

Oregon Extended Assessment Participation Reporting

District Justifications & Plans

SCHOOL YEAR 2025-26



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Executive Summary

In alignment with federal requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) collects annual justification information and participation plans from districts anticipating more than 1% participation in the Oregon Extended Assessments. For the 2025-26 school year, 87 districts submitted required documentation, including assurances, justification information, reflections on prior plans, and updated strategies to ensure appropriate assessment participation. All districts provided assurance that plans are in place to ensure that only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities participate in the ORExt and that any disproportionality in participation will be addressed.

Districts identified a range of contributing factors to their expectation of exceeding 1% participation, including instruction and access to curriculum and supports, participation patterns related to schools or programs, IEP team knowledge, small student populations, and the availability of specialized services. Reflections on prior-year plans indicated continued progress in staff training, use of state guidance, and data-informed decision making. Common challenges included staff turnover, competing priorities, and limitations in available assessment data. District feedback emphasized the value of ODE guidance and ongoing professional learning.

District participation plans for the 2025-26 school year focused on staff training, consistent use of ODE's [Alternate Assessment Decision Making Guidance](#), data review processes, and monitoring systems designed to support accurate eligibility decisions. Additional strategies included coaching, IEP review, collaboration across staff roles, and increased family engagement. ODE identified 49 districts with disproportionality in their participation data. In response, these districts submitted plans that commonly included data reviews, IEP audits, staff training, root cause analysis, and efforts to strengthen equitable decision-making practices.

This report provides a statewide overview of district practices, challenges, and planned actions related to Oregon Extended Assessment participation. It serves as both a transparency resource for public accountability and as a tool to support districts in refining their assessment practices to ensure that only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities participate in the Oregon Extended Assessments. Additionally, this report fulfills the federal requirement to make district justification information publicly available ([34 CFR § 200.6\(c\)\(3\)\(iv\)](#)).

Background

Oregon Extended Assessments

Federal law allows States to assess students with the most significant cognitive disabilities with an alternate assessment (34 CFR § 200.6(a)(2)(ii)(B)). This alternate assessment is based on alternate academic achievement standards that are aligned with the State's general academic content standards but have been reduced in breadth, depth, and complexity (34 CFR § 200.1(d)). Oregon's alternate assessment is called the Oregon Extended (ORExt) Assessments, and is available for English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. For more information, please visit the Oregon Department of Education's [Oregon Extended Assessment webpage](#).

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requirements

The federal law under ESSA requires States to monitor participation in alternate assessments. While the State cannot place a cap on the alternate assessment participation rates of local education agencies (LEAs) in any subject (34 CFR § 200.6(c)(3)(i)), the statewide participation rate cannot exceed 1% of the total number of students in the state who are assessed in any subject (34 CFR § 200.6(c)(2)). The law requires LEAs who plan to exceed 1% participation to submit information justifying the need to do so. The State must make this information publicly available and provide oversight of those LEAs (34 CFR § 200.6(c)(3)(ii-iii)).

States may request that the U.S. Secretary of Education waive the 1% state cap for the relevant subject for one year (34 CFR § 200.6(c)(4)). The request must include:

- Assurances that the State has verified that each LEA anticipated to exceed 1% participation will address any disproportionality in the percentage of students in any subgroup taking an alternate assessment (34 CFR § 200.6(c)(4)(iii)(B)).
- A plan and timeline describing how the State will take additional steps to support and provide appropriate oversight to each LEA expected to assess more than 1% of students in a given subject, ensuring that only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities take an alternate assessment. The State must describe how it will monitor and regularly evaluate each such LEA to ensure that the LEA provides sufficient training for school staff so that all students are appropriately assessed (34 CFR § 200.6(c)(4)(iv)(B)).

Oregon district reporting requirements

All districts must submit their projected Extended Assessment participation numbers and rates for each content area (English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science) by the first weekday

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on or after October 1 of each school year. Districts who expect to exceed 1% participation in the Extended Assessments in any content area must submit the following information to ODE by the first weekday on or following November 15 of each school year:

- Justification of the need to exceed 1% participation.
- A plan to ensure that only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are found eligible for, and participate in, the Extended Assessments.
- Assurances that the district will address any disproportionality in the percentage of students in any focal group taking the Extended Assessments.

The Oregon Department of Education provides disproportionality data annually to any district who anticipates exceeding 1% participation in the Extended Assessments. These data detail disproportionate Extended Assessment participation for students in the district, broken out by student focal groups. Districts must submit a description of how they intend to address disproportionality in the percentage of students in any identified focal group taking the Extended Assessments by the first weekday on or after November 15 of each school year. For more information, please see the [1% ORExt Participation Reporting Requirements for Oregon Districts](#) document.

Oregon Department of Education Oversight

General procedural oversight

Districts who do not project to exceed 1% participation will receive no additional oversight from ODE for the current year. If the district's projection proves inaccurate and it does exceed 1% participation, the district must submit justification information and a participation plan for the following year, regardless of whether they project to exceed 1% participation again.

Approval of justification information and participation plans

ODE staff review each district's justification information and participation plan (including disproportionality when required). ODE communicates to submitting district staff whether the district's submission is acceptable or needs additional revision. If additional revision is required, a new deadline will be set in collaboration with the district.

District monitoring

As part of ODE's General Supervision Framework under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Extended Assessment participation data is one of several factors included in each district's profile. While it is not a specific element in the cyclical monitoring risk assessment, it continues to help inform decisions about which districts are selected for focused monitoring. Additionally, decision making consistent with state guidance is monitored for compliance through *Priority Area 2: IEP Development* file reviews conducted by ODE during cyclical monitoring. For more information, visit ODE's [General Supervision webpage](#).

The remainder of this report includes:

- District-submitted justification factors for the 2025-26 school year.
- Summaries of narrative information provided by districts for justification factors.
- Summaries of district participation plans and disproportionality plans.

The following information is intended to provide a helpful narrative to gauge the landscape of Extended Assessment participation in the state of Oregon. Please reach out to Mason Rivers at ODE with questions related to 1% Extended Assessment participation reporting.

