

South Dakota Science Assessment

2024–2025

Volume 5: Test Administration

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1. INTRODUCTION

This volume provides an overview of testing windows, available testing options, and the responsibilities associated with administrative roles to ensure smooth and effective test administration processes.

1.1 TESTING WINDOWS

The 2024–2025 South Dakota Science Assessment (SDSA) testing window spanned approximately two months for the summative assessments and nine months for the interim assessments. The paper-pencil fixed-form summative assessments were administered concurrently during the online summative window.

1.2 TEST OPTIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES

The SDSA is administered primarily online. To ensure that all eligible students in the tested grades were provided the opportunity to take the SDSA, a number of testing options were available for the 2024–2025 test administration to accommodate students’ needs. Table 1 lists the testing options that were offered in 2024–2025. Once a testing option was selected, it applied to all tests in the content area.

Table 1. Summary of Tests and Testing Options in 2024–2025

Assessments	Test Options	Test Mode
Summative Assessments	English	Online
	Braille	Online
	Spanish (Toggle)	Online
	Paper-Pencil Large Print Fixed-Form Test [†]	Paper-Pencil
	Paper-Pencil Braille Fixed-Form Test [†]	Paper-Pencil
Interim Assessments	English	Online

[†]For the paper-pencil fixed-form tests, all student responses on the paper-pencil tests were entered in the Data Entry Interface (DEI) by test administrators.

To ensure standardized test administration conditions, teachers (TEs) and proctors (PRs) followed procedures outlined in the *Test Administration Manual (TAM)*. TEs and PRs reviewed the TAM prior to the beginning of testing to ensure that the testing room was prepared appropriately (e.g., removing certain classroom posters, arranging desks). Make-up procedures were established for any students who were absent on the day(s) of testing. TEs and PRs followed required test administration procedures and directions and read the boxed directions verbatim to students, ensuring standardized test administration conditions.

1.2.1 Administrative Roles

The key personnel involved with test administration are assessment coordinators (ACs), district administrators (DAs), school coordinators (SCs), technology coordinators (TCs), teachers (TEs),

and proctors (PRs). The main responsibilities of these key personnel are described in this section. Detailed descriptions can be found in the TAM provided online at <https://sd.portal.cambiumast.com/resource-item/en/online-summative-test-administration-manual-tam>.

Assessment Coordinator

The AC is authorized to add users to the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) and to assign them any role except that of an AC. If assigned, an AC can modify student records within their district in TIDE (including accommodations, designated supports, and interim test eligibility) or submit appeals. Their primary responsibility is coordinating the administration of the South Dakota assessments in the district.

ACs are responsible for the following:

- Reviewing all SDSA policies and test administration documents
- Reviewing scheduling and test requirements with SCs, TEs, and PRs
- Working with SCs and TCs to ensure that all systems, including the Cambium Assessment, Inc. (CAI) Secure Browser, are properly installed and functional
- Creating, updating, or importing SC accounts in TIDE
- Verifying all student information and eligibility in TIDE
- Scheduling and administering training sessions for all SCs, TEs, PRs, and TCs
- Ensuring that all personnel are trained on how to properly administer the SDSA assessments
- Monitoring the secure administration of the tests
- Investigating and reporting all testing improprieties, irregularities, and breaches reported by the TEs and PRs
- Attending to any secure material according to SDDOE policies

District Administrator

The DA's role is assigned by the South Dakota Department of Education (SDDOE) to district-level personnel who need access to the system, mainly to access district-level data, but isn't the Assessment Coordinator.

