

# Oregon Extended Assessment Decision Making Guidance

## **Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities**

Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are typically characterized by significantly below average general cognitive functioning. This commonly includes a student with intelligence test scores two or more standard deviations below the mean on a standardized individually administered intelligence test, occurring with commensurate deficits in adaptive behavior that are frequently also evident in early childhood. Further, the cognitive disability must significantly impact the child's educational performance and ability to generalize learning from one setting to another. Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in general, require highly specialized education and/or social, psychological, and medical services to access an educational program. These students may also rely on adults for personal care and have medical conditions that require physical/verbal supports, and assistive technology devices. These intensive and on-going supports and services are typically provided directly by educators and are delivered across all educational settings.

Starting 9/2015, Oregon Individual Education Plan (IEP) teams will be required to select the Oregon's Extended Assessment as the *only* option for all subject areas assessed. Students who participate in Oregon's Extended Assessment **will not** participate in Oregon's general assessments. This reflects a significant change from previous policy which permitted a student to participate in either test or both. This change in criteria is intended to take into account the pervasive nature of a *significant* cognitive disability and allows the state's assessment models to appropriately measure the student populations they were designed to measure.

## **Unacceptable Considerations**

The following are **unacceptable** reasons for considering participation in Oregon's Extended Assessment:

1. Disability category or label
2. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment
3. Expected difficulties meeting the essential skills requirements through the state's general assessment
4. Poor attendance or extended absences
5. Native language/social/cultural or economic difference
6. English Language Learner (ELL) status
7. Percent of time served in special education
8. Low reading level or achievement level
9. Anticipated disruptive behavior during testing
10. Impact of student's scores on district's/school's accountability results
11. Administrator decision
12. Anticipated emotional duress/anxiety around or during testing
13. Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/AAC) to participate in assessment process

**Eligibility and Participation Criteria**

To assist in decision making, IEP teams may use the Oregon Extended Assessment Decision Making Checklist to determine whether or not a student should participate in the Oregon Extended Assessment.

**Oregon Extended Assessment Decision Making Checklist**

This checklist is ***not*** a required document. It is to be a tool that can be used to assist IEP teams in making individual decisions regarding participation in the Oregon’s Extended Assessment. Extended Assessment participation can only be determined by the student’s IEP team. **The IEP team for a student with a disability MUST answer “YES” to ALL of the following questions for the student to be eligible to participate in Oregon’s Extended Assessment.**

Students Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA</b>		
<b>1. Student has been evaluated, found eligible under IDEA, and has an IEP.</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student has an identified disability under IDEA.</li> <li style="text-align: center;">AND</li> <li>• The student has an Individualized Education Plan.</li> </ul>		
<b>2. The student demonstrates significant cognitive disabilities with commensurate delayed adaptive skills.</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student has been determined to have cognitive abilities falling within the most significant cognitive disability range as evidenced by standardized assessments.</li> <li style="text-align: center;">OR</li> <li>• The student has been determined to have significant cognitive disabilities based on the level of on-going supports needed for the student to access his or her educational program and difficulty generalizing learning from one setting to another.</li> <li style="text-align: center;">AND</li> <li>• The student demonstrates adaptive skills that are substantially limited compared to same age peers and skills are commensurate with the student’s cognitive ability.</li> </ul>		
<b>3. The significant cognitive disability impacts the student’s access to the general education curriculum and requires individualized instruction.</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student requires a highly specialized educational program with intensive and on-going supports, modifications, accommodations and/or adaptations to allow access to the general education curriculum.</li> <li style="text-align: center;">AND/OR</li> <li>• The student consistently requires individualized instruction in core academic and functional life skills at a substantially low level relative to other peers with disabilities.</li> <li style="text-align: center;">AND/OR</li> <li>• The student requires alternate methods or significant supports to communicate.</li> </ul>		
<b>4. The significant cognitive disability impacts the student’s post-school outcomes.</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student’s post-secondary outcomes will likely require supported or assisted living and continued supervision and support into adulthood provided through adult service providers such as Oregon Department of Disability Services (ODDS) and/or Vocational Rehabilitation (VR).</li> </ul>		
<b>5. Additional factors considered for the student.</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student’s inability to participate in the state’s general assessment is primarily the result of the significant cognitive disability and <b><u>NOT</u></b> excessive absences; other disabilities; or social, cultural, language or economic differences.</li> </ul>		

## Oregon Extended Assessment Decision Making Checklist Guidance

The following guidance is provided to assist IEP teams in determining eligibility for participation in the Extended Assessment when using the checklist. It is important to remember that the team must determine that the student meets all of the criteria included in the checklist for the student to be considered for the Oregon's Extended Assessment.

### 1. The student has been evaluated and found eligible under the IDEA.

Only students who have been identified under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are eligible to participate in the Oregon Extended Assessment. The IEP team for a student must make an individualized decision regarding the student's participation in the Extended Assessment. Students who only have a medical diagnosis or are found eligible for a 504 plan are **NOT** eligible to participate in the Oregon Extended Assessment.