Mason Rivers, Ed.S., NCSP

Education Program Specialist 2

Office of Enhancing Student Opportunities

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mason.rivers@ode.oregon.gov

District Justification Information

Each district in Oregon that anticipated assessing more than 1% of their students using the Extended Assessments was required to complete the [1% ORExt Participation Reporting District Justification and Plan Submission Form](#). This form guides districts through the process of identifying and reporting district information related to exceeding 1% participation in the Extended Assessments in any content area.

The justification factors from which districts selected are outlined below, along with brief descriptions.

- Factor 1. Size of Student Population:** Districts with a small overall student population (less than 500 students) may be more likely to exceed 1% participation.
- Factor 2. Programs and Services:** Districts that include school, community, or health programs that draw large numbers of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities may be more likely to exceed 1% participation.
- Factor 3. Participation Rates Based on Assessment Content, Type of School, or Program:** Districts who have higher participation rates in a particular content area, school, grade level, or program may be more likely to exceed 1% participation.
- Factor 4. Instruction and Access to Curriculum and Supports:** District implementation of curriculum based on alternate academic achievement standards, adult supports such as providing accommodations and assistive technology, teacher knowledge of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and student access to additional programs such as Title I and Title III may impact a district's likelihood of exceeding 1% participation.
- Factor 5. IEP Team Knowledge:** The level to which district staff on IEP teams are aware of and follow ODE's [Alternate Assessment Decision Making Guidance](#) may impact a district's likelihood of exceeding 1% participation.
- Factor 6. Parent/Guardian IEP Knowledge:** The level to which parents/guardians are familiar with the IEP process and ODE's Alternate Assessment Decision Making Guidance may impact a district's likelihood of exceeding 1% participation.
- Factor 7. Other Factors:** Districts may have other factors contributing to their need to exceed 1% participation.

Districts selected applicable factors, then responded to relevant guiding questions for each factor. Consult [Appendix A](#) for a summary of form submission data.

District Reported Justification Factors

The table below includes the justification factors reported by each of the 87 districts that anticipated exceeding 1% participation in the Extended Assessments for the 25-26 school year.

Table 1.0 Justification factors reported by District

District	Justification Factors
Adrian SD 61	1, 4
Amity SD 4J*	1, 3, 4
Athena-Weston SD 29RJ	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
Baker SD 5J	5
Bandon SD 54	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Beaverton SD 48J	2, 3
Centennial SD 28J	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Central Curry SD 1*	1
Central Linn SD 552*	1
Central SD 13J	3, 4, 7
Clatskanie SD 6J	3, 4, 7
Colton SD 53	1, 4, 5, 6
Condon SD 25J	1, 4
Coos Bay SD 9	2, 3
Coquille SD 8*	4
Corvallis SD 509J	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Creswell SD 40	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Douglas County SD 4	2, 3
Dufur SD 29	1, 4, 5, 6
Eagle Point SD 9	2, 3, 5, 6
Elgin SD 23	1, 4
Enterprise SD 21	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Falls City SD 57*	1, 4, 5, 6, 7
Fern Ridge SD 28J	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Forest Grove SD 15	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Gaston SD 511J	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Gladstone SD 115*	1
Glendale SD 77	1, 3, 4

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District	Justification Factors
Glide SD 12	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
Grants Pass SD 7	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Harney County SD 3	4, 5, 7
Harrisburg SD 7J*	1
Hillsboro SD 1J	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Jefferson County SD 509J	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Jewell SD 8	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
John Day SD 3	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Klamath County SD	5, 7
Klamath Falls City Schools	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Knappa SD 4*	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Lake County SD 7	3, 4, 6
Lebanon Community SD 9	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Long Creek SD 17	1
Mapleton SD 32*	1
McKenzie SD 68	1, 7
Milton-Freewater Unified SD 7	2, 5, 6
Mitchell SD 55	3
Molalla River SD 35*	3
Morrow SD 1	3, 5, 7
Mt Angel SD 91	1, 4, 5, 6
Myrtle Point SD 41	1
Neah-Kah-Nie SD 56	1, 4
Nestucca Valley SD 101J	1, 2, 4, 5
North Bend SD 13	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
North Lake SD 14	1, 7
North Marion SD 15	3, 4, 7
North Wasco County SD 21	2, 3, 4
Oakland SD 1	1, 3, 4
Oregon Trail SD 46	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Paisley SD 11	1
Parkrose SD 3	2, 3, 4, 7

