



Next Generation Science Standards Test Administration Manual

2018–2019

Published December 10, 2018

Prepared by the American Institutes for Research®





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NGSS Assessment Resources and Technical Support

Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal

<https://ct.portal.airast.org/>

Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Help Desk

1-844-202-7583 | CTHelpDesk@air.org

The Help Desk is open Monday–Friday 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. EST outside of the summative testing window and Monday–Friday 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. EST during the summative testing window (excluding holidays).

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

- Help is needed in preparing for online testing, such as downloading the Secure Browser and installing voice packs.
- The online testing environment is down or unavailable.
- User accounts are unavailable or users are unable to administer tests.
- Student information or test session is incorrect or missing.
- Issues are present with loading student data or student settings into the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE).

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 email address and telephone number
- Any relevant and authorized student and school information, including the State Assigned Student Identifier (SASID), grade-level, and content area

If you have general questions about the NGSS Assessment and related policies, please contact Jeff Greig at the CSDE Performance Office (see [Appendix A](#)).

For online NGSS Assessment administration resources, please refer to the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal using the information on this page.

Overview of the Test Administration Manual

The purpose of the Test Administration Manual (TAM) is to guide Teachers/Test Administrators (TE/TA), and District/School Test Coordinators (DC/SC) to prepare for and administer the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessment to students in their school or district.

The TAM contains the following sections:

- [Section I: Overview of the NGSS Assessment](#)
- [Section II: During NGSS Assessment Administration](#)
- [Section III: After NGSS Assessment Administration](#)

Terms, Abbreviations, and Acronyms

[Table 1](#) provides a summary of terms with the associated abbreviations and acronyms used frequently in this TAM and other documents needed for NGSS test administration.

Table 1. NGSS Terms, Abbreviations, and Acronyms

Term	Acronym
American Institutes for Research	AIR
Connecticut State Department of Education	CSDE
District Test Coordinator	DC
Next Generation Science Standards	NGSS
School Test Coordinator	SC
State Assigned Student Identifier	SASID
Test Administration Manual	TAM
Test Delivery System	TDS
Test Information Distribution Engine	TIDE

Section I. Overview of the NGSS Assessment

I.I 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 for this spring 2019. This will be the first operational year of the NGSS assessments with results scheduled to be reported early fall 2019.

I.II Participation

All students in Grades 5, 8, and 11 are required to participate in either the standard NGSS Assessment or, if they qualify, the Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment (CTAS). For school and district accountability purposes, the target is 95% participation.

I.III Technology and Online Systems

Online testing systems used for NGSS Assessment administration are the same as those used for the spring 2019 administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessments. The list of applicable online systems include the Secure Browser, Test Administrator (TA) Interface, and TIDE.

The Secure Browser must be installed on all computers used for testing. The Secure Browser can be downloaded from the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal at <https://ct.portal.airast.org/secure-browsers.stml>.

The NGSS Assessment will provide online access to a Desmos calculator at each grade-level in the online test environment. Grade 8 and 11 students will also have access to either an online version of the periodic table (available to all students by default) or a [printed periodic table](#), posted to the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal at <https://ct.portal.airast.org/resources/student-materials/>.

Students requiring special test settings—such as color contrast, text-to-speech, print size, or braille—should be assigned those test settings through TIDE prior to testing.

I.IV Testing Schedule

The testing window for the NGSS Assessment in Grade 11 is from February 4 to June 7, 2019. The testing window for Grade 5 and 8 students is from March 25 to June 7, 2019. The recommended testing time is at least 90 minutes plus an additional 10 minutes for reading the directions to the students. The testing time is an estimate of how much time students will need to complete the NGSS Assessment. Students should be given additional time if it is needed. Ninety minutes is the minimum time that must be provided to students, unless all students in a testing room have finished early.

I.V Pause Rules

The NGSS Assessment may be administered in more than one day. If the NGSS Assessment is administered in one day, a break of 10 minutes is recommended between the two sessions. If the NGSS Assessment is administered in two days, each test session should be approximately 45 minutes long.

There will be a 20-minute pause rule set for the NGSS Assessment. If a student pauses the test for more than 20 minutes, he or she will not be able to return to the questions that he or she previously answered. If a student pauses on a page that contains multiple questions, he or she will be able to return to the same page and respond to the remaining questions even after the 20-minute pause.

I.VI NGSS Practice Test

In preparation for the NGSS Assessment, it is **highly recommended** that **all** participating students access the NGSS Practice Tests available through the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal at <http://ct.portal.airast.org>. Teachers are encouraged to use the NGSS Practice Test clusters to familiarize students with the testing format of the NGSS Assessment.

I.VII NGSS Assessment Content and Item Types

The NGSS Assessment will consist of a variety of item types and interactions, many of which students will have experienced before on the Smarter Balanced Assessments. However, other item types will be new. Some items will be organized in item 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. In addition to item clusters, there are stand-alone items that most often contain a single interaction framed around a single task demand. Each student will receive six item clusters and 12 stand-alone items that will be scored. Students may also receive an additional cluster or several standalone items for field test purposes. On the NGSS Assessment, different students will receive different item clusters and stand-alone items.

I.VIII Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations

[Appendix B](#) includes a list of the universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations available to students for the NGSS Assessment. All designated supports and accommodations, as recorded in a student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan, must be entered into the “Science” subject area of TIDE before testing. Students using text-to-speech designated support will need headphones or earbuds to complete the NGSS Assessment.

I.IX NGSS Assessment Security

Ensuring Test Security

All NGSS Assessment items and test materials are secure and must be appropriately handled. Secure handling protects the integrity, validity, and confidentiality of assessment items, prompts, and student information. Refer to [Appendix C](#) and [Appendix D](#) for examples of issues that are considered violations of test security.

Violation of test security is a serious matter with far-reaching consequences. Breaches of test security include but are not limited to copying or photographing test materials, coaching students, giving students answers, and changing students' answers. A breach of test security may be dealt with as a violation of the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers, as well as a violation of other pertinent state and federal law and regulation. The Connecticut State Department of Education will investigate all such matters and pursue appropriate follow-up action. Any person found to have intentionally breached the security of the test system may be subject to sanctions including, but not limited to, disciplinary action by a local board of education, the revocation of his or her Connecticut teaching certification by the State Board of Education,* and civil liability pursuant to federal copyright law.

