

## Today's Presentation Content....

- History of Connecticut Alternative Assessment (CTAA)
- Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) Data
- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) 2015 Language / Requirements on Alternate Assessments
- Characteristics of students with significant cognitive disabilities (Alternate Assessment Eligibility Criteria).
- Learning Characteristics Inventory (LCI)
- IEP File Review Process
- Suggestions for Improving Identification Process



## Past Practices

- How were students identified?
- What we used to do?
- What has changed?
- Why the changes?



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## Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)



- In 2015, Congress reauthorized ESEA as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
- ESSA changed the 1% cap to be based on the participation rate rather than the proficiency/performance rate.
- ESSA placed the 1% cap on the state participation rate for each content area, based on the total number of all students in the state assessed in the content area.
- As a reminder, the ESSA requires that only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities may take an Alternative Assessment aligned with Alternative Academic Achievement Standards (AA-AAAS).
- ESSA limits the number of students that a state may assess with an AA-AAAS to no more than 1.0 % of all students in the grades assessed.



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## Considerations before Choosing the Alternative Assessment for a Student

- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE);
- Communication
- Assessment accessibility
- High expectations for all students
- Curriculum aligned with CT Core Standards (CCS)
- How the assessment helps to inform programming



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## Significant Cognitive Disability FAQs

- Students with significant cognitive disabilities are a relatively small population who: (1) are identified with one or more of the existing categories of disability under the IDEA (for example: intellectually disabled, autism, multiple disabilities, and traumatic brain injury, which are the most common); and (2) have cognitive impairments that may prevent them from attaining grade-level achievement standards, even with systematic instruction and accommodations.
- Additionally, student records indicate a pervasive disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact **intellectual functioning** and **adaptive behavior** defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.



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## Characteristics of Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

- Disability Category
- Assessment/Evaluation
- Adaptive Behavior
- Language/Communication



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## Who are Connecticut's CTAA students?

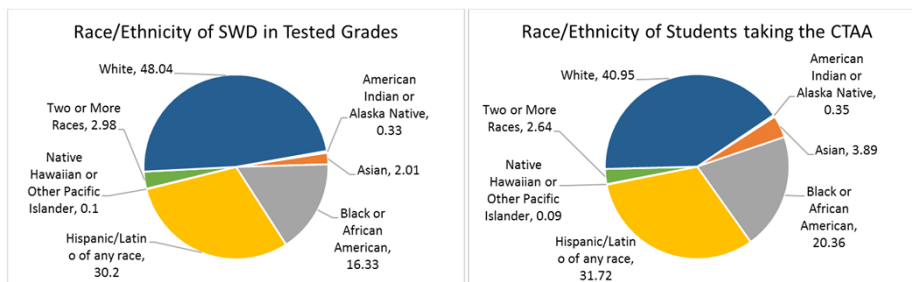
2017-18

Primary Disability	Count	% of CTAA	% of Disability	Count SWD G.3-8,11	% All SWD
Autism	1496	34.6%	31.9%	4696	11.2%
Deaf/Blindness	*	*	*	7	0.0%
Emotional Disturbance	48	1.1%	1.7%	2898	6.9%
Hearing Impairment	*	*	*	265	0.6%
Intellectual Disability/MR	1016	23.5%	82.9%	1225	2.9%
Learning Disability	266	6.2%	1.6%	16298	38.8%
Learning Disability/Dyslexia	9	0.2%	0.6%	1387	3.3%
Multiple Disabilities	946	21.9%	66.0%	1433	3.4%
Orthopedic Impairment	*	*	*	21	0.1%
Other Health Impairment	217	5.0%	9.5%	2285	5.4%
Other Health Impairment-ADD/ADHD	83	1.9%	1.2%	7043	16.8%
Speech/Language Impairment	127	2.9%	3.0%	4304	10.3%
Traumatic Brain Injury	17	0.4%	35.4%	48	0.1%
Visual Impairment	6	0.1%	10.2%	59	0.1%
Unknown (IDEA eligible after 10/1/18)	82	1.9%	na	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4322</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>10.3%</b>	<b>41969</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