School Coordinator

The SC is primarily responsible for coordinating the administration of the SDSA at the school level and ensuring that testing within his or her school is conducted in accordance with the test procedures and security policies established by the SDDOE. SC responsibilities include the following:

- Based on test administration windows, establishing a testing schedule with ACs, TEs, and PRs
- Working with technology staff to ensure timely computer setup and installation
- Working with TEs and PRs to review student information in TIDE to ensure that student information and test settings for designated supports and accommodations are correctly applied
- Identifying students who may require designated supports and test accommodations and ensuring that procedures for testing these students follow SDDOE policies
- Attending all district trainings and reviewing all SDDOE policies and test administration documents
- Ensuring that all TEs and PRs attend school or district trainings and review online training modules posted on the South Dakota Gateway
- Establishing secure and separate testing rooms, if needed
- Downloading and planning the administration of the classroom activity with TEs and PRs
- Monitoring secure administration of the tests
- Monitoring testing progress during the testing window and ensuring that all students participate, as appropriate
- Investigating and reporting all testing improprieties, irregularities, and breaches reported by the TEs and PRs
- Attending to any secure material according to SDDOE policies

Teacher and Proctor

A TE responsible for administering the South Dakota assessments must have the same qualifications as a PR. TEs and PRs must be certified educators. He or she also has the same test administration responsibilities as a PR. TEs can view student results when they are available. This role may be assigned to TEs who do not administer an assessment but need access to student results.

PRs are primarily responsible for administering the South Dakota assessments. The PR's role does not allow access to student results. The role is designed for PRs, such as technology staff, who administer tests but should not have access to student results.

TEs/PRs are responsible for the following:

- Completing South Dakota test administrator training
- Reviewing all state policy and test administration documents before administering any SDSA assessments

- Viewing student information before testing to ensure that a student receives the proper test with the appropriate supports and reporting any potential data errors to SCs and ACs, as appropriate
- Administering the SDSA
- Reporting all potential test security incidents to the SCs and AC in a manner consistent with SDDOE and district policies

1.2.2 Online Test Administration

Within South Dakota’s testing window, schools can set testing schedules, allowing students to test in intervals (e.g., multiple sessions) rather than in one long test period, minimizing the interruption of classroom instruction and using its facility efficiently. With online testing, schools do not need to handle test booklets and address the storage and security problems inherent in large shipments of materials to a school site.

SCs oversee all aspects of testing at their schools and serve as the main point of contact, while TEs and PRs administer the online assessments only. TEs and PRs are trained in the online testing requirements and the mechanics of starting, pausing, and ending a test session. Training materials for the test administration are provided online.

To start a test session, the TE or PR must first enter the TA Interface of the online testing system using his or her own computer. A session ID is generated when the test session is created. Students who are taking the assessment with the TE or PR must enter their State Student Identification Number (SSID), first name, and session ID into the Student Interface using computers provided by the school. The TE or PR then verifies that the students are taking the appropriate assessments with the appropriate accessibility feature(s); see Table 2 in Section 5.1.66, Non-Embedded Accommodations, for a list of universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations. Students can begin testing only after the TE or PR has confirmed the settings. The TE or PR then reads aloud the *Directions for Administration* in the SDSA TAM to the students and guides them through the login process.

Once an assessment has started, the student must answer the test item presented on a page before proceeding to the next page. Skipping items is not permitted. For the online test, students are allowed to scroll back to review and edit previously answered items, as long as these items are in the same test session and this session has not been paused for more than 20 minutes. Students may review and edit responses they have previously provided before submitting the assessment. During an active online test session, if a student reviews and changes the response to a previously answered item, then all items that follow to which the student already responded remain the same. If a student changes the answers, no new items are assigned. For example, a student pauses for 10 minutes after completing Item 10. After the pause, the student goes back to Item 5 and changes the answer. If the response update in Item 5 changes the item score from wrong to right, the student’s overall score will improve; however, there will be no change in Items 6–10.

The summative assessment can be started on one day and completed on another. The online assessment must be completed within 45 calendar days of the start date or the assessment opportunity will expire.

During a test session, TEs or PRs may pause the test for a student or group of students to take a break. It is up to the TEs or PRs to determine an appropriate stopping point; however, to ensure the integrity of test scores or testing, the online test session cannot be paused for more than 20 minutes. If that happens, the student must begin a new test session, which starts from where the student left off. Previous responses are no longer available for viewing or editing.

The TEs or PRs must remain in the room at all times during a test session in order to monitor student testing. Once the test session ends, the TEs or PRs must ensure that each student has successfully logged out of the system. Then the TEs or PRs must collect and send for secure shredding any handouts or scratch paper that students used during the assessment.

