



Student assessments: Participation matters

Dear PPS Staff,

As we approach our time frame for administering the Oregon State Smarter Balanced Assessments or SBAC, I wanted to take a moment to share the district's position on the value of state assessments and provide you with additional information that can be used to answer questions from parents and families.

The most important points we can share with families is around the value of using data in decision making and our intentional shift to be a data-driven organization. One of our best tools for gathering data on student success is through our state assessments and I am stressing the importance of participation to give our leaders access to critical information that can be used in educational decisions and resource allocation.

Information about opt-out and exemptions available to families is included in