If the IEP team determines that the student will take the Extended Assessment, then the IEP must include a statement of why the student cannot participate in the general assessment and why the Extended Assessment has been selected and is appropriate for the student.

### 2. The student demonstrates significant cognitive disabilities with commensurate delayed adaptive skills.

Intelligence refers to general mental capability and involves the ability to reason, plan, solve problems, think abstractly, comprehend complex ideas, learn quickly, and learn from experience. Studies show that somewhere between 1% and 3% of Americans have an intellectual disability. There are many causes of intellectual disability--factors may include but are not limited to physical, genetic, and/or social causes.

The most significant cognitive disabilities can be evidenced by (a) standardized assessment results, (b) the intensity and pervasiveness of needed supports, and (c) significant difficulty generalizing learning from one setting to another. In addition to demonstrating significant cognitive disabilities, the student must also demonstrate significantly limited adaptive skills relative to same-age peers and commensurate with the student's cognitive ability.

Although an IQ score is not the sole criterion to determine participation in the Oregon Extended Assessment, it is expected that students taking the Extended Assessment score significantly lower than their same age peers on standardized tests of ability, or that these students may not be capable of achieving a valid score on a standardized cognitive measure. It is strongly recommended that IEP teams refer to the test manual of individual cognitive assessments for guidance on what would be considered significant cognitive disability for a particular test.

If the results from a standardized cognitive assessment instrument cannot be used with a student, documentation must be provided and reviewed that demonstrates the student requires intensive and on-going levels of support across multiple settings (e.g., home, school, community). This information must come from multiple sources and should include both skills the student can perform as well as those the student has difficulty performing. This documentation needs to include specific information for the following: communication; self-care; daily living skills; social skills; community access; self-direction; health and safety; functional academics; leisure and work.

In addition to the above criteria, the student also **must** demonstrate significant delays in adaptive skills as measured by a standardized measure of adaptive ability.

**3. The significant cognitive disability impacts the student's access to the general education curriculum and requires individualized instruction.**

The student requires intensive supports in the school setting as evidenced by the level of individualized instruction and adult supervision and assistance provided throughout the school day. The student is taught using a substantially modified curriculum that may consist of functional life skills such as pre-academics, communication, self-care, daily living skills, and social skills. Subsequently, the student may obtain information primarily through methods other than reading due to limited reading skill and may use alternative methods to express or share oral or written ideas and information with others.

**4. The significant cognitive disability impacts the student's post-school outcomes.**

The student's post-secondary outcomes for independent living likely will require supported or assisted living and may involve a guardian when the student turns 18. The student will require continued supervision and support into adulthood provided through an adult service agency in order to access the community for recreation, employment, and daily living. The student's post-secondary outcomes for employment will likely result in individualized supports provided by adult agencies for success in accessing competitive integrated employment.

**5. Additional factors considered for the student.**

To be eligible to participate in Oregon's Extended Assessment the student's difficulties in the general educational setting **CANNOT** be primarily the result of excessive absences; mild disability, social or cultural differences; or economic disadvantages or differences.

To be eligible to participate in Oregon's Extended Assessment the student's difficulties in the general educational setting must be directly related to the impact of the student's cognitive disability and limited adaptive skills.

**6. Parent Notification Requirements.**

State (or in the case of a district-wide assessment, an LEA) must ensure that parents of students selected to be assessed using an alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards under the State's guidelines in paragraph (c)(1) of this section are informed, consistent with 34 CFR 200.2(e), that their child's achievement will be measured based on alternate academic achievement standards, and of how participation in such assessments may delay or otherwise affect the student from completing the requirements for a regular high school diploma.

*Section 300.160 (e) of IDEA*

Beginning in grade five or beginning after a documented history has been established and then annually, school districts and public charter schools are required to provide annually, information to the parents or guardians of a student taking an alternate assessment who has the documented history, about the availability of a Modified Diploma, Extended Diploma, and Alternative Certificate and the requirements for each of these options.

*OAR 581-022-2010(4)(d), OAR 581-022-2015(7)(b), OAR 581-022-2020(5)(b)*

Federal regulations at CFR 300.160(2)(e) require that parents must be informed about the consequences of having their child assessed against alternate academic achievement standards, particularly as it relates to potential limitations on diploma options for graduation. As part of the eligibility determination process, IEP teams should review all Oregon diploma options and discuss potential limitations of any option other than a standard diploma, as elaborated in the graduation options [Frequently Asked Questions 2015](#) document. Pursuant to CFR 300.160(2), participation in the ORExt does not prohibit a student from attempting to complete the requirements for a standard high school diploma; however, participation in an alternate assessment denotes a substantial reduction in terms of access to the full depth, breadth, and complexity of Oregon's grade level content standards during instruction and may limit a student's access to credit-bearing coursework required for a standard diploma."

**Oregon Extended Assessment Decision Making Flow Chart: DRAFT**

