

# PERFORMANCE MATTERS

News from the CSDE Performance Office



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## Performance Matters Forum – Save the Date and Call for Proposals

District/school leaders, data managers, data-entry staff, and informational technology



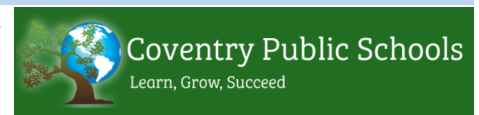
(IT) staff should plan to join the CSDE Performance Office on **October 17, 2019**, at the Red Lion in Cromwell. The Performance Matters Forum will be a half-day conference that offers sessions highlighting best practices focused on the following five topic areas:

- Data Collection
- Assessment
- EdSight
- Accountability
- Research/Evaluation

The CSDE is seeking school and district teams to present at the PMF. Please share your best practices that use data, information, and research from the Performance Office. **Please submit your proposal no later than June 28, 2019.** You will be notified by July 28, 2019 if your proposal is selected. Contact [Michelle Rosado](#) if you have any questions.

## Systems Promoting Student Growth @ George Hersey Robertson School

When Performance Office staff reviewed Smarter Balanced growth results for the previous three school years, Grade 4 at George Hersey Robertson School in Coventry emerged as a consistently strong growing group. We wanted to learn more about what is working at this elementary school. District and school administrators as well as the fourth grade teachers graciously accepted our request to meet and discuss the secrets to their success.



We learned that the educators are proud of the deeply collaborative culture they have developed with support from the administration. They stressed their unwavering focus on the needs of every student and how they use data to do this efficiently and effectively. The group explained that they attribute their success not to a single practice but to a well-coordinated system of efforts that work for them and their students.

The classroom teachers praised the math and literacy specialists' ability to "see the big picture" and provide teachers with exactly what they need in terms of data, support, and instructional resources. The specialists have time built in to their schedules to pore over the data and drill down to specific questions and related skills that are presenting challenges for students whereas teachers acknowledge that they simply do not have the time in their day to do this successfully.

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## Connecticut Report Cards

The Connecticut State Department of Education is excited to announce the release of the “Connecticut Report Cards” on our data portal EdSight at <http://edsight.ct.gov>. The report cards are user-friendly, visual reports for all schools, districts, and the state. The Connecticut Report Cards are also designed to fulfill the reporting requirements outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act and the Connecticut General Statutes.



Each report card provides essential information about:

- Students (e.g., enrollment, demographics, attendance, discipline)
- Educators (e.g., capacity, demographics, attendance)
- Instruction/Resources (e.g., course participation, time with non-disabled peers, per-pupil expenditures)
- Performance (e.g., state test achievement and growth, high school graduation, college readiness, physical fitness, college entrance)

The report cards use simple charts to visualize the data and make them accessible and understandable to a broad audience. Most charts offer trend data and encourage a longer-term perspective. District and/or state data are offered as comparisons in many cases. An “info icon” next to every chart contains a brief explanation of the data. When new data are available, the particular chart in the report card will be updated. Please share this new tool with staff, parents, local board members, and the community. If you have any questions, please email EdSight at [edsight.sde@ct.gov](mailto:edsight.sde@ct.gov).

## Next Generation Accountability—Measuring Arts Access— Seeking Input

Connecticut’s Next Generation Accountability System is founded on the principle that a broader set of indicators can provide a more complete picture of a school or district and encourage the provision of a well-rounded education for Connecticut students. To further this goal, Indicator 12 – Arts Access – was included in the accountability system; it serves as an “access” metric that evaluates the extent to which students in high school participate in at least one arts course during the school year.

This indicator uses data collected through the Teacher-Course-Student (TCS) system. Schools and districts can earn up to 50 points based on the percentage of students in Grades 9 through 12 participating in at least one arts course. Currently, an arts course is any dance, theater, music, or visual arts course that is assigned to the Fine and Performing Arts area (i.e., Subject Area 5 in the Secondary Course Code List). Since initial implementation of the accountability system, many stakeholders have requested the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to

expand the types of courses that are considered as arts courses for purposes of Indicator 12.

The Next Generation Accountability System was developed with extensive feedback from district and school

leaders. The CSDE remains committed to this ongoing input from stakeholders and will balance requests for change with availability of high-quality

data and a need to ensure meaningful comparisons across years.

The CSDE is seeking input on the potential specific courses in the secondary course list that: are not in Subject Area 5; are aligned to Connecticut’s arts standards; provide students with access to the arts; and should be considered as an arts course toward Indicator 12.