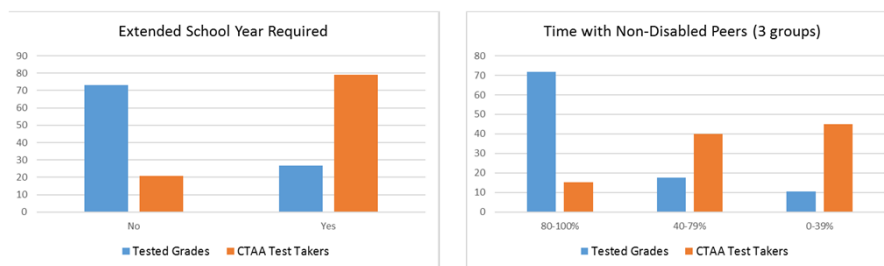
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## CTAA Students, cont. 2017-18



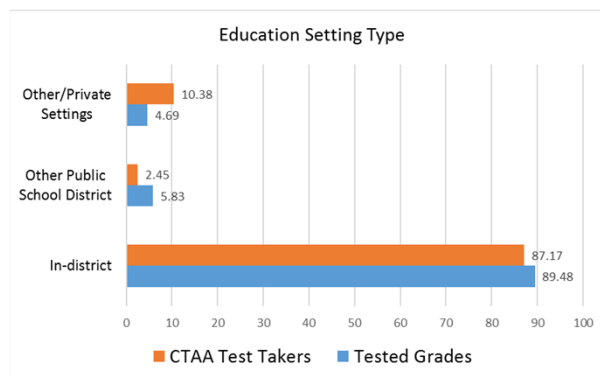
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## CTAA Students, cont. 2017-18



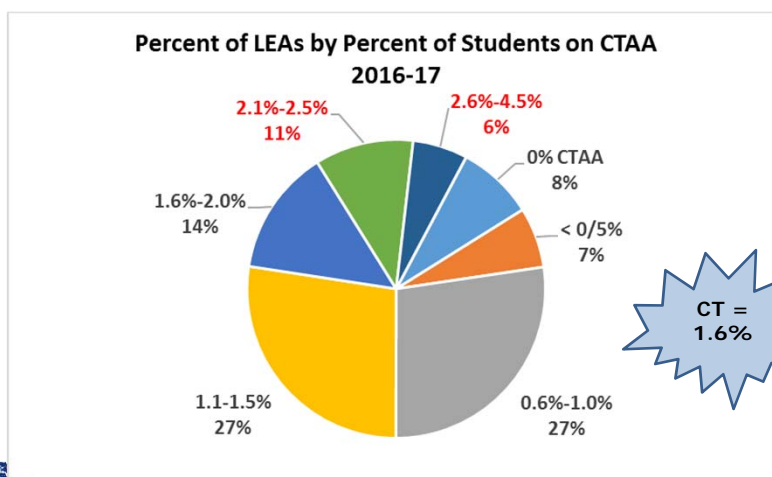
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## CTAA Students, cont. 2017-18



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## What Percent of CT Districts are below 1%?



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## Reporting of 1% in LEA-Level APR

Connecticut has incorporated the reporting of each Nexus District's percentage of students participating on the Alternate Assessment in the LEA-Level Annual Performance Report (APR) beginning with the 2016-17 LEA-Level APR available on EdSight (CSDE Public Data Portal).

For 2016-17, districts below the State's Alternate Assessment Participation Rate (1.6%) were indicated to be meeting the target. Moving forward, 0% through 1% will "meet target", 1.01% to the State Rate will be in "substantial compliance" and any district over the state rate will have failed to meet the target. An example report of from the APR is below.

Alternate Assessment Participation (ESSA) 2.4% 1.00% Did Not Meet



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## Disability Type for Districts with >= 2.5% 2017-18

Primary Disability	Count	% of CTAA	% of Disability	Count SWD G.3-8,11	% All SWD	>=2.5% Districts
Autism	1496	34.6%	31.9%	4696	11.2%	32.0%
Deaf/Blindness	*	*	*	7	0.0%	*
Emotional Disturbance	48	1.1%	1.7%	2898	6.9%	2.0%
Hearing Impairment	*	*	*	265	0.6%	*
Intellectual Disability/MR	1016	23.5%	82.9%	1225	2.9%	20.6%
Learning Disability	266	6.2%	1.6%	16298	38.8%	10.5%
Learning Disability/Dyslexia	9	0.2%	0.6%	1387	3.3%	0.7%
Multiple Disabilities	946	21.9%	66.0%	1433	3.4%	19.9%
Orthopedic Impairment	*	*	*	21	0.1%	*
Other Health Impairment	217	5.0%	9.5%	2285	5.4%	4.5%
Other Health Impairment-ADD/ADHD	83	1.9%	1.2%	7043	16.8%	3.1%
Speech/Language Impairment	127	2.9%	3.0%	4304	10.3%	3.8%
Traumatic Brain Injury	17	0.4%	35.4%	48	0.1%	0.4%
Visual Impairment	6	0.1%	10.2%	59	0.1%	*
Unknown (IDEA eligible after 10/1/18)	82	1.9%	na	0	0.0%	2.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4322</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>10.3%</b>	<b>41969</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