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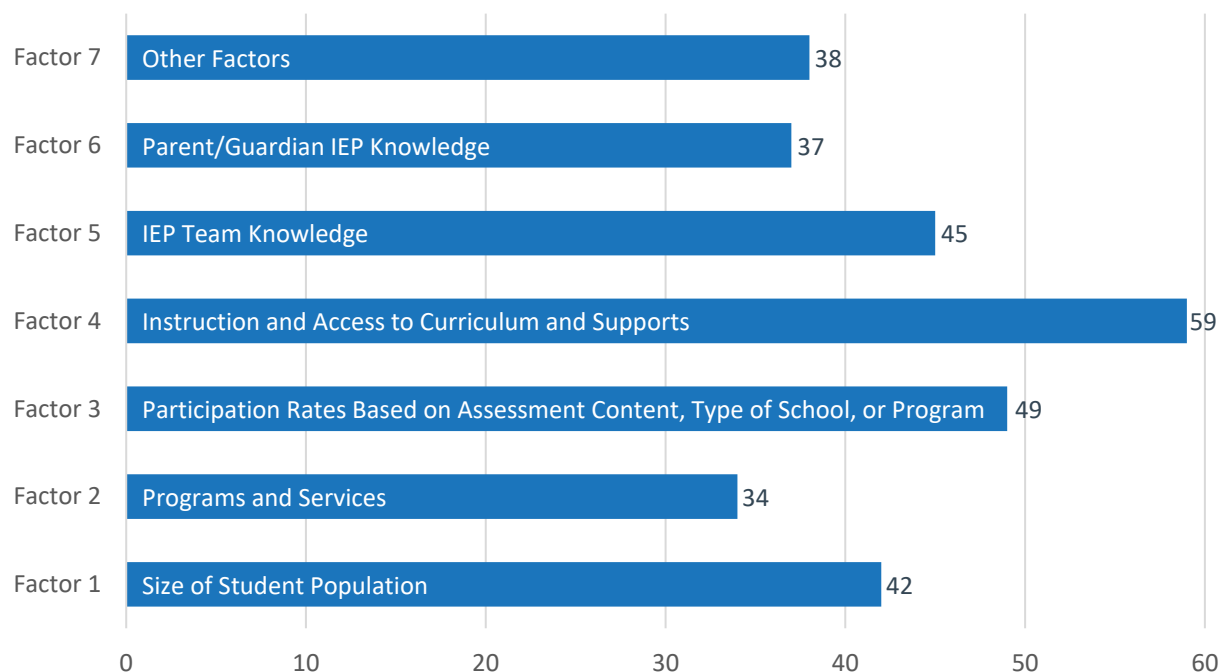
District	Justification Factors
Pendleton SD 16	2, 4, 7
Perrydale SD 21	3, 4
Phoenix-Talent SD 4	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Port Orford-Langlois SD 2CJ	1
Rainier SD 13	4
Reedsport SD 105	1, 3, 4, 7
Reynolds SD 7	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Salem-Keizer SD 24J	2, 5
Santiam Canyon SD 129J	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Seaside SD 10	4, 5, 6
Sheridan SD 48J*	1, 4, 5, 6
Sherman County SD	1, 4, 5
South Umpqua SD 19	1
South Wasco County SD 1	1
St Helens SD 502	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
St Paul SD 45	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Stanfield SD 61	1, 2
Sweet Home SD 55	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Tigard-Tualatin SD 23J	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Tillamook SD 9	4, 5, 7
Union SD 5	1, 2
Vale SD 84	1, 3
Vernonia SD 47J	3, 4, 5, 7
Warrenton-Hammond SD 30	2, 3, 4
West Linn-Wilsonville SD 3J	4, 5
Winston-Dillard SD 116	2, 3, 5, 6, 7
Yoncalla SD 32	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

*District did not project to exceed 1% participation but was required to submit information after exceeding 1% participation in the 2024-25 school year.

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The graph below represents the number of districts who indicated that each factor was applicable to their district justification to exceed 1% participation in the Extended Assessments.

Graph 2.0 Number of districts by justification factor



District Justification Guiding Questions

Districts were asked to reflect on guiding questions intended to support their analysis, evaluation, and improvement of district practices related to the identification and participation of students in the Extended Assessments. Districts were required to respond to at least one guiding question from each factor they determined applicable to their district. They were allowed to respond to all additional questions as they determined appropriate.

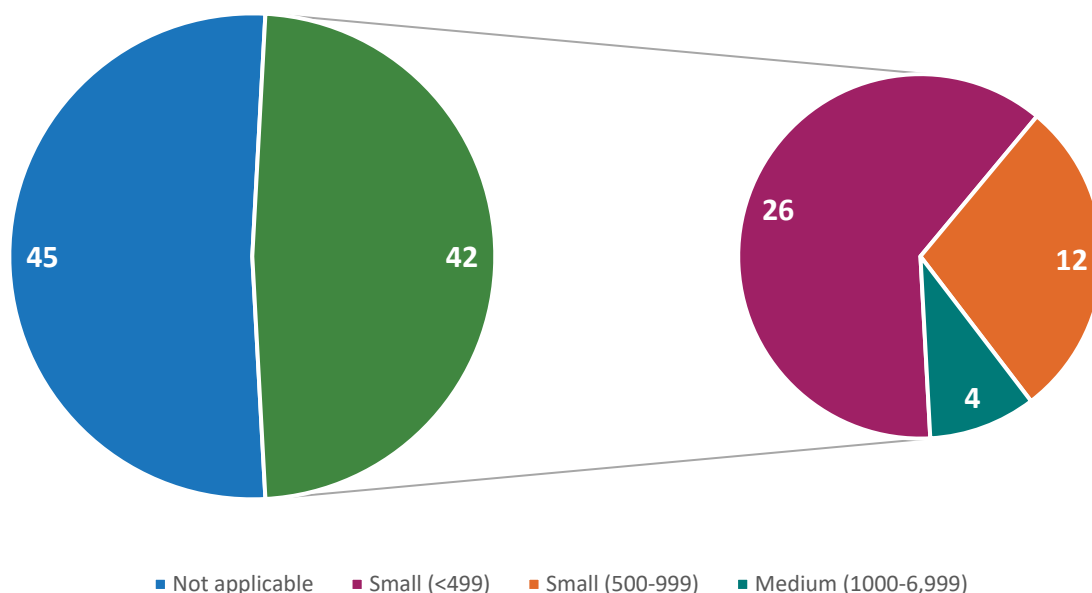
Factor 1. Size of Student Population

Forty-eight percent of reporting districts (42 of 87) identified the size of their student population as a contributing factor to why they expect to exceed 1% participation in the Extended Assessments for the 25-26 school year.

Does your district have a small (<499) overall student population that increases the likelihood of exceeding 1% participation in the ORExt?

Of those 42 districts, 38 are considered small size districts (1 – 999 students) and 4 are considered medium size districts (1,000 – 6,999 students). Of the 38 small districts, 26 have student enrollment of less than 499 students.

Graph 3.0 Factor 1 identification by enrollment size



District responses focused on how different student populations are considered when evaluating participation rates. Most districts included analysis of overall student enrollment, sometimes alongside their population of students in tested grades (3-8 and 11 for English language arts and mathematics, and 5, 8, and 11 for science). Many districts also compared the number of students participating in the Extended Assessments to these populations to illustrate how small group sizes can result in higher participation rates. In addition, districts examined their special education population as a percentage of total enrollment, to provide further context for participation patterns.

Across these responses, districts highlighted how small student populations can increase the likelihood that a small number of students eligible for the Extended Assessments will exceed the 1% threshold. This was most evident when considering testing populations and specific grade levels, where small changes in the number of participating students can result in noticeable differences in overall rates.

Factor 2. Programs and Services

Thirty-nine percent of reporting districts (34 of 87) identified programs and services as a contributing factor to their expectation of exceeding 1% participation in the Extended Assessments.