1.2.3 Paper-Pencil Test Administration

The paper-pencil versions of the SDSA are provided as an alternative test administration method for students who cannot access a computer or for students with blindness or visual impairments. In South Dakota, paper-pencil tests are offered in the standard, non-accommodated, large print, and braille formats.

On behalf of the students who need to take the paper-pencil test, the AC must order test materials via TIDE. Based on the paper-pencil orders submitted in TIDE, the testing contractor ships the appropriate test booklets and the paper-pencil TAM to the district.

After the student has completed the assessment, the TEs and PRs enter the student responses into the DEI and return the test booklets to the testing vendor. The tests submitted via the DEI are then scored.

1.2.4 Braille Test Administration

The science fixed-form braille test was available with the same test blueprint.

The braille interface is described here:

- The braille interface included a text-to-speech (TTS) component for science consistent with the read-aloud assessment accommodation. The Job Access with Speech (JAWS) screen-reading software provided by Freedom Scientific was an essential component that students used with the braille interface.
- Science items were presented to students in Unified English Braille (UEB) Contracted with Nemeth Braille Code.

Before administering the online summative assessments using the braille interface, TEs or PRs ensured that the technical requirements were met. These requirements applied to the student's computer, the TE's or PR's computer, and any supporting braille technologies used in conjunction with the braille interface.

2. TRAINING AND INFORMATION FOR TEST COORDINATORS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Assessment coordinators (ACs), district administrators (DAs), and school coordinators (SCs) oversee all aspects of testing at their schools and serve as the main points of contact, while teachers (TEs) and proctors (PRs) administer the online assessments. The online Test Administrator (TA) Certification Course, PowerPoint presentations, user guides, manuals, and regional trainings are used to train ACs and SCs in the online testing requirements and the mechanics of starting, pausing, and ending a test session. Training materials for the test administration are online at <https://sd.portal.cambiumast.com/resources>. ACs and SCs are responsible for training TEs and PRs.

2.1 ONLINE TRAINING

Multiple online training opportunities were offered to key staff.

2.1.1 TA Certification Course

CAI's online Test Administrator (TA) Certification Course was available as an optional course to any user in TIDE. This web-based course was about 30–45 minutes long and covered information on testing policies and steps for administering a test session in the online system. This interactive course required participants to actually start test sessions under different scenarios. Throughout the training and at the end of the course, participants were required to answer multiple-choice questions about the information provided.

2.1.2 Practice Site

Since fall 2021, a practice site was opened for TEs/PRs and students. TEs and PRs could practice administering assessments and starting and ending test sessions on the TA Training Site, and students could practice taking a short online assessment on the Student Practice and Training Site. The practice tests contained the same item types (stand-alone and clusters) students would encounter on the SDSA. The practice tests were designed to provide students and TEs with opportunities to quickly familiarize themselves with the software and navigational tools they would use for the SDSA.

A student could log in directly to the practice and training test site as a guest without a TA-generated test session ID, or the student could log in through a practice test session created by the TE or PR.

2.1.3 Manuals and User Guides

The following manuals and user guides were available on the South Dakota Gateway, <https://sd.portal.cambiumast.com>.

The *Assessment Viewing Application User Guide* provides an overview of how to access and use the Assessment Viewing Application (AVA). AVA allows TEs to view items on the science interim assessments.

The *Assistive Technology Manual* provides an overview of the embedded and non-embedded assistive technology tools that can be used to help students with specific accessibility needs complete online tests in the Test Delivery System (TDS). It includes lists of supported devices and applications for each type of assistive technology that students may need, as well as setup instructions for the assistive technologies that require additional configuration in order to work with the TDS.

The *Online, Summative, Test Administration Manual* provides information for PRs administering the South Dakota online summative assessments in English language arts/literacy (ELA/L), mathematics, and science. It includes screen captures and step-by-step instructions on how to administer the online tests.

The *Science Paper Pencil Test Administration Manual* provides information for PRs administering the South Dakota paper-pencil summative assessments in science.

