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Connecticut Resources and Help Desk Information

If you have general questions about the NGSS pilot and related policies, please contact Jeff Greig at Connecticut State Department of Education (e-mail: jeff.greig@ct.gov, phone: 860-713-6854).

For online NGSS pilot administration resources, please refer to the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal at http://ct.portal.airast.org.

For any other questions, please contact the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Help Desk by phone 1-844-202-7583 or e-mail CTHelpDesk@air.org. The Help Desk is open Monday–Friday 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time outside of the testing window and Monday–Friday 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time during testing.

The Help Desk may be contacted for situations and questions including the following:

- Online testing environment down or unavailable
- User accounts not available or users not able to administer tests
- Student information or test session incorrect or missing
- Issues with loading student data or student settings into the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE)
- Preparations for online testing, such as downloading the secure browser, installing voice packs, etc.

When contacting the Help Desk, provide the representative with as much detail as possible about the issue(s) encountered and the system on which it occurred. This should include the following:

- Type of device being used for the test
- Any error messages that appeared (code and description)
- Operating system and browser information
- Network configuration information
- Your contact information, including e-mail address and phone number
- Any relevant and authorized student and school information, including statewide student identifier (SSID), grade level, and content area
Section I. Prior to NGSS Pilot Test Administration

Background

The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) were adopted by the Connecticut State Board of Education in November 2015. Further information about the NGSS can be accessed through the science home page of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). State assessments aligned to the NGSS are scheduled to be in place for the spring of 2019. The development of these NGSS assessments is underway with input from science educators throughout the state. Pilot testing of assessment items with students is a critical part of this process. While no results from the pilot test will be reported back to schools, the data and feedback gathered will be critical to the creation of the NGSS assessments. The CSDE thanks you for your cooperation in this important endeavor to support the implementation of NGSS in our state.

Participation

Schools were randomly selected to participate in the NGSS pilot test. Each selected school will participate at a single grade. All students in that grade (either 5, 8, or 11) should participate, with a few exceptions. High levels of participation are important in order to obtain complete data from a representative sample of students statewide. The only participation exceptions should be made for students who require a large print or Braille version of the standard tests or for students who would qualify for the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science. These students will not need to participate in the NGSS pilot test.

Testing Schedule

The testing window for the NGSS pilot test will open on May 1 and close on May 26, 2017. The NGSS pilot test does not need to be administered to all students in a grade in a school on the same day and time. Students may be cycled through rooms with computers throughout the May 1–26, 2017 testing window.

Table 1: Suggested Testing Time Limits for Administering the NGSS Pilot Test in 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Testing Time*</th>
<th>Directions Time</th>
<th>Total Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NGSS Pilot Grade 5</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGSS Pilot Grade 8</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGSS Pilot Grade 11</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The testing time is an estimate of how much time students will need to complete the pilot test. Students may be given additional time if it is needed and the school is able to provide it.
Universal Tools, Designated Supports and Accommodations

Appendix A includes a list of the universal tools, designated supports and accommodations available to students for the NGSS pilot test. Students who require them will be eligible for the same designated supports and accommodations that they received for the CMT Science at grades 5 and 8. Students in Grade 11 should be provided any accommodations that they receive as part of their IEP or 504 plan that are available for the NGSS pilot test (see Appendix A, Table 3 for the list of available accommodations). Students using text-to-speech (and only these students) will need headphones or earbuds to complete the pilot test.

All designated supports and accommodations must be entered into the TIDE system prior to testing. Note that there will be no large print or Braille versions of the NGSS pilot tests.

Test Content and Item Types

The NGSS pilot test will consist of a variety of item types and interactions, many of which students have experienced before on the Smarter Balanced assessments. However other item types will be new. Some of the items will be organized in clusters that are designed to engage the student in a grade-appropriate, meaningful scientific activity aligned to a specific NGSS performance expectation. Each item cluster begins with a real-world phenomenon and includes two or more items that require students to demonstrate the ability to use the science and engineering practices, disciplinary core ideas, and cross-cutting concepts described by the performance expectation.

Test Security

All of the items on the NGSS pilot test are secure and must not be shared or discussed. Anyone interested in information about the types of items on the NGSS pilot should be directed to the NGSS sample items, which are not secure.

NGSS Sample Items

In preparation for the NGSS pilot tests, it is highly recommended that all participating students access the NGSS sample items available through the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal at http://ct.portal.airast.org. Teachers are encouraged to use the NGSS sample items to familiarize students with the testing format. These sample items illustrate the rigor and complexity of the science items, while allowing students to become familiar with the item interactions and navigational tools that are used in the NGSS pilot tests. Sample items will likely take students 20-30 minutes to complete.
Technology and Online Systems

Online testing systems used for NGSS pilot test administration are the same as those used for the spring 2017 administration of CMT and CAPT Science. Each student device used for testing should have the Secure Browser installed on it. The Secure Browser can be downloaded from the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal: [http://ct.portal.airast.org/secure-browsers/](http://ct.portal.airast.org/secure-browsers/). Students requiring special test settings should be assigned those test settings through TIDE prior to testing.
Section II. During NGSS Pilot Test Administration

On the day of the pilot test administration, the test administrator will need to start an NGSS Pilot Grade 5, Grade 8 or Grade 11 test session and read aloud directions to students. The read aloud directions are shown in boxes with blue backgrounds in this section of the manual. Test examiners should distribute scratch paper to students before the testing begins.

