



STUDENT ASSESSMENT NEWS

[Archived Student Assessment News](#)
CTStudentAssessment@ct.gov

October 18, 2019

860-713-6860



Smarter Balanced Content Explorer Launched

Use the quick links below to access articles and/or sections included in this newsletter.

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The new [Smarter Content Explorer](#) Web site is now available. With the Smarter Content Explorer, educators can:

- use it to support instruction, interpret student results, and plan activities aligned to grade-level claims and targets;
- learn how Smarter Balanced assesses academic standards;
- explore the range of knowledge and skills for college and career readiness; and
- learn about test development with resources like blueprints and scoring rubrics.

Please see [the flier](#) for more information about the Smarter Content Explorer. The site has been enhanced to add a PDF Download function.



Individual Student Reports and Summative Assessment Parent Page

Individual Student Reports (ISR) for the Smarter Balanced Assessment and the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) were distributed to districts from AIR early in September. Reports should be distributed to parents/guardians. As a reminder, the [Smarter Balanced Results Resources](#) page has resources for districts and parents to support understanding of results. This includes an ISR template release letter that can be customized.

The ISRs for the NGSS Assessment and the Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment (CTAS) will be distributed to districts from AIR beginning in mid-October. These reports should also be distributed to parents/guardians. The [Science Resources](#) page has resources for districts and parents to support understanding of the science results. This includes an ISR template release letter that can be customized. If districts have questions about the delivery of the reports from AIR, please contact the AIR Helpdesk at 844-202-7583.

New this year to support parent understanding of the assessments administered to Connecticut Publics School students is the [Parent Resources for Connecticut Summative Assessments](#) page. This page contains parent resources for all the assessments administered by the Performance Office at the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE).

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College Board Opportunity Scholarship and CT Supplemental Scholarship Fund

The CSDE has teamed up with the College Board to launch a supplemental pool of scholarship funds available to Connecticut students from lower-income families starting with the class of 2020. As of June 1, 2019, Connecticut students from lower income-families who join the national [College Board Opportunity Scholarships](#) program are eligible for an additional \$40,000 in scholarships per year.

The additional scholarships available to Connecticut students will be awarded monthly through random drawings among all eligible students, beginning with the class of 2020. So far the following districts have winners:

- \$1000 Practice for the SAT: East Hartford, Southington, Danbury
- \$500 Build your College List: Ansonia, New Haven, LEARN



1. Build Your College List: \$500
Get started by [exploring colleges](#) you're interested in. [Learn More](#)



2. Practice for the SAT: \$1,000
Use [Official SAT Practice on Khan Academy](#)® to get ready for test day. [Learn More](#)



3. Improve Your Score: \$2,000
Show how practice pays off by improving your SAT score. [Learn More](#)



4. Strengthen Your College List: \$500
Make sure your college list has a mix of academic safety, match, and reach schools. [Learn More](#)



5. Complete the FAFSA: \$1,000
Fill out the free government form to apply for financial aid. [Learn More](#)



6. Apply to Colleges: \$1,000
Apply to the schools you want to attend. [Learn More](#)



Complete Your Journey: \$40,000
Complete all six scholarship steps to be eligible for a \$40,000 scholarship. [Learn More](#)

Additionally, all students can earn a chance for scholarships ranging from \$500 to \$2,000 by completing steps on the path to college. Doing all six steps will earn students a chance for \$40,000 for their college education. Please share this information with your students from the class of 2020. More information about the College Board Opportunity Scholarships can be found at cb.org/opportunity.

Connecticut SAT School Day Updates

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities, Section 504 and English Learner Students

The window to submit accommodations for students with an active Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan for the 2020 Connecticut SAT School Day will be from November 22, 2019, to February 4, 2020. Accommodations must be submitted through the [College Board's SSD Online](#) system.

2019-20 Connecticut SAT School Day Accommodations/EL Supports SSD Online Submission Dates		
IEP and 504 Plan Accommodations Window Opens	EL Window Opens	Accommodations Deadline
11/22/19	1/14/20	2/4/20

English learner (EL) students who require 50 percent extended time will be entered into the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) through an embedded link beginning on January 14, 2020, and ending on February 4, 2020. As a reminder, students using the 50 percent extended time EL support receive extended time on the entire assessment.

