



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: English Learner Assessment Coordinators
FROM: Janet Stuck, Education Consultant, Special Populations
DATE: November 8, 2021
SUBJECT: Assessment Procedures for Dually Identified Students for the 2021-22 School Year

This memo provides information discussed at the [2021-22 English Learner Assessment Coordinator \(ELAC\) Training for LAS Links Administration](#). Specific information about LAS Links procedures for dually identified students for the 2021-22 school year is described here. Dually identified students are those students identified as English learners (ELs) who have an active Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan. All students identified as English learners in Grades K-12 are expected to participate in the LAS Links Assessment between **January 3 and March 4, 2022**.

English Learners Educated in Approved Private Special Education Programs

If applicable, English Learner Assessment Coordinators (ELACs) received a memo on November 4, 2021, Dually Identified English Learners Placed Outside the District Including Approved Private Special Education Programs (APSEPs). With the memo, a list of students from the October 1, 2021, Public School Information System (PSIS) collection indicated as attending schools outside the district was provided. A link to a list of District Administrators (DAs) in the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) for each APSEP was also included to support communications related to testing these students. Please use the [District Administrators in TIDE at Approved Private Special Education Programs \(APSEPs\)](#) as needed. District ELACs should communicate with special education staff in their districts to ensure all placements are reflected accurately in PSIS.

Accommodated/Paper Test Forms

Some English learners, for reasons specified below, will not be able to participate in the online LAS Links Assessment and will be administered the LAS Links accommodated paper form.

ELACs are responsible for the administration of the LAS Links to students represented in the following groups and will need to request the accommodated paper version:

- students entered in PSIS who have an active IEP or Section 504 Plan indicating a need for a paper-test form, a braille form, or a large-print form due to a disability;
- students entered in PSIS who are being educated out of state; or
- students enrolled in an APSEP without access to the online LAS Links testing platform.

Use the Connecticut 2022 LAS Links Accommodated/Paper Materials Order Form available on the [Connecticut DRC LAS Links Website](#) under Assessment Administration to order a paper form. Orders must be placed by **January 7, 2022** and take approximately one week to ship from the time the order is received. All paper materials must be returned to the Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) for scoring. The last day to call the United Parcel Service (UPS) for pickup of completed forms is **February 18, 2022**. (Please note this is prior to the end of the LAS Links Testing Window to ensure all paper submissions meet required deadlines for scoring.) Districts should maintain copies of all mailing and tracking receipts. Please see the Receipt and Return of 2022 Accommodated/Paper Test Materials information provided in the LAS Links Test Administration Manual and on the [Connecticut DRC LAS Links Website](#).

Dually Identified Students Eligible to Participate in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment System

A small group of dually identified students will not participate in the standard or in the accommodated LAS Links Assessment (online or paper version). These students are English learners who are also identified with a significant cognitive disability per their IEP and meet the criteria specified by the [Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#). While Connecticut offers alternate assessments in the subject areas of English language arts, math, and science, it does not currently have an alternate assessment for the English Language Proficiency (ELP) Assessment.

The ELAC must communicate to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) any student who will **not** participate in the LAS Links due to the student's significant cognitive disability as determined at their Planning and Placement Team (PPT) by confirming that the student meets eligibility criteria for the alternate assessments. These students will be excluded from reporting for the LAS Links based on the data provided to the CSDE. **The student's EL status will not change for the following school year.** There are two ways to communicate this student information to the CSDE:

- **Dually identified English learners Grades 3-8 and 11:** Students who are eligible to participate in the Alternate Assessment System must have the [Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#) submitted into the Data Entry Interface (DEI) by **December 22, 2021**. The submission of this form documents that the PPT determined the student meets eligibility criteria for the alternate assessments and will communicate to the CSDE these students will not participate in the LAS Links. The ELAC should maintain a list of these students to ensure no test sessions or tests are created in the DRC INSIGHT Portal.
- **Dually identified English learners in Grades K-2, 9, 10, and 12:** The student identified as an English learner must have a significant cognitive disability (per their IEP) and evidence throughout their IEP to substantiate the need for an alternate assessment (if an alternate assessment was available in these grades). The EL team (consisting of EL specialists, special education staff, district test administrators, and teachers) may use the [Connecticut Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form](#) for discussion purposes, however, forms are **not** submitted through the DEI for students in Grades K-2, 9, 10, or 12.