Test Examiners are responsible for monitoring student progress and tracking the time for the pilot test; the test session will not automatically end after 60 minutes. The testing time is an estimate of how much time students will need to complete the pilot test. Students may be given additional time if needed and the school is able to provide it.

Log In to the TA Interface

Access the TA Interface via this link https://ct.tds.airast.org/testadmin or from the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program. Then, enter your e-mail address and password and click [Secure Login] to log in to the TA Interface.

Start a Test Session

From the test selection window, select the particular test and grade to be administered in the test session and click the Start Session button.
Provide Students with a Test Session ID

The Test Examiner should write the Test Session ID on the board and may print test tickets for the students with the following information:

- The student’s legal first name, and
- The student’s SSID number.

As a reminder, Test Examiners can print students’ first names and SSIDs by using Print Testing Tickets feature in the Administering Tests section of TIDE.

The students must enter this information in the student interface of the Secure Browser.

When providing students with the session ID, read aloud the directions below:

**SAY:** Enter your legal first name followed by your student ID number using the information on the paper I gave you. Then enter the test session ID number exactly as it is written—it is case sensitive—without extra spaces or characters. Raise your hand if you need help typing this information.

Please do not share your student ID number with anyone. This is private information.

**SAY:** Now click “Sign In.” Once you have successfully logged in, you will see a screen with your first name, grade, student ID number, and school. If all of the information on your screen is correct, select YES to continue. If any of the information is incorrect, please raise your hand and show me what is incorrect.
View and Approve Students Waiting for Test Session Approval

In the TA Interface, select the Approvals button and approve student requests to start a test by clicking ✓.

![Screenshot of Approvals and Student Test Settings]

**SAY:** After I approve you to begin testing, you will see a screen asking you to check your test content area and settings. Review your test settings and verify that you are taking the NGSS Pilot Grade [insert grade] test. If all of the information is correct, you may select YES, START MY TEST. If any of it is incorrect, please raise your hand.

The students will also see a video playback check as some of the NGSS items include short videos. There are no audio items on the NGSS pilot test (unless a student requires Text-to-Speech).
Text-to-Speech Designated Support

Students marked as requiring text-to-speech accommodation in TIDE will be asked to verify that their headsets are working properly.

[Screenshot of Text-to-Speech verification process]

SAY: [For Text-to-Speech] Next, you should see a screen that prompts you to verify that the sound on your computer is working. Put your headsets on and click the green icon of the speaker to hear the sound. If you hear the voice, click [Yes, I heard the voice]. If not, raise your hand. You can adjust the volume, pitch, and rate of the voice by using the sliders.

Before the test begins, inform the students of general information relevant to the test.

SAY: The questions in this test cover many science topics. Although some of the questions may look difficult or unfamiliar, you may be able to figure out the answers if you read and think about them carefully.

If you are unsure of an answer, provide what you think is the best answer; there is no penalty for guessing. If you would like to review that answer at a later time, mark the item for review by clicking the menu icon represented by three horizontal lines in the upper right corner of the question and clicking the flag to mark for review before going on to the next question. Flagging the item will remind you to go back and decide whether you want to change the answer later.

SAY: Your answers need to be your own work. Please keep your eyes on your own test and remember that there should be no talking.

When you are ready to begin your test, click BEGIN TEST NOW at the bottom of the page. You will have 60 minutes to complete this test.
Start timing the test. The suggested testing time is an estimate of how much time students will need to complete the pilot test. Students may be given additional time if needed and the school is able to provide it.

**Monitor Student Progress**

It is very important that the Test Administrator is monitoring student progress throughout the test session. The Test Administrator may also use the TA Interface to view the testing progress of any student. This site will not show test items or scores, but it will let the Test Administrator see how many items have been delivered to each student (e.g., question 24/40).

Test Administrators may assist students in navigating the online test environment and with how to respond to different item types, but should not assist students with any science content needed to answers questions.

While the TA Interface is designed to automatically refresh every 20 seconds, the Test Administrator can refresh it manually at any time by clicking the button at the top right of the screen.

Do NOT click the web browser’s refresh button to refresh the TA Interface. Doing so may log the Test Examiner out of the current session. If this happens, have students pause the test and create a new test session. Students should log back in to the test with the new session ID.

The button in the TA interface also allows TAs to monitor and understand reasons that halt student progress.
When there are 10 minutes left in the test session.

**SAY:** You have 10 minutes left. Please review any completed or marked items now. Please click submit when you are completely finished with your test.

When the test session is over, all students must end the test regardless of whether they answered all of the questions or not.

**SAY:** This test session is now over. Please click SUBMIT TEST now. I will now collect any scratch paper and other materials.