Does the district include school, community, or health programs that draw large numbers of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?

District responses reflected a consistent pattern: districts identifying this factor often described the presence of specialized services and supports for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities within their communities. These services most commonly included:

- District-operated classrooms and programs designed to serve students with the most significant cognitive disabilities
- Programs operated by Education Service Districts (ESDs) or county partners
- Community-based supports such as developmental disability services, medical providers, and therapeutic services
- Specialized foster care placements and group homes located within district boundaries

Districts also noted the availability of these services, and in some cases a strong reputation for special education programming, can influence where students and families choose to live or enroll in order to access needed supports.

Taken together, these patterns suggest that districts with more comprehensive or well-known services may serve a higher concentration of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. This increased concentration can contribute to a higher likelihood of exceeding the 1% participation threshold.

Factor 3. Participation Rates Based on Assessment Content, Types of School, or Program

Fifty-six percent of reporting districts (49 of 87) identified this factor as contributing to their need to exceed 1% participation in the Extended Assessments and considered it through a series of guiding questions examining participation rates across settings, schools, and content areas. The summaries below highlight common patterns in how districts responded to each question.

Are students in restrictive settings more likely to participate in the ORExt?

Across district responses, there was broad agreement that students in more restrictive settings are more likely to participate in the Extended Assessments. Districts commonly described how these settings are designed to meet the needs of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, with placement decisions reflecting the level of support required. Responses included descriptions of specialized classrooms or programs and how the services provided align with student needs. Many districts also referenced placement codes from student IEPs as part of their analysis. A small group of districts noted efforts to increase mainstreaming access,

which may result in a higher number of students from less restrictive environments participating in the Extended Assessments.

Are ORExt participation rates higher in one school compared to other schools with similar grade levels in the district?

Participation patterns across schools often reflected how specialized programs are organized within a district. Many districts reported higher participation rates at a specific school, most often due to the location of a specialized classroom or program serving students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. This results in a concentration of eligible students at that site. Districts included school-level participation data to support this explanation. When differences in rates could not be clearly connected to a program or placement decision, districts identified this as an area for further review.

Do participation rates differ in reading, mathematics, and science?

Responses to this question were largely consistent, with most districts indicating that participation rates do not differ across content areas. This aligns with expectations, given that eligibility criteria apply consistently across subjects. When differences were reported, districts generally attributed them to structural factors, such as smaller district size and the limited number of tested grade levels in science. Uneven distribution of eligible students across grades was also noted. In some cases, districts pointed to differences in opt-out policies for English language arts and mathematics compared to exemption processes for science as a contributing factor.

Have some students with disabilities previously participated in the general assessment in elementary school, but were placed on the ORExt when they transitioned to secondary school?

Districts generally reported stability in assessment participation over time, with students typically identified for the Extended Assessments in elementary school and continuing in subsequent grades. A smaller number of districts described the reverse pattern, where students transitioned from the Extended Assessments to the general assessment in later grades. Instances of students newly identified for the Extended Assessments in secondary school were uncommon in district responses.

District responses to these questions reflect a focus on understanding whether observed participation patterns can be explained by program structure, school organization, or student distribution. Differences that align with specialized program placement or district size were generally understood within the context of service delivery. When patterns could not be

explained by these factors, districts may identify them as areas for further review to ensure alignment with state guidance on appropriate participation in the Extended Assessments.

Factor 4. Instruction and Access to Curriculum and Supports

Sixty-eight percent of reporting districts (59 of 87) indicated that instruction and access to curriculum and supports contributed to their need to exceed 1% participation in the Extended Assessments. District responses to this factor reflected consideration of curriculum alignment, instructional supports, and staff capacity through a series of guiding questions. The summaries below highlight common patterns in those responses.

Are students who have been identified to take the ORExt participating in, and making progress with, curriculum that is aligned with the Alternate Academic Achievement Standards in all content areas? What is the alignment between the curriculum in which the students participate, and the standards that the ORExt measures?

District responses reflected a focus on alignment between curriculum, instruction, and student goals, as well as how progress is monitored. Common elements included:

- Alignment between instructional materials and the alternate academic achievement standards
- Connections between curriculum and IEP goals, along with progress monitoring practices
- Implementation supports such as staff training, collaborative planning, and professional learning communities (PLCs)
- Use of specific curricula designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities

Districts often emphasized ongoing review of student progress and alignment across content areas.

Do students who are identified to take the ORExt require adult supports, including assistive technology and accommodations necessary to enable them to participate in their education?

Districts consistently described the need for adult supports, along with systems for providing and monitoring those supports. Responses generally included:

- Descriptions of a range of student supports such as accommodations, assistive technology, communication systems, and adapted materials
- Monitoring processes through classroom observations, formative assessment, and IEP review cycles
- Supports for staff, including access to specialists, consultation, and professional development

Collaboration between educators, specialists, and families was also referenced as part of implementing these supports.

Do special education teachers have sufficient content knowledge to provide instruction aligned with the grade-level general education curriculum?

Responses focused on how districts support educator knowledge and instructional alignment. Most described ongoing professional development on topics such as standards-based instruction, progress monitoring, and adapting instructional materials. Districts also emphasized coaching, instructional support, and collaboration between general and special education staff through co-planning, consultation, and professional learning communities. Access to grade-level materials and instructional resources was noted, and some districts referenced educator licensure as one indicator of staff preparedness.

Do general and special education teachers receive training in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to develop instructional objectives, assignments, and assessments? Do they appropriately implement these principles?

Most districts reported providing training in UDL, while others identified this as an area for continued growth. Responses described training opportunities for general education, special education, and instructional assistant staff, as well as the role of collaboration in supporting implementation. Several districts also noted connections between UDL practices, instructional planning, and IEP development.

Do students with significant cognitive disabilities have access to all supports and services provided by the programs for which they qualify (e.g., Title I, Title III)?

All districts that responded indicated that students have access to supports and services for which they qualify. Districts described a range of service delivery models, including push-in and pull-out supports, small group instruction, consultation, and extended learning opportunities. They also referenced access to programs such as Title I and Title III, along with coordination across staff and departments to ensure services are implemented as intended.

