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Colt Gill

Director of the Oregon Department of Education

Impact of COVID-19 on ELPA Assessments

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The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) is providing this communication to update our education and community partners around our English language proficiency assessment system. Information about COVID-19 and the state's response is evolving quite rapidly and was recently impacted by the announcement that Oregon's public schools would be closed through the end of March. The Assessment Team at ODE is committed to providing important information about statewide assessment as quickly and as accurately as possible.

[COVID-19 and Statewide Assessment & Accountability Expectations](#) were posted to ODE's [COVID-19 page](#) on March 12, and circumstances have continued to evolve since then. The United States Department of Education (ED) [has also signaled](#) that they understand the extraordinary circumstances that COVID-19 has caused for states and districts. The Fact Sheet from ED emphasizes the importance of student participation in statewide assessments, while acknowledging that there are likely to be changes to accountability and related reporting requirements.

Further statewide communications regarding assessments and accountability will be published as the situation evolves. It remains possible that ODE will consider applying for an accountability waiver to ED within [Section 8401](#) on behalf of our districts.

Q: Will the ELPA test window be extended?

A: Yes. While ODE cannot confirm the exact dates of the window extension at this time, the Assessment Team is collaborating with colleagues in Title III and Accountability to consider and plan for all possible impacts of a window extension on score reporting, accountability, data collections, etc. We will make every effort to keep the window open as long as is needed in order to allow for all students who are English learners to demonstrate their English language proficiency.

There are no changes planned at this time for the ELA, Math, and Science test window, which runs Jan 7 to June 5, 2020.

Q: Will the deadline be extended for ELPA tests in danger of expiration?

A: Yes. ODE will extend the expiration deadline for all ELPA Summative tests open as of March 13, 2020. This extension will coincide with the end of the extended test window. In other words, all open ELPA Summative tests, as well as all ELPA tests opened for the balance of the testing window, will remain open until submitted or until the extended window expires, whichever comes first.

Q: Will the expiration deadline be extended for open ELA, Math, and Science tests?

A: Yes. We will add 15 days to the expiration deadline for ELA, Math, and Science tests open as of March 13, 2020 to compensate for lost testing time. This will make the effective test window for those students 60 calendar days instead of 45. ODE will revisit this decision as necessary.

Q: How do we meet federal screening deadlines during this extended period absence?

A: The intent of the federal 10-day window for screening is to make sure the student receives services that are their civil right within a reasonable period of time. ED signaled that they understand the extraordinary nature of these circumstances and that states and districts may not be able to abide by usual time frames in such areas. You can find more detail in this [Fact Sheet](#). Districts should continue good faith efforts to screen students as possible, documenting cases where students are not able to be screened in the federally-recommended window due to interference related to COVID-19.

Q: If the testing window is extended, how will that affect reporting deadlines and other data collections?

A: ELPA testing and score reporting is a complex process that touches many areas. At this date we have not yet worked through all the potential impacts of a window extension, but will collaborate with colleagues in Title III and Accountability in order to communicate a coherent and accurate plan. In subsequent communications, we will detail expected impacts of the ELPA Summative window extension on accountability, reporting, data collections, and related systems. We are also mindful that districts typically need the results from the ELPA Summative early in June in order to help inform programmatic decisions for the 2020-21 school year.

Please contact [Ben Wolcott](#), English Language Proficiency Assessment Specialist, or [Dan Farley](#), Director of Assessment, if you have any questions or concerns.