](#) needs to be

completed and submitted to CSDE.

g. Print on Demand

The Print on Demand Accommodation may only be provided through the [Special Accommodations Procedure](#). Some students with disabilities may need paper copies of either passages/stimuli and/or items. A very small percentage of students should need this accommodation. The use of this accommodation may result in the student needing additional time to complete the assessment. Permissive mode must be indicated within the TIDE system to access this accommodation.

h. Scribe

The accommodation for the provision of a scribe requires the [Special Accommodations Procedure](#). Teachers must be trained and complete the Scribe Protocol provided by CSDE when the special accommodation petition permission has been approved. Students dictate their responses to a qualified person who records verbatim what they dictate. This accommodation may result in the student needing additional time to complete the assessment.

i. Speech-to-Text, Voice-recognition Software, Dragon Dictate or Others

Voice recognition allows students to use their voices as input devices to the computer, to dictate responses or give commands (e.g., opening application programs, pulling down menus, and saving work). Voice recognition software generally can recognize speech up to 160 words per minute. Students may use their own assistive technology devices. Students who have motor or processing disabilities (such as dyslexia) or who have had a recent injury (such as a broken hand or arm) that make it difficult to produce text or commands using computer keys may need alternative ways to work with computers. Students will need to be familiar with the software, and have had many opportunities to use it prior to testing. Speech-to-text software requires that the student go back through all generated text to correct errors in transcription, including use of writing conventions; thus, prior experience with this accommodation is essential. When students use their own assistive technology devices, all assessment content should be deleted from these devices after the test for security purposes. For many of these students, using voice recognition software is the only way to demonstrate their composition skills. Still, use of speech-to-text does require that students know writing conventions and that they have the review and editing skills required of students who enter text via the computer keyboard. It is important that students who use speech-to-text also be able to develop planning notes via speech-to-text, and to view what they produce while composing via speech-to-text. Permissive mode must be indicated within the TIDE system to access this accommodation.

j. Alternate Response Options

Alternate response options include but are not limited to adapted keyboards, large keyboards, StickyKeys, MouseKeys, FilterKeys, adapted mouse, touch screen, head wand, and switches. Students with some physical disabilities (including both fine motor and gross motor skills) may need to use the alternate response options accommodation to access the Smarter Balanced assessment. Some alternate response options are external devices that must be plugged in and be compatible with the assessment delivery platform. Therefore it is very important to use the devices with the Smarter Balanced Practice Site to ensure compatibility and provide more familiarity for testing for the student. Permissive mode must be indicated within the TIDE system to access this accommodation.

3) Other Accommodations

a. Specialized Calculator (Mathematics-Grade 6 and above only)

A specialized calculator is a non-embedded calculator for students needing a special calculator, such as a braille calculator or a talking calculator. Care must be taken to ONLY provide it for the Smarter Balanced mathematics calculator allowed items in Grade 6-8.

b. Abacus (Mathematics)

This tool may be used in place of scratch paper for students who typically use an abacus. This accommodation is only available for the Smarter Balanced mathematics test.

c. Multiplication Table (Mathematics-Grade 4 -8)

A paper-based single digit (1-9) [multiplication table](#) is available for students in Grades 4 and above for the Smarter Balanced mathematics assessment. This tool may be used for reference for students with an IEP or 504 plan documented need for this accommodation.

G. SCIENCE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION, SECTION 504 STUDENTS AND ENGLISH LEARNERS

CMT and CAPT Science supports for students with disabilities, students with a 504 plan and students identified as English learners (EL) are also provided through designated supports and accommodations, which are documented on the [Test Information and Distribution Engine \(TIDE\)](#).

Supports and Accommodations are commonly categorized in three ways: presentation, response, and other:

- **Presentation Supports/Accommodations** — Allow students to access information in ways that do not require them to visually read standard print. These alternate modes of access are auditory, multisensory, tactile and visual.
- **Response Supports/Accommodations** — Allow students to complete activities, assignments and assessments in different ways or to solve or organize problems using some type of assistive device or organizer.
- **Other Supports/Accommodations** — Allow students the use of non-embedded material or devices.