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## CTAA Math Performance

Performance Level	LD	ID	ED	SLI	Other	OHI	Autism	ALL MATH
1	8.1%	28.1%	11.6%	12.1%	47.2%	22.0%	39.0%	33.8%
2	21.8%	32.5%	30.2%	23.4%	20.9%	26.6%	24.9%	25.8%
3	35.1%	28.5%	30.2%	35.5%	21.2%	35.3%	23.1%	26.1%
4	35.1%	10.8%	27.9%	29.0%	10.7%	16.1%	13.0%	14.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>988</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>903</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>1444</b>	<b>4059</b>

Performance Level*	LD	ID	ED	SLI	Other	OHI	Autism	ALL MATH
1	4.8%	28.4%	8.3%	7.4%	41.5%	13.0%	35.3%	28.3%
2	16.6%	31.6%	25.0%	18.5%	22.5%	22.2%	21.3%	23.2%
3	25.0%	27.1%	41.7%	33.3%	28.6%	42.6%	23.0%	27.5%
4	53.6%	12.9%	25.0%	40.8%	7.4%	22.2%	20.4%	21.0%

\* only LEA's Above 2.5%



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## CTAA ELA Performance

Performance Level	LD	ID	ED	SLI	Other	OHI	Autism	ALL ELA
1	10.7%	34.9%	11.4%	16.1%	52.6%	23.6%	50.1%	41.1%
2	18.1%	26.8%	15.9%	22.6%	18.9%	20.1%	22.0%	22.0%
3	35.8%	27.0%	52.3%	40.3%	18.5%	33.0%	18.6%	23.8%
4	35.4%	11.3%	20.4%	21.0%	10.0%	23.3%	9.3%	13.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>1451</b>	<b>4088</b>

Performance Level*	LD	ID	ED	SLI	Other	OHI	Autism	ALL ELA
1	6.0%	33.3%	15.4%	18.5%	46.3%	13.0%	46.0%	34.6%
2	20.2%	25.0%	7.7%	14.8%	22.8%	16.7%	20.6%	21.2%
3	38.1%	32.7%	61.5%	44.5%	23.5%	44.4%	20.3%	29.2%
4	35.7%	9.0%	15.4%	22.2%	7.4%	25.9%	13.1%	15.0%

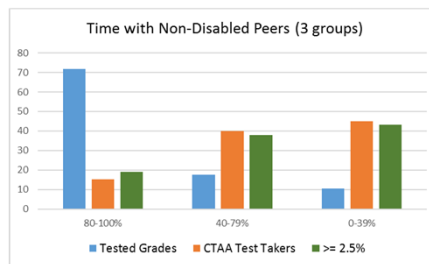
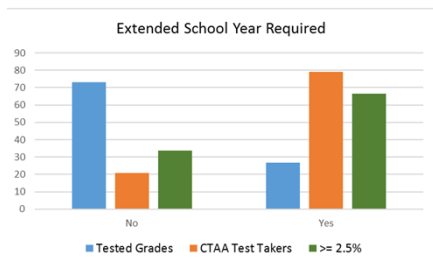
\* only LEA's Above 2.5%



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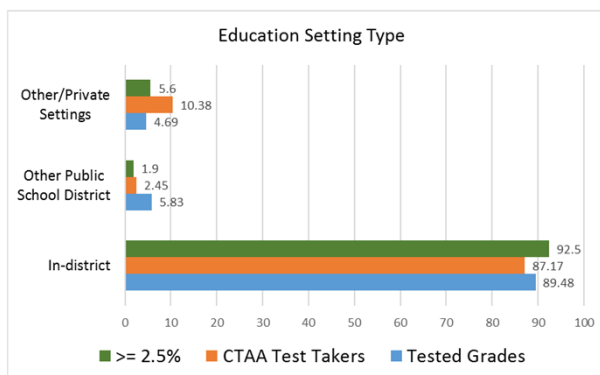


## Students in the $\geq 2.5\%$ Districts



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## Students in the $\geq 2.5\%$ Districts



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## What factors contribute to the high participation rates in Connecticut?

- Audience please turn and discuss with colleagues ....