*See Section 10-145b(i) (1) (E) of the Connecticut General Statutes, which reads in relevant part as follows: The State Board of Education shall revoke any certificate, authorization or permit issued pursuant to said sections if the holder is found to have intentionally disclosed specific questions or answers to students or otherwise improperly breached the security of any administration of a state-wide examination pursuant to Section 10-14n.

Security of the Test Environment

[Table 2](#) describes security requirements for the test environment during various stages of testing. The test environment refers to all aspects of the testing situation while students are testing and includes what a student can see, hear, or access (including access via technology).

Individuals who have witnessed, been informed of, or suspect the possibility of a test security incident that could potentially affect the integrity of the assessments must report this incident immediately to the District Test Coordinator.

Table 2. Requirements of the Test Environment

Before Testing	
Instructional materials removed or covered	Instructional materials must be removed or covered, including, but not limited to information that might assist students in answering questions. This includes materials that may be displayed on bulletin boards, chalkboards, dry-erase boards, or charts (e.g., wall charts that contain literary definitions, maps, mathematics formulas, etc.).
Student seating	Students must be seated so that there is enough space between them to minimize opportunities to look at one another’s work, or they should be provided with table-top partitions.
Signage	If helpful, place a “TESTING—DO NOT DISTURB” sign on the door or post signs in halls and entrances rerouting hallway traffic to promote optimum testing conditions.
During Testing	
Quiet environment	Provide a quiet environment void of talking or other distractions that might interfere with a student’s ability to concentrate or might compromise the testing situation.
Student supervision of electronic devices	Students are actively monitored and are prohibited from access to unauthorized electronic devices that allow availability to outside information, communication among students or with other individuals outside the test environment, or photographing or copying test content. This includes any device with cellular, messaging, or wireless capabilities, but is not limited to cell phones, smart watches, iPods, cameras, and electronic translation devices.
Student access to allowable resources only	Students must only have access to and use of those allowable resources that are permitted for each specific test (e.g., NGSS Assessment Periodic Table).
No answer key development	No form or type of answer key may be developed for test items.
Access to assessments	Only students who are testing can view test items. Students who are not being tested, unauthorized staff, or other adults must not be in the room where a test is being administered. Trained teachers and Test Administrators may have limited exposure to test items in the course of properly administering the assessments; however, Test Administrators may not actively review or analyze any test items.
Testing through the Secure Browser	Administration of the NGSS Assessment is possible only through the Student Interface via the Secure Browser.
No unauthorized log in to the Online Testing System	Only students may log in to the Student Interface. Students may not use another student’s login credentials. Only adults may log in to the Test Administrator Interface (Test Administration Interface) with an authorized account. An adult may not use another person’s username and password.

Table 2. Requirements of the Test Environment

After Testing	
No access to responses	Test Administrators are not permitted to review student responses in the testing interface or students' notes on scratch paper.
No copies of test materials	Unless needed as a print-on-demand or braille accommodation, no paper copies of the test items or stimuli may be made or otherwise retained.
No retaining, discussing, or releasing test materials	Descriptions of test items, stimuli, and simulations must not be retained, discussed, or released to anyone.
No test materials used for instructional purposes	Test items, stimuli, and simulations must not be used for instructional purposes.
Destroy test materials securely	Printed materials from the print-on-demand accommodation and scratch paper should be destroyed after testing.

Section II. During NGSS Assessment Administration

On the day of the NGSS Assessment administration, the Test Administrator will need to start an NGSS Assessment Grade 5, Grade 8, or Grade 11 session and read the directions aloud to students. The read-aloud directions are shown in boxes with dark backgrounds. Test Administrators should distribute scratch paper to students before testing begins.

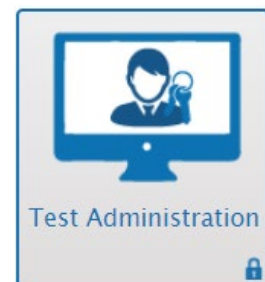
Test Administrators are responsible for monitoring student progress and tracking the time for the NGSS Assessment; the test session will not automatically end after 90 minutes. Ninety minutes is the minimum time that must be provided to students, unless all students in a testing room have finished early. The testing time is a recommendation of how much time students will need to complete the NGSS Assessment. Students may be given additional time if needed to complete the test.

II.I Test Session Administration

The Test Examiner should follow the steps outlined in this section to administer a test session.


1. Log into the Test Administration (TA) Interface


- a. From the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal (<https://ct.portal.airast.org/>), select the **NGSS Assessment** program card.
- b. Select the **Test Administration** card.



- c. On the *Login* page, the Test Examiner enters his or her email address and password associated with his or her TIDE account in the respective fields. Then, the Test Examiner clicks **Secure Login**. The Test Administration Interface appears.

Login





[Forgot Your Password?](#)

Secure Login


First Time Login This School Year?

The password you used during the previous school year has expired.

[Request a new one for this school year.](#)

2. Start a Test Session

When a Test Examiner logs in to the Test Administration Interface, the *Test Selection* window opens automatically. To create a test session, select the particular test and grade to be administered in the test session and click the **[Start Session]** button.

Test Selection
Expand All 

Choose the tests to add to your session, and then start your session.

+	<input type="checkbox"/> Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments
-	<input type="checkbox"/> Next Generation Science Standards Assessment
+	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 5
+	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 8
+	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 11
+	<input type="checkbox"/> Connecticut Alternate Assessment
+	<input type="checkbox"/> Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments
+	<input type="checkbox"/> Next Generation Science Standards Interim Assessments

▶ Start Session
Close

3. Provide Students with the Test Session ID

The Test Administrator should write the test session ID number (see [Figure 1](#)) on the board and may print test tickets for the students with the following information:

- The student’s first name (as recorded in the Public School Information System [PSIS])
- The student’s State Assigned Student Identifier (SASID) number

As a reminder, Test Administrators can print students’ first names and SASIDs by using the *Print Testing Tickets* feature in the *Administering Tests* section of TIDE. The students must enter this exact information in the Student Interface of the Secure Browser (see [Figure 2](#)).