The technology resource manuals contain technology requirements and instructions that assist technology coordinators in preparing computers and devices for online testing. A guide is created for each of the approved operating systems (Windows, Mac, iPad, Linux, Chrome OS).

The *Reporting System User Guide* provides information about the Reporting System including instructions for viewing score reports, accessing test management resources, creating and editing rosters, and searching for students for both interim and summative assessments.

The *Test Delivery System User Guide* is designed to help users navigate the TDS, including the Student Interface and the TA Interface, and to help TEs/PRs manage and administer online testing for students.

The *Test Information Distribution Engine User Guide* was designed to help users navigate TIDE. It provides information on managing user account information, student account information, student test settings and accommodations, appeals, and voice packs.

The *Tools, Supports, and Accommodations (TSA) Guidelines* provide information for school-level personnel and decision-making teams, particularly Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams, to use when selecting and administering universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations for students who need them.

All manuals and user guides pertaining to the 2024–2025 online assessments were available on the South Dakota Gateway, and ACs and SCs used the manuals and user guides to train TEs and PRs in test administration policies and procedures.

2.1.4 System Tutorials

The following presentations are offered to explain how the assessment system works. Each of these presentations lasts approximately 30 minutes. The slides are available on the South Dakota Gateway at <https://sd.portal.cambiumast.com/resources>.

Assessment Viewing Application (AVA). This application allows district- and school-level users to view the interim assessments for administrative or instructional purposes. The tutorial provides an overview of the AVA for the South Dakota interim assessments.

Reporting System. The reporting system enables district- and school-level users to hand score interim assessments or view their associated reports. The webinar provides an overview of the reporting for the South Dakota interim assessments. In addition, slide notes and an additional presentation are provided as resources.

Student Interface Overview. This tutorial provides an overview of the online Student Interface in the TDS.

Technology Requirements for Online Testing. This tutorial provides an overview of the technology requirements needed on all computers and devices used for online testing, information on secure browser installation, and voice packs for TTS.

Proctor Interface for Online Testing. This tutorial prepares ACs, SCs, TEs, and PRs for the assessments by providing an overview of the PR Interface and the TDS, including how to start and monitor a test session using the PR Interface.

Test Information Distribution Engine. This tutorial provides an overview of how to navigate the TIDE system, including how to register users, enroll students, manage and edit users/students, and process/view test invalidations.

Testing with Braille. This tutorial provides an overview of the information needed to administer an online braille test in the TDS. This also includes information about the specific hardware and software requirements needed to support online braille testing.

2.2 DISTRICT TEST COORDINATOR TRAINING WORKSHOPS

The SDDOE provided statewide virtual trainings available to all districts during the 2024–2025 school year.

3. TEST SECURITY

All test items, test materials, and student-level testing information are considered secure materials for all assessments. The importance of maintaining test security and the integrity of test items is stressed throughout the webinar trainings and in the user guides, modules, and manuals. Features in the testing system also protect test security. This section describes system security, student confidentiality, and policies on testing improprieties.

3.1 STUDENT-LEVEL TESTING CONFIDENTIALITY

All secure websites and software systems enforce role-based security models that protect individual privacy and confidentiality in a manner consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other federal laws. Secure transmission and password-protected access are basic features of the current system and ensure authorized data access. All aspects of the system—including item development and review, test delivery, and score reporting—are secured by password-protected logins. Our systems use role-based security models to ensure that users may access only the data to which they are entitled and may edit data only in accordance with their user rights.

There are three dimensions related to identifying that students are accessing appropriate test content:

1. *Test eligibility* refers to the assignment of a test to a particular student.
2. *Test accommodation* refers to the assignment of a test setting to specific students based on their need.
3. *Test session* refers to the authentication process of a teacher (TE)/proctor (PR) creating and managing a test session, the TE/PR reviewing and approving a test (and its settings) for every student, and the student signing on to take the test.

FERPA prohibits public disclosure of student information or test results. The following are examples of prohibited practices:

- Providing login information (username and password) to other authorized TIDE users or to unauthorized individuals
- Sending a student’s name and SSID number together in an email message (If information must be sent via email or fax, include only the SSID number, not the student’s name.)
- Having students log in and test under another student’s SSID number

Test materials and score reports should not be exposed to identify student names with test scores except by authorized individuals with an appropriate need to know.