Special Population resources can be found on the [Connecticut SAT School Day web page](#).

Connecticut SAT School Day Webinar

There will be a webinar for Connecticut SAT School Day Coordinators and SSD Coordinators regarding the **2020 Connecticut SAT School Day Administration Updates and Accommodations**. The webinar will be held on **November 13, 2019, from 2-3 p.m.** Please [register](#) in advance. The webinar will be recorded and posted.



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New Connections Playlists in the Digital Library

Forty-two new Connections Playlists are now available in the [Digital Library](#). Each Playlist corresponds to the new Focused Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) launched this fall. Educators now have access to 150 Connections Playlists with associated instructional resources across grades and content areas in the Digital Library. The [Updated Connections Playlists flier](#) describes how to use the Connections Playlist and how they connect Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) to Instructional Resources in the Digital Library.



Special Populations Updates

Decision Guidelines for Text-to-Speech and the Read Aloud for the Smarter Balanced Reading Passages

The decision to provide students in Grades 3-8 with Text-to-Speech or Human Read Aloud Accommodations for the English language arts (ELA) Reading Passages is a significant decision. The following updated guidance provides support for this accommodation decision. These accommodations are typically provided to students with a visual or print disability who use this accommodation during instruction. Please refer to the following resources below:

[2019-20 Text-to-Speech and Read Aloud Accommodation for ELA Reading Passages Flowchart](#)—This resource should be used to determine student eligibility for the Text-to-Speech and Read Aloud Accommodation for ELA Reading Passages. It also provides the appropriate procedures based on accommodation need.

[2019-20 Text-to-Speech Decision Guidelines](#)—The Text-to-Speech Decision Guidelines form must be completed for any student in Grades 3-8 who will receive the accommodation of Text-to-Speech for English language arts/literacy (ELA) Reading Passages on the Smarter Balanced Assessments. This form can be completed online by selecting the “*submit this form electronically*” hyperlink embedded in the form.

[2019-20 Decision Guidelines for Read Aloud of the Smarter Balanced Reading Passages](#)—The Read Aloud of the ELA Reading Passages requires the submission (and approval) of a Special Documented Accommodation. If approved, the Decision Guidelines for a Read Aloud must be completed online by selecting the “*submit this form electronically*” hyperlink embedded in the form. (Please note this link will not be activated until the Special Documented Accommodations window opens on December 9, 2019.)

2019-20 CSDE English Learner Assessment Coordinator Training

The 2019-20 English Learner Assessment Coordinator (ELAC) Training will be provided in November at 450 Columbus Boulevard in Hartford. This training shares specific information for ELACs regarding their role and responsibilities, prior to, during, and after the administration of the LAS Links Assessment for students in Grades K-12 identified as English Learners (ELs).

The ELACs registered with CSDE for the 2019-20 school year will receive an e-mail invitation from the CSDE Calendar System (TRUMBA) allowing them to register and attend one of the half-day training sessions occurring on one of the following dates: November 19, 20, or 21.

Please note that if you represent a district, charter school, endowed academy etc., and have not yet updated your ELAC record for the 2019-20 school year, you will **not** receive an invitation to this training or have the ability to register.