Figure 1. Sample Test Session ID in the Test Administration Interface

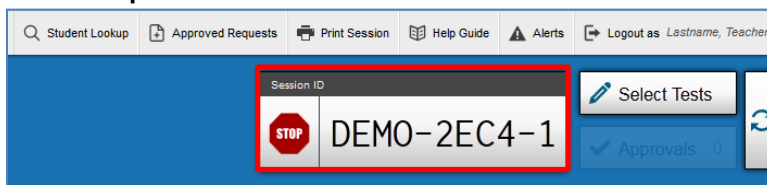
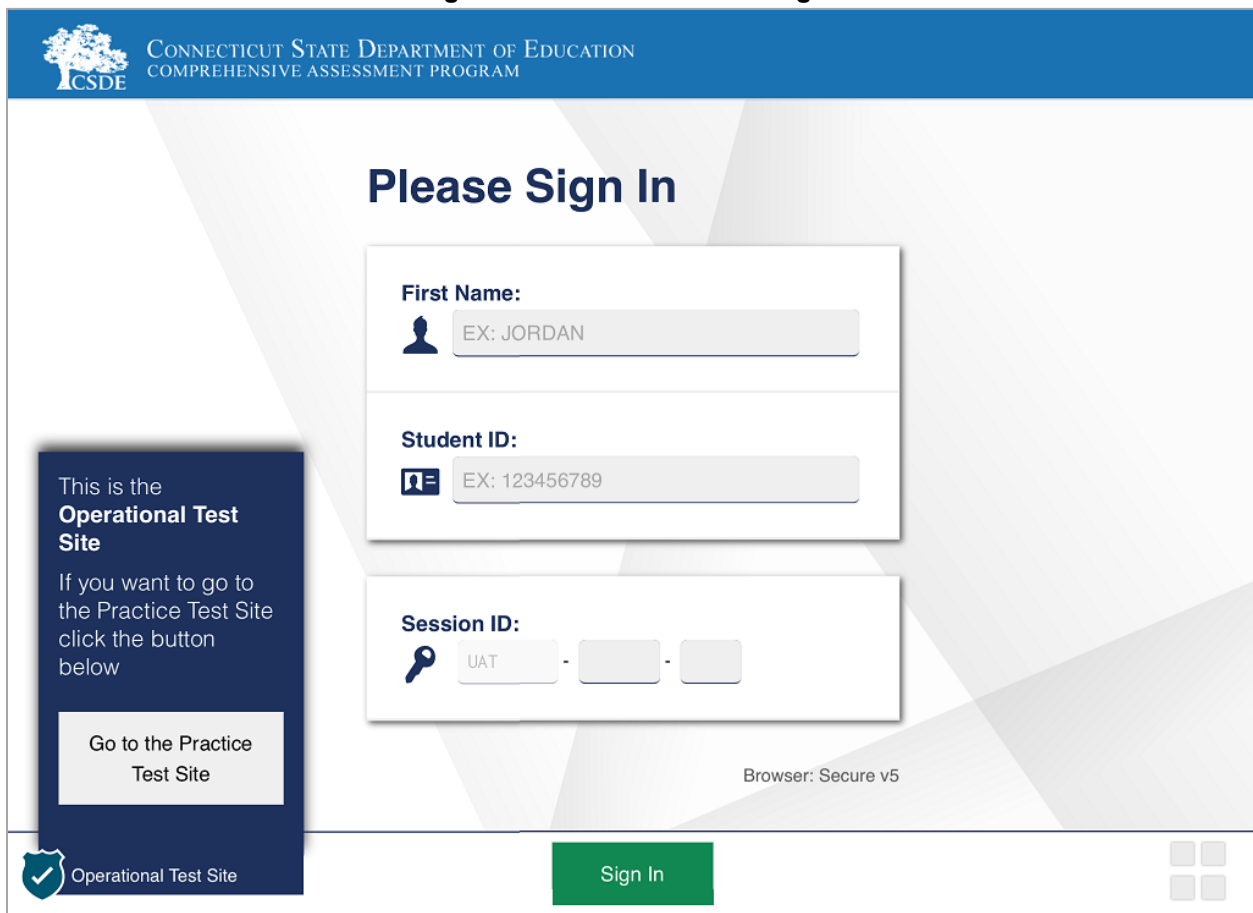


Figure 2. Student Interface Login



When providing students with the test session ID number, read aloud the directions below.

SAY: Enter your 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 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 signed 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.

Pause to assist students. If any student information is incorrect, please pause testing for the student, contact your District Test Coordinator to alert them of the discrepancy, and resume testing once the incorrect information has been resolved in TIDE.

SAY: Now select Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS Assessment [Insert Grade]).

4. View and Approve Students Waiting for Test Session Approval

In the Test Administration Interface, select the [Approvals] button and approve student requests to start a test by clicking the checkmark icon, ✓ (see [Figure 3](#)). The *Approvals and Student Test Settings* window appears (see [Figure 4](#)).

Figure 3. Students Waiting for Test Session Approval in the Test Administration Interface

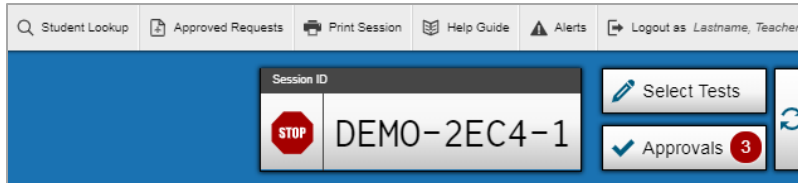


Figure 4. Approvals and Student Test Settings Window

Approvals and Student Test Settings
✓ Approve All Students
↻ Refresh
⊗ Done

3 students awaiting approval 0 tests in session ● Next Generation Science Standards Assessment

Next Generation Science Standards Assessment Grade 5 - 1 student(s)

Student Name	SSID	Opp #	See Details	Action
Lastname, Firstname	9999990091	1	Custom	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Lastname, Firstname	9999990092	1	Custom	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Lastname, Firstname	9999990093	1	Custom	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

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 Assessment [insert grade]. If all of the information is correct, select [YES]. 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 video simulations (see [Figure 5](#)). There are no audio items on the NGSS Assessment (unless a student requires text-to-speech designated support).

Figure 5. Audio/Video Checks Page

Audio/Video Checks

Your test uses multi-media features. Please perform the following checks before continuing.