All students, including homeschooled students, had to be enrolled or registered at their testing schools in order to take the online, paper-pencil, or braille assessments. Student enrollment information, including demographic data, was generated using a state file and uploaded nightly via a secured file transfer site to the Centralized Reporting System (CRS) during the testing period.

Students logged in to the online assessment using their legal first name, SSID number, and a test session ID. Only students could log in to an online test session. TEs/PRs, proctors, or other personnel were not permitted to log in to the system on behalf of students, although they were permitted to assist students who needed help logging in. For the paper-pencil versions of the assessments, TEs and PRs were required to affix the student label to the student’s answer document.

After a test session, only staff with the administrative roles of AC, DA, SC, or TE can view their students’ scores. PRs do not have access to student scores.

3.2 SYSTEM SECURITY

The objective of system security is to ensure that all data are protected and accessed appropriately by the correct user group. It is about protecting data and maintaining data and system integrity as intended, including ensuring that all personal information is secured, that transferred data (whether sent or received) are not altered in any way, that the data source is known, and that any service can be performed only by a specific, designated user.

A Hierarchy of Control. As described in Section 1.2, Test Options and Administrative Roles, SCs, PRs, and TEs have well-defined roles and access to the testing system. When the TIDE window opens, the SDDOE creates a verified list of ACs that is uploaded into TIDE. ACs are then

responsible for selecting and entering AC and SC information into TIDE, and SCs are responsible for entering PR and TE information into TIDE. Throughout the year, the ACs, DAs, and SCs are also expected to delete the information of any staff members in TIDE who have transferred, resigned, or no longer serve as educators in the designated school.

Password Protection. Access points for each system role—at the state, district, and school levels—require a password to log in to the system. Newly added users receive separate passwords through the email address assigned by the school.

Secure Browser. A key role of the SC is to ensure that the CAI Secure Browser is properly installed on the computers used for the administration of the online assessments. Developed by the testing contractor, the Secure Browser prevents students from accessing other computers or Internet applications and from copying test information. The Secure Browser suppresses access to commonly used browsers such as Internet Explorer and Firefox, and it prevents students from searching for answers on the Internet or communicating with other students through the school’s Internet connection. The assessments can be accessed only through the CAI Secure Browser and not by other Internet browsers.

3.3 SECURITY OF THE TESTING ENVIRONMENT

3.3.1 Duties of Testing Personnel

The ACs, SCs, TEs, and PRs work together to determine appropriate testing schedules based on the number of computers available, the number of students in each tested grade, and the average length of time needed to complete each assessment.

Testing personnel are reminded in the online training, face-to-face training, and user manuals that assessments should be administered in testing rooms that do not crowd students. Good lighting, ventilation, and freedom from noise and interruptions are important factors to consider when selecting testing rooms.

TEs and PRs must establish procedures to maintain a quiet environment during each test session, recognizing that some students may finish more quickly than others. When students are allowed to leave the testing room upon test completion, TEs or PRs must explain the procedures for leaving and where they are expected to report once they leave. Students must not disrupt others while leaving the testing environment. If students are expected to remain in the testing room until the end of the session, TEs or PRs are encouraged to prepare some quiet work for students to do after they finish the assessment. If a student needs to leave the room for a brief time during testing, the TEs or PRs are required to pause the student’s assessment. For the online test, if the pause lasts longer than 20 minutes, the student can continue with the rest of the assessment in a new test session, but the system will not allow the student to return to the items answered before the pause. This measure is implemented to prevent students from using the time outside of the testing room to look up answers.

3.3.2 Room Preparation

The room should be prepared prior to the start of the test session. Any information displayed on bulletin boards, chalkboards, or charts that students might use to help answer test questions should be removed or covered. This rule applies to rubrics, vocabulary charts, student work, posters,

graphs, content-area strategies charts, and other materials. The cell phones of both testing personnel and students must be turned off and stored in the testing room out of sight. TEs are encouraged to minimize access to the testing rooms by posting signs in halls and entrances in order to promote optimum testing conditions; they should also post “TESTING—DO NOT DISTURB” signs on the doors of testing rooms.

