



Board of Education

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March 25, 2022

Dear Parent or Guardian:

In Watertown, we strive to ensure that all students receive an education that prepares them to thrive in a global economy and civic life. As you know, Connecticut has adopted challenging academic standards including the Connecticut Core Standards in Mathematics and Language Arts, as well as the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Watertown believes that with a firm grounding in these subjects, by the time all students graduate from high school, they will be ready to succeed in college and the workplace.

In Connecticut, statewide assessments, administered digitally, are used as one way to measure student progression in mastering these standards. **Watertown's window runs from late April to mid May. Specific testing dates will be forthcoming from school administrators.**

- The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessment is used to measure student understanding of Science content in Grades 5, 8 and 11; students will take this assessment in April.
- The Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC) is used to measure student performance in English/Language Arts and Mathematics in grades 3-8; students will take this assessment in May.
- In all of these statewide assessments, additional supports are available for students with special needs, as determined by an individualized education program (IEP) or 504 Plan.
- Eligible students in grades 3-8 and 11, who are identified through the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meeting, may participate in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) rather than the Smarter Balanced or Connecticut SAT School Day, if this assessment is believed to meet their need for greater accessibility to the grade-level content being assessed. If this applies to your child, you will receive a second letter with additional details about the CTAA.

Please know that our district certainly recognizes that these assessments are one snapshot of a student's overall progress, and that many factors contribute to a student's growth over time. However, these assessments do help teachers and parents see where students are, compared to where they need to be. The results can reveal subject areas where a student is excelling and subject areas where a student needs extra help. Arguably, this information is more important now than ever, as we emerge from the unfinished learning that may result from the COVID-19 pandemic. To find more resources specifically for parents and guardians, including ways to help your child with the Connecticut standards at home, please visit:

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/CT-Core-Standards> or <https://www.nextgenscience.org>

If you have any questions, please feel welcome to call me to discuss these assessments. Thank you for your continued support of our students and our school.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Fekete

Lisa M. Fekete
Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Watertown Public Schools