

CTE END-OF-PROGRAM (EOP) ASSESSMENT ONLINE IT REQUIREMENTS

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

CTE EOP Assessments are administered using the online assessment system, E-SESS, through Pitsco Education. Please review the following technical specifications provided by Pitsco Education, the Career and Technical Education Consortium of States (CTECS) and the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) to ensure a smooth testing experience. District Assessment Coordinators (DAC), Building Assessment Coordinators (BAC) and Principals should communicate with Building and District Technology Coordinators to confirm all guidelines in this document are addressed.

Browser: The testing program is supported in Chrome, Edge, Firefox and Safari.

KDE Specific Browser Update:

- Firefox or Chrome are preferred on Mac OS. An issue has been reported with Safari in the past.
- Chrome is preferred on Windows.

Other browsers beyond what is listed above may work, but the specified browsers are the only versions actively tested and supported. We will try to help with any other browsers or older versions but offer no guarantees. Bandwidth may be an issue if it's not "dedicated." A school may have 5 T1s, but if they have 50 students in the library streaming videos, the entire pipe is going to be used. The bandwidth estimation of this requirement is based on 150-200 students simultaneously taking the assessment on a dedicated T1 and experiencing no delays.

Reporting: In some cases, in-browser reports are augmented with spreadsheets and/or PDF documents. Excel (or compatible) and a PDF reader (such as Acrobat Reader) are optional but not required.

Audio: Using the audio feature requires additional bandwidth; you may notice slower response times during testing. CTECS recommends using wired computer internet connections, if possible. Audio is played using HTML 5 technology.

Display Properties: The testing program is best viewed at 1024 x 768 display resolution or higher. It will work at 800 x 600.

Memory: There are no specific requirements for the CPU, RAM, etc. If the machine will run the browser, the E-SESS application will run.

Proxy Server Settings: Make sure that the proxy server will not cache Techfluency.org. Responses must be sent directly to the E-SESS server. Do not begin testing students until proxy server settings allow communication to flow to and from E-SESS. Otherwise, the students will finish the test and receive a 0 score.

Be sure to take the sample test (refer to next section) to test your devices and system. The timer (clock) should display correctly on the screen; if not, there is a problem, and students cannot test until it is resolved.

Sample Test: Access the sample test at each location before students begin testing. This ensures that there are no proxy servers preventing access to the site, no software packages preventing cookies/sessions from being stored, etc. The sample test may be accessed multiple times by individual users.

To access the sample CTE EOP Assessment test:

1. Go to www.techfluency.org/esess/
2. Make the following entries into the four blanks:

Sample

Organization: KYEOP

First Name: Sample

Last Name: Sample

Password: Sample

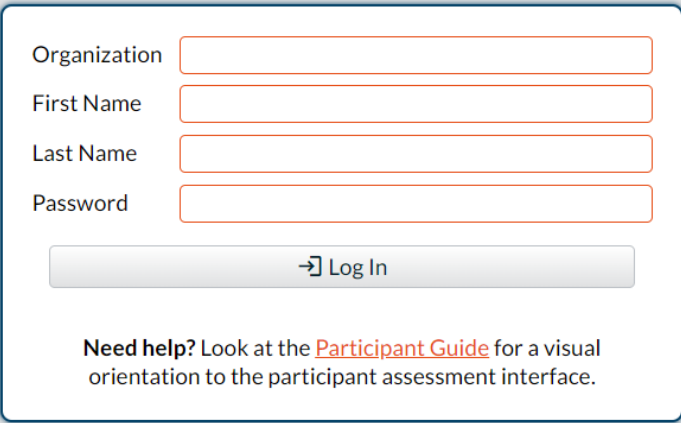
Sample with Accommodations (e.g., audio reader, extended time)

Organization: KYEOP

First Name: Audio Sample

Last Name: Audio Sample

Password: Audio Sample



The screenshot shows a login form with four input fields: Organization, First Name, Last Name, and Password. Below the fields is a button labeled "Log In" with a right-pointing arrow icon. At the bottom of the form, there is a note: "Need help? Look at the [Participant Guide](#) for a visual orientation to the participant assessment interface."

3. Click **Log In**.

4. Click **Continue**.

5. Click **Begin**.

NOTE: At least one graphic should be visible, and the timer should be visible and clearly readable throughout the test.

Firewalls and server settings: Ensure www.techfluency.org and any subdomains are not blocked.

The only exception will be images and audio (text-to-speech feature) used on the tests. The images are hosted on Amazon's S3 servers. Server name: media.techfluency.org

Add the Server name: "techfluency.org" to the permit lists on the firewalls, internet filters and proxies.