3.3.3 Seating Arrangements

TEs and PRs should provide adequate space between students’ seats. Students should be seated so that they will not be tempted to look at the answers of others. Because the online test is adaptive, it is unlikely that students will see the same test items as other students; however, through appropriate seating arrangements, students should be discouraged from communication with one another.

3.3.4 After the Test

At the end of the test session, TEs or PRs must walk through the classroom to pick up any scratch paper that students used and any papers that display students’ SSID numbers and names together. These materials should be securely shredded or stored in a locked area immediately.

For the paper-pencil versions, specific instructions on how to package and secure the test booklets to be returned to the testing contractor’s office are provided in the *Science Paper Pencil Test Administration Manual*.

3.4 TEST SECURITY VIOLATIONS

Anyone who administers or proctors a South Dakota assessment is responsible for understanding the assessment security procedures and prohibited practices. Prohibited practices, as detailed in the *Online, Summative Test Administration Manual*, fall into three groups:

1. **Impropropriety.** A test security incident that has a minor 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 (for example, students leaving the testing room without authorization).
2. **Irregularity.** A test security incident that affects an individual or group of students who are testing and may affect student performance on the test, test security, or test validity. These circumstances, such as a fire drill or other disruption, can be contained at the local level.
3. **Breach.** A test security incident that poses a threat to the validity of the test. Breaches require immediate attention and escalation to the SDDOE Office of Assessment. Examples include exposure of secure materials or a repeatable security/system risk. These circumstances have external implications (e.g., administrators modifying student answers, students sharing test items through social media).

District and school personnel must document all test security incidents in a test security incident log. Districts send the test security incident logs on an as-needed basis to the SDDOE Office of Assessment. This log is the document of record for all test security incidents and should be maintained at the district level and submitted to the SDDOE at the end of testing.

4. STUDENT PARTICIPATION

4.1 ELIGIBILITY

All students (including retained students) currently enrolled in grades 5, 8, and 11 at public schools in South Dakota must participate in the South Dakota assessments¹. Students are tested in the enrolled grade assessment, with the exception of grade 12 students. Out-of-grade-level testing is not allowed for the administration of the South Dakota summative assessments.

4.2 EXEMPT STUDENTS

Students who are hospitalized or homebound due to illness should be tested unless there are medical constraints that prevent them from testing and the student has received an approved medical exemption from participating in the SDSA.

5. ONLINE TESTING FEATURES AND TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

South Dakota’s *Tools, Supports, and Accommodations (TSA) Guidelines* are modified from the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium’s *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines*. TSA guidelines are intended for school-level personnel and decision-making teams, including Individualized Education Program (IEP) and Section 504 Plan teams, as they prepare for and implement the South Dakota assessments. TSA guidelines provide information for classroom teachers (TEs), English language development educators, special education TEs, and instructional assistants to use in selecting and administering universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations for students who need them. The TSA guidelines are intended for assessment staff and administrators who oversee decisions made in instruction and assessment.

The TSA guidelines apply to all students. These guidelines emphasize an individualized approach to the implementation of assessment practices for students who have diverse needs and participate in large-scale content assessments. The TSA guidelines focus on universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations for the South Dakota assessments. At the same time, they support important instructional decisions about accessibility and accommodations for students who participate in the South Dakota assessments.

The summative assessments contain universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations in both embedded and non-embedded versions. Embedded resources are part of the computer administration system, whereas non-embedded resources are provided outside that system.

State-level users, ACs, DAs, and SCs can set embedded and non-embedded designated supports and accommodations based on their specific user role. Designated supports and accommodations must be set in TIDE before starting a test session.

All embedded and non-embedded universal tools will be activated for all students to use during a test session. A TE or PR can deactivate SDDOE-approved universal tools in the testing system’s

¹ Some nonpublic schools may have administered the assessment but were not required to administer it if another assessment was given to their students.

Proctor (PR) Interface for a student who may be distracted by the ability to access a specific tool during a test session.

