

Higher Standards, Better Assessments

Preparing Oregon Students For Life After High School

Oregon is committed to providing a quality K-12 education for all students, regardless of where they live or which school they attend. Over the last 5 years, our public schools have been working hard to implement college and career-ready standards, known as Common Core. These standards provide clear expectations for what every student should know and be able to do at each grade level. Now, we are using new tests aligned to our higher standards that will measure the real-world skills our students need to be successful in the 21st Century.

SMARTER BALANCED IS A BETTER TEST

Smarter Balanced Assessments are different from Oregon's previous tests in several ways:

1. **The tests challenge students** to think critically and apply their knowledge and skills to real-world problems.
2. **The test questions go beyond multiple-choice** and allow students to explain their answers, interact with texts, and build equations.
3. **The test provides all students, regardless of disability or primary language**, with the supports they need to demonstrate what they know and can do.



WHAT TO EXPECT

Students will take Smarter Balanced English and Math tests **once at the end of the school year** in grades 3-8 and 11.

Students who **receive a 3 or 4** on the test (on a 4-point scale) **are considered on track to graduate** high school college- and career-ready.

These tests are one measure of students' academic success and **no student will be held back a grade or kept from graduating** based on the results.

WHAT THE RESULTS MEAN

Scores **represent a new baseline** and **provide more honest information** about what our students know and can do – and where they need the most help – so we can raise the bar for all Oregon students.

Patience and persistence will be required as we transition to higher expectations but this year's results indicate that Oregon students and teachers are rising to the challenge.



Visit www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=4302 to learn more about the tests





HIGHER STANDARDS STRONGER MINDS

WHAT ARE OREGON’S COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS?

These standards, also known as the Common Core, are a set of high learning expectations in math and English that are designed to better prepare K-12 students for success in college, work, and life. The standards offer a clear picture of what students should know and be able to do at every grade level.

Over the last 5 years, Oregon educators have worked hard to implement these more rigorous standards for students, raising the bar for learning. This is a big change in the way students learn and one that will take time to see results, but it’s an approach that will help Oregon students acquire real-world skills needed to be successful in the 21st century.

**STANDARDS
IN
OREGON
SCHOOLS**
80% of Oregon teachers’
report what is taught in their
school aligns with the new
college- and career- ready
standards.

TOP 3 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT OREGON’S STANDARDS

CONSISTENT LEARNING EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Before these standards, all 50 states had different sets of expectations for what students should know and be able to do in each grade. Oregon’s college- and career-ready standards help ensure that all students graduate from high school with the core academic knowledge and skills necessary for success in their next steps.

STUDENTS FOCUS ON DEVELOPING A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING

The standards go deeper into fewer topics and focus on developing students’ understanding of key concepts. They build on one another, allowing students to apply the skills and knowledge learned in the previous grade to real-life situations.



BUILDING THE CRITICAL SKILLS STUDENTS NEED IN THE JOB MARKET

Common Core focuses on building and applying real-world skills students need to be ready for college and work, so they can be more competitive in the global economy.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why are Oregon's standards important to you and your child?

The standards provide benchmarks, or expectations, for teaching and learning at every grade level. The standards are consistent across states and match the standards used by top-performing nations. Consistent learning expectations will help parents and teachers work together to make sure students have the opportunities they need to succeed in school and in life.

Why has Oregon adopted these college- and career-ready standards?

Oregon adopted these standards and the aligned tests because they will help students be better prepared for college and work.

Currently in Oregon:

- Far too many of our students graduate unprepared for college and careers; and
- Approximately 66% of our students who go on to a community college need to take remedial courses in English, math, or both.

Will schools and teachers still have control over teaching materials and other local decisions?

Yes. The way in which the new learning standards are taught is up to each of Oregon's 197 school districts. Each school or district will continue to have the flexibility to select the teaching materials and resources that best meet the needs of its students.

Who developed the standards?

The development of these standards began in 2009.

Hundreds of teachers, education researchers, mathematicians, and other experts across the country provided input and guidance and have collaborated in developing the learning standards. With higher standards, nearly every state is now working together and sharing resources to help our kids get ready for life after high school.

If we're raising learning expectations, will the test be harder, too?

The Smarter Balanced tests are different from Oregon's previous end-of-year tests because they challenge students to think critically and apply their skills to real-world problems. The test questions go beyond multiple choice and allow students to explain their answers, interact with texts, and build equations. Research shows that when you raise learning expectations, students will work harder to meet them.

Where can I learn more about the standards in Oregon?

Please visit www.corestandards.org.

HIGHER STANDARDS IN OREGON

2010: Oregon officially adopts higher standards

2011-15: Teachers receive professional development to support successful implementation of the standards

2014-15: Students take new tests aligned to the standards called Smarter Balanced

2015-16: Continue implementation