Students taking the CMT/CAPT Science in test booklets are allowed to take notes in the margins of their test booklets. They may underline with a pencil or a highlighter to note key points or keep their place. Students need to understand however, that only those responses recorded in the answer spaces will be scored. Students may also use a piece of oak tag to reduce the visual field and/or to keep their place while working in the test booklet. All accommodations must be submitted to the CSDE using the Test Supports/Accommodations Form on [Test Information and Distribution Engine \(TIDE\)](#) prior to testing.

1. Presentation Accommodations

a. Braille and Large Print

Braille and large print forms of the CMT and CAPT Science are available for students who are blind or visually impaired. Test/answer booklets may not be photocopied or enlarged; however, as recommended in an IEP or 504 plan, visually impaired students may use any magnifying equipment available to them to enlarge the test booklet for viewing.

A separate test examiner's manual for the CMT/CAPT Braille or large print forms called, *General Instructions for Testing with Braille and Large Print Forms*, is included in the shipment of Braille and large print forms. This manual includes more detailed information about administering the Braille and large print forms of the CMT/CAPT Science. In addition, a document titled "Notes to the Examiner" accompanies the Braille test booklets. This document details information for the test administrator where the Braille version of the test is necessarily different from the standard text version of the test.

b. Sign Language

Students who are deaf or hearing impaired may have the CMT/CAPT Science test administered individually. Furthermore, a sign language interpreter may assist in test administration by giving directions and clarifying information as allowed in the

c. Text To Speech and Read Aloud

With the Text to Speech Accommodation text is read aloud to the student via embedded text-to-speech technology. The student is able to control the speed as well as raise or lower the volume of the voice via a volume control. The Read Aloud accommodation for science provides the text to the student using a person to read it aloud. This student should be tested individually.

Table 2 TEXT-TO-SPEECH & READ ALOUD ACCOMMODATION CMT/CAPT SCIENCE

TEST	CMT		CAPT	
	Text-to-Speech	Read Aloud	Text-to-Speech	Read Aloud
Science	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

2. Response Accommodations

a. Circle Answers in CMT/CAPT Science Test Booklet (Multiple-choice Items Only)

If necessary, students may **circle multiple-choice** answers in their science test booklets; however, **they must avoid making marks in the bubble area on CMT Science test booklets. Under the supervision of an administrator or district test coordinator, the test examiner should fill in the bubbles in the student’s test/answer booklet after the student completes the test.**

b. Braille Responses

Students may respond in contracted or non-contracted braille. Nemeth code is available for math. Students may also respond using refreshable braille devices. If needed, students may work with a qualified scribe which requires the [Special Accommodations Procedure](#). More information available at: [Technical Specifications Manual for Online Testing](#) and [Technology Requirements for Text-to-Braille](#) .

c. Test Mode: Computer Response CMT/CAPT Science

Students may respond on the computer using the TIDE system to complete open-ended or extended response items. This allows for the use of embedded tools and if needed, designated supports and other accommodations.

d. Bubbles (Science Test Booklet Only)

Trained school personnel may **bubble** student verbal or nonverbal (pointing, gesturing)

responses during testing to **multiple-choice and grid-in items only**. This accommodation is available only for those students for whom marking in the test booklet is not a sufficient accommodation and must be administered in an alternate test setting. **Students may not dictate their responses to open-ended or extended response items.**

Summary Bubbler Accommodation for Special Education and Section 504 Students

BUBBLER ACCOMMODATION* Test booklet only	CMT	CAPT
Multiple-choice/grid-in items	Yes	Yes
Open-ended/Extended response	No	No

*Record an examinee’s verbal/or nonverbal response to **multiple-choice or grid-in items only**.

e. Bubbles Time Extension (Science)

Time extensions beyond those stated in the CMT/CAPT Science Test Examiner’s Manual may be granted to students whose disability makes completion of the test within prescribed time limits unrealistic. For each testing session, time may be extended for as long as necessary provided the student does not suffer from fatigue and the test session is not carried over to another day. (For example, CAPT Science I may be administered on one day and Science II may be administered the following day; however, neither section may be administered over two days.) A good benchmark for time extensions is one and a half times the standard testing period for a specific subtest. Students who receive extended time **must be tested separately** from those students tested under standard time limits. If factors such as mental and/or physical fatigue or disruptive behavior present a problem, it is acceptable to plan breaks within one sitting of the test administration or to spread out test activities over several sittings in one day. Care should be taken to ensure that students do not have an opportunity to share and/or compare test information during any breaks that are provided.

