

Practice Brief: Leveraging Oregon’s Local Performance Assessment Requirement for Student Agency and Growth



Did you know?

Oregon is one of only a few states that requires performance assessments be administered locally each academic year. [OAR 581-022-0615](#), one of the “Division 22” assurances, states: “School districts and public charter schools . . . shall administer local performance assessments for students in grade 3 through 8 and once in high school.” These local performance assessments (or LPAs) must be administered in the areas of **writing, speaking, math problem-solving, and scientific inquiry**, and may be optionally administered in **social science analysis**.

Why do performance-based assessments matter?

Performance-based assessments offer several benefits to students, which include:

- Increased engagement and choice.
- Tasks of higher cognitive demand (DOK).
- Eliciting large amounts of evidence of student thinking, often in multiple formats.
- Promotion of high-quality feedback.
- Authentic ways for students to interact with both content and practice standards.
- Opportunities for multiple revisions and “honing the craft.”

Despite these benefits, administering LPAs can often feel, in practice, like pausing the flow of classroom teaching and learning to tick a box. This Practice Brief clarifies the intent of Oregon’s LPA requirement and offers some practical ways to use LPAs to enrich student learning.

What is a Local Performance Assessment (LPA)?

The definition given in Section 1(c) of OAR 581-022-0615 gives three key components: “‘Local performance assessment’ means a standardized measure (e.g., activity, exercise, problem, or work sample scored using an official state scoring guide), embedded in the school districts’ and public charter schools’ curriculum that evaluates the application of students’ knowledge and skills.” LPAs must be **(1) a standardized measure, (2) embedded in curriculum, and (3) evaluate the application of students’ knowledge and skills**.

The example of “standardized measure” given in Section 1(c) is elaborated in Section 2, which states that “. . . the assessments shall consist of:

- a. One work sample per grade scored using official state scoring guides; or
- b. **Comparable measures adopted by the district**” (emphasis added).

While districts and public charter schools may use the official state scoring guides as their standardized measure, they may alternatively use district-adopted resources. This includes instructional materials that meet Oregon’s criteria for high quality. Performance-based activities, tasks, or assessments included in district-adopted high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) meet the definition of an LPA in OAR 581-022-0615. When implemented as intended, the performance-based tasks included in district-adopted HQIM are embedded within a district’s curriculum. Educators should ensure these performance-based tasks allow students to apply their knowledge and skills.

What are common sources of LPAs?

- **District-adopted HQIM.** Performance-based tasks from instructional materials that meet the Performance Assessment criteria in the IMET meet the LPA definition.
- **OSAS Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs).** In ELA and Math, any IAB designated “Performance Task” meets the LPA definition. In Science, any IAB designated as a “cluster task” meets the LPA definition. Explore the OSAS IABs for [ELA & Math](#) and [Science](#).
- **Smarter Balanced Sample Items.** Similarly, any ELA or Math sample item designated as a “Performance Task” meets the LPA definition. Browse [sample items](#).
- **District-created assessment tasks.** Districts may develop performance-based tasks that can be scored with either Oregon’s official state scoring guides or one adopted locally (e.g., a general rubric included within district-adopted HQIM).
- **ODE Local Performance Assessment webpage.** These tasks are designed to be scored with Oregon’s official state scoring guides. Many of these tasks provide examples of scored student work and other administration resources. Browse the collection [here](#).

Note that while these additional sources meet the definition of an LPA, districts and public charter schools must ensure they are administered as a standardized measure and embedded within curriculum to meet the LPA requirement.

What else can be done with LPAs?

Outside the requirements of the rule, LPAs hold the potential to humanize student assessment. One of the hallmarks of the formative assessment process is eliciting evidence of student thinking. LPAs typically require students to produce academic language, either orally or in writing, that give educators access to rich evidence beyond selected response or short answer test items. This evidence lends itself to high-quality feedback, both from educators and from peers ([FARROP](#), 2022).



LPAs can also integrate content in ways that break through traditional silos. A student could, for example, complete a single performance-based task that fulfills both the writing and scientific inquiry requirements. Such tasks open the door to more authentic learning experiences. **A single LPA administered in multiple content areas must be scored in both content areas.** In this example, the LPA would need to be scored with both a writing and scientific inquiry scoring guide.

While performance-based tasks may take longer to evaluate than other forms of assessment, the process of collaborative scoring is often invaluable professional learning for teams of educators. Seeing themes emerge in evidence of student thinking often stretches instructional practice and opens opportunities for other forms of collaboration.

Finally, the product of many performance-based tasks can be revised for improvement based on feedback. This increases the learning potential of the task while also building persistence and perseverance among students. In the end, students can take pride in the evolution of their learning as well as the emergent final product.

Please reach out to the [ODE Assessment Team](#) for more information or with questions.