District responses to the above questions highlighted a broad range of practices related to curriculum, instruction, and access to supports for students participating in the Extended Assessments. The guiding questions appear to prompt reflection on how these systems are implemented and aligned with student needs. While responses varied in depth, districts consistently emphasized alignment, access, and ongoing monitoring. Differences in how these systems are implemented may influence participation patterns, though these responses are primarily reflective of district practices rather than direct indicators of appropriate or inappropriate identification.

Factor 5. IEP Team Knowledge

Fifty-two percent of reporting districts (45 of 87) identified IEP team knowledge as a contributing factor to their expectation of exceeding 1% participation in the Extended Assessments. District responses to this factor centered on how teams are prepared to understand and apply eligibility guidance, and how districts monitor the consistency of decision making over time. The summaries below highlight common patterns across the guiding questions.

Do IEP team members need training to understand the state’s definition of students with significant cognitive disabilities and implement the ORExt eligibility guidelines established by the state for participation in the ORExt?

Districts most often described training already in place to support staff understanding of eligibility guidelines and the definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Training is typically provided to special education teachers and case managers, with support from district staff and regional partners. Districts also referenced the use of tools such as guidance documents, case examples, and decision-making checklists. In addition to formal training, districts described ongoing supports such as coaching, consultation, and use of procedural handbooks. Staff turnover was noted as a reason for revisiting this training on a regular basis.

Do relevant staff receive the same training to understand and implement eligibility guidelines?

Responses reflected a range of approaches to training across staff roles. Many districts reported extending training beyond special education staff to include administrators, general education teachers, and instructional assistants, and highlighted the importance of training new staff across roles. Others described a model in which trained case managers are responsible for ensuring that IEP team members are informed during the decision-making process. Districts also identified alternative ways of sharing information, including internal resources, coaching, consultation, and communication of assessment data.

Do school staff, who participate as members of IEP teams, make decisions about ORExt participation based on factors that should NOT be considered as stated in the ORExt eligibility guidelines?

Districts generally indicated that decisions are aligned with state guidance and not based on inappropriate factors. Some noted ongoing challenges, such as inconsistent application of eligibility across content areas, which does not align with guidance and has been identified as an area for continued training. Districts commonly described processes used to monitor

decision-making, including file review and IEP audits. Strategies to support alignment included use of decision-making tools, annual review of guidance, and structured supports during IEP meetings.

Do school staff, who are members of IEP teams, know how to develop standards-based IEPs for students with significant cognitive disabilities?

District responses emphasized the role of training and support in building staff capacity to develop standards-based IEPs. Districts described a range of approaches, including professional development, coaching, mentoring, and peer review processes. Many also noted conducting IEP reviews or audits to monitor quality and consistency. Access to resources and tools for writing standards-based goals was referenced as part of these efforts.

Do some students with significant cognitive disabilities repeatedly score proficient and advanced on the ORExt in one or more content areas? Have school staff who participate as members of IEP teams considered whether these students could participate in the general assessment with the necessary supports and accommodations?

Responses indicated that this consideration is typically part of the annual review process. Districts described using multiple data sources, including prior assessment results, to inform decisions. Some also noted utilizing district-level data review to identify students who may need to be reconsidered for participation. Parent opt-out was identified as a factor that can limit the availability of assessment data for decision making. Training and data analysis were commonly used to support these discussions.

Do school staff, who participate as members of IEP teams, select the ORExt because they are concerned that the general assessment will be too difficult or stressful for the student OR base assessment decisions on concerns about the impact of student scores on school and district accountability ratings?

Most districts emphasized that eligibility decisions are guided by state criteria rather than concerns about assessment difficulty, student stress, or accountability outcomes. While these concerns may be discussed during IEP meetings, they were not described as determining factors in decision-making. Some districts identified this as an area for continued attention and described strategies such as training, use of guidance tools, and IEP reviews to reinforce appropriate practices.

Do school staff, who participate as members of IEP teams, have high expectations for students with significant cognitive disabilities?

District responses described multiple ways that high expectations are demonstrated and supported in practice. These included development of IEP goals aligned to grade-level

standards, as well as instructional strategies designed to promote access and engagement. Districts also emphasized the role of inclusion in general education settings as a key support for maintaining high expectations, often paired with collaboration between general and special education staff. Professional development, coaching, and ongoing progress monitoring were noted as ways to reinforce and sustain these expectations over time.

Responses to this set of questions focused on the systems districts have in place to support consistent and appropriate decision making by IEP teams. These included training, access to guidance and tools, and processes for reviewing IEPs and eligibility decisions. The guiding questions appear to prompt districts to examine both how teams are prepared to make decisions and how those decisions are monitored over time. Districts that described more consistent structures for preparing IEP teams and monitoring decisions may be better positioned to demonstrate alignment with state guidance in eligibility determinations.

Factor 6. Parent/Guardian IEP Knowledge

Forty-three percent of reporting districts (37 of 87) identified parent or guardian IEP knowledge as a contributing factor to their expectation of exceeding 1% participation in the Extended Assessments. District responses focused on how information is shared with families and how parent understanding may influence assessment decision making.

Do parents/guardians of students with disabilities in the school need to better understand the State's eligibility guidelines for participation in the ORExt so they may provide meaningful input related to their student's participation decision?

District responses primarily described when and how information about eligibility and assessment decisions is shared with parents and guardians. Most districts indicated that this information is provided during annual IEP meetings, with additional communication through district websites and mailed materials. Information shared with families often includes topics such as eligibility guidelines, student progress, diploma options, credit acquisition, and post-secondary considerations. Districts also described strategies used to support understanding, including use of state-provided checklists and flowcharts during IEP meetings, review of IEPs for compliance, consultation with parent advisory groups, and use of standardized templates for communicating information.

Do some parents/guardians of students with disabilities request the ORExt because they are concerned that the general assessment will be too difficult or stressful for their student?