For additional information about the availability of designated supports and accommodations, refer to South Dakota’s TSA for complete information. This document is located at: <https://sd.portal.cambiumast.com/resource-item/en/tools-supports-and-accommodations-tsa-guidelines>.

5.1 ONLINE UNIVERSAL TOOLS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Universal tools are access features of an assessment that are embedded or non-embedded components of the test administration system. Universal tools are available to all students based on their preference and selection and have been pre-set in TIDE. In the 2024–2025 test administration, the following features of universal tools were available for *all* students to access. For specific information on how to access and use these features, refer to the *Test Delivery System User Guide* posted on the South Dakota Gateway. This document is located at: <https://sd.portal.cambiumast.com/resource-item/en/test-delivery-system-guide>.

5.1.1 Embedded Universal Tools

Breaks (pauses): The number of items per session can be flexibly defined based on students’ needs. Breaks of more than 20 minutes will prevent students from returning to items already attempted. There is no limit on the number of breaks that students might be provided. The use of this universal tool may result in students needing additional time to complete the assessment.

Desmos Calculator: The Desmos Calculator is available for all students taking the SDSA in grades 5, 8, and 11. Students may use a handheld calculator (per the calculator descriptions stated in this manual) as a non-embedded universal tool.

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.

Line Reader: The student uses an on-screen universal tool to assist in reading by raising and lowering the tool, allowing the student to focus on a single line of text on the screen.

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.

Periodic Table: Students may access an embedded periodic table when needed for an item.

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: Selected writing tools (i.e., bold, italic, bullets, undo/redo) are available for all student-generated responses.

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 changes only 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 TEs can set. The use of this universal tool may result in students needing additional time to complete the assessment.

5.1.2 Non-Embedded Universal Tools

Breaks: Breaks may be provided at predetermined intervals or after completion of sections of the assessment for students taking a paper-pencil test. Sometimes, students are allowed to take breaks when individually needed in order to reduce cognitive fatigue when they experience heavy assessment demands. The use of this universal tool may result in students needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

Scratch Paper/White Board with Marker: Scratch paper may be provided to make notes, write computations, or record responses.

Designated Supports and Accommodations. Designated supports for the SDSA are features that are available for use by any student for whom the need has been indicated by an educator (or team of educators with parent/guardian and student). Scores achieved by students using designated supports will be included for federal accountability purposes. It is recommended that a consistent process be used to determine these supports for individual students. All educators making these decisions should be trained on the process and should understand the range of designated supports available. SDDOE has identified digitally embedded and non-embedded designated supports for students for whom an adult or team has indicated a need for the support.

Accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that increase equitable access during the SDSA. Assessment accommodations generate valid assessment results for students who need them; they allow these students to show what they know and can do. Accommodations are available for students with documented Individual Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans. SDDOE-approved accommodations do not compromise the learning expectations, construct, grade-level standard, or intended outcome of the assessments.

5.1.3 Embedded Designated Supports

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 can 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 that the size and color of the mouse pointer be changed. A test administrator (TA) 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 (TDS) to be preset for the entire test. This designated support is generally most beneficial for students with visual disabilities.

Streamline: This accommodation provides a streamlined interface of the test in an alternate, simplified format in which the items are displayed below the stimuli.

Text-to-Speech: Students may have the text read aloud via embedded TTS technology. The student can control the speed, as well as raise or lower the volume of the voice via a volume control.

Spanish Presentation (Toggle): Spanish translations are a language support available for select Spanish-speaking students. The item is presented in Spanish, but there is a button students can select that will enable them 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 be used only for students who are proficient readers in Spanish but are not proficient in English.

Turn Off Any Universal Tools: The student may request that any universal tools that might be distracting, that the student does not need to use, or that the student is unable to use be disabled during testing.

Zoom: To increase the default print size of the entire test (from 5X to 20X default size), the print size must be set for the student in TIDE prior to the start of the test. Students preferring enlarged text, graphics, and 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.

5.1.4 Non-Embedded Designated Supports

Amplification: The student adjusts the volume control beyond the computer’s built-in settings using headphones or other non-embedded devices.