Some students with health problems and/or medication schedules benefit by being tested at particular times of the day (e.g., first thing in the morning, immediately following medication, etc.). It is permissible to test at a time that is most beneficial to the student.

f. Native Language Reader Directions Only (Science)

All test directions may be read and clarified in English or the student’s native language for EL students who have been identified as needing this support. A non-certified or certified staff person may administer this accommodation.

g. Bilingual Dictionaries- Word-to-word Translation (Science)

A bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary is a language support. A bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary can be provided for Science.

h. Time Extensions (Science)

Time extensions beyond those stated in the Test Examiner’s Manual may be granted to a student whose limited English proficiency makes completion of the test within the prescribed time limits unrealistic. Time may be extended for as long as necessary provided the student does not become unreasonably fatigued. A good benchmark is one and a half times the standard time for the subtest. All students who receive extended time must be tested separately from students being tested under standard time limits. If such factors as mental or physical fatigue or disruptive behavior present a problem, it is acceptable to plan breaks within one test sitting or to spread out the test activities over several sittings on an individual student basis. However, each test session/test sitting must be completed in a single day. Stated differently, test sessions may not be split between two different days.

i. Separate Setting

Test location is altered so that the student is tested in a setting different from that made available for most students. Student can be tested alone or in a small group. Students who are easily distracted (or may distract others) in the presence of other students, for example, may need an alternate location to be able to take the assessment. The separate setting may be in a different room that allows them to work individually or among a smaller group, or in the same room but in a specific location (for example, away from windows, doors, or pencil sharpeners, in a study carrel, with a whisper phone, near the teacher’s desk, or in the front of a classroom). Some students may benefit from being in an environment that allows for movement, such as being able to walk around. In some instances, students may need to interact with instructional or test content outside of school, such as in a hospital or their home. A specific adult, trained in a manner consistent with the TAM, can act as test proctor (test administrator) when student requires it.

**H. SUPPORTS AND ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS
PARTICIPATING IN ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS**

Students with significant cognitive disabilities participating in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment and/or the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science typically receive multiple supports and accommodations during instruction. Teachers also design their instruction to be more accessible through various strategies and scaffolding. Both alternate assessments were developed to incorporate the typical scaffolding teachers provide when test items were

designed. Therefore the expectation for students participating in the alternate assessment system is for any accommodations to be clearly defined within the IEP on page 8. During any special accommodation requests or focus monitoring activities representatives from the State Department of Education would be able to see information related to instruction and assessment that might include communication or access supports and accommodations such as signing, use of assistive technology, read aloud or a scribe.

A. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

1) **Students Who Are Present but Do Not Take the Test**

Some students are present in school during the testing window, but for any number of reasons do not take the test. These students may or may not have disabilities or have limited English proficiency.

Students with serious emotional and behavioral concerns often are among the most difficult to test. Even with suitable accommodations and individual administration, students sometimes refuse to be tested or become agitated or disruptive to the point that testing for those students is not appropriate. If a student reaches this point, testing must be stopped.

The Test Examiner’s Manual outlines strategies for preparing and reassuring students prior to test administration in an effort to reduce anxiety and promote full participation. There are instances in which the student “refuses” to even attempt the test, and simply puts his or her head on the desk without disrupting other students. **In these cases, for Science the test examiner should indicate the test was “Left Blank” by darkening the appropriate bubble on the *back cover* of the science test booklet.**

2. Reluctant Students

In other situations, a student reluctantly begins the test and then becomes impatient or frustrated, but does not disturb other students. For CMT/CAPT Science, the test examiner should encourage the student to continue the test. For the Smarter Balanced Assessments, the student may resume testing at a later time or day. The student may decide to attempt the test later in the same session. The student will receive a score based on the number of items completed.

3) **Students Who Become Agitated or Disruptive**

In those circumstances where the student becomes emotionally agitated and/or disruptive, he or she should be promptly removed from the class if being tested in a group. If the student is being tested individually, the student should be provided with a break. An attempt should be made to reassure the student and continue testing. If, however, it is apparent that the student cannot continue, the test administrator may collect the student’s test materials or pause the test and remove the student from the test setting for the time

remaining in the particular test period. If the student does not finish testing and has attempted any questions, the student will receive a score based on the number of items completed. If the student did not attempt any items, please refer the section titled “Students Who Are Present but Do Not Take the Test.