Video Playback Check



Make sure audio playback is working.

Make sure video playback is working. To play the sample video, press the play button.

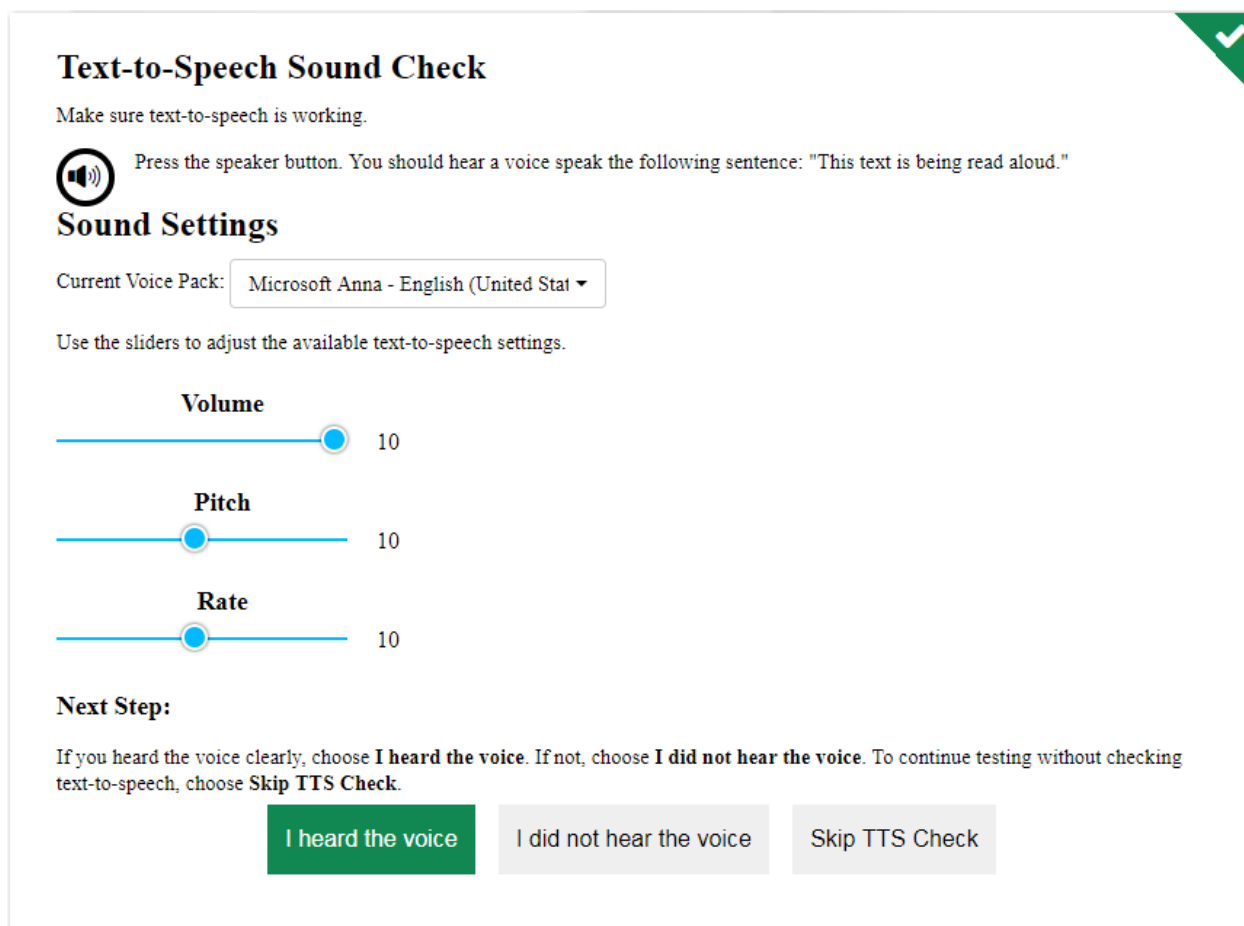
Next Step:

If you were able to play the video, choose **I could play the video**. If not, choose **I could not play the video**.

5. Text-to-Speech Designated Support


Students marked as requiring text-to-speech designated support in TIDE will be asked to verify that their headsets are working properly (see [Figure 6](#)).

Figure 6. Text-to-Speech Sound Check Page



Text-to-Speech Sound Check

Make sure text-to-speech is working.

 Press the speaker button. You should hear a voice speak the following sentence: "This text is being read aloud."

Sound Settings

Current Voice Pack: Microsoft Anna - English (United States) ▾

Use the sliders to adjust the available text-to-speech settings.

Volume
 _____ ● 10

Pitch
 _____ ● 10

Rate
 _____ ● 10

Next Step:

If you heard the voice clearly, choose **I heard the voice**. If not, choose **I did not hear the voice**. To continue testing without checking text-to-speech, choose **Skip TTS Check**.

For only students requiring text-to-speech designated support, read the following.

SAY: You will also see a Text-to-Speech Sound Check below the Audio/Video checks. Check the prompts to verify 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 [I heard the voice]. If not, raise your hand. You can adjust the volume, pitch, and rate of the voice by using the sliders.

For ALL students read the following:

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 question for review. Mark for Review is available in the upper right corner of the answer and represented by three horizontal lines. Flagging the question will remind you to go back and decide whether you want to change the answer later.

You may PAUSE at any point in the test by clicking [PAUSE] rather than [NEXT] after answering an item. The PAUSE button is used to pause the test. Note that PAUSING for more than 20 minutes will prevent you from changing any answer on previous pages of the test. Please raise your hand if you need a break and ask me before you click [PAUSE].

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.

The suggested testing time of at least 90 minutes is a recommendation of how much time students will need to complete the NGSS Assessments. Students should be given additional time if needed.

II.II Monitoring Student Progress

Test Administrators may assist students in navigating the online test environment and responding to different item types (e.g., using the available global tools, such as the Mark for Review feature and the Next button), but they should **not** assist students with any content needed to answer questions.


It is very important that the Test Administrator monitor student progress throughout the test session. The Test Administrator may also use the Test Administration Interface to view the testing progress of any student using the Students in your Test Session table (see [Figure 7](#)). 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), as well the time the student spent on the assessment.