Districts indicated that concerns about assessment difficulty or student stress are sometimes raised by both parents and school staff. However, districts consistently noted that these concerns are not used as determining factors in eligibility decisions. Instead, districts described

approaches to addressing these concerns during the IEP process, including use of State guidance tools, discussion of appropriate accommodations and supports, and providing clear documentation of decision making. Some districts also noted that when concerns about stress or difficulty are significant, families may choose to opt students out of statewide assessments rather than request participation in the Extended Assessments.

District responses point to the importance of communication and shared understanding between schools and families in supporting assessment decision making. Providing clear and consistent information to parents/guardians, along with preparing school staff to address questions and concerns, may support IEP teams in making decisions that are aligned with state guidance.

Factor 7. Other Factors

Forty-four percent of reporting districts (38 of 87) identified additional factors contributing to their expectation to exceed 1% participation in the Extended Assessments.

Use the space below to explain any additional factors contributing to the district's need to exceed 1% participation on the ORExt. Please include any relevant district evidence and reflection.

While the vast majority of districts used this opportunity to reiterate factors already described in earlier sections, a small number of additional themes emerged. Some districts noted an increase in the number of students with low-incidence disabilities in recent years, which may contribute to higher participation rates. Others pointed to declining participation in the general assessment, particularly at the high school level, driven by both enrollment changes and parent opt-out. As participation in the general assessment decreases, the total number of students included in the calculation is reduced, which can result in a higher percentage of students participating in the Extended Assessments even when the number of participating students remains unchanged.

District Extended Assessment Participation Plans

Each district in Oregon that anticipated assessing more than 1% of their students using the Extended Assessments was required to complete the [1% ORExt Participation Reporting District Justification and Plan Submission Form](#). This form guides districts through the process of identifying and reporting district information related to exceeding 1% participation in the Extended Assessments in any content area.

After completing a suggested review of their data and reflecting on justification factors contributing to their need to exceed 1% participation in the Extended Assessments, each district was required to develop a plan to ensure that only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are found eligible for, and participate in, the ORExt. Districts were asked to provide assurance to ODE of this plan, and all 87 districts required to submit provided this assurance. Districts were provided with three optional prompts to reflect on their previous year plan, if applicable, and required to share the details of their plan with ODE. A summary of these reflection prompts as well as district Extended Assessment participation plans is outlined below.

Previous Plan Reflection

Districts were asked to reflect on three prompts related to the implementation of their prior year plan. These reflections focused on outcomes achieved, challenges encountered, and feedback received during implementation. Districts were also encouraged to use these insights to inform the development of their new plans. The summaries below highlight common patterns across district responses.

What specific measurable outcomes did we achieve, and which ones did we miss?

District responses reflected both completed actions and areas where work is still ongoing. The most commonly reported accomplishments included:

- Completion of staff training related to Extended Assessment decision making
- District-level data analysis to inform identification practices
- Mentorship and support for new staff

Additional reported successes included increased collaboration, greater use of State-provided resources, development of data tracking systems, and expanded supports for students, including within MTSS frameworks.

Areas identified as still in progress included addressing disproportionality, increasing communication with parents and families, and providing training related to Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and access for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Several districts also noted ongoing efforts to refine systems for tracking and analyzing longitudinal data.

What challenges or obstacles did we encounter, and how did we address them?

District responses showed strong alignment in identifying common challenges. Staffing was the most frequently cited concern, including turnover in special education roles, changes in district leadership, and the need to continuously onboard new staff. Districts also described:

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- Challenges in collaborating with external providers or partners, where districts may have limited influence over staff supporting students
- Time constraints and competing priorities that affect the ability to provide consistent training
- The need for follow-up training to ensure consistent implementation of district plans

A small number of districts noted that parent opt-outs impact their ability to fully implement or evaluate elements of their plans.

What feedback did we receive during implementation, and how can we use it to improve our approach?

Feedback reported by districts included both strengths and identified needs for improvement. Common themes included:

- Positive feedback indicating that current practices are aligned with state guidance and supporting appropriate decision making
- Recognition that State-provided guidance and tools are clear and useful

Areas for improvement included the need for more consistent communication and additional training for staff. Districts also noted the importance of timely access to data, as well as the impact of parent opt-outs on the availability of information used for decision making. Some districts shared ongoing concerns about the accessibility and difficulty of the general assessment for certain students with disabilities who do not qualify for the Extended Assessments.

Across reflections, districts described stronger progress in areas that are largely within district control, such as training, use of guidance materials, and internal review processes. More consistent challenges were reported in areas requiring coordination and collaboration, including staffing stability and engagement with families. Districts that have established regular systems for training, communication, and review appear better positioned to maintain continuity despite these challenges. Overall, feedback from districts reinforces the value of consistent use of State-developed resources to support aligned and informed decision making.

District ORExt Participation Plan Summary Analysis

All 87 districts required to submit justification information were also required to provide the details of their plan to ensure that only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are found eligible for, and participate in, the Extended Assessments. District plans reflected a range of strategies aimed at strengthening decision-making practices, improving alignment with state guidance, and supporting consistent implementation across IEP teams.

Training and Professional Development

The most common component of districts plans was the provision of training and professional development. Most districts described at least annual training focused on best practices for determining eligibility for the Extended Assessments, often referencing application of the State's [Alternate Assessment Decision Making Guidance](#). In addition to broad, district-wide training, many districts reported more targeted approaches, including support for new staff, educators working with students with significant cognitive disabilities, and staff in specific programs or schools where data indicated a need for additional support.

Districts also described professional learning on related topics, including:

- Data-based decision making
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and curricular differentiation
- Standards-based IEP development
- Implementation of specialized curricula and intensive interventions
- Alternate academic achievement standards
- Educating students in the least restrictive environment

Several districts also included ongoing coaching as part of their plans, particularly for staff responsible for leading or facilitating IEP team decision making.

Use of State Guidance and Decision-Making Tools

District plans reflected a continued emphasis on increasing the consistent use of state-provided guidance and tools. This included both staff training staff on these resources as well as embedding them into routine decision-making practices. Districts described using the guidance document, checklist, and flowchart during IEP meetings, often with both staff and families.

Some districts reported requiring IEP teams to complete the decision-making checklist annually for students participating in the Extended Assessments. These practices support documentation of decision making and reinforce alignment with state expectations.