In all the examples provided, every reasonable effort should be made to encourage the student to complete the test on which he or she is working.

4) Accommodation Provision Error

A student’s IEP team is responsible for determining the support(s)/accommodation(s) a student should receive during statewide testing. During testing it is essential that all proctors are aware of all supports and accommodations the student should receive for each of the sub-tests. If a student did not receive their IEP mandated supports and/or accommodation(s) or received a support and accommodation in error, the district test coordinator (DTC) must be informed immediately. The DTC must then call the CSDE student assessment office immediately. For Smarter Balanced assessments, a separate online system is available to record these incidents.

If a student refuses the support(s)/accommodation(s) during testing, a district is encouraged to document this refusal and keep this information in the student’s file. This may be important for determining appropriate supports and accommodations for this student in the future.

B. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO ACCOMMODATIONS DURING ASSESSMENT

1) Planning for Test Day

Once decisions have been made about providing accommodations to meet individual student needs, the logistics of providing the actual accommodations during state and district assessments must be mapped out. It is not uncommon for members of the IEP team, most often special education teachers, to be given the responsibility for arranging, coordinating and providing assessment accommodations for all students who may need them. Thus, it is essential for all IEP team members to know and understand the requirements and consequences of district and state assessments, including the use of accommodations. It is important to engage the appropriate personnel, including paraprofessionals to plan the logistics and provisions of assessment accommodations on test day. Prior to the day of a test, be certain that test coordinators and test examiners know what accommodations each student will be using and how to administer them properly. For example, test coordinators and test examiners need to know which students will be allowed extra time to complete the test so that separate test settings may be arranged for those students. Staff administering accommodations, such as reading to a student, must adhere to the specific guidelines in this document so that student scores are valid.

2) Administering Assessments with Accommodations

State and local laws and policies specify practices to assure test security and the standardized and ethical administration of assessments. Test coordinators, test examiners and all staff members involved in test administration must adhere to these policies. The Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement (NCME, 1995) states that test examiners and others involved in assessments must:

- take appropriate security precautions before, during, and after the administration of the assessment;
- understand the procedures needed to administer the assessment prior to administration;
- administer standardized assessments according to prescribed procedures and conditions and notify appropriate personnel if any nonstandard or delimiting conditions occur;
- avoid any conditions in the conduct of the assessment that might invalidate the results;
- provide for and document all reasonable and allowable accommodations for the administration of the assessment to students with disabilities or special needs; and
- avoid actions or conditions that would permit or encourage individuals or groups to receive scores that misrepresent their actual levels of attainment.¹

Failure to adhere to these practices may constitute a test irregularity or a breach of test security and must be reported immediately to the Student Assessment Office at 860-713-6860 and investigated according to state testing policies.

3) Ethical Testing Practices

Ethical testing practices must be maintained during the administration of a test. Unethical testing practices relate to inappropriate interactions between test examiners and students taking the test. Unethical practices include changing the content by paraphrasing or offering additional information, coaching students during testing, editing student responses or giving clues in any way.

4) Standardization

Standardization refers to adherence to uniform administration procedures and conditions during an assessment. Standardization is an essential feature of educational assessments and is necessary to produce comparable information about student learning. Strict adherence to guidelines detailing instructions and procedures for the administration of accommodations is necessary to ensure test results reflect actual student learning.

¹. National Council on Measurement in Education. (1995). *Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement*. Washington, DC: Author.

5) Test Security

Test security involves maintaining the confidentiality of test questions and answers, and is critical in ensuring the integrity and validity of a test. Test security can become an issue when accessible test formats are used (e.g., Braille, large print) or when someone other than the student is allowed to see the test (e.g., interpreter, reader). To ensure test security and confidentiality, test administrators need to: 1) keep testing materials in a secure place to prevent unauthorized access; 2) keep all test content confidential and refrain from sharing information or revealing test content with anyone; and 3) return all materials as instructed.

