



# WHY STATE TESTING PARTICIPATION MATTERS TO POLICYMAKERS

## How Does Taking State Tests Help Students and Their Families in Oregon?

- It helps families and community members understand how local schools are supporting the educational needs of all students in learning English language arts (ELA), math, and science standards.
- It measures students' progress toward completing high school and success after high school, such as attending college and being ready for a career.
- It measures and provides actionable information to educational leaders about student learning within the ELA, math, and Science standards and proficiency expectations.

## How Does Taking State Tests Help Districts and Schools?

- It supports the development of equitable policies and practices, and distribution of resources.

## FAQs about State Tests

### Are all students required to participate in state tests?

The Every Student Succeeds Act **requires** the participation of all students in the required grades in state tests (with exceptions detailed in [ORS 329.479](#) and [OAR 581-021-0009](#)).

For students with disabilities, test participation is also required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

### Are state tests accessible for all students?

Most students take the general state test. Some need accommodations to access the test, and a few with the most significant cognitive disabilities take an alternate assessment.

- It reveals performance differences across different student groups in Oregon and supports programs to address those students' educational needs.

## How Can I Support Educators, Students and Families in Oregon?

- State test results are designed to be reliable at the student group level, not at the individual student level. Evaluation of individual students, access to student opportunities (such as accelerated course pathways, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or Talented and Gifted programs) should be based on **multiple sources of evidence**.
- Reinforce that **the quality of a school is more than the sum of its test results in a few key subjects**. Labeling or judging districts or schools solely by performance in state testing encourages decision-making that perpetuates inequities.
- Encourage use of state test results in conversations about student learning. These conversations should be asset-based and build from strengths.

State tests measure student progress in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. They should be interpreted in combination with other sources of evidence, such as SEED Survey results, interim assessment results, teacher feedback, report cards, and attendance.

**State tests are part of a comprehensive education system.** Oregon's balanced assessment system provides additional resources to support teaching and learning during the school day and through the year.

## CONTACT



[ODE's Assessment Team Webpage](#)

Please send any questions, comments, or recommendations to:

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