OREGON’S NEW SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS

WHAT ARE THEY? WHY ARE WE USING THEM?
WHAT DO THEY MEAN FOR MY STUDENT?
WORDS TO KNOW: STANDARDS, CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT

**Standards**
- Tell us **WHAT** students need to know and be able to do
- State sets academic standards that apply to all students and schools

**Assessment**
- How to **MEASURE** students’ learning progress based on standards
- Includes assessment *for* learning and assessment *of* learning
- State and federal law set certain assessment requirements

**Curriculum**
- **HOW** teachers teach students what they need to learn
- Materials and methods used to teach standards
- Local districts, schools, teachers decide
STATE STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS: WHAT HAS CHANGED?

Common Core State Standards
- Oregon’s state learning standards for grades K–12
- Math, language arts (reading and writing), literacy standards across all subjects
- Oregon adopted in 2010, replaced previous standards

Smarter Balanced Assessments
- Oregon’s state tests of language arts and math
- Completed in grades 3–8 and 11
- Oregon implementing in 2015, replacing previous OAKS tests
STATE STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS: OREGON’S BAR HAS BEEN SET TOO LOW

What it takes to pass Oregon tests is among the lowest in the nation

4th grade math
STATE STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS: OREGON’S BAR HAS BEEN SET TOO LOW

What it takes to pass Oregon tests is among the lowest in the nation

4th grade reading
STATE STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS: WHY DID OREGON CHANGE?

- Improve college and career readiness
- New standards = new tests
- More meaningful information on student learning
- Next generation assessment
Thousands of teachers helped develop the tests, including more than 500 teachers from Oregon.

Largest field test of a new assessment in U.S. history:
- 4.2 million U.S. students participated
- 24,000 Oregon students participated
SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS: WHAT INFORMATION IS PROVIDED?

Valuable information on student learning

- More detailed results, including subscales — old OAKS provided only total score
- More precise diagnostic information for teachers and schools
- More meaningful info for students and parents about students’ learning progress
- More accurate reflection of whether student is on track for next school level, graduation, college and careers
For students in grades 3–8: No-stakes test

- Assessment results provide information for students, parents, teachers, schools and districts
- Scores have no consequences for students’ grades, credits, or advancement to the next grade
- Not used to determine grade or course placement
For high school students: Graduation requirements

- No consequences for students’ grades, credits, advancement
- Does have impact on meeting graduation requirements
  - Since 2012, Oregon students must demonstrate proficiency in essential skills of reading, writing and math to earn a diploma
  - Most students meet requirement through state tests
  - Alternatives are other standardized tests or work samples
  - Graduation requirement has not gotten harder; required score has been matched to difficulty level in old OAKS tests
- More information in high school breakout session
SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS: WHAT IMPACT DO THEY HAVE?

For schools & districts: School ratings

- State accountability system
  - Oregon assigns accountability rating (1–5) to each school
  - Rating is based on state test scores and participation + graduation
  - Rating is lowered 1, 2 or 3 points if any group participates < 94.5%
  - Schools that receive low ratings face multiple consequences

- Federal requirement
  - No Child Left Behind Act requires state tests for students
  - States must report participation and results in accountability systems
INCREASING RIGOR: EXPECTED CHANGE IN OREGON SCORES

- New test is more rigorous, more accurate measure of learning
- Many students not at higher “proficiency” level yet
- This is normal and expected
- State predicts no impact on the number of students who meet graduation requirements (bar for graduation stays the same)
Other states have increased rigor of tests in the past.

Students and teachers make progress over time in meeting higher expectations.

Example: Massachusetts increased test rigor in 1998. Trend in the student proficiency rate for the 10th grade Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) shown at right:
SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS: TIMING & CALENDAR

How long?

- Each test is spread out over multiple sessions / days
- Total time for each of the two tests = about 3 ½ hours
  - Some students will finish faster
  - Some will take longer and can have as much time as they need
- New tests take a little longer because they include writing, open response questions and tasks, not just multiple choice
- Students take each test only once, not multiple times as with old OAKS tests
When?

- 4J elementary schools: Early April to early June
- 4J middle schools: Late April to mid-May
- 4J high schools: Late April to mid-May
SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS: SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- Smarter Balanced assessments include support for students who are learning English or have special needs.
- Teachers determine what tools students may need.
- Supports are documented in the student’s IEP or 504 plan.
- Supports include tools such as:
  - scratch pad
  - Braille
  - closed captioning
  - text-to-speech feature
  - translated glossary for English language learners
SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS: SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Universal Tools

Designated Supports

Accommodations

**Embedded**
- Color Contrast
- Masking
- Text-to-speech
- Translated Test Directions
- Translations (Glossary)
- Translations (Stacked)
- Turn off Any Universal Tools

**Non-embedded**
- Bilingual Dictionary
- Closed Captioning
- Text-to-speech

**Embedded**
- American Sign Language
- Braille
- Digital Notepad
- English Dictionary
- English Glossary
- Expandable Passages
- Global Notes
- Highlighter
- Keyboard Navigation
- Math Tools
- Spell Check
- Strikethrough
- Writing Tools
- Zoom

**Non-embedded**
- Abacus
- Alternate Response Options
- Calculator
- Multiplication Table
- Print on Demand
- Read Aloud
- Scribe
- Speech-to-text
Oregon allows exemptions from state testing for two reasons:
- Student’s sincerely held religious belief (not political/personal views)
- Student’s disability that cannot otherwise be accommodated

Process for exemption
- Parent completes 4J request form and submits to district
- District responds in writing
- Parent may appeal
- Alternative learning activity if exemption approved
OREGON STATE TESTS: HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY CHILDREN TO DO THEIR BEST?

- **Ready body, ready mind:** Make sure your children are rested and have had enough to eat on test days.

- **Positive attitude:** Emphasize your belief in them and encourage them to do their best.

- **Pressure off:** State tests provide one piece of information; score has no consequences for your child except in 11th grade.

- **Practice:** Trying out a practice test can make it more familiar and comfortable: [sbac.portal.airast.org/practice-test](http://sbac.portal.airast.org/practice-test)

- **Communicate:** Concerned about your child’s preparedness for testing? Talk with teacher or principal.
SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS:

Everyone more informed:

- Parents will have more information about their students’ progress
- Teachers will be able to target instruction based on results
- Schools and districts will be able to design programs
- Students will be able to demonstrate what they know and can do
- Student progress toward readiness for the next level is evaluated
- Aligned with formative and interim assessments available throughout year, creates a consistent system of support for student learning
- This is new to all of us and we will learn, adjust and improve over time
NEW STATE STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS: WHERE TO LEARN MORE

- www.4j.lane.edu/commoncore
- www.ode.state.or.us/go/commoncore
- www.ode.state.or.us/go/smarterbalanced
- www.corestandards.org
- www.smarterbalanced.org
WHAT WILL THE NEW TESTS BE LIKE?

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

• ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: ______
• MIDDLE SCHOOL: ______
• HIGH SCHOOL: ______