6) Connecticut's Test Security Policy

The CMT/CAPT Science and the Smarter Balanced assessment test administration manuals contain specific instructions that proctors must follow to ensure security and validity. Therefore, it is essential that each test examiner review the entire test administration manual for both assessments prior to administering any part of the Connecticut statewide assessments. Violation of test security is a serious matter with far-reaching consequences. Breaches of test security include, but are not limited to, photographing/copying of test materials, failing to return test materials, coaching students, giving students answers, and/or changing students' answers. Such acts may lead to the invalidation of an entire school district's student test scores, disruption of the test system statewide, and legal action against the individuals committing the breach. A breach of test security may be dealt with as a violation of the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers, as well as a violation of other pertinent state and federal law and regulation. The Connecticut State Department of Education will investigate all such matters and pursue appropriate follow-up action. Any person found to have breached the security of the test system may be subject to sanctions including, but not limited to, disciplinary action by a local board of education, the revocation of Connecticut teaching certification by the State Board of Education [see Section 10-145b(m) of the Connecticut General Statutes], and civil liability pursuant to federal copyright law.

APPENDIX A

MEDICAL EXEMPTION

Students with Temporary Medical Conditions Attending School

Every year during statewide testing, there are cases of students with various medical conditions that effect their ability to participate in testing. In some cases, the student may have a note from a medical professional stating that the student should be excused from participating in testing. State law stipulates that all public school students in the specified grades who receive educational services must participate in statewide assessment.

In some cases, a student may have been injured and the student’s medical condition (e.g., broken hand or arm, concussion) may temporarily impact his or her ability to complete the test. There is no exemption from administering the statewide test to these students under the law. Therefore, to test the injured student, the first option would be to delay testing until later in the test administration window to give the student enough time to recover.

A student who is injured in the days just before or during test administration has a temporary disability and may be eligible for accommodations under Section 504. This determination of temporary disability is made by a 504 planning team at a meeting in which the injury is documented. If the student is determined eligible for Section 504 status, a plan is developed outlining the accommodations necessary, for the student to participate in instructional activities and statewide assessment. If standard accommodations are not sufficient for statewide assessment, contact the academic office to see what other accommodation options are available.

Medical Exemption Procedure

Definition: In Connecticut, the exemption determination for a medical emergency rests primarily on the following criteria. **The student is unable to attend school and is medically/emotionally unavailable for homebound/hospitalized instruction.** Students who are hospitalized or homebound due to illness should be tested unless there are medical constraints. These students can have the test administered at home or in the hospital provided the test is administered by a certified school staff member who is fully trained in the proper test administration and security procedures for the Smarter Balanced Assessments, CMT/CAPT Science and CTAA.

In rare cases, there may be a student who experiences a medical emergency just prior to or during the testing window. There is a process whereby, the student may

receive an exemption from testing due to the emergency nature of the medical condition, if the criteria for exemption are met.

A medical exemption can be given to a student depending on the availability of the student during the statewide testing window. An application for medical exemption is required each year a student meets the criteria for exemption.

Step 1 – Initial Contact:

The District Test Coordinator (DTC) contacts the Academic Office at the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) prior to the statewide testing window or at the time the student becomes medically unavailable during the statewide testing.

- Contact Joe Amenta - joseph.amenta@ct.gov (860-713-6855) or Janet Stuck - janet.stuck@ct.gov (860-713-6837).
- Provide the following information:
 - State Assigned Student Identification (SASID) number;
 - Student Name (last, first);
 - Date of Birth;
 - Grade;
 - Name of School, District, Approved Private Special Education Facility or RESC; and
 - Reason for exemption.
- You will be notified if the student meets the qualification for medical exemption and whether to proceed to Step 2.

Step 2 – Medical Form:

- Based on the result of Step 1, the DTC will receive the Emergency Medical Exemption Form. This form will be partially completed with the name of the student who qualifies for a medical exemption.
- The remainder of Emergency Medical Exemption Form **must** be completed and signed by the student's attending physician.

If signed documentation is not received in accordance with the CSDE procedures all subtests not received will be marked absent.

Step 3 – Returning Documentation to the CSDE:

- The DTC will return a completed Emergency Medical Exemption Form and cover letter on district letterhead by U.S. mail to:

Joseph Amenta or Janet Stuck, Education Consultant
Academic Office
Connecticut State Department of Education
165 Capitol Avenue, Room 215

P.O. Box 2219
Hartford, CT 06145-2219

The cover letter should include:

- Student Name (last, first);
- State Assigned Student Identification (SASID) number;
- Date of Birth;
- Grade;
- Name of School, District, Approved Private Special Education Facility or RESC; and
- Reason for exemption.