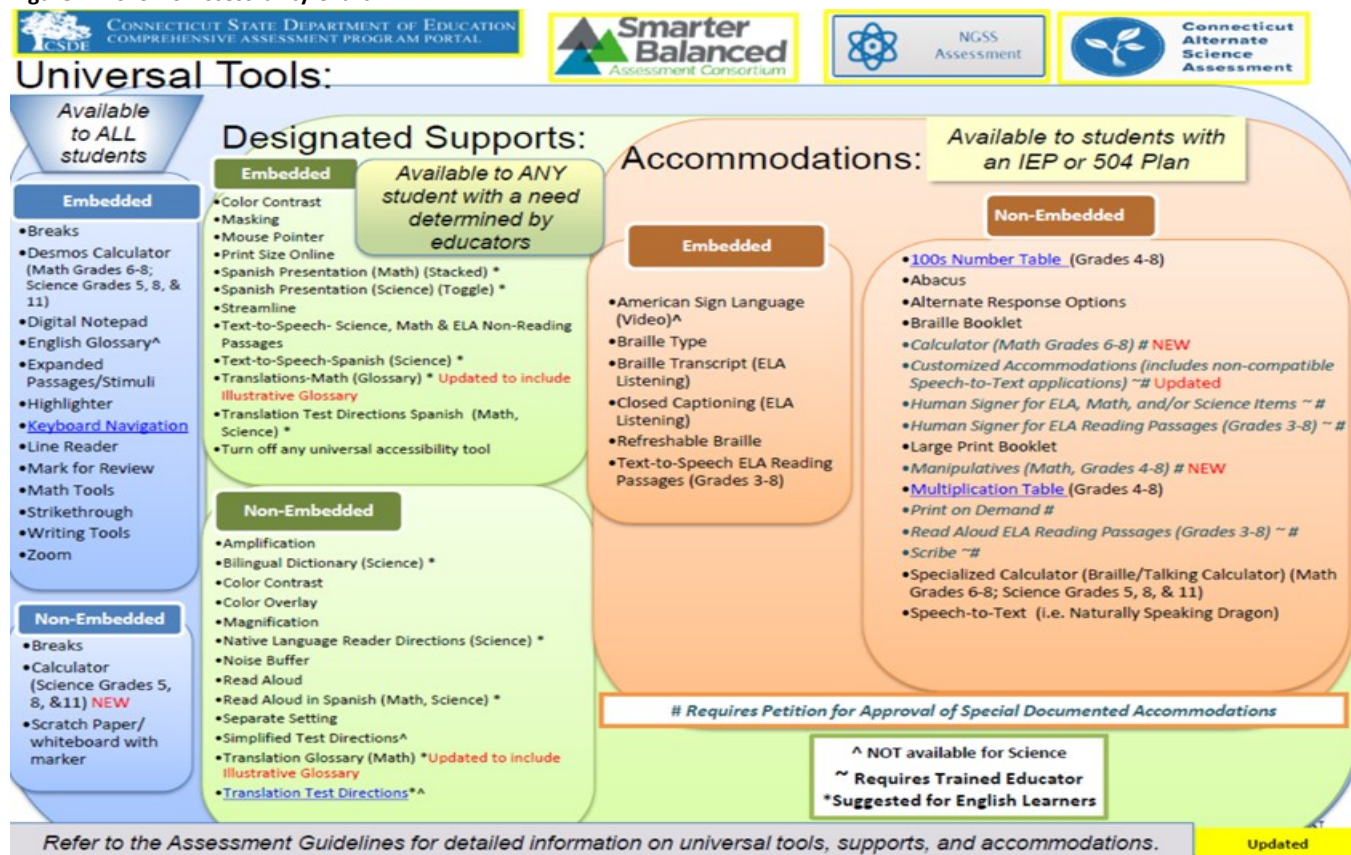
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NEW Special Populations Updates (continued)

What's New for Designated Supports and Accommodations for Smarter Balanced and Next Generation Science Standards?

In an effort to get a head start on providing all students with the most appropriate tools and supports when participating on the optional Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments and spring summative assessments, refer to the updated [2019-20 Accessibility Chart](#) (see Figure 1 below) and [Test Supports/Accommodations Form](#) available on the CSDE Web site and [Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal](#). The Performance Office encourages teachers and test coordinators to plan early when determining the types of supports and accommodations their students may need. Refer to most recent 504 Plans and Page 8 of IEPs to ensure that appropriate supports and accommodations are identified and submitted through the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) system this November. For students who need additional accessibility to assessments such as the use of a Read Aloud of the Smarter Balanced English language arts (ELA) Reading Passages or use of a Scribe, please contact the Performance Office, as early as possible to apply for Special Documented Accommodations.

Figure 1. 2019-20 Accessibility Chart



Technology System Preparation for the LAS Links Administration

To ensure consistent communication regarding the LAS Links, it is important that the entire domain name, do-main@datarecognitioncorp.com, be whitelisted. Information technology personnel should become familiar with the technology requirements to support the ONLINE LAS Links. They may be accessed via this link: [DRC IN-SIGHT System Requirements](#).