For students in Grades K-2, 9, 10, or 12, ELACs communicate this information by **December 22, 2021** using the English Learners with Significant Cognitive Disabilities Potentially Eligible for Alternative Assessments Survey located on the [Connecticut DRC LAS Links Website](#) under Assessment Administration. Required information includes the student's SASID, grade, district name, school name, primary disability category, and the name and number of the ELAC.

Note: Please take extra precautions to manage this list of students who are considered for an alternate assessment. **These students should not participate in the LAS Links or the standard (Smarter Balanced, NGSS, or Connecticut SAT School Day) assessments in ELA, math, or science.** Errors in documentation or the testing of these students with significant cognitive disabilities eligible for an alternate assessment have repercussions for each student and may impact school and district accountability.

LAS Links Domain Exemptions

A small group of English learners may not be able to access a specific domain tested on the LAS Links due to a disability. For example, some English learners may also have a primary disability category of Deaf or hard of hearing and are unable to access the Listening subtest of the LAS Links due to this disability.

Similarly, some English learners with an IEP or Section 504 Plan may be non-verbal, and due to their disability, even when provided assistive technology or augmentative and alternate communication supports, may not be able to participate in the Speaking subtest.

The ELAC will submit the student specific information using the Domain Exemption Form under Assessment Administration on the [Connecticut DRC LAS Links Website](#) to communicate to CSDE about these students. Based on the information provided to the CSDE by the ELAC, an overall score will be calculated for the student based just on the subtests taken. This overall score will only be reported in the CSDE's student reporting portal, EdSight Secure.

Connecticut Students in PSIS Educated Out of State

The reporting district is responsible for testing all grade K-12 students reported as an English learner in PSIS. Some of these students may be attending out-of-state schools where the district has accepted programmatic responsibility for the student's education through the development and implementation of an IEP.

Working with appropriate district staff including the PSIS Coordinator, the special education director, and the District Administrator for testing, the ELAC should confirm any English learners who are appropriately included in PSIS and work with the out-of-state program to complete testing for these English learners. These students would be administered an Accommodated/Paper test form.

The ELAC should place an order by January 7, 2022 for accommodated/paper-test materials using the **2022 LAS Links Accommodated/Paper Materials Order Form** available on the [Connecticut DRC LAS Links Website](#). The ELAC will work with the out-of-state program to assess the student on the LAS Links. The ELAC must define a "return to district" date, so the Connecticut district can ensure all sections are completed and returned to the district for UPS return to DRC by **February 18, 2022** for scoring. The ELAC must ensure the student is administered the LAS Links Assessment at the out-of-state program in a secure manner, providing accommodations as required and the ELAC should maintain all tracking receipts for the sending and return of all tests.

Considerations for Entering LAS Links Accommodations

Students identified as ELs who have an active IEP or a Section 504 Plan may be eligible for accommodations on the LAS Links Assessment subtests: Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing. Accommodations are entered by the ELAC into the DRC INSIGHT Portal in the student demographic area during the testing window prior to the date the student is tested. Guidance and procedures may be found in the LAS Links Test Administration Manual and on the [Connecticut DRC LAS Links Website](#).

In each applicable subject area, the ELAC will indicate if a student has one or more LAS Links allowable accommodations in that subject by checking Category 3, or text-to-speech. The actual named accommodation is not selected here other than text-to-speech.

The ELACs should communicate with special education staff early in the school year and maintain a list of actual accommodations to ensure they are appropriately provided to each student in each subject by proctors during the testing window.

Note: Accommodations are recorded in the demographic area for each student **prior** to testing the student. It is critical for accurate scoring and reporting that no changes or additions other than the accommodations be entered in the demographic area. The ELAC **MUST** confirm the student has not started testing at the time they are entering accommodations. If a change is made to accommodations while a student's test is in progress, it will have significant consequences for the student's testing, scoring, and reporting.

Additional English Learner Resources

Please access additional English learner resources, on the [Connecticut DRC LAS Links web site](#), the [English Language Proficiency Assessment –LAS Links web page](#), and the [CSDE English Learners web page](#).

For any questions or concerns about these topics regarding English learners, please contact Janet Stuck at janet.stuck@ct.gov.

Thank you.