Please submit your responses using the [online survey](#) by **Friday, June 7, 2019**. Please share this with staff in your district who are familiar with secondary course offerings and the accountability system. If you have any questions, please contact [Ajit Gopalakrishnan](#).

The Connecticut Next Generation  
ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM



CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### 2019 PSAT for Alliance/CTECS Districts and 2020 AP Fees for Students from Low-Income Families

The CSDE will cover the cost for the October 16, 2019, administration of the PSAT for Grade 11 students who attend Alliance Districts and the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS). Additionally, the CSDE and College Board will cover the entire cost of the 2020 Advanced Placement (AP) exam fees for all students from low income families who attend public school in Connecticut.

The CSDE has a process with the College Board to direct bill the CSDE for Grade 11 students from low income

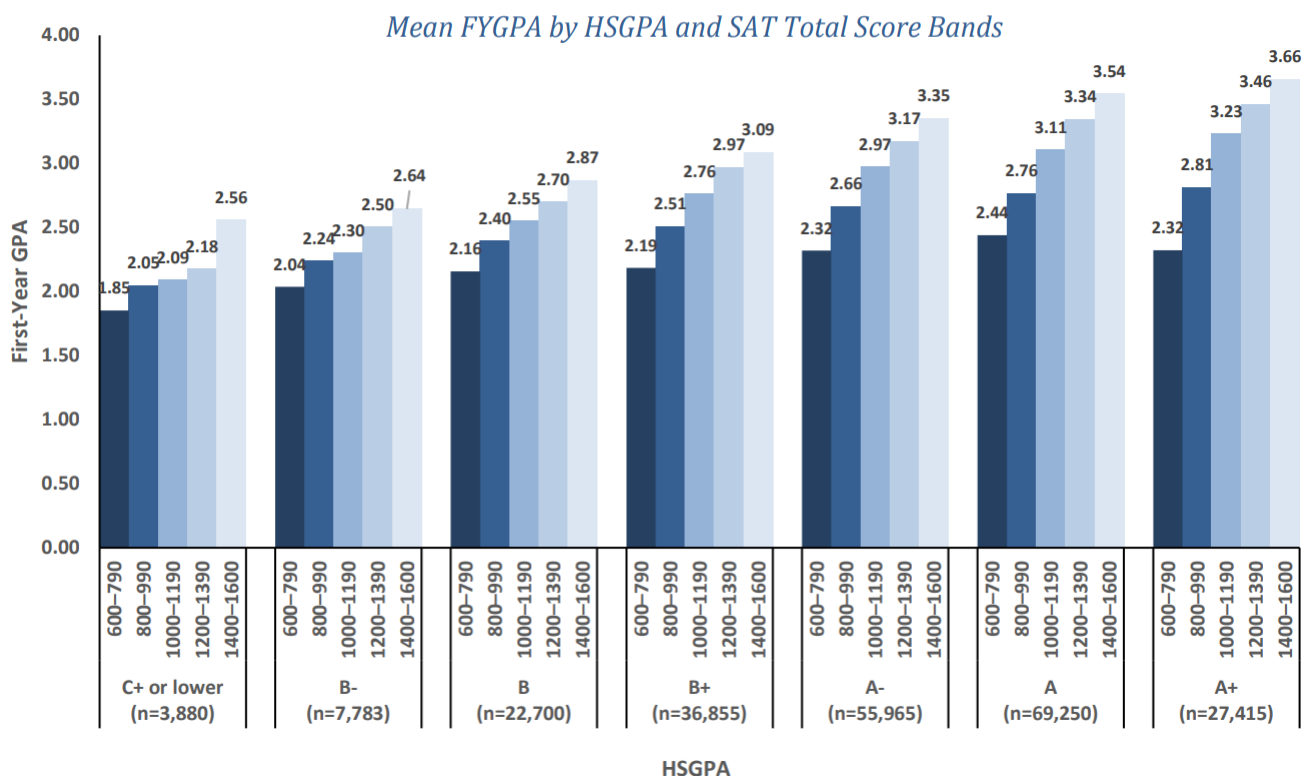
families who take the October 2019 PSAT from Alliance districts and the CTECS. Schools don't need to do anything other than test the students and the billing should take care of itself.

**However, please make sure that Grade 11 students properly grid their year of graduation (YOG) on the PSAT answer sheet. Mis-grids and blank YOG will result in your school getting billed for those students.** Please order the exams as you would normally do. If you have any questions, contact [Michelle Rosado](#).

For 2020 AP testing, AP coordinators will now order tests for students in the fall 2019 for 2020 exams. In 2020, AP coordinators will have the opportunity in the AP Registration and Ordering site (APRO) to indicate students' low income status, thus avoiding having to do this twice as is currently the practice, once during the test ordering and once during the pre-administration activities. Please visit the [College Board's AP Central](#) for more information.