Figure 7. Students in Your Test Session Table

Students in your Test Session							
0 students awaiting approval		0 print requests		3 active tests		= Next Generation Science Standards Assessment	
Student Name	SSID	Opp #	Test	Time	Test Status	Test Settings	Actions
Lastname, Firstname	9999990091	1	Next Generation Science Standards Assessment Grade 5	2 min spent	Approved 0/0 answered	Custom	
Lastname, Firstname	9999990092	1	Next Generation Science Standards Assessment Grade 5	2 min spent	Started 2/15 answered	Custom	
Lastname, Firstname	9999990093	1	Next Generation Science Standards Assessment Grade 5	2 min spent	Paused 12/15 answered	Custom	




“SSID” is used as the designation in all AIR systems for “SASID,” the State Assigned Student Identifier. These two acronyms—SSID and SASID—refer to the same 10-digit unique student identification number.

Although the Test Administration Interface is designed to automatically refresh every 20 seconds, the Test Administrator can refresh it manually at any time by clicking the refresh button, , at the upper right corner of the screen.



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

The information button, , in the Test Administration Interface also allows Test Administrators to monitor and understand reasons that halt student progress.

If the test is administered on the same day, with a 10-minute break between 45-minute sessions, use the script below.

When there are approximately 10 minutes left in the first test session, read the following.

SAY: This test session is almost over. Please review any completed or marked-for-review questions now as you will not be able to see those questions again. Please PAUSE the test when you are finished reviewing your work. You will be able to return to the test after the break. Do not click [SUBMIT TEST] unless you are completely finished with your test.

If the test is administered over two days, use the script below.

When there are 10 minutes left in the first test session, read the following.

SAY: This test session is almost over. Please review any completed or marked-for-review questions now as you will not be able to see those questions again. Please PAUSE the test when you are finished reviewing your work. You will be able to return to the test when the second session of the test is administered. Do not click SUBMIT TEST unless you are completely finished with your test.

Use the script below after the break or the following day when the next session is administered.



If the pause is longer than 20 minutes, and the original test session has expired, the test administrator will need to start a new test session. In addition, if the test is paused for more than 20 minutes, students will not be allowed to review previously responded items.

SAY: Enter your 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 without extra spaces or characters. Raise your hand if you need help typing this information. Follow the on-screen prompts and sign in to the test session. Once I approve you for the test, you can resume working on the test.

When there are 10 minutes left at the end of the second session, read the following.

SAY: There are 10 minutes left in this session. Please review your work and click [SUBMIT TEST] when you are finished.

When the time is up, read the following.

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

In the Test Administration 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 complete any unfinished items at any time during the NGSS Assessment administration window. When finished, the Test Administrator can log out of the Test Administration Interface by clicking the **[Logout]** button at the upper right corner of the screen.

II.III Reporting Testing Improprieties, Irregularities, and Breaches

Throughout testing, ensure that all test security incidents are reported in accordance with state and district policies (see [Security of the Test Environment](#)).

Any breaches in test security must be reported immediately to your District Test Coordinator who will contact the Connecticut State Department of Education Performance Office.

See [Appendix C. Testing Improprieties, Irregularities and Breaches](#) and [Appendix D. Examples of Test Security Violations](#) for more information.

Section III. After NGSS Assessment Administration

III.I Participation Reports

Test Administrators, as well as district- and school-level users, can see how many students completed the NGSS Assessments in a given school using the Monitoring Test Progress module in TIDE. To access participation reports, follow the steps below.

1. From the Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal (<https://ct.portal.airast.org/>), select the **NGSS Assessment** program card.

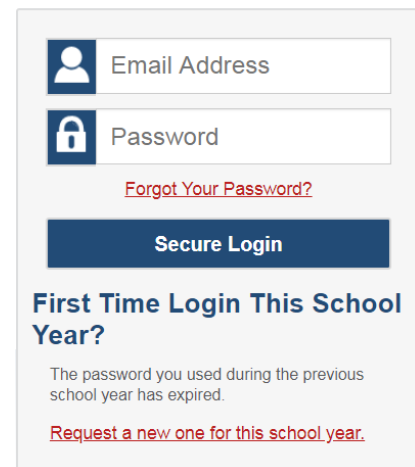


2. Select the **TIDE** card.



3. On the *Login* page, the Test Examiner enters his or her email address and password associated with his or her TIDE account in the respective fields. Then, the Test Examiner clicks **Secure Login**. The TIDE dashboard appears.

Login



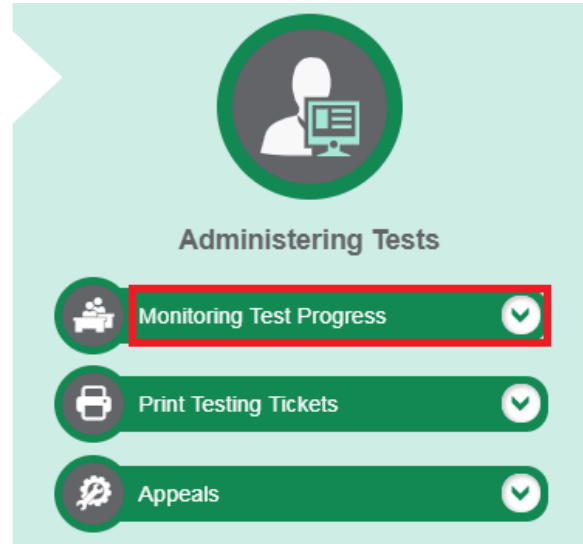
Secure Login

First Time Login This School Year?

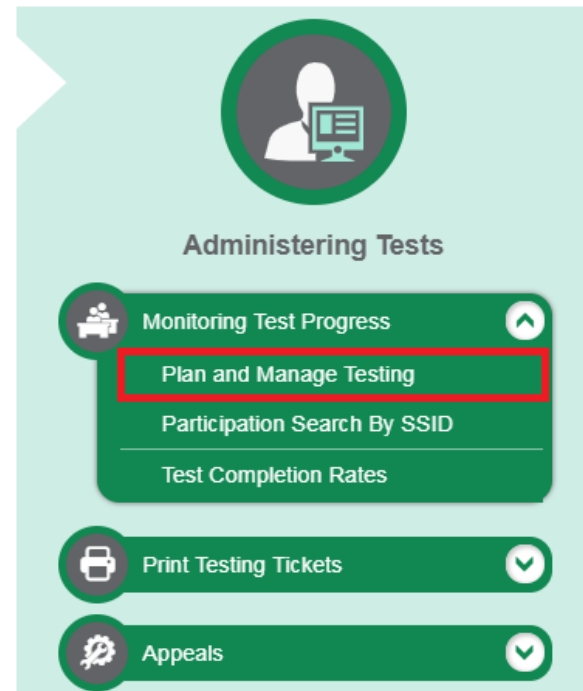
The password you used during the previous school year has expired.