District Guidelines for Network Activity Moratorium During Online Testing:

The following is a list of recommended best practices for district technology personnel to have in place during scheduled online testing windows in their district.

The use of these recommendations will greatly improve the testing experience for the students and reduce or eliminate possible activities that could impede the online testing system. These guidelines apply to all online tests. They were specifically designed to focus on best practices and lessons learned from past testing sessions.

Most Importantly:

Communicate with the DAC or ATC Principal to make sure you have these guidelines in place to meet their scheduled tests.

During Testing Windows:

1. Disable wireless guest networks
2. If a district has routers within their LAN, establish QOS rules to prioritize access to testing sites
3. Whitelist testing sites "techfluency.org" (Proxy/Internet Filter)
4. Restrict or ban certain network activity during the testing window. This should include:
 - a. Video streaming (YouTube, Discovery, Netflix, Hulu, Hudi, etc.)
 - b. Audio streaming (Pandora, iHeartRadio, Slacker, etc.)
 - c. Large data moves or backup/restoration projects
 - d. Alterations to LAN network equipment
 - e. Removal or additions to network LAN
 - f. System updates (OS Updates, Patches, Software Updates, etc.). These should be rescheduled after the testing window.

- g. App updates or downloads. These should be scheduled for after the testing window.
- h. Video conferencing

IT TIPS AND SOLUTIONS

The students are using an online assessment tool called E-SESS. The website is www.techfluency.org. Below are some problems you might experience during online testing. Please check this list to the best of your abilities before proceeding. If this does not appear to be the problem, then escalate the problem appropriately.

If you must escalate the problem, please have the following information available:

- Browser name and version (e.g., Chrome, Edge, Firefox)
- What time did the problem begin, and if it is still currently going on.
- Is your lab running on wireless, or are the computers physically connected to the network?

If the students are having general connection issues, check the following:

- If possible, check the packet loss in the lab.
- Perform a traceroute to www.techfluency.org to see if the connection to E-SESS is OK and packet loss ("No Reply" or "Host Unreachable") is minimal.

Next, refer to the following troubleshooting steps:

1. The test will not load at all. The student clicks the Begin button, but the page never opens.
 - a. Check the firewall and/or proxy server to see if www.techfluency.org or any subdomains are blocked.
 - b. Close all open browser windows (even any minimized ones). Try again. It is possible for the test to already be open and minimized or for an open window to prevent the test from opening.
2. The student clicks Begin, and the page opens, but the assessment never appears.
 - a. Check the browser version. The assessment program is supported in Chrome, Edge, Firefox, and Safari.
 - **Firefox or Chrome are preferred on Mac OS.** An issue has been reported with Safari in the past.
 - **Chrome is preferred on Windows.**
 - b. Try closing the assessment and clicking Begin again.
 - c. Check for any specific errors showing up and contact CTECS with the exact error message.
3. "The students keep getting disconnected." The message on the screen should be something like "Please wait while your test is being loaded. The connection to the server has slowed or stopped..."

- a. A background request to E-SESS may have failed. This could be due to server packet loss on an overloaded network. When the student begins the assessment, it will download about 1+MB, but the typical transaction after that is less than 10K, so it doesn't require much bandwidth. You might also check to see if a firewall or proxy server is blocking communication with www.techfluency.org.
 - b. If the computer seems acceptable, try a connection speed test, such as <http://speedtest.net>. Run the test to see if the numbers are abnormally low. Check the browser to be sure that it is adequately responsive when changing to other sites, such as the local school website.
4. The test is going really slowly. Each question takes more than ten seconds to load.
- a. This is most likely the computer itself, *as all items are loaded in the background before the first item is presented*. Try moving the student to another available computer/device for testing.

CTE End-of-Program (EOP) Assessment /TRACK Pre-Apprenticeship Assessment - E-SESS Focus Lock Technical Preparations

In preparation for online testing in E-SESS for the CTE EOP Assessment and TRACK Pre-Apprenticeship Assessment, follow the guidelines and recommendations below when preparing your district's technology and devices for online testing.

The security feature Focus Lock has been added for integrity to the online testing experience. It detects when a test taker navigates away from the testing screen or clicks on a notification. Focus Lock violations may include attempting to access the Internet, access to applications or extensions that may offer corrections, information, or may interrupt the test with pop-up notifications and operating system features that could compromise the security of the test content. Proctors and students should be well-informed about how Focus Lock works.

