

# 2020-21 Oregon Assessment and Accountability Strategic Waiver Request Executive Summary



The Oregon Department of Education plans to apply for a strategic statewide assessment and accountability waiver to the United States Department of Education for the 2020-21 school year. We are requesting input from our education and community partners regarding the request. Please submit comments to [WaiverFeedback@ode.state.or.us](mailto:WaiverFeedback@ode.state.or.us), between the dates of December 1 - 15, 2020.

## Overview

Summative tests are used to evaluate learning at the conclusion of a defined instructional period. Summative tests can be powerful tools to identify which parts of Oregon’s education system are working well, and where there are opportunities for improvement. ODE uses summative data to inform resource distribution, providing supports where they are needed most. Administrators also use the data to evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction.

ODE is committed to statewide summative tests and will continue using these tools in the future to continue to serve Oregon’s learners, as they are useful for reliably evaluating annual progress and are required by the U.S. Department of Education.

**However, this year, due to the impacts of COVID-19, wildfires, economic downturn, social and political instability, and other factors, and their impact on student participation, we’re asking the U.S. Department of Education to pause administration of our annual English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science summative tests.**

This is an important and necessary pause. Our statewide summative tests will not yield reliable data that can be used to make valid interpretations in 2020-21 because necessary test conditions cannot be assured:

- Secure, quiet, supportive, distraction-free location to take the test.
- Appropriate accessibility supports (such as speech to text) for students experiencing disability.
- Consistent student opportunity to learn the tested content
- standardized test administration practices, (e.g. each student takes the test under similar conditions accounting for noise, quality and availability of technology and other distractions).
- Sufficient student group participation rates.

## Commitment to Equity

The Oregon Department of Education remains committed to equity, student learning, and student well-being. These goals will be best served by pausing select summative tests in 2020-21 and collecting information that will increase our understanding of factors surrounding instruction and student performance.

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## What will assessment look like in 2020-21?

### Assessment Resource Prioritization

Within limits that respect student, family, and staff health and safety, ODE will continue to support administration of both our yearly English language proficiency assessment (ELPA) and the individual evaluations and reevaluations required within the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The administration of the yearly ELPA constitutes a student's sole opportunity to exit English learner status in 2020-21, which impacts course taking and service provision. Likewise, evaluations required within IDEA provide educators with essential information to help make appropriate related service and instructional support decisions for students experiencing disabilities. Our waiver request prioritizes limited on-site resources, to help our districts meet the assessment needs of our students who are experiencing disabilities or who are emergent bilinguals.

### Protecting Parent Access to Achievement and Growth Data

Oregon policy ([OAR 581-022-2305](#)) requires that parents be notified annually about student performance and progress. School-level grade reporting, together with a robust statewide interim assessment system, ensure that parents will remain informed as to their child's academic performance and progress in 2020-21.

### Assessment System Redesign to Support Academic Achievement

ODE has provided districts with instructional and professional learning resources to implement balanced approaches to assessment. ODE is focused on supporting effective [formative assessment practices](#) and appropriate use of our new [statewide interim assessment system and Tools for Teachers](#). As part of our waiver request, ODE will review implementation and use of its interim system in 2020-21 and beyond.

To support classroom assessments for learning, as well as future summative assessment result interpretation, ODE will develop and administer a student survey measuring *Access to Learning Resources, Opportunity to Learn, and Student Self-Efficacy/Beliefs*. National and international assessments have used similar instruments for many years and will provide ODE, our districts, schools, teachers, parents, and students with valuable and actionable information which academic results alone cannot supply.