In the TA Interface, the Test Administrator should click [Stop] to end the test session and pause any student tests that are still in progress. Students who have not finished testing may return to their test at any time during the NGSS pilot administration window. When finished, the Test Administrator can log out of the TA Interface by clicking the [Logout] button at the top right.
Section III. After NGSS Pilot Test Administration

Student and District Staff Feedback Surveys

Upon completion of pilot testing, district staff and students are encouraged to complete online feedback surveys. There are separate surveys for students and district staff. These surveys should take about 10–15 minutes to complete.

Participation Reports

Test Administrators, as well as district and school level users, can see how many students completed the NGSS pilot test in a given school through participation reports in TIDE. To access participation reports, select Plan and Manage Testing from the Monitoring Test Progress menu.

In Step 1, from the drop-down menu, select the NGSS Pilot and choose the administration year, test name, and enrolled grade.

Note: Optional – you may select additional criteria to filter your results (e.g., Filter By Gender).
In Step 2, select your district, school, and teacher.

**Step 2: Choose Who**

- District Demo District 1 (99999999)
- School Demo School 1 (99999999)
- Teacher Demo, Demo

In Step 3, select the radio button for one of the options and then set the parameters for that option. The following options are available:

- Students who (have/have not) (completed/started) the 1st opportunity in the selected administration.
- Students whose current opportunity will expire in (number) of days.
- Students on their 1st opportunity in the selected administration who have a status of (student test status).
- Students whose most recent (Session ID) was (Session ID (optional)) between (start date) and (end date).

**Step 3: Get Specific**

- students who have completed 1st opportunity in the selected administration
- students whose current opportunity will expire in days.
- students on their 1st opportunity in the selected administration, and have a status of any
- students whose most recent Session ID was Session ID (optional) between 04/05/2017 and

Note: If no TA or Session ID is specified, date range cannot exceed 15 days.
Appendix A. Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations

Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3 provide the universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations that are available to students taking the NGSS Pilot. See the CSDE Assessment Guidelines for complete information on student accommodations and supports. See the TIDE User Guide for information on how to adjust and set student test settings.

Table 1. Universal Tools for Online Testers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital Notepad</td>
<td>Allows students to make notes, computations, or responses about an item or performance task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expandable Passages</td>
<td>Enables students to expand passages or stimuli so that they take up a larger portion of the screen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlighter</td>
<td>Allows students to mark desired text, item questions, item answers, or parts of these with a color.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keyboard Navigation</td>
<td>Allows students to navigate through the tests using a keyboard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark for Review</td>
<td>Allows students to flag items for future review during the assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strikethrough</td>
<td>Allows students to cross out answer options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Tools</td>
<td>Allow students to apply rich text formatting to text in written responses. Examples include bold, italic, bullets, and undo/redo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoom</td>
<td>Enlarges text or other graphics in a window or frame on the screen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color Contrast</td>
<td>Students may adjust screen color display, printed background, or font color, based on student needs or preferences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual Dictionary</td>
<td>A bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary can be used during the test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnification</td>
<td>The size of specific areas of the screen (e.g., text, formulas, tables, graphics, and navigation buttons) may be adjusted by the student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masking</td>
<td>Content that is not of immediate need or that may be distracting to the student may be blocked off. This designated support may help students focus their attention on a specific part of a test item by masking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise Buffers</td>
<td>Ear mufflers, white noise, and/or other equipment used to block external sounds may be used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read Aloud</td>
<td>Text is read aloud to the student by a human reader. Student must be tested one-on-one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Language Reader of Directions</td>
<td>Students may have the test directions translated for them into their native language by a bilingual reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate Setting</td>
<td>The test location may be altered so that the student is tested in a setting different from that made available for most students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn Off Universal Tools</td>
<td>Disables any universal tools that might be distracting, that students do not need to use, or that students are unable to use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text-to-Speech</td>
<td>Reads text aloud to the student via embedded text-to-speech technology.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3. Accommodations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternate Response Options</td>
<td>Alternate response options include but are not limited to adapted keyboards, large keyboards, StickyKeys, MouseKeys, FilterKeys, adapted mouse, touch screen, head wand, and switches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissive Mode</td>
<td>Students can use accessibility software, such as screen readers or magnifiers, during testing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech-to-Text</td>
<td>Students may use voice recognition software to use their voices as input devices to the computer in order to dictate responses or give commands (e.g., opening application programs, pulling down menus, and saving work). Students may use their own assistive technology devices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign Language</td>
<td>Available as a non-embedded accommodation (outside the on-line testing system). The accommodation allows a qualified test administrator to sign the NGSS pilot test directions or test content to a student who is deaf or hard of hearing. Students are tested individually and if necessary a sign language interpreter may assist in test administration by providing directions and clarifying information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streamline</td>
<td>This accommodation provides a streamlined interface of the test in an alternate, simplified format in which the items are displayed below the stimuli.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Extension</td>
<td>Students may be provided extra time to finish the test.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>