[Request a new one for this school year.](#)

- Click **Monitoring Test Progress** to expand the task menu.



- Select **Plan and Manage Testing** to access participation reports.



- In the **Choose What** pane, make the following selections from the drop-down menu:
 - Test: NGSS Assessment
 - Administration: 2018-2019
 - Test Name: Select all (specify this search criteria as needed to refine your search results)

Choose What

Test:

*Test Name:

Administration:

- In the **Search Students** pane, select your district, school, and teacher. Specify additional search criteria as needed to refine your search results.

— Search Students

*District:

*School:

*Teacher:

SSID:

Student's Last Name:

Student's First Name:

Grade Level When Assessed:

— Advanced Search

Search Fields:

Additional Criteria Chosen:

- In the **Get Specific** pane, select the radio button for one of the options and set the parameters for that option. The following options are available:
 - Students who **(have/have not) (completed/started)** the **(any/opportunity number)** opportunity in the selected administration.
 - Students whose current opportunity will expire **(in/between) (number)** of days.
 - Students on their **(any/opportunity number)** opportunity in the selected administration who have a status of **(student test status)**.
 - Students whose most recent **(Session ID/TA Name)** was **(Session ID (optional)/TA Name)** between **(start date)** and **(end date)**.

— Get Specific

students who opportunity in the selected administration

students whose current opportunity will expire days.

students on their opportunity in the selected administration, and have a status of

students whose most recent was between and

Note: If no TA or Session ID is specified, date range cannot exceed 15 days

III.II Appeal Process

In the normal flow of test opportunities, students take tests in the Test Delivery System (TDS) and then submit them. Appeals are a way of interrupting this normal flow. A student may need to retake a test or have another test opportunity. A Test Administrator may want to invalidate a test because of a hardware malfunction or a testing incident.

Test Administrators should work with their School Test Coordinators to submit relevant appeals in TIDE. The appeal will be reviewed by a staff member of the Connecticut State Department of Education within 48 hours after the appeal is received.

The outcomes indicated in [Table 3](#) are possible following an appeal.

Table 3. Possible NGSS Assessment Appeal Outcomes

Appeal Type	Description of Possible Outcome
Invalidate a test	Invalidating a test eliminates the test opportunity, and students have no further opportunities for the test.
Reset a test	Resetting a test allows students to restart a test opportunity (removing all responses on the test) or allows the data entry operator to restart the data entry process.
Re-open a test	Re-opening a test allows students to return to the NGSS Assessment, modify their answers, and resubmit the test.
Grace period extension	A grace period extension allows students to return to the questions that were locked by the 20-minute pause rule.
Restore a test that was reset	Restoring a test that was reset reverses a reset, restoring students' responses to what they were before the reset was processed.

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Appendix A. Performance Office Contact Information

[Table 4](#) includes the contact information for CSDE Performance Office NGSS Assessment support.

Table 4. CSDE Performance Office Contact Information

Name	Phone	E-mail
Student Assessment, Performance Office	860-713-6860	CTStudentAssessment@ct.gov
Jeff Greig	860-713-6854	Jeff.Greig@ct.gov

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Appendix B. Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations

[Table 5](#) – [Table 9](#) outline the embedded and non-embedded universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations that are available to students taking the NGSS Assessment. 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.

Online braille, Spanish and large print versions of the NGSS Assessment are available. Students requiring a braille or Spanish version of the NGSS Assessment should be assigned this embedded accommodation or designated support in the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) before the test administration. Students requiring a large print version of the NGSS Assessment should be assigned the required print size through the respective embedded designated support in TIDE.

Table 5. Embedded Universal Tools

Tool	Description
Digital Notepad	Students may use this tool to make notes about an item. The digital notepad is item-specific and is available through the end of the test segment. Notes are not saved when the student moves on to the next segment or after a break of more than 20 minutes.
Expandable Passages	Students may expand passages or stimuli so that they take up a larger portion of the screen.
Highlighter	Students may use this tool to mark desired text, item questions, item answers, or parts of these with a color. Highlighted text remains available throughout each test segment.
Keyboard Navigation	Students may navigate through the test by using a keyboard. Students are provided with a document called Keyboard Commands for Students that explains the various keystrokes.
Mark for Review	Students may flag items for future review during the assessment. Markings are not saved when the student moves on to the next segment or after a break of more than 20 minutes.
Strikethrough	Students may cross out answer options. If an answer option is an image, a strikethrough line will not appear, but the image will be grayed out.
Writing Tools	Students may use selected writing tools (e.g., bold, italic, bullets, undo/redo) for all student-generated responses.

Table 5. Embedded Universal Tools

Tool	Description
Zoom	Students may use this tool to enlarge text or graphics in a window or frame. The default size for all tests is 14-point font. Students can enlarge text and graphics using the Zoom In button or return to the default size using the Zoom Out button. The Zoom feature only changes the size of text and graphics on the current screen. To increase the default print size of the entire test (from 1.5X to 3.0X default size), the print size must be set for the student in TIDE prior to the start of the test. This is the only feature that Test Administrators can set. The use of this universal tool may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

Table 6. Non-Embedded Universal Tools

Tool	Description
Breaks	Breaks may be given at predetermined intervals or after completion of sections of the assessment for students taking a paper-based test. Sometimes, individual students may take breaks when needed to reduce cognitive fatigue from heavy assessment demands. The use of this universal tool may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.
Scratch Paper/ Whiteboard with Marker	Scratch paper may be provided to make notes, write computations, or record responses. Only plain paper or lined paper is appropriate for English language arts (ELA) tests. Graph paper is required beginning in Grade 6 and can be used on all mathematics assessments. Any kind of paper can be used for science. A whiteboard with marker may be used as scratch paper.