Color Contrast: Test content of online items may be printed with different colors (e.g., Print-on-Demand or paper/pencil assessment).

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 may also 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: The size of specific areas of the screen (e.g., text, formulas, tables, graphics, navigation buttons) may be adjusted by students who use assistive technology devices.

Magnification allows the student to increase the size to a level not supported by the Zoom universal tool. Students who are 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 students needing additional time to complete the assessment.

Medical Support: Students may have access to an electronic device for medical purposes (e.g., glucose monitor). The device may include a cell phone and should support the student only during testing.

Noise Buffer: Students may use ear muffs, 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 they regularly use them in the classroom. Students who use noise buffers will need headphones unless they are tested individually in a separate setting.

Periodic Table: Students may access paper copies of a periodic table when needed for an item.

Read-Aloud Stimuli and Items: Text is read aloud to students by a trained and qualified human reader who follows the *Summative, Online Test Administration Manual (TAM)*, security procedures, and *Read Aloud Guidelines*. All or portions of the content may be read aloud. Students who are struggling readers may need assistance gaining access to 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 to a group of students. Students should have the option of asking a reader to slow down or repeat text. The use of this support may result in one or more students needing additional time to complete the assessment, and they will need to be tested in a separate setting.

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 TE'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 in their home. A designated adult, employed by the school and trained in a manner consistent with the TAM, including security procedures, may act as test PR (TA) 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 who gain access to the read-aloud designated support or accommodation, scribe, or speech-to-text.

Simplified Test Directions: The test administrator simplifies or paraphrases the test directions found in the TAM according to the Simplified Test Directions guidelines.

5.1.5 Embedded Accommodations

Braille Type: Access to braille (UEB Contracted + Nemeth), in conjunction with other technologies, is available through the online TDS when the Permissive Mode is set to YES in the student’s test settings in TIDE. Technologies, such as refreshable braille devices or a braille embosser, are available on the SDSA for students who use them.

Permissive Mode: Students can use accessibility software, such as screen readers or magnifiers, during testing.

5.1.6 Non-Embedded Accommodations

Alternate Response Options: Alternate response options include, but are not limited to, adapted keyboards, large keyboards, Sticky Keys, Mouse Keys, 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 gain access to the SDSA. 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 (UEB Contracted + Nemeth). It is typically used by students who have visual disabilities. Contracted or non-contracted forms of braille may be selected.

Calculator: A non-embedded, stand-alone calculator for students needing a specialized calculator, such as a braille calculator or a talking calculator, currently unavailable within the assessment platform.

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.

Print-on-Demand: Paper copies of either passages/stimuli and/or items are printed for students. For students needing a paper copy of a passage or stimulus, permission for the students to request printing must first be set in TIDE. For students needing a paper copy of one or more items, SDDOE Assessment or the special education office must be notified to have the accommodation set for the student.

Scribe: The accommodation for the provision of a scribe requires the Special Accommodations Procedure. 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 students needing additional time to complete the assessment.

Table 2 presents a list of universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations that were offered in the 2024–2025 administration of the SDSA.

Table 2. 2024–2025 Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations

Universal Tools	Designated Supports	Accommodations
Embedded		
Breaks Desmos Calculator Digital Notepad Expandable Items/Stimuli Highlighter Keyboard Navigation Line Reader Mark a Question for Review Periodic Table Strikethrough Zoom	Color Contrast Masking Mouse Pointer (Size and Color) Print Size Online Spanish Presentation (Toggle) Streamline Text-to-Speech (TTS) Turn Off Any Universal Tools Zoom	Presentation/Language (Braille) Braille Type Permissive Mode
Non-Embedded		
Breaks Calculator Scratch Paper/White Board with Marker	Amplification Color Contrast Color Overlay Magnification Medical Support Noise Buffers Read-Aloud Stimuli and Items Separate Setting Simplified Test Directions	Alternate Response Options Braille Booklet Calculator Large Print Booklet Print-on-Demand ^a Scribe

^aWhile Print-on-Demand is a non-embedded accommodation, permission for students to request printing must first be set in TIDE.