<p>Joseph Amenta Education Consultant Special Student Populations Academic Office Connecticut State Department of Education joseph.amenta@ct.gov Phone: 860-713-6855 Fax: 860-713-7030</p>	<p>Janet Stuck Education Consultant Special Student Populations Academic Office Connecticut State Department of Education janet.stuck@ct.gov Phone: 860-713-6837 Fax: 860-713-7030</p>
--	--

CRITERIA FOR EXEMPTION FROM TESTING DUE TO A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

TO: CMT/CAPT District Test Coordinators

FROM: Barbara Q. Beaudin, Chief
Bureau of Student Assessment

DATE: December 2006

**RE: CRITERIA FOR EXEMPTION FROM TESTING DUE
TO A MEDICAL EMERGENCY**

In guidance issued in the late spring, the U.S. Department of Education now allows states to set policies for the exemption of individual students from statewide testing in cases where there is a medical emergency. States were advised to use their own discretion in the establishment of the exemption policy. Outlined below is Connecticut's policy and discussion points for your use with staff and/or parents as well as the rationale for the policy decisions.

In Connecticut, the exemption determination for a medical emergency rests primarily on the following criteria.

The student is unable to attend school and is medically/emotionally unavailable for homebound/hospitalized instruction.

Rationale: We typically consider students who are well enough to receive homebound or hospitalized instruction well enough to be tested. The test schedule can be modified for these students so that they take only one test a day.

While we ask that the medical emergency be attested to by a physician, this attestation speaks to whether or not the student is available for homebound/hospitalized instruction. The physician is not asked to determine whether the student should take the test; the physician should determine whether the student is well enough to receive homebound or hospitalized instruction.

Factors to consider when in conversation with parents and/or school district personnel.

The illness, injury or condition is of an unexpected nature. It is not a chronic condition.

Rationale: It is expected that if the student has a chronic condition the district has taken the necessary steps to provide homebound/hospitalized instruction as necessary; has accommodations in place for test administration and is generally prepared to deal with the situation.

The emergency may be physical or emotional in nature, e.g., psychotic episode requiring hospitalization.

Rationale: Especially with adolescents, it is not unusual that the medical emergency is emotional in nature rather than just physical. We need to be sensitive to these emotional issues without exempting large numbers of students who are “nervous” and/or “anxious” about the test. We will need documentation of emotional incapacitation resulting in unavailability for instruction as determined by a qualified medical professional as the criteria for an emotional issue that is severe enough to warrant an exemption.

The student is absent due to a documented medical condition for the whole test window, including the make-up period.

Rationale: The testing window is generally long enough (about 3 weeks) to allow sufficient time for a student to make up any testing that has been missed. If the student has recovered and has time to make up the testing during the testing window, an exemption is not warranted.

Documentation of the medical emergency is required. The physician or psychiatrist must attest to the inability of the student to be available for instruction and testing. Physician means a Doctor of Medicine or Osteopathy licensed to practice medicine and surgery according to Chapter 370 and 371 of the Connecticut General Statutes, or licensed to practice medicine in another state. For the purpose of determining a medical emergency, this means attestation required from an MD, DO or Psychiatrist. Attestations from social workers will not suffice.

Rationale: The circumstances surrounding a medical emergency must have a significant impact on the student’s ability to participate in the entire test. Since we are looking for documentation of a medical condition, it seems reasonable to expect the documentation come from the student’s doctor.

It may be necessary for the school nurse to have a discussion with the medical personnel caring for the student in order to fully understand the emergency situation, rather than relying solely upon district or parental explanations of the situation.

Rationale: It is not uncommon during the testing window to have school personnel or parents call the CSDE to report on the medical/emotional status of a student as an argument for not participating in the test. It is frequently difficult to make a valid judgment about such circumstances from afar. Having the school nurse in communication with the doctor, as necessary, will be helpful in determining and communicating the extent of the medical emergency. The school nurse will need to obtain proper authorization from the parent to communicate directly with the physician caring for the student.