Table 7. Embedded Designated Supports

Support	Description
Color Contrast	Students may adjust screen background or font color, based on needs or preferences. This may include reversing the colors for the entire Student Interface or choosing the color of font and background; options include Black on White; Yellow on Blue; Medium Gray on Light Gray; or Reverse Contrast.
Masking	Students may block off content that is not of immediate need or that may be distracting. Students are able to focus their attention on a specific part of a test item by masking. Masking allows students to hide and reveal individual answer options, as well as all navigational buttons and menus.
Mouse Pointer (Size and Color)	Students may request the size and color of the mouse pointer to be changed. A Test Administrator sets the size and color of the mouse pointer before testing.
Print Size Online	Print size online allows the font size viewed by the student in the test delivery system to be preset for the entire test. This designated support is generally most beneficial for students with visual disabilities.
Spanish	Spanish translations are a language support available for select Spanish speaking students. The item is presented in Spanish but there is a button a student can select that will enable the student to toggle to the English version of the item translation. For students whose primary language is not English and who use dual language supports in the classroom, the use of the translation may be appropriate. This support should only be used for students who are proficient readers in Spanish and who are not proficient in English.

Table 7. Embedded Designated Supports

Support	Description
Text-to-Speech	Students may have the text read aloud via embedded text-to-speech (TTS) technology. The student is able to control the speed, as well as raise or lower the volume of the voice via a volume control.
Turn Off Universal Tools	The student may request that any universal tools that might be distracting, that students do not need to use, or that students are unable to use be disabled while testing.
Streamline Mode	This accommodation allows any tests to be presented without a split screen. Items are presented sequentially below the stimuli.

Table 8. Non-Embedded Designated Supports

Support	Description
Amplification	The student may adjust the volume control beyond the computer’s built-in settings using headphones or other non-embedded devices.
Bilingual Dictionary	A bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary is a language support. For students whose primary language is not English and who use dual language supports in the classroom, use of a bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary may be appropriate. Students participate in the assessment regardless of the language. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment. Glossaries Authorized for Use by English Language Learners on MCAS and PARCC provide potential resources for word-to-word dictionaries and are allowed on Connecticut’s statewide assessments.
Color Overlay	Color transparencies may be placed over a paper-based assessment. Students with attention difficulties may need this support to view test content. This support also may be needed by some students with visual impairments or other print disabilities (including learning disabilities). The student must have the print-on-demand accommodation or use a large print test booklet in order to use this designated support. Choice of color should be informed by evidence of those colors that meet the student’s needs.
Magnification Device	The size of specific areas of the screen (e.g., text, formulas, tables, graphics, and navigation buttons) may be adjusted by the student with an assistive technology device. Magnification allows the student to increase the size to a level not supported by the Zoom universal tool. Students used to viewing enlarged text, graphics, or navigation buttons may need magnification to comfortably view content. This support also may meet the needs of students with visual impairments and other print disabilities. The use of this designated support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.
Native Language Reader Directions Only	All test directions may be read and clarified in English or the student’s native language for English learner (EL) students who have been identified as needing this support. A non-certified or certified staff person may administer this accommodation.
Noise Buffering	Students may use ear muffers, white noise, WhisperPhone, or other equipment to block external sounds. A student (not groups of students) may wear equipment to reduce environmental noises. Students may have these testing variations if regularly used in the classroom. Students who use noise buffers will need headphones unless tested individually in a separate setting.

Table 8. Non-Embedded Designated Supports

Support	Description
Read Aloud	Text is read aloud to the student by a trained and qualified human reader who follows the Test Administration Manual, security procedures, and Read Aloud Guidelines . All or portions of the content may be read aloud. Students who are struggling readers may need assistance accessing the assessment by having all or portions of the assessment read aloud. This support also may be needed by students with reading-related disabilities or by students who are blind and do not yet have adequate braille skills. If not used regularly during instruction, this support is likely to be confusing and may impede the performance on assessments. Readers must be provided to students on an individual basis, not a group of students. A student should have the option of asking a reader to slow down or repeat text. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment, and the student will need to be tested in a separate setting.
Read Aloud (Spanish)	Spanish text is read aloud to the student by a trained and qualified human reader who follows the test administration manual, security procedures, and the <i>Guidelines for Spanish Read Aloud, Test Reader</i> . Readers must be provided to students on an individual basis not to a group of students
Separate Setting	Students who are easily distracted (or may distract others) may need an alternative location to be able to take the assessment. The separate setting may be a different room that allows the students to work individually or among a smaller group, or in the same room but in a specific location (for example, away from windows, doors, or pencil sharpeners; in a study carrel; with a WhisperPhone; near the teacher’s desk; or in the front of a classroom). Some students may benefit from being in an environment that allows for movement, such as being able to walk around. In some instances, students may need to interact with instructional or test content outside of school, such as in a hospital or their home. A designated adult, employed by the school and trained in a manner consistent with the Test Administration Manual (TAM), including security procedures, may act as test proctor (Test Administrator) for the student. Some designated supports or accommodations require students to be assessed individually. These students would also require a separate setting. Examples include students accessing the Read Aloud designated support or accommodation, scribe, or speech-to-text.

Table 9. Embedded Accommodations

Accommodation	Description
Alternative Response Options	Alternate response options include but are not limited to adapted keyboards, large keyboards, StickyKeys, MouseKeys, FilterKeys, adapted mouse, touch screen, head wand, and switches. Students with some physical disabilities (including both fine motor and gross motor skills) may need to use the alternate response options accommodation to access the NGSS Assessments. Some alternate response options are external devices that must be plugged in and must be compatible with the assessment delivery platform.
Braille Booklet	This accommodation is a fixed-form test booklet that provides all content in braille. It is typically used by students who have visual disabilities. Contracted or non-contracted forms of braille may be selected.
Large Print Booklet	This accommodation is a fixed-form test booklet that provides enlarged content. It is typically used by students who have visual disabilities.
Permissive Mode	Students can use accessibility software, such as screen readers or magnifiers, during testing.

