



CONNECTICUT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE TEST - SCIENCE

What High School Students and their Parents or Guardians Should Know About the CAPT Science

BACKGROUND

In March, high school students across the state will participate in the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) in Science. The CAPT Science serves as the statewide science assessment program required by state and federal legislation. All Grade 10 students enrolled in a public school must participate.

The CAPT Science has been in place since 1994 and was developed with the input of educators throughout the state. The purpose of this assessment is to measure student achievement in science and support improvements in Connecticut's science education programs by:

- establishing high performance standards for students on a range of skills and knowledge;
- emphasizing the application of skills and knowledge in realistic contexts;
- providing useful information to inform decisions about curriculum and instruction; and
- increasing accountability at the high school level.

OVERVIEW OF THE TEST

The CAPT Science assesses concepts and skills that have been established by the *Connecticut Core Science Curriculum Framework: Expected Performances for Grades 9 and 10* (CSDE, 2004). The CAPT Science assesses students' understanding of scientific concepts from five major content strands:

- Energy Transformations
- Chemical Structures and Properties
- Global Interdependence
- Cell Chemistry and Biotechnology
- Genetics, Evolution and Biodiversity

There is also a major focus on scientific inquiry, literacy and numeracy skills applied to real-world issues. The CAPT Science includes 60 multiple-choice and five short, written-response questions and is administered in two 50-minute test sessions.

RESULTS FROM THE TEST

Students receive a full report of their results. While there is no passing score on the CAPT Science, five performance levels have been established: Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, Goal and Advanced. Results from the CAPT Science may be incorporated into local graduation requirements. Summary results for schools, districts, and the state are also reported. These results allow educators to identify academic strengths and weaknesses to better plan instructional supports for students. It is important to note that the CAPT Science is only one indicator of student performance. The results should be used along with other information, such as results from classroom assignments and other assessments, when making educational decisions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the CAPT Science, go to www.ct.gov/sde. Click on the Student Assessment link and then CMT/CAPT Science.