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### Considerations:

## What factors contribute to the high participation rates in Connecticut?

- High population of students with “Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities.”
- Parental resistance to Smarter Balanced and SAT (let’s not put the student through this).
- Educator Resistance to Smarter Balanced and SAT (let’s not put the student through this).
- Lack of or insufficient professional development and training for IEP team members and other educators on the nature of the alternate assessment, and who should participate in the assessment(s).
- Lack of understanding of Smarter Balanced and SAT accommodations.
- Lack of clarity of overall identification process.



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## Alternate Assessment Eligibility Criteria Should NOT Be Based Solely On:

- a disability category;
- poor attendance or extended absences;
- native language, social, cultural, or economic differences;
- expected poor performance on the standard educational assessment(s);
- academic and other services student receives;
- educational environment or instructional setting;
- percent of time receiving special education;
- English learn (EL) status;
- low reading level;
- anticipated disruptive behavior by the student;
- impact of student's scores on accountability system;
- administrator decision;
- anticipated emotional duress; or
- need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/AAC) to participate in assessment.



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## Tool for Schools

Connecticut State Department  
of Education

Required for Participation in the  
Connecticut Alternate Assessment System

## Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI)



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## LCI Revisions

Based upon conversations with various stakeholder groups, internal discussions, the desk audit, and data and process review, CSDE chose to revise the LCI for 2018-19.

The revised LCI includes:

- an enhanced introduction emphasizing the purpose, importance of evidence, and completion and submission processes
- Language changes reflecting a student focus
- Formatting changes to reflect the same appearance on the DEI which will also facilitate reviews for Early Stopping Rule cases and monitoring
- Very little change to characteristic items to ensure comparability cross years
- Moved Criteria to the end of the documents so the PPT can use it as a method to discuss eligibility based upon characteristics.
- Created a detailed specific Verification Section to ensure teacher accountability and understanding.



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### Alternate Assessment Eligibility Criteria

Student must meet all 3 criteria components to participate in the Alternate Assessment System.

Evidence-Based Criteria	Criteria Descriptors
1. The student has a significant cognitive disability.	Review of student records indicates 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>
2. The student is learning content linked to (derived from) the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).	Goals and instruction listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade-level CCS and NGSS, which address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student.
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.



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**VERIFICATION SECTION**

- I verify that supporting evidence related to the student's assessment options was discussed at the PPT on \_\_\_\_\_ (date of PPT) to determine eligibility for participation in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System.
- Evidence reviewed during the PPT was used to determine that:
  - The student meets all three evidence-based criteria for participation in the Alternate Assessments. **This student is eligible for and will participate in the Alternate Assessments during the current school year as indicated on Page 9 of their Individualized Education Program (IEP).**
  - The student does not meet all three evidence-based criteria for participation in the Alternate Assessments. **This student will participate in the standard statewide assessments with designated supports and accommodations (as needed) during the current school year as indicated on Page 9 of their Individualized Education Program (IEP).**

*Reminder: All accommodations, including assistive technology, should be reflected on Page 8 of the IEP for instruction and standard/alternate assessment.*

- I verify that I am the student's primary special education teacher and that I have met the requirements for the current school year's Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Training.

Primary Special Education Teacher Completing Form:


First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

EIN: 

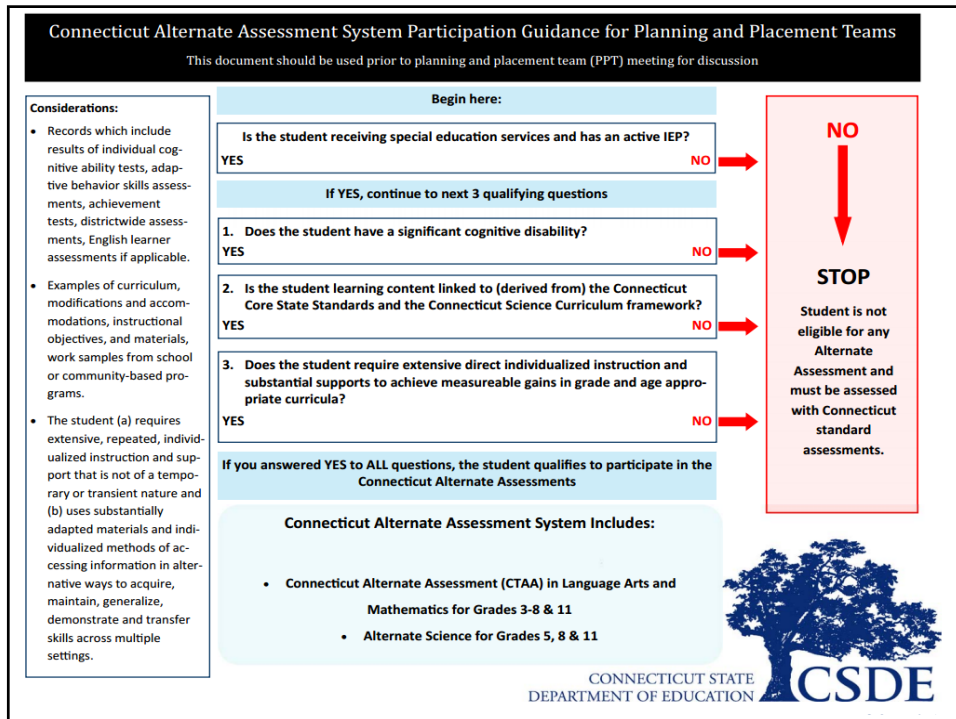
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School Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date entered into the Data Entry Interface (DEI) on the CSDE Assessment Program Portal: \_\_\_\_\_