Data Review, Monitoring, and System Development

Many districts described processes to review and monitor eligibility decisions and participation patterns. These included both individual-level and system-level approaches, such as:

- IEP reviews or audits of students participating in the Extended Assessments
- District-level analysis of participation data to identify patterns
- Development of tracking systems to support longitudinal data review

These practices were intended to verify alignment with state guidance and to inform continuous improvement efforts. Districts varied in their approach, with some focusing on

detailed review of individual student decisions and others using broader data trends to guide targeted supports.

Areas for Improvement and System Strengthening

In addition to planned actions, districts identified areas for continued growth. These commonly included:

- Strengthening special education identification practices overall
- Improving academic outcomes for students with significant cognitive disabilities
- Increasing communication and collaboration across roles and with families

Districts described efforts to improve collaboration between special education and general education staff, as well as with English Language Development staff. Increasing communication with families and raising awareness of Extended Assessment participation were also noted as priorities. Some districts identified the use of practice tests as a strategy to increase familiarity with the assessment and support more accurate decision making.

Across district plans, there is a clear focus on strengthening practices that are within district control, particularly training, use of guidance, and internal review processes. Approaches vary based on district size and context, with smaller districts often emphasizing individual IEP review and larger districts relying more on system-level data analysis to guide targeted supports. In addition, districts are working to improve broader IEP practices, including data collection, goals development, and instructional alignment for students with significant cognitive disabilities. These efforts reflect an ongoing emphasis on aligning instruction and assessment, while maintaining a balance between providing access and opportunity for students and identifying areas where practices may need further development.

District ORExt Disproportionality Plan Summary

Analysis

As part of the reporting process, all 87 districts who projected to exceed 1% participation in the Extended Assessments were required to submit assurance that they intend to address any disproportionality in their Extended Assessment participation. All 87 districts provided this assurance to ODE as part of their reporting. Districts identified by ODE as having disproportionate participation of specific student focal groups in the Extended Assessment were required to submit a description of how they plan to address this issue. ODE's annual analysis, based on three years of participation data, identified 49 districts as having disproportionality. District plans reflected a range of strategies aimed at improving the accuracy

of eligibility decisions, strengthening data use, and supporting equitable practices across systems.

Data Review and Use of Information

The most common focus of district plans was the review and use of data to better understand participation patterns. Districts described reviewing Extended Assessment participation data provided by ODE at least annually, and in some cases multiple times per year, often alongside additional district-level data. These reviews were not limited to participation rates, but also included other relevant information such as progress monitoring, assessment performance, and data related to student eligibility. This approach reflects a reliance on data as a starting point for identifying patterns and determining where additional attention or support may be needed.

Monitoring Systems and Ongoing Review

In addition to data analysis, many districts described establishing or refining monitoring systems to support ongoing review of eligibility decisions. These systems often included IEP audits, either for all students participating in the Extended Assessments or for a subset of students within identified focal groups. Districts also noted efforts to develop systems for reviewing data over time, allowing for longitudinal analysis of participation patterns across and within focal groups. These monitoring practices were intended to support consistency and provide regular opportunities to examine alignment with state guidance.

Staff Support, Training, and Coaching

Districts frequently identified staff support as a key component of their plans. This included training, professional development, and coaching focused on improving the accuracy of eligibility decisions.

Training and professional learning topics included:

- Application of state eligibility guidance and decision-making tools
- Reducing implicit bias in eligibility and assessment decisions
- Culturally responsive practices and inclusive instructional approaches
- Understanding the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students

In addition, districts noted the role of coaching, particularly from special education instructional coaches, in supporting staff with decision making and implementing equitable practices.

Improving Practices and Systems

District plans also emphasized improvements to broader practices that support decision making. These included increasing communication and collaboration, both within school systems and with families. Districts described efforts to strengthen communication about eligibility criteria and to increase awareness of disproportionality findings among staff to inform

more deliberate decision making. Collaboration was frequently cited, including partnerships between special education, general education, and English Language Development staff, as well as engagement with families.

Districts also identified several system-level improvements, including:

- Strengthening special education identification processes
- Improving IEP documentation, including clearer rationales for eligibility decisions
- Increasing use of state-provided tools such as the eligibility checklist

Additional Strategies and System Supports

Several additional approaches were noted across districts plans. These included conducting root cause analyses to better understand drivers of disproportionality, strengthening MTSS implementation to ensure inclusion of students with significant cognitive disabilities, and, in some cases, focusing on reducing overall Extended Assessment participation rates to better align with the 1% threshold. While varied in focus, these strategies reflect efforts to address disproportionality through broader system improvement and deeper analysis of contributing factors.

Across district plans, there is a consistent emphasis on using data to guide decision making and on supporting staff in applying eligibility guidance accurately. Districts are combining system-level analysis with targeted supports and improvements to practice in order to better understand and address disproportionality. These efforts reflect a focus on ensuring that participation in the Extended Assessments is based on accurate identification, even as districts work to examine and respond to patterns across student groups.

Appendix A: Summary data of form submission

This appendix provides the summary data from districts who were required to submit justification information as part of the 1% ORExt participation reporting requirements for Oregon districts.

District Assurances

For the 2025-26 school year, 87 districts were identified to submit justification information. Each district was asked to provide the following assurances.

1. District ORExt Participation Plan Assurance:

District assures the Oregon Department of Education that a plan is in place to ensure only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities take the ORExt Assessments.

All 87 districts required to submit, provided the District ORExt Participation Plan Assurance.

2. ORExt Participation Disproportionality District Assurance:

District assures the Oregon Department of Education that the district will address any disproportionality in the percentage of students in any focal group taking the ORExt. These focal groups include the race/ethnicity categories of American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Latina/o/x, Multi-racial, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and White as well as multilingual students with English learner status.

All 87 districts required to submit, provided the ORExt Participation Disproportionality District Assurance.

Justification Factors

The table below provides the number of districts who indicated that each factor was applicable to their district justification to exceed 1% participation in the Oregon Extended Assessments.

