

OREGON STATE ASSESSMENTS

Parents' Frequently Asked Questions

What Subjects and Grades Are Tested?

Oregon has selected the Smarter Balanced assessment to measure student performance in math and English language arts in grades 3-8 and 11. Oregon has developed its own assessment to measure student performance in science at grades 5, 8, and 11.

Why Is It Important That My Child Participate in the State Tests?

The Smarter Balanced test measures how your child has progressed toward meeting the state standards in English language arts and math, and helps identify their strengths and weaknesses in these important subject areas. Siuslaw School District also uses state test results – along with students' attendance, behavior, and coursework – to plan for student success.

What Kind of Information Do the State Assessments Provide?

The results of the state tests act as a snapshot of your child's progress. The test results are among the data we use to identify where individual students are struggling, where they are excelling, and whether every student is achieving their learning goals. High school students who earn a Level 3 or 4 on the tests meet their essential skill requirements for an Oregon High School Diploma, and may also be able to forgo college placement testing and move directly into credit-bearing courses in college. Finally, the test results also provide a more complete and accurate picture of how all Siuslaw students are performing as we assess curriculum, review instructional strategies, distribute resources, and continue to improve our educational system.

How Are the Smarter Balanced Tests Different From the Old State Tests?

The Smarter Balanced test questions go beyond multiple-choice and allow students to explain their answers using short responses. They challenge students to think critically and apply their knowledge and skills to real-world problems. Additionally, the Smarter Balanced tests are aligned to Oregon's more rigorous state standards in order to measure what students know and are able to do at each grade level.

How Much Time is Taken With Testing?

The tests are not timed, so your child can take as long as they need to fully demonstrate what he or she knows and can do. Your child will only test once each year, unlike our previous tests which many students took multiple times.

Will These Scores Impact Student Promotion?

No student will be held back a grade or kept from graduating based on the results of the assessment alone. However, the state assessments at 11th grade are the primary way for students to demonstrate the essential skills in math, reading, and writing required to earn an Oregon High School Diploma. If a student does not participate in the state assessments at 11th grade or fails to demonstrate the essential skills through the assessment, additional alternative assessments will be made available for students to demonstrate essential skills in math, reading and writing so that they may earn their high school diploma.

What Can Parents or Guardians Do To Help Their Children?

Parents and Guardians should review the test results and work with teachers to identify their child's strengths and weaknesses, and develop strategies to improve performance. By working together, you can identify ways of supporting your child both in and outside the classroom.

Can I Opt My Child(ren) Out of State Tests?

You have the right to opt your child out of state Smarter Balanced tests in English language arts and math. However, as was mentioned above, the state assessments at 11th grade are the primary way for students to demonstrate the essential skills in math, reading, and writing required to earn an Oregon High School Diploma. To opt-out of the tests, you should complete the 2015-16 Opt-Out form (available on the school website) and submit it to the school office. Any student who has opted-out of a state test will be provided with supervised study time while other students are testing.