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## BSE Review Process

- Support
- Guidance



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## BSE File Review

- 56 districts comprised Cohort A.
- BSE reviewed the process for appropriate identification of students with disabilities for participation on state alternate assessments (CTAA and CTAS).
- Present Levels of Performance were reviewed: current performance data included standardized, classroom, district/state, narrative.
- 10 IEPs per district were reviewed.
- IEPs were rated along a continuum indicating strong/sufficient evidence or weak/no evidence for accurate identification.



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## Internal Rubric

BSE reviewed preponderance of evidence to suggest that the student:

### Evidence-Based Criteria:

1. The student has a significant cognitive disability.
2. The student requires extensive, direct, individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade and age appropriate curricula.

*Note: For the purpose of this review, the additional eligibility criteria, "the student is learning content linked to [derived from] the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)" was not considered.*

### Criteria Descriptors:

- Review of student records indicates a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior.
- 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 setting.

## Alternate Assessment CTAA Rubric Content

### Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

- Language Arts, Mathematics, Communication
- Strengths, Concerns & Needs, Impact Statement
- Assessment Criteria Encompassed:
  - Standardized
  - Classroom
  - District / State
  - Narrative / Informational



## Present Levels of Performance IEP Page 4

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name, First Name      DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ mm/dd/yyyy      District: \_\_\_\_\_      Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_ mm/dd/yyyy

**PRESENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE**  
(The following information was derived from: report data, documentation from classroom performance, observations, parent/student reports, and curriculum based and standardized assessments, including Smarter Balanced and CT Alternate Assessments results and student samples).

Parent and Student input and concerns	

Area <i>(briefly describe current performance)</i>	Strengths <i>(include data as appropriate)</i>	Concerns/Needs <i>(requiring specialized instruction)</i>	Impact of student's disability on involvement and progress in the general education curriculum or appropriate preschool activities.
<b>Academic/Cognitive</b> <b>Language Arts:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Age Appropriate       			
<b>Academic/Cognitive:</b> <b>Math:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Age Appropriate       			
<b>Other Academic/ Nonacademic Areas:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Age Appropriate       			

## Present Levels of Performance IEP Page 5

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name, First Name      DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ mm/dd/yyyy      District: \_\_\_\_\_      Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_ mm/dd/yyyy

**PRESENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE**

Impact of student's disability on involvement  
and progress in the general education  
curriculum or appropriate preschool activities.

Area <i>(briefly describe current performance)</i>	Strengths <i>(include data as appropriate)</i>	Concerns/Needs <i>(requiring specialized instruction)</i>	Impact of student's disability on involvement and progress in the general education curriculum or appropriate preschool activities.
<b>Behavioral/Social/Emotional:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Age Appropriate       			
<b>Communication:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Age Appropriate       			
<b>Vocational/Transition:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Age Appropriate       			
<b>Health and Development including Vision And Hearing:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Age Appropriate       			
<b>Fine and Gross Motor:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Age Appropriate       			
<b>Activities of Daily Living:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Age Appropriate       			
<b>Other:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Age Appropriate       			