Table 9. Embedded Accommodations

Accommodation	Description
Print on Demand	Some students with disabilities may need paper copies of either passages/stimuli and/or items. A very small percentage of students need this accommodation. The use of this accommodation may result in the student needing additional time to complete the assessment. Permissive mode must be indicated within the TIDE system to access this accommodation.
Scribe	The accommodation for the provision of a scribe requires the Special Accommodations Procedure. Teachers must be trained and complete the Scribe Protocol provided by the CSDE when the special accommodation petition permission has been approved. Students dictate their responses to a qualified person who records verbatim what they dictate. These students may have significant processing or motor difficulties requiring a scribe for lengthy responses in instruction and assessment. This accommodation may result in the student needing additional time to complete the assessment.
Sign Language for Test Items	The sign language accommodation for the Standard Science Assessment allows a qualified Test Administrator to sign the 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.
Speech-to-Text	The speech-to-text or voice-recognition software accommodation allows students to use their voices as input devices to the computer, to dictate responses, or to give commands (e.g., opening application programs, pulling down menus, saving work). Students use their own assistive technology devices, which generally include a microphone and headphones. Typically, students who have motor or processing disabilities (such as dyslexia) may use this accommodation and find it beneficial. Students need to be familiar with the software and have had many opportunities to use it during instruction. Speech-to-text software requires that students know writing conventions and that they have reviewing and editing skills; thus, experience with this accommodation prior to testing is essential. When students use their own assistive technology devices, all assessment content must be deleted from these devices after testing for security purposes. Permissive mode must be indicated within the TIDE system to access this accommodation.

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Appendix C. Testing Improprieties, Irregularities and Breaches

Test security incidents, such as improprieties, irregularities, and breaches, are behaviors prohibited either because they give a student an unfair advantage or because they compromise the security of the assessments. Whether intentional or by accident, failure to comply with security rules, either by staff or students, constitutes a test security incident. Improprieties, irregularities, and breaches need to be reported in accordance with the instructions in this section for each severity level. Definitions for test security incidents are provided in [Table 10](#).

There are times when these situations may even require a retest of an individual or a group of students. Any breaches in test security must be reported immediately to your District Test Coordinator who will contact the Connecticut State Department of Education Performance Office.

Table 10. Definitions for Test Security Incidents

Type	Definition
Breach	<p>A test security incident that poses a threat to the validity of the test. Examples may include such situations as a release of secure materials or a security/system risk.</p> <p>A breach incident must be reported to the District Test Coordinator immediately and entered in TIDE (should an appeal be required). Breaches require immediate attention and escalation to the state. Any breaches in test security must be reported immediately to your District Test Coordinator who will contact the Connecticut State Department of Education Performance Office.</p>
Irregularity	<p>A test security incident that impacts an individual or group of students who are testing and may potentially affect student performance on the test, test security, or test validity. These circumstances can be corrected by the district/school and submitted in the online appeals system for resolution, if necessary. An irregularity must be reported to the District Test Coordinator immediately and entered into the appeals module of TIDE (should an appeal be required).</p>
Impropriety	<p>A test security incident that has a low impact on the individual or group of students who are testing and has a low risk of potentially affecting student performance on the test, test security, or test validity. These circumstances can be corrected and contained at the local level. An impropriety should be reported to the Test Coordinator immediately and entered into the appeals module of TIDE (should an appeal be required).</p>

It is important for Test Examiners to ensure the physical conditions in the testing room meet the criteria for a secure test environment. See [Security of the Test Environment](#) for more detail.

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Appendix D. Examples of Test Security Violations

Level of Severity	Types of Issues
<p>LOW Impropriety</p>	Students making distracting gestures/sounds or talking during the test session, creating a disruption in the test session for other students.
	Students leaving the test room without authorization.
	Testing staff leaving related instructional materials on the walls in the testing room.
<p>MEDIUM Irregularity</p>	Students cheating or providing answers to one another, including passing notes, giving help to other students during testing, or using hand-held electronic devices to exchange information.
	Students accessing the Internet or any unauthorized software or applications during a testing event.
	Students accessing or using unauthorized electronic equipment (e.g., cell phones, smart watches, iPods, electronic translators) during testing.
	Test session disrupted due to an event such as a fire drill, schoolwide power outage, or other acts.
	Testing staff failing to ensure administration and supervision of the NGSS Assessments by qualified, trained personnel.
	Testing staff giving incorrect instructions that are not corrected prior to testing.
	Testing staff giving out his or her username/password (via email or otherwise), including to other authorized users.
	Testing staff coaching or providing any other type of assistance to students that may affect their responses. This includes both verbal cues (e.g., interpreting, explaining, paraphrasing items or prompts) and nonverbal cues (e.g., voice inflection, pointing, nodding head) to the correct answer. This also includes leading students through any instructional strategy, such as think-aloud, asking students to point to the correct answer or otherwise identify the source of their answer, or requiring students to show their work.
	Testing staff providing students with non-allowable materials or devices during test administration or allowing inappropriate designated supports and/or accommodations during test administration.
	Testing staff allowing anyone other than a student to log in to the test unless prescribed as an allowable accommodation in the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP). This includes Test Administrators or other staff using student information to log in or allowing a student to log in using another student’s information.
<p>HIGH Breach</p>	Testing staff providing a student access to another student’s work/responses.
	Testing staff modifying student responses.
	The live Student Interface or Test Administration Interface being used for practice instead of a live test administration. Live interfaces should be accessed only via the Secure Browser for live assessments (interim or summative). Any practice or training tests should be taken on the Practice Test and Training Test sites, located on the Connecticut Comprehensive Program Portal.
	Adults or students posting items or test materials on social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.).
	Testing staff allowing students to take home printed test items, reading passages, or scratch paper that was used during the test or failing to otherwise securely store test materials.
	Adults or students copying, discussing, or otherwise retaining test items, reading passages, or answers for any reason. This includes the use of photocopiers or digital, electronic, or manual devices to record or communicate a test item. This also includes using secure test items, modified secure test items, reading passages, or answer keys for instructional purposes. This includes reviewing secure test items beyond active proctoring of students.
	Secure test materials (e.g., test items, reading passages) being shared with the media or allowing the media to observe a secure test administration.
Adults or students improperly removing secure testing materials—such as test items, stimuli, reading passages, or scratch paper—from the testing environment.	