Guidelines and Recommendations Testing Environment Preparations

- **Operating System Updates** – Make certain all operating systems are up to date but do not exceed the supported versions documented by the test delivery system. Avoid operating system updates during testing.
- **Disable Notifications (Do Not Disturb Settings)** – This includes anti-virus, email, text and messaging notifications or any application that may use pop-up notifications on the desktop screen. Disable these prior to the school testing window and restore them once the test windows close for each student to restore the functionality.
- **Disable Assistants (Siri/Cortana)** – Much like notifications, "assistants" can pop up and interrupt the test session, causing Focus-Lock to activate and shut down the test session. Disable Siri and Cortana prior to a test session and restore them once the test windows close for each student to restore the functionality.

- **Disable Extensions (i.e., Grammarly)** – Disable Chrome extensions; these can be on the Chrome and Edge Browsers in Windows and MacOS, as well as the Chrome operating system. Any extension that can bring up a prompt, like Grammarly, needs to be disabled to prevent activation of the Focus-Lock component, shutting down the test session.
- **Disable Microsoft Game Bar** – The Microsoft Game Bar has the capability to record the screen and can be operated in the background. This needs to be disabled prior to the test sessions to prevent security issues.
- **Best Practices: Networks**
 - a. **Wi-Fi** – Do not exceed the number of connections per Wireless Access Point. Also, if multiple access points are used, ensure that one does not become overloaded with most connections. Balance access to these network resources.
 - b. **Reduce Local Network and Internet activity during test windows.** For students who are not active during the test window, minimize or restrict local network and Internet access during the test window to reduce local network traffic and promote the most Internet bandwidth available for test sessions.
- **Run Sample Test** - This practice shows potential issues and allows students and test proctors to become familiar with the test delivery system.

[CTE EOP Online Sample Test](#)

Organization Name: KYEOP

First Name: Sample

Last Name: Sample

Password: Sample

[CTE EOP Online Sample Test \(with audio reader accommodation\)](#)

Organization Name: KYEOP

First Name: Audio Sample

Last Name: Audio Sample

Password: Audio Sample

Note: Make necessary audio adjustments before beginning the assessment or use keyboard shortcut Alt + F2 to decrease the audio volume and use keyboard shortcut Alt. + F3 to increase the audio volume.

- **Assistive Technology** – If assistive technology is required that could potentially violate Focus Lock, please contact E-SESS or Career and Technical Education Consortium of States (CTECS) technical support for assistance.

Focus Lock –Test Security Feature

Share this information with teachers, students, proctors and IT staff **BEFORE TESTING**. Proctors and students should be well-informed about how Focus Lock works. Refer to the following documents:

- [ESESS Guide to Using Focus Lock](#)

- CTE EOP Assessment Instructions (Script) in the [CTE End-of-Program \(CTE EOP\) Assessment Coordinator and Test Administrator Manuals](#)
- [CTE EOP Online IT Requirements](#)

Before the Test: Disable automatic updates, close unnecessary applications, and **turn off notifications** that might interfere with the testing window.

- Ensure "sleep on idle" settings are disabled during testing.
- Ensure students are instructed to only use the calculator in the testing platform, as opposed to another calculator application.

E-SESS Focus Lock Incident Response Policy

Students will see a warning before beginning the test. **If locked out, students should notify the proctor or test site administrator for assistance.** Proctors or test site administrators should contact technical support for the following scenarios:

- **Test Ended for Inadvertent Technical Issue:** When a student's account is locked out of the assessment in E-SESS due to Focus Lock, if the incident was an inadvertent technical issue (e.g., power outage, internet connectivity issue, other technical issue, or extenuating circumstance) the student may be granted a new attempt. Incidents and resulting decisions fall under the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE) and local LEA jurisdictions. Contact technical support for assistance; a new attempt may be required.
- **Test Ended for Malicious Focus Lock Violations:** For intentional attempts or an intent to cheat, the student would **NOT** be permitted to take the test again during the current school year. If the incident is reported to be an intentional violation, **NO** new attempt will be permitted. Any consequence beyond would be up to KDE-OCTE and local jurisdictions.

Technical Support

If you have any technical concerns prior to testing, please contact:

CTECS Testing Technical Support:

(available Monday – Friday 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM ET)

Tim Withee
 (404) 994-6535
twithee@cteecs.org

Robyn Marshall
 (404) 994-6534
rmarshall@cteecs.org

E-SESS Technical Support:

(available Monday – Friday 7:00 AM CT / 8:00 AM ET – 5:00 PM CT / 6:00 PM ET)

E-SESS Support

866-277-5061

esess@pitsco.com

Garrett Curran

866-277-5061

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