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Special Populations Updates (continued)

Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form

The Planning and Placement Team (PPT) makes decisions about the appropriate assessment selection for students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP). These students are eligible to participate in the standard assessments (Smarter Balanced, NGSS and Connecticut SAT School Day) with accommodations. Additionally, universal tools and designated supports are available to students participating in Smarter Balanced and NGSS Assessments.

However, a very small group of special education students with significant cognitive disabilities are determined by the PPT to be eligible to participate in Connecticut’s Alternate Assessment System. The [Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#) is used by the PPT to determine eligibility. Once approved, eligibility forms are submitted into the Data Entry Interface (DEI) by the Trained Teacher Administrating the Alternate (TEA) to register the student to participate in the Alternate Assessments. The submission window for the DEI will open on November 15, 2019, and close on June 5, 2020. Prior to the opening of the DEI, PPTs/TEAs are encouraged to download and complete the hard copy eligibility forms as PPTs take place and submit a courtesy copy to the Director of Special Education and the District Administrator (DA in TIDE).

Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form Submission into the DEI Deadlines	Student Subgroup
January 15, 2020	Grade 11; Dually identified (special education and English learner) Grades 3-8 and 11
February 14, 2020	Grades 3-8; Extended deadline for new Grade 11 students
June 5, 2020	DEI closes for the spring 2020 assessment window.

Please direct questions to Janet Stuck at 860-713-6837 or Deirdre Ducharme at 860-713-6859. Additional resources are included below:

[Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#) Updated September 23, 2019

[Frequently Asked Questions and Answers About the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System](#)

[Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Participation Guidance for Planning and Placement Teams](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions and Answers About the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#)

[Connecticut Alternate Assessment System: Transition from the Learner Characteristics Inventory to the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#)

Updated Resource: Bilingual Dictionaries and Glossaries

The [Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System \(MCAS\) Bilingual Dictionaries and Glossaries](#) are used by permission of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Inclusion does not constitute endorsement of this or any other commercial publication. This resource provides examples of word-to-word dictionaries allowed on select Connecticut statewide assessments as a non-embedded language support for English learners.



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Special Populations Updates (continued)

Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Training Required for Teachers Administering the Alternate

All TEAs who will be administering the alternate assessments, regardless of previous training status, will need to participate in the **required** annual Alternate Assessment System Training, accessible online via the CSDE Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal. The TEAs who participate will be certified to administer the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) and the Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment (CTAS) after completing the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Training required annually for TEA sessions and passing the associated quiz with a score of at least 80 percent. ***District Administrators (DAs) listed in TIDE will be notified via the Student Assessment News when this required training is available.***

Connecticut Alternate Science Assessments for Eligible Students in Grades 5, 8, and 11

The CTAS is a non-secure test that is administered to eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities in Grades 5, 8, and 11. The CTAS was designed to be administered by the TEA in a one-to-one test setting with the student. The CTAS is comprised of a series of Performance Tasks that must be administered by the Trained TEA over the course of the school year. The TEA rates student responses according to scoring and content guidance provided in the grade- and content-specific Performance Task documents. These student ratings are recorded on the Student Score Worksheet throughout test administration. Once the assessment has been completed, student ratings must be entered into the online Data Entry Interface (DEI) during the CTAS upload window (**March 23, thru June 5, 2020**). Ratings submitted in the DEI during the upload window will be processed for reporting. The [Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment TEA Responsibility Checklist](#) for pre-planning activities suggested for the Trained TEA is available to help facilitate this process. The TEAs may access the [CTAS materials](#) online or access the hard copies that are shared by the district.

Ensuring TEA Access to the Connecticut Alternate Assessment Systems

Two overviews regarding the required CTAA System Training are available: one for DAs and one for the teachers who will be administering the CTAA for ELA and Math, and CTAS (if applicable) during the 2019-20 school year. Information also includes how to manage and update the list of TEAs and ensure that all user accounts in TIDE are updated, so that teachers can access the required online training when it becomes available.

Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Training—[Overview for District Administrators](#)—describes the responsibilities of the DA in TIDE for the mandatory online course completed each school year, to provide qualified educators with essential alternate assessment materials and the permissions to administer these assessments. The DAs must follow these procedures to ensure the alternate assessments are administered by teachers qualified for this responsibility.

Connecticut Alternate Assessment System Training—[Overview for Teachers Administering the Alternate](#)—describes the responsibilities of the TEA and the procedures to ensure the alternate assessments are administered by teachers qualified for this responsibility.

Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments: Guidance for Entering Designated Supports and Accommodations

Now that the 2019-20 Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) and NGSS IABS are available for administration, there are some considerations that impact the selection of accommodations prior to test administration. Because the selection of accommodations in TIDE is dependent on a student’s special education and 504 status, accommodations will not be selectable in TIDE until the 2019-20 PSIS student batch upload into TIDE occurs on November 15, 2019.



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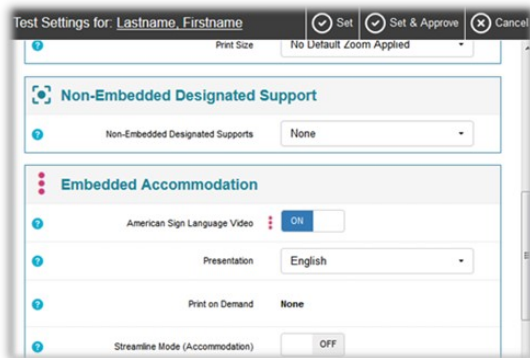
Special Populations Updates (continued)

If your school or district expects to administer an IAB prior to November 15, 2019, accommodations will need to be selected in the Test Administration (TA) Interface at the time of testing. Please see the guidance, below, for administering Interim Assessment Blocks, and entering Designated Supports or Accommodations, prior to November 15, 2019:

1. Designated Supports should be entered directly into TIDE by the DA or School Test Coordinator (SC) either manually or via the upload process. These supports will be immediately visible to the SC in the TA Interface and will be immediately available to the student for use while taking the IAB. Once a designated support is set in TIDE, this setting will persist in TIDE.
2. While Designated Supports are persistent in TIDE over time, accommodations (both Embedded and Non-Embedded) should be entered manually by the SC using the TA Interface prior to the approval/administration of an Interim Assessment Block (see Figure 1 below).

Note: The Test Administrator will need to set accommodations for each applicable student every time an IAB is administered.

Figure 1. Test Setting Menu Available on the Test Administration Interface



After the PSIS upload on November 15, 2019, accommodations set in TIDE (for students with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) or 504 Indicator) will be available to students taking the IABs, and the manual entry of these accommodations through the TA Interface Test Setting Menu will no longer be required.

For more information, please refer to the brochure [MANUALLY ENTERING DESIGNATED SUPPORTS AND ACCOMMODATIONS](#).

Next Generation Science Standards Interim Assessments

The NGSS Interim Assessments are now available for use. This is an optional assessment resource that local school districts may use for different purposes. The NGSS interim assessments include 14 item clusters for Grades 3-5, 20 items clusters for Grades 6-8 and 20 item clusters for High School. Each item cluster is aligned to an NGSS performance expectation and includes a variety of item interaction types that students will encounter on the live NGSS Assessments in the spring. Immediate results are available for students with roster reports and aggregate results available for educators. Further information about the NGSS Interim Assessments including a recorded webinar that provides an overview of their use can be found at <https://ct.portal.airast.org/get-started/ngss-assessment.stml>.



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Lexile and Quantile Resources

The CSDE is now providing Lexile and Quantile measures for Smarter Balanced Summative results to both parents and districts. These measures, provided by MetaMetrics, are supported with a number of free resources for parents and educators in Connecticut. Using their school e-mail, all educators in Connecticut can access the [MetaMetrics Hub](#) for free. This is a site that offers Lexile and Quantile tools to support student learning in reading and math. The Lexile tools on the Hub include Find a Book, which identifies books for students based on their Lexile level and interests, and the Lexile Analyzer, that allows teachers to enter text and receive a Lexile range. Quantile tools, such as Teacher Assistant, can support educators as they differentiate instruction based on Quantile scores. Visit the [Lexile Framework for Reading](#) and the [Quantile Framework for Mathematics](#) web pages on the CSDE Web site for information and resources.