The district may have to wait until the end of the test window to determine if the student will have qualified for a medical emergency exemption, will be considered absent, or will participate in some or all of the subtests.

Rationale: It is often difficult in the week(s) before the testing window to predict the extent of the medical emergency and whether the student will be able to participate in the test during the course of the test window.

If the district is able to have a discussion with CSDE staff about the particular student in question and submit appropriate medical documentation prior to the end of the test window, then no answer booklet will be submitted to the test contractor for scoring. This student will not be reflected in CMT/CAPT reports or in the AYP calculations.

All documentation pertinent to a request for a medical exemption must be submitted by the end of the week following the close of the testing window.

If the district is unable to secure and submit medical documentation to the CSDE before the end of the test window, a test booklet must be submitted for the student.

If the subsequent determination is made that the student is eligible for an exemption, the student will not be reflected in the CMT/CAPT reports and will not be included in AYP calculations.

If the subsequent determination is made that the student is NOT eligible for an exemption, the student will be recorded as absent in the CMT/CAPT reports and will be included in the AYP calculations.

Rationale: Because medical documentation is necessary for the exemption determination, until the documentation is available for review and discussion there is no exemption. Thus, an answer booklet must be submitted. However, there is no easy way to “pull” an answer booklet once it has been submitted to the test contractor for scoring.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Emergency Medical Exemption Form

SAMPLE

Date: _____

Joseph Amenta or Janet Stuck, Education Consultant
Academic Office
Connecticut State Department of Education
165 Capitol Avenue
P.O. Box 2219
Hartford, Connecticut 06145-2219

Dear _____

_____ has been under my care since _____. This student is unable
to attend school and is medically/emotionally unavailable for homebound/hospitalized
instruction. This student will not be available to receive such instructional services until after
_____.

Sincerely,

DOCTOR'S SIGNATURE

DOCTOR'S PRINTED NAME

Please Note: This form must be signed by a Doctor of Medicine or Osteopathy licensed to practice
medicine or surgery according to Chapter 370 and 371 of the Connecticut General Statutes, or licensed
to practice medicine in another state. For the purpose of determining a medical emergency, this means
attestation required from an MD, DO, or Psychiatrist Attestations from social workers will not suffice.
For purposes of HIPPA, the parent must be the one to present and secure this attestation from the doctor.
CSDE 9-2010

APPENDIX B

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Special Accommodation Procedure

Definition: Accommodations in test administration are provided to allow students with disabilities the opportunity to demonstrate their aptitude and achievement in testing situations rather than produce a score that mainly reflects their impairments. Although test accommodations provide students with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge, they do not guarantee equal outcomes. Again, an appropriate or reasonable accommodation should not interfere with the interpretation of a student's scores. This *Assessment Guidelines* current edition contains a substantial list of test accommodations that may be used by students with disabilities.

In exceptional circumstances, there may be a student whose disabilities are such that the allowable accommodations listed in the *Assessment Guidelines* would be insufficient to provide access to the Smarter Balanced Assessments and/or the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Science, and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Science. In these cases, upon request, the District Test Coordinator (DTC) will be provided with information regarding the *PETITION FOR APPROVAL OF SPECIAL DOCUMENTED ACCOMMODATIONS For Smarter Balanced and CMT/CAPT Science*. These special accommodations petitions **MUST** be submitted to Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) in writing, **prior** to testing. These petitions must also include all of the necessary documentation to support any request for the use of an accommodation other than those allowed as indicated in the *Assessment Guidelines* current edition.

Step 1 – Initial Contact:

- The District Test Coordinator (DTC) contacts the CSDE at least two months prior to start of testing and describes special testing accommodations needed for a student.

Contacts:

Joe Amenta-joseph.amenta@ct.gov (860-713-6855) or
Janet Stuck-janet.stuck@ct.gov (860-713-6837)

- Provide the following information:
 - State Assigned Student Identification (SASID) number;
 - Student Name (last, first);
 - Date of Birth;
 - Grade;
 - Name of School, and District, or Approved Private Special Education Facility or RESC; and

- Reason for special accommodation request.
- The CSDE makes initial determination providing suggestions for alternatives utilizing standard accommodations and if necessary proceeds to Step 2.

