

General FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions for the South Carolina Alternate Assessments

Contents

Overview and Changes for 2020	1
What is the South Carolina Alternate Assessment (SC-Alt)?	1
What are the changes for the spring 2020 administration?	1
When and how will the SC-Alts be administered?	1
Who can administer the SC-Alt?	2
Eligibility and Test Assignments	3
Who determines eligibility for the SC-Alt?	3
Which tests does my student take?	3
What if a student does not demonstrate a mode of communication?	4
How are students enrolled in one district tested in another?	4
Paper Materials	4
How do test administrators get a Test Administrator Manual (TAM)?	4
Who receives paper testing materials?	5
How are test materials distributed? Should there be one set of materials per student?	5
To which address will the test materials be sent?	5
Who will deliver my test materials? When will they arrive?	5

*FAQs will be regularly updated as new information becomes available.

Overview and Changes for 2020

What is the South Carolina Alternate Assessment (SC-Alt)?

The SC-Alt is an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The SC-Alt is administered to students who meet the participation guidelines for alternate assessment and who are in grades 3-8 and High School.

What are the changes for the spring 2020 administration?

The spring 2020 administration utilizes a fully online testing system, which adapts to each student's ability. The following are the major changes in the tests:

- Test length has decreased from 50 to 40 items.
- The Science assessment will no longer be delivered in grade 8.
- The Social Studies assessments will no longer be delivered in grades 5 and 7.

For 2020 the Alternate Assessment is composed of two different assessments:

- The **SC-Alt Online Assessment** is divided into two tests, one operational test and one embedded field test. All SC Alternate Assessments will be delivered as SC-Alt Online Assessment. These tests will be administered online through the TA and Student Interfaces. Student participation in the SC Alternate Assessments is an IEP team decision and should be documented in the student's IEP.
 - The **SC-Alt Online Assessment Operational Test (OT)** is administered by grade. ELA and Math will be administered to students in grades 3-8 and High School. Science will be administered to students in grades 4, 6, and High School. US History and Constitution will be administered to students in High School. This assessment is scored.
 - The **SC-Alt Online Assessment Embedded Field Test (EFT)** is administered by grade. ELA and Math will be administered to students in grades 3-8 and High School. Science will be administered to students in grades 4, 6, and High School. US History and Constitution will be administered to students in High School. The EFT assessments are NOT scored.

More information on the assessments being administered in the spring 2020 administration can be found in the [Grade Reference Sheet](#) and the [Overview of the Alternate Assessment](#) document on the [SC-Alt Portal](#).

When and how will the SC-Alts be administered?

Schools have a seven week window during which they will administer the alternate assessments, **March 9 – April 24, 2020**. These windows were chosen to provide schools ample time to assess all eligible students at their own pace. There are no time restrictions inherent to the assessment itself, and students may stop and resume the assessment at any point. All test results must be submitted by the Test Administrator for the student before the end of the testing window. There will be no extensions.

More information on the assessments being administered in the spring 2020 administration can be found in the [Grade Reference Sheet](#) and the [Overview of the Alternate Assessment](#) document on the [SC-Alt Portal](#).

Who can administer the SC-Alt?

All Test Administrators must be trained to administer the SC-Alt and must be one of the following:

- A certified employee of the district.
- An employee of the district who is a critical needs teacher and has a letter of eligibility, an interim certificate, or a critical needs certificate.
- A substitute teacher who is certified and employed by the district on an as-needed basis.
- Someone who was a certified teacher but has allowed the teaching certificate to expire owing to retirement, change of career, or some other reason, and has been approved by the District Test Coordinator or the District Test Coordinator for Alternate Assessment (DTC-Alt) as a qualified test administrator.
- Someone who is not certified but has been employed by the school district in an instructional capacity and has been approved by the DTC-Alt as a qualified TA

Test administrators may not administer the assessment to close relatives (e.g., children, grandchildren). If the SC-Alt is administered in a location other than the school, the test administrator must meet the same criteria specified above.

Eligibility and Test Assignments

Who determines eligibility for the SC-Alt?

The IEP team determines whether a student will participate in the SC Alternate Assessment using the [South Carolina Participation Guidelines](#).

Which tests does my student take?

Students are assigned tests based on their enrolled grade.

Grade	Subject
Grade 3	ELA Math
Grade 4	ELA Math Science
Grade 5	ELA Math
Grade 6	ELA Math Science
Grade 7	ELA Math
Grade 8	ELA Math
High School	English Algebra Biology US History and Constitution

What if a student does not demonstrate a mode of communication?

For the SC-Alt, students must attempt to complete all questions. If the student does not respond to an item, the TA may click **[No Response]** to move on to the next item.

The procedures regarding students who do not demonstrate a mode of communication have remained the same for the 2020 administration. If a TA believes that a student eligible for the SC-Alt does not have an observable mode of communication, he or she must complete all the steps included in the Early Stopping Rule Flowchart and Checklist. As directed in the Flowchart, the TA must administer the Student Response Check, or SRC, to the student three times. The administration of the SRC should take place at a different location and different time of day.

Both the Early Stopping Rule Flowchart and Checklist and the SRC will be located on the on the Portal at sc-alt.portal.cambiumast.com.

If the student shows any observable mode of communication during any administration of the SRC, the TA must administer the entire SC-Alt. If the student does not show any observable mode of communication, the TA should contact her/his DTC-Alt.

The DTC-Alt will review the student's IEP to ensure communication is addressed in the student's present levels, goals, and services. If developing communication is addressed on the student's IEP, the DTC-Alt will advise the SC-Alt Help Desk that he or she has determined that a student in the district does not have an observable mode of communication and request that the SCDE review the student's IEP. If the SCDE determines that the student does not have an observable mode of communication, the SCDE and CAI will flag the student in TIDE as having No Mode of Communication. The TA should then administer only the first four items of the SC-Alt and answer the affidavit questions before submitting the test

How are students enrolled in one district tested in another?

In TIDE, the DTC-Alt will add the district and school IDN where the student will TAKE the test in the Attending District and School IDN fields on the Student Information page. The TA in the attending school (where the student will test) will need to be added in TIDE as a TA in the enrolled school (where the student is based).

If this is a new student, the DTC-Alt must still put in the enrolled school and district IDN in addition to the attending school and district IDN.

Paper Materials

How do test administrators get a Test Administrator Manual (TAM)?

While the TAM is available for download on the Portal, DTCs-Alt can order paper TAMs for their TAs through TIDE. New test administrators will be given TAMs at their training session.

Who receives paper testing materials?

If a student has vision impairments and cannot access the SC-Alt online, the student's DTC-Alt may submit a request to order SC-Alt Online Assessment paper response options in TIDE.

Brailed materials are not available for Sc-Alt. The school or district can Braille these as necessary. PDFs for Brailed materials for the SC-Alt Online Assessment are ordered through the SC-Alt Help Desk.

How are test materials distributed? Should there be one set of materials per student?

If a student has vision impairments and cannot access the SC-Alt online, the student's DTC-Alt may submit a request to order paper response options in TIDE. The SCDE will review each request before approving the order for paper materials.

To which address will the test materials be sent?

Test materials are sent to the district. Districts can view the shipping address in in TIDE's "Contact Information" page for the Paper Response Orders. Districts can change their shipping addresses by contacting the South Carolina Alternate Assessment Help Desk at 1.877.231.7789 or schelpdesk@cambiumassessment.com.

Who will deliver my test materials? When will they arrive?

The test materials ordered during the order window will be delivered by FedEx and arrive in district on February 24, 2020.