# Accommodation/Modifications

## IEP Page 8

Student: _____		DOB: _____	District: _____	Meeting Date: _____
Last Name, First Name		mm/dd/yyyy		mm/dd/yyyy
<b>Program Accommodations and Modifications - INCLUDING NONACADEMIC AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/COLLABORATION/SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL</b>				
<b>Accommodations and Modifications to be provided to enable the child:</b> - To advance appropriately toward attaining his/her annual goals; - To be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum; - To participate in extracurricular and other non-academic activities; and - To be educated and participate with other children with and without disabilities.				<b>Sites/Activities Where Required and Duration</b>
<b>Accommodations may include Assistive Technology Devices and Services</b>				
Materials/Books/Equipment:				
Tests/Quizzes/Assessments:				
Grading:				
Organization:				
Environment:				
Behavioral interventions and Support:				
Instructional Strategies:				
Other:				
<i>Note: When specifying required supports for personnel to implement this IEP, include the specific supports required, how often they are to be provided (frequency) and for how long (duration)</i> Frequency and Duration of Supports Required for School Personnel to implement this IEP include: _____				
_____ _____				

# Service Delivery Grid

## IEP Page 11

Student: _____		DOB: _____	District: _____	Meeting Date: _____				
Last Name, First Name		mm/dd/yyyy		mm/dd/yyyy				
<b>SPECIAL EDUCATION, RELATED SERVICES, AND REGULAR EDUCATION</b>								
Special Education Services	Goal(s) #	Frequency	Responsible Staff	Service Implementer	Start Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	End Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Site*	If needed, description of Instructional Service Delivery (e.g. small group, team taught classes, etc.)
<b>Related Services</b>								
*Instructional Site: 1. Regular Classroom 2. Resource/Related Service Room 3. Self-Contained Classroom 4. Community-Based 5. Other: _____ Description of participation in General Education: _____ Note: Each Item #1-13 must include a response 1. Assistive Technology: <input type="checkbox"/> Not Required <input type="checkbox"/> Required: See Pg. 8 2. Applied (Voc.) Ed: <input type="checkbox"/> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Special (specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> N/A 3. Physical Education: <input type="checkbox"/> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Special (specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> N/A 4. Transportation: <input type="checkbox"/> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Special (specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> N/A 5. Length of School Day: (Specify) _____ 6. Number of Days/Week: (Specify) _____ 7. Length of School Year: (Specify) _____ 8. Total School Hours/Week: (Specify) _____ 9. Special Education Hours/Week: (Specify) _____ 10. Hours per week the student will spend with children/students who do not have disabilities (time with non-disabled peers): _____								
11. Since the last Annual Review, has the student participated in school sponsored extracurricular activities with non-disabled peers? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No 12. Extended School Year Services: <input type="checkbox"/> Not Required <input type="checkbox"/> Required: See service delivery grid above or an additional page 11 for services to be provided <input type="checkbox"/> Required: Continue to implement current IEP 13. a) The extent, if any, to which the student will not participate in regular classes and in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities, including lunch, recess, transportation, etc., with students who do not have disabilities: _____ b) If the IEP requires any removal of the student from the school, classroom, extracurricular, or nonacademic activities, (e.g., lunch, recess, transportation, etc.) that she would attend if not disabled, the PPT must justify this removal from the regular education environment. <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable: Student will participate fully <input type="checkbox"/> The IEP requires removal of the student from the regular education environment because: (provide a detailed explanation - use additional pages if necessary) _____								
Note: The LRE Checklist (ED632) must be completed and attached to this IEP if the student is to be removed from the regular education environment for 50% or more of the time. It is recommended that the LRE Checklist be utilized when making any placement decision to ensure conformity with the LRE provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.								

## Review Process Findings

Turn and discuss with colleague:

What concerns/issues were reviewed from the file review process?



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## Review Process Findings

### Most frequent concerns/issues identified across districts:

- Primary disability category does not reflect the pervasive nature of a significant cognitive disability;
- Limited data to identify academic achievement/functional performance;
- Over-reliance on narrative information across all components of present levels;
- Identified performance levels inconsistent with significant cognitive disability;
- Limited documentation or existence of goals associated with adaptive behavior and/or functional academics;
- Special Education/Related Service hours do not suggest: "...extensive supports and individualized instruction...";
- Absence of assistive technology/accessible educational materials; and
- Designation of accommodations/modifications "as needed."



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## Review Process Findings

### Technical Issues / Errors:

- IEPs contain an outdated Page 9 or a Page 9 that is incomplete; and
- Page 9 does not reflect that a LCI was completed.
- Goals and objectives for address academic, behavior, and functional performance are missing.