Step 2 – Petition for Special Documented Accommodations:

- The CSDE e-mails the Petition for Special Accommodations for the Special Documented Accommodations
- The DTC must complete this form and fax or mail it with **ALL** required documentation to either Joseph Amenta **or** Janet Stuck.

Joseph Amenta Academic Office Connecticut State Department of Education 165 Capitol Avenue, Room 215 P.O. Box 2219 Hartford, CT 06145-2219 Fax: 860-713-7030	Janet Stuck Academic Office Connecticut State Department of Education 165 Capitol Avenue, Room 215 P.O. Box 2219 Hartford, CT 06145-2219 Fax: 860-713-7030
--	--

Step 3 – Review of documentation:

- If necessary, the CSDE will contact the student’s teacher and/or other appropriate district staff to discuss the student’s qualifications and need for the special accommodation indicated on the Petition for Approval of Special Documented Accommodations.
- Criteria used to determine approval of a petition for special accommodations include:
 - Evidence of appropriate specificity of special accommodations requested related to the individual need of the student throughout the IEP document. (States activities where required/duration/personnel support etc.).
 - Evidence that requested special accommodations are currently used during classroom instruction.
 - Evidence of student’s primary disability impacting test accessibility.
 - Evidence of student’s experience level with the special accommodations requested.
 - Evidence of goals to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities over time.

Step 4 – The CSDE sends letter of response to the DTC indicating the petition has been approved or denied.

Letters include:

- Date;
- Name and address of the DTC petitioning for special accommodation;
- Student Name;
- Test Year;
- Grade;
- Test (CMT Science, CAPT Science, Smarter Balanced);
- Description of disabling conditions and the impact on test accessibility; and
- Statement of approval or denial.
 - Letters of approval also include:
 - Explanation of special accommodations for each subtest;
 - Statement regarding score reporting and related judgments; and
 - Names individual (usually the District Test Coordinator) responsible for appropriate submission of materials.

PETITION FOR APPROVAL OF SPECIAL DOCUMENTED ACCOMMODATIONS
For Smarter Balanced and CMT/CAPT Science

Student Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Grade _____
(Last, First)

School _____ District _____ Date _____

Student has an: IEP Section 504 plan (If neither, stop here, student does not qualify)

Subject Area (select all that apply): ELA Mathematics Science

Answer the following questions in Section I and II to determine if a student qualifies for special documented accommodations.

SECTION I

1. Does the student's disability require that the Smarter Balanced Assessments be given on paper? (*Print on Demand Accommodation*) Yes No
2. Does the student have a documented print disability that requires ELA reading passages read to them by a qualified person? (*Read Aloud Accommodation Grades 3-8; also requires [Text-to-Speech and Read Aloud Decision Guidelines 2015-2016 Form](#)*) Yes No
3. Is this a student who is deaf or hard of hearing requiring sign support by a qualified person to take the test? Yes No
4. Does the student's disability prevent him/her from answering open-ended questions on a computer or in the CMT/CAPT Science booklet? (*Scribe Accommodation*) Yes No
5. Does the student's disability prevent him/her from answering multiple choice questions on a computer or in the CMT/CAPT Science booklet? (*Scribe Accommodation*) Yes No
6. Does the student have a documented need that requires an accommodation that is presently not available in order to participate on the Smarter Balanced Assessments or CMT/ CAPT Science Assessment? Yes No

SECTION II

1. Explain in detail on a separate sheet, the accommodation(s) being proposed for this student.
2. If applicable, provide supporting documentation of the student's most recent psycho-educational, evaluation and physical therapy, speech/language, etc., evaluations that document the conditions/characteristics described in item 1, above. List the document(s) that are enclosed.
3. Enclose a copy of the student's latest Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan which documents the use of the proposed accommodation(s) in the student's current instructional setting.

Certification: We believe that the proposed documented accommodations are necessary in order for this student to participate in Smarter Balanced Assessments and/or CMT CAPT Science.

Teacher Name _____
Print

_____ Telephone Number

Teacher Signature _____

Special Education Director Name _____
Print

_____ Telephone Number

Special Education Director Signature _____

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Academic Office

Mary Anne Butler
Chief Academic Officer

Abe Krisst
Bureau Chief

Joseph Amenta/Janet Stuck
Education Consultants
Special Populations