

Summary Key & Concepts

Parent Learning Session

How does Oregon ensure its assessments are fair?

Summary: This session helps parents understand how the Oregon Department of Education uses a rigorous and research-based assessment development, review, and refinement process to ensure that statewide standards-based assessments are fair and accessible to all students.

Key Concepts:

- 1. Academic standards define what is taught and assessed in Oregon classrooms and schools.**
 - *Common Core State Standards* – Language Arts and Mathematics: <http://www.corestandards.org>
 - *Next Generation Science Standards* – Science: <https://www.nextgenscience.org>
- 2. Assessment developers use a careful process to ensure *fairness* and *accessibility* for all students before they are used in testing circumstances that actually count:**
 - ***Test blueprints*** ensure that assessments are aligned with these standards and that they are given to students using standardized procedures
 - ***Standardization*** ensures that all students take the same assessment using the same procedures that is scored in the same manner. It allows assessment performance to be compared between individual students, groups of students, schools, districts, and sometimes states.
 - ***Universal Design*** ensures access to assessments for all students by developing questions that are *precise* (accurate and clear) and *free of bias* (no advantage or disadvantage to groups of students based on characteristics such as race, gender, socioeconomic status, or religion)
 - ***Reviews and Revision*** are completed by content experts, teachers, parents, and disability and language-learner advocates. These community partners review developed assessments and questions for alignment to standards, presence of bias, accessibility, and to guide revision.
 - ***Piloting and Field-testing*** “tests out” assessments and questions with actual students and uses sophisticated statistics to detect bias. Biased items are discarded or revised.
 - ***Accessibility Supports*** ensure students can show their knowledge and skills on assessments. Common examples include: having questions read aloud, providing translations, and including glossaries or other supports to help students access and use key vocabulary.
 - ***Accommodations*** are provided to students based on Individualized Education Programs (IEP) or Section 504 plans during assessment. Common examples include: extra time to complete assessments, taking assessments in multiple, shorter sessions, assessment content presented using physical assistance or adaptive technology to provide their response to certain types of questions. https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/assessment/Documents/accessibility_manual.pdf
 - ***The Oregon Equity Lens*** articulates Oregon’s goal of building an equitable educational system. The Oregon Department of Education sees statewide assessment as an important part of ensuring that all Oregon’s students experience excellent educational outcomes. Statewide assessments help gauge how effectively Oregon’s school system is preparing all students to graduate prepared for a productive future. Statewide assessments help ensure that all students are provided a consistent, high-quality education by: (1) maintaining high academic standards through a rigorous assessment system and (2) by ensuring that student performance is publicly reported. <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/equity/equityinitiatives>