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## File Review Findings Concerns/Issues

### Primary Disability Category:

- Eligibility that would suggest other than significant cognitive impairment;

### Data (Academic Achievement / Functional Performance/Adaptive Behavior):

- Limited data to identify academic achievement / functional performance;
- Over-reliance on narrative across all components of present levels

### Present Levels:

- Overreliance on Narrative Information
- Identified performance levels inconsistent with significant cognitive impairment



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## File Review Findings Concerns/Issues

### **Accommodations/modifications:**

- Does not suggest significant supports, not aligned, with services, lack of A.T. or Accessible materials
- Designation of accommodations / modifications “as needed.”

### **Service Grid:**

Special education / related service hours that do not suggest: “requires extensive instruction/support”;

- low hours of
- low services
- low specialized instruction



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## District Notification

- A notification letter was sent to district Directors of Special Education summarizing the most frequent concerns/issues identified across districts derived from the file review process.
- Planning and Placement Teams’ decision,
- District will contact BSE to determine if:
  - 1) Staff is sufficiently trained/knowledgeable
  - 2) District would like to engage in focus group
  - 3) District would like assistance/training/resources to assist with appropriate identification



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2018 CTAAS District Review Form

**Eligibility for Participation in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System**

Once you have reviewed the eligibility of each student, please complete the following and return to James Moriarty, Education Consultant at [james.moriarty@ct.gov](mailto:james.moriarty@ct.gov) by September 28, 2018.

District: \_\_\_\_\_

SASID: \_\_\_\_\_

The IEPs of the student(s) with the above referenced SASID(s) have been reviewed with regard to eligibility for participation in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System.

\_\_\_\_\_ The review identified the need for the development of a district professional learning plan to address the matter of CTAAS eligibility.

\_\_\_\_\_ The district is satisfied with the results of its review and believes that appropriate eligibility determinations are being made.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would be interested in participating in a Focus Group to help inform the development of guidance, technical assistance, and/or professional learning related to CTAAS eligibility.

Review submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(name) (role)

## Suggestions for Improved Process

Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)  
Recommendations for Districts to Monitor the Identification of  
Students for the CT Alternate Assessments:

1. If your district's percentage is greater than one percent, investigate whether those numbers are disproportionately represented in certain schools or grades.
2. Examine the process your planning and placement team (PPT) uses to determine how a student qualifies for the Connecticut Alternate Assessments. Convening a meeting with your staff with responsibilities in the decision-making process is highly recommended.



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## Suggestions for Improved Process

3. Research has shown that certain primary disabilities are most likely to be a reason for a student to be considered eligible to participate in CTAA's. The following primary disabilities represent those typically considered with evidence for eligibility:
- Intellectual Disability
  - Autism
  - Traumatic Brain Injury
  - Multiple Disabilities



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## Suggestions for Improved Process

Other primary disability categories in isolation that would generally require more substantial evidence to support eligibility for CTAA participation:

- Specific Learning Disabilities/Dyslexia
- Emotional Disturbance
- Other Health Impairment (OHI)-ADD/ADHD
- Speech or Language Impairment

If these latter categories are considered, strong evidence review should be included in the PPT process. Generally, selecting the standard assessments with supports and accommodations as needed, is preferable to selecting students with these primary disability categories for alternate assessment.



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## Next Steps and Resources

The CSDE will continue to provide additional supports to districts addressing the process for appropriate selection of students for participation in Connecticut Alternative Assessments.

- Districts may retrieve student test participation numbers through the American Institute of Research (AIR) reporting system. The Online Reporting System (ORS) User Guide provides information on how to access data on this Web site.

[https://wa.portal.airast.org/core/fileparse.php/2317/urlt/Online-Reporting-System-User-Guide\\_2017-2018.pdf](https://wa.portal.airast.org/core/fileparse.php/2317/urlt/Online-Reporting-System-User-Guide_2017-2018.pdf)



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## Questions?