Table A.0 Number of districts by justification factor

Justification Factor	Districts
Factor 1. Size of Student Population	42
Factor 2. Programs and Services	34
Factor 3. Participation Rates Based on Assessment Content, Type of School or Program	49

Justification Factor	Districts
Factor 4. Instruction and Access to Curriculum and Supports	59
Factor 5. IEP Team Knowledge	45
Factor 6. Parent/Guardian IEP Knowledge	37
Factor 7. Other Factors	38

Guiding Questions

Each justification factor provided guiding questions and possible information sources. Districts were required to provide their evidence and reflection on at least one guiding question for each justification factor they marked as applicable for their district. However, districts were not prohibited from providing evidence and reflection on any question, regardless of applicability. The tables below provide a summary of the number of districts who responded to each guiding question. Guiding question tables are organized by associated justification factor.

Table A.1 Number of respondents to factor 1 guiding questions

Guiding Question	Respondents
1. Does your district have a small (<499) overall student population that increases the likelihood of exceeding 1% participation in the ORExt?	46

Table A.2 Number of respondents to factor 2 guiding questions

Guiding Question	Respondents
1. Does the district include school, community, or health programs that draw large numbers of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?	41

Table A.3 Number of respondents to factor 3 guiding questions

Guiding Question	Respondents
1. Are students in restrictive settings more likely to participate in the ORExt?	56
2. Are ORExt participation rates higher in one school compared to other schools with similar grade levels in the district?	56
3. Do participation rates differ in reading, mathematics, and science?	57
4. Have some students with disabilities previously participated in the general assessment in elementary school, but were placed on the ORExt when they transitioned to secondary school?	56

Table A.4 Number of respondents to factor 4 guiding questions

Guiding Question	Respondents
1. Are students who have been identified to take the ORExt participating in, and making progress with, curriculum that is aligned with the Alternate Academic Achievement Standards in all content areas? What is the alignment between the curriculum in which the students participate, and the standards that the ORExt measures?	63
2. Do students who are identified to take the ORExt require adult supports, including assistive technology and accommodations necessary to enable them to participate in their education?	65
3. Do special education teachers have sufficient content knowledge to provide instruction aligned with the grade-level general education curriculum?	64
4. Do general and special education teachers receive training in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to develop instructional objectives, assignments, and assessments? Do they appropriately implement these principles?	63
5. Do students with significant cognitive disabilities have access to all supports and services provided by the programs for which they qualify (e.g., Title I, Title III)?	64

Table A.5 Number of respondents to factor 5 guiding questions

Guiding Question	Respondents
1. Do IEP team members need training to understand the state's definition of students with significant cognitive disabilities and implement the ORExt eligibility guidelines established by the state for participation in the ORExt?	59
2. Do relevant staff receive the same training to understand and implement ORExt eligibility guidelines?	58
3. Do school staff, who participate as members of IEP teams, make decisions about ORExt participation based on factors that should NOT be considered as stated in the ORExt eligibility guidelines?	57
4. Do school staff, who are members of IEP teams, know how to develop standards-based IEPs for students with significant cognitive disabilities?	58
5. Do some students with significant cognitive disabilities repeatedly score proficient and advanced on the ORExt in one or more content areas? Have school staff who participate as members of IEP teams considered whether these students could participate in the general assessment with the necessary supports and accommodations?	56

Guiding Question	Respondents
6. Do school staff, who participate as members of IEP teams, select the ORExt because they are concerned that the general assessment will be too difficult or stressful for the student OR base assessment decisions on concerns about the impact of student scores on school and district accountability ratings?	59
7. Do school staff, who participate as members of IEP teams, have high expectations for students with significant cognitive disabilities?	58

Table A.6 Number of respondents to factor 6 guiding questions

Guiding Question	Respondents
1. Do parents/guardians of students with disabilities in the school need to better understand the state's eligibility guidelines for participation in the ORExt so they may provide meaningful input related to their student's participation decision?	46
2. Do some parents/guardians of students with disabilities request the ORExt because they are concerned that the general assessment will be too difficult or stressful for their student?	46

Table A.7 Number of respondents to factor 7 guiding questions

Guiding Question	Respondents
1. Use the space below to explain any additional factors contributing to the district's need to exceed 1% participation on the ORExt.	47

District ORExt Participation Plan

Each district had the opportunity to respond to three reflection prompts in relation to their previous year's extended assessment participation plan. They were also required to provide the details of their participation plan for the current year. The tables below provide the prompts along with the number of districts that responded to each.

Table A.8 Number of respondents to previous plan reflection prompts

Reflection Prompt	Respondents
1. What specific measurable outcomes did we achieve, and which ones did we miss? Reflect on the original goals of the plan. Determine which were accomplished, which were not, and why. This will help identify both successes and areas for improvement.	50
2. What challenges or obstacles did we encounter, and how did we address them?	51

Reflection Prompt	Respondents
Discuss any difficulties faced during the execution of the plan and the solutions implemented. Consider whether different strategies could have been more effective and what could be done differently in the future.	
3. What feedback did we receive during implementation, and how can we use it to improve our approach? Review the feedback from teams, educators, families, and other participants in the plan. Identify recurring themes and suggestions for improvement. Consider how to incorporate this feedback into the plan moving forward to better meet the needs and expectations of all involved.	51

Table A.9 Number of respondents to District ORExt Participation Plan

Developing a Successful Plan Prompt	Respondents
A successful plan to ensure that only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are found eligible for, and participate in, the ORExt will include: - Actions associated with each justification factor identified in section 2 for why ORExt participation will exceed 1%, - Baseline data for each factor, - Progress indicators for each factor, - Measurable outcomes with an associated timeline, and - Reflections and improvements learned from implementing any previous plans.	87

District Plan to Address Disproportionality

Districts with identified disproportionality in their ORExt participation data were required to provide the details of their plan to address disproportionality. ODE's analysis identified 49 districts who were required to respond to this section of the form. The table below provides the prompt along with the number of districts that responded.

Table A.10 Number of respondents to District Plan to Address Disproportionality

Disproportionality Prompt	Respondents
Submit a description of how the district intends to address disproportionality in the percentage of students in any identified focal group taking the ORExt, based on the data provided by ODE and any supplemental data to which the district may have access.	52