CSDE Comprehensive Assessment Program Password Reset for 2019-20

The TIDE system is now open for the 2019-20 school year. All users who have not already done so will need to complete the steps below to create a new password and gain access to TIDE. Please reset your password at your earliest convenience.

From the [CSDE Comprehensive Assessment Program portal](#), navigate to the [TIDE](#) login page.

1. Select the "Request a new one for this school year" link just below the login prompt.
2. On the "Reset Your Password" page, enter the e-mail address you use for all CSDE Comprehensive Assessment Program systems and select the 'Submit' button.

An e-mail (from AIRAST-DoNotReply@airast.org) which contains a link to reset your password will be sent to the e-mail address associated with the account. This link must be accessed within 15 minutes or you will need to restart the password reset process. Within 15 minutes, select the link in the e-mail and follow the on-screen prompts to create a new password. Press the 'Submit' button.

After entering your username and new password via the secure login prompt, you will be prompted to enter a verification code. An automated, verification code e-mail will be sent to the e-mail address associated with the account. Within 15 minutes of receiving the verification code e-mail, please enter the code into the "Enter Emailed Code" prompt and press the 'Submit' button.

During the school year, if you are accessing CSDE Comprehensive Assessment Program systems from a new device or browser, or have cleared the cache on a previously-used browser, you will be required to enter an e-mailed verification code upon login.

All users who had access to CSDE Comprehensive Assessment Program systems in 2018-19 will continue to have access this year, after the above process has been followed to reset their password. If a user should no longer have an account, the district test coordinator (DC) or school test coordinator (SC) should follow the process in the TIDE user guide to add or remove system access for that user. Please contact the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Help Desk at (844) 202-7583 or cthelpdesk@air.org with any questions.



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2018-19 NGSS Preliminary Results

Secure access to the preliminary results for districts for the 2018-19 Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessment and the Connecticut Alternate Science (CTAS) Assessment are now available to authorized users through the Online Reporting System (ORS). Users can contact the American Institutes for Research (AIR) Help Desk at 844-202-7583 for assistance with logging into the ORS.

This is the first year of results from these new science assessments. Therefore, to assist with interpretation of scale scores, achievement levels, discipline scores, and disciplinary core idea performance, please see the [Frequently Asked Questions](#); a more comprehensive Interpretive Guide for these assessments will be released later. Final results for both the NGSS and the CTAS assessments will be released publicly through [EdSight](#) later in the fall.

For questions about the science assessments, please e-mail CTStudentAssessment@ct.gov.

The [Test Information Distribution Engine \(TIDE\) User Guide](#) is designed to help users navigate TIDE. Users can find information on managing user account information, managing student test settings, appeals, rosters, and voice packs.

Please explore the **NEW Connecticut Report Cards!** View school-, district- and state-level report cards by clicking the link on the [EdSight Homepage](#). The report cards are mobile friendly and can be viewed on your phone or tablet as well. If you have any questions, please e-mail edsight.sde@ct.gov.

Summative Assessment Calendar for 2019-20

Assessment	Dates
The AIR secure browsers for the 2019-20 school year must be downloaded for all 2019-20 online tests	Currently available
English Language Proficiency LAS Links	January 2–March 6, 2020
Connecticut SAT School Day	Primary Test Dates: March 25, 2020, or April 14, 2020 (Based on school selection) Makeup Dates: April 28 and 29, 2020
NGSS Assessment	February 3–June 5, 2020 (Grade 11) March 23–June 5, 2020 (Grades 5 and 8)
Connecticut Smarter Balanced	March 23–June 5, 2020
Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment - CTAS	(Upload Window for Submission through the DEI) March 23–June 5, 2020 (Grades 5, 8, and 11)
Connecticut Alternate Assessment - CTAA	March 23–June 5, 2020

Register for email updates

To automatically receive the *Student Assessment News* and/or other announcements, [register for e-mail updates](#) on the Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal.