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## Resources

**Completion Procedures for the Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI):** <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Student-Assessment/Special-Populations/Completion-Procedures-for-the-Learner-Characteristics-Inventory-LCI-Final-8172018-003.pdf?la=en>

**Learner Characteristics Inventory:**  
[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Student-Assessment/Special-Populations/Learner-Characteristics-Inventory\\_MASTER.pdf?la=en](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Student-Assessment/Special-Populations/Learner-Characteristics-Inventory_MASTER.pdf?la=en)



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## Resources

Connecticut Alternate Assessments and  
Connecticut NGSS Alternate Assessment

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Student-Assessment/CTAA-Skills-Checklist/Connecticut-Alternate-Assessments>



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## ESSA Language on Alternate Assessment

### ESSA Language on Alternate Assessments

- (D) ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS FOR STUDENTS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT COGNITIVE DISABILITIES. —
  - (i) ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS ALIGNED WITH ALTERNATE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS.—A State may provide for alternate assessments aligned with the challenging State academic standards and alternate academic achievement standards described in paragraph (1)(E) for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, if the State—
    - (I) consistent with clause (ii), ensures that, for each subject, the total number of students assessed in such subject using the alternate assessments does not exceed 1 percent of the total number of all students in the State who are assessed in such subject;



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## ESSA and 1% Participation Cap

- The establishment of the 1% cap is consistent with research showing that some students assigned to the alternate assessment more appropriately should have been assessed with the general assessment in which all other students participated (Cho, H., & Kingston, N. (2011).
- This shift in policy means that states, districts, schools, and Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams need to think carefully about which student should be included in the alternate assessment, which, as indicated in ESSA, is for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.



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## Characteristics of Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

- Much has been learned during the past several years about the characteristics of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities (NCEO, 2017):
- Available data confirm that most students with significant cognitive disabilities are in the categories of intellectual disabilities, autism, and multiple disabilities, although these are not the only disability categories reflected in the population of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.
- Available data also indicate that some students with the most significant cognitive disabilities come from home where a language other than English is spoken.



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KB1

## Significant Cognitive Disability Criteria Description (Beaver & Burton, 2017)

- Significant cognitive disability is characterized by scores on verbal or nonverbal assessments of cognition that are at least 2-1/2 – 3 standard deviations below the mean.
- Academic deficits or difficulties alone do not indicate that a student has a significant cognitive disability.
- Must consider social adaptive behaviors.
- A significant cognitive disability will be pervasive, affecting student learning across content areas and in social and community settings.
- Not all students with intellectual disabilities have the most significant cognitive disabilities.
- Students should be carefully considered for the alternate assessments, and they should not be automatically be assigned to the alternate assessment based on their identified disability category.



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## Expressive Communication (LCI Selection Criteria)

- Uses symbolic language to communicate: Uses verbal or written words, signs, braille, or language-based augmentative systems to request, initiate, and respond to questions, describe things or events, and express refusal.
- Uses intentional communication, but not at a symbolic-language level: Uses understandable communication through such modes as gestures, pictures, objects/textures, points, etc., to clearly express a variety of intentions.
- Communicates primarily through cries, facial expressions, change in muscle tone, etc., but does not clearly use objects/textures, regularized gestures, pictures, signs, etc., to communicate.



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**KB1** Klimkiewicz, Bryan, 9/6/2018

## Receptive Communication (LCI Selection Criteria)

- Independently follows 1-2 step directions presented through words (e.g., spoken, signed, printed, and does not need additional cues.
- Requires additional cues (e.g., gestures, pictures, objects, or demonstrations/models) to follow 1-2 step directions.
- Alerts to sensory input from another person (auditory, visual, touch, movement) BUT requires actual physical assistance to follow simple directions.
- Uncertain response to sensory stimuli (e.g., sound/voice, sight/gesture, touch, movement, smell).



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## Who are Connecticut's CTAA students?

2016-17

Primary Disability	Count	% of CTAA	% of Disability	Count SWD G.3-8,11	% All SWD
Autism	1520	34.0%	33.5%	4540	11.2%
Deaf/Blindness	*	*	*	8	0.0%
Emotional Disturbance	52	1.2%	1.9%	2709	6.7%
Hearing Impairment	10	0.2%	3.6%	277	0.7%
Intellectual Disability/MR	1022	22.9%	84.6%	1208	3.0%
Learning Disability	289	6.5%	1.8%	15932	39.3%
Learning Disability/Dyslexia	12	0.3%	1.3%	889	2.2%
Multiple Disabilities	955	21.4%	65.2%	1465	3.6%
Orthopedic Impairment	*	*	*	23	0.1%
Other Health Impairment	254	5.7%	11.5%	2213	5.5%
Other Health Impairment-ADD/ADHD	101	2.3%	1.5%	6828	16.8%
Speech/Language Impairment	157	3.5%	3.6%	4385	10.8%
Traumatic Brain Injury	12	0.3%	33.3%	36	0.1%
Visual Impairment	6	0.1%	8.6%	70	0.2%
Unknown (IDEA eligible after 10/1/18)	75	1.6%	na	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4471</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>10.3%</b>	<b>40583</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



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