### SAT Validity Study – Predicting First Year Grades and Second Year Retention

The first national [SAT validity study](#) for the redesigned SAT was completed in May 2019. It is based on data from more than 223,000 students across 171 four-year colleges and universities. Results show that while SAT scores and high school GPA (HSGPA) are both related to first year college GPA (FYGPA), using SAT scores in conjunction with HSGPA offers a more complete prediction of FYGPA than either measure individually. The figure below illustrates the validity of the SAT for predicting FYGPA after controlling for HSGPA. Within each HSGPA category, the relationship between SAT scores and FYGPA remains positive and increases by SAT score band. Note also that as HSGPA increases from C+ or lower to A+, the gaps between students within the same HSGPA category, but within different SAT score bands, increase.



**Systems Promoting Student Growth- (continued from page 1)**

The specialists in partnership with the teachers have used the Smarter Balanced interim assessment blocks (IABs) to “pinpoint struggles” and to identify students who need enrichment. In the discussion, one teacher explained that, “We saw for the first time, because of the IABs, that there was a group of students that needed to be enriched. We often only think about those who are below proficient, but we were missing these other kids through that kind of thinking.”

In addition to the benefit of providing more granular information about student knowledge and skills, the IABs serve as a tool to familiarize students with the format and language of the assessment. The teachers report thinking more flexibly about the way they pose questions to students so that they are confident that students have developed a deep understanding of the content rather than simply being able to respond correctly to a question when asked in a single way that the student has grown accustomed to in the classroom. The teachers help their students approach questions that may not seem “familiar” by teaching them to look for what they do know, what they can build from, and to identify clues they see.

The teachers also shared that seeing the expectations of the content standards applied to assessment items helped them to improve their understanding of the standards and enabled them to adjust their instruction to better reflect the intent of the standards. One teacher explained, “We

learned a lot about the rigor for the math assessment. They can’t only focus on the final answer now; they have to know the whys and the hows. We learned that from the IABs.” Another teacher reported that, “The IABs have pushed our Tier 1 instruction to become incredibly strong. We are creating great lessons that are very structured and well-scaffolded.”

This high degree of reflection and professional learning would not be possible without the time that has been dedicated for teachers to collaborate. In this school, they have six coaching days, three half days of professional development, and two weekly 30-minute team meetings that occur in part during dismissal with support from parent volunteers. One teacher explained the change in professional learning at their school this way: “The quality of our professional development was low and unfocused. Then we began a more collaborative process, so that people got what they needed. In the last five years, we put a lot of focus on pedagogical practice. We choose a couple of practices each year, such as feedback and collective efficacy.”

The ELA and mathematics specialists also play an important role by focusing their attention on vertical alignment and helping teachers understand the skills that were the building blocks for a particular grade and what the learning looks like one grade beyond. The specialists’ perspectives across multiple grades is critical curricular context for staff and is tremendously helpful in

easing student transitions from grade to grade.

They are deliberate in the development and ongoing improvement of their curriculum, and there is significant trust of the educators throughout the building. No one expects to go in every Grade 4 classroom on the same day and see exactly the same instruction. The teachers are responsive to the needs of their students and that is reflected in their daily practice.

The teachers explained that their approach to personalization for students and intervention specifically is effective. Everyone including students and their families view intervention as a “tune up,” a chance to build facility in a few skills rather than a holistic judgment. Tier 1 and tier 2 interventions take place every day during a 30-minute block in addition to the regularly scheduled math and literacy instruction. Students who need intervention are pulled out of the classroom while the remaining students receive additional targeted instruction. The intervention referral team meets bi-weekly to discuss student progress, allowing students to move in and out of interventions as needed rather than getting stuck in (or out of) an intervention group for six to eight weeks when the next “cycle” restarts. This model motivates students to focus on mastering the necessary concepts or skills as quickly as possible so that they can move beyond the intervention group.

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### Accountability Index Calculator Tool

A new tool is available on EdSight Public to promote a better understanding of the Next Generation Accountability System and to support schools and districts with improvement planning. The [Accountability Index Calculator](#) (available in the Related Links section of the Next Generation Accountability page) allows users to see how the Accountability Index calculations change based on changes in the individual indicators, changes in grade levels, and the physical fitness multiplier. Templates for both the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years are available. Additional information is available on the Notes tab. Please direct any questions to [Renee Savoie](#).

Accountability Calculator for 2017-18						
Select Grade Range for District or School						
		Min	Max			
		Pre-K	Grade 12			
No.	Indicator	Index/Rate	Target	Points Earned	Max Points	
					% Points Earned	
1a.	ELA Performance Index – All Students	67.6	75	45.1	50	90.1%
1b.	ELA Performance Index – High Needs Students	57.5	75	38.3	50	76.7%
1c.	Math Performance Index – All Students	62.7	75	41.8	50	83.6%
1d.	Math Performance Index – High Needs Students	52.0	75	34.7	50	69.3%
2a.	ELA Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – All Students	60.7%	100%	60.7	100	60.7%
2b.	ELA Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – High Needs Students	55.6%	100%	55.6	100	55.6%
2c.	Math Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – All Students	61.9%	100%	61.9	100	61.9%
2d.	Math Avg. Percentage of Growth Target Achieved – High Needs Students	55.4%	100%	55.4	100	55.4%
4a.	Chronic Absenteeism – All Students	10.7%	<=5%	38.6	50	77.2%
4b.	Chronic Absenteeism – High Needs Students	16.6%	<=5%	26.8	50	53.6%
5	Preparation for CCR – % taking courses	74.8%	75%	49.9	50	99.7%
6	Preparation for CCR – % passing exams	44.8%	75%	29.9	50	59.7%
7	On-track to High School Graduation	87.5%	94%	46.5	50	93.1%
8	4-year Graduation All Students	87.9%	94%	93.5	100	93.5%
9	6-year Graduation - High Needs Students	81.8%	94%	87.0	100	87.0%
10	Postsecondary Entrance	70.9%	75%	94.5	100	94.5%
11	Physical Fitness (remember to apply Fitness participation rate multiplier below)	50.1%	75%	33.4	50	66.8%
12	Arts Access	51.2%	60%	42.7	50	85.3%
<b>Accountability Index</b>				<b>936.3</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>74.9%</b>
Physical Fitness Multiplier Based on Estimated Participation Rate		Multiplier				
–At least 90%		1				
–At least 70% but less than 90%		0.5				
–At least 50% but less than 70%		0.25				
–Less than 50%		0				
Select the Fitness multiplier to be applied		1				

### Smarter Balanced Growth Trajectory Tool

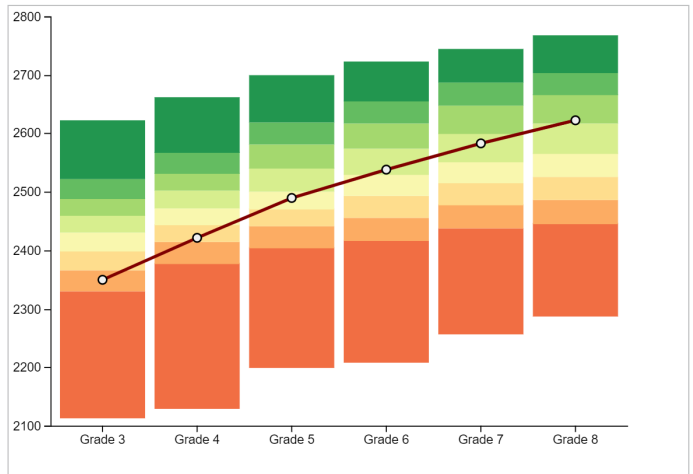
A new interactive tool is available on [EdSight](#) (under Performance —> Smarter Balanced). The purpose of this tool is to illustrate the trajectory of a student who meets his/her annual growth expectation as outlined in [Connecticut's Smarter Balanced Growth Model](#). It is designed to answer a question like,

*“If a student earns a Grade 3 Smarter Balanced ELA score of 2350 and meets all growth targets in future years, how will the student’s achievement change across Grades 4 through 8?”*

To use this tool: Select a subject, select a starting grade, enter a valid scale score, and click calculate. Please direct any questions to [Renee Savoie](#).

Select a **subject**, select a starting **grade**, enter a valid **scale score**, and click **calculate** to see the trajectory.

Subject: ELA Grade: Grade 3 Scale Score: 2350 Calculate



### Systems Promoting Student Growth- (continued from page 4)

The positivity and collegiality of the group was palpable. A variety of anecdotes were shared, providing evidence that the professionals in this organization assume collective responsibility for student success. One of the teachers remarked that, “No one says ‘Oh, well, those are your kids. I’m only helping my kids.’ All of the kids belong to everyone! We are all here to help all of the kids.” The teachers bring many decades of experience to their classrooms and are respected and supported. They have demonstrated an ongoing willingness to change by learning from their peers, asking for help, and using new approaches to meet the needs of their students today. They recognize and appreciate the strong leadership present throughout their district. The Superintendent summed it up best by saying, “Every day isn’t perfect, but 90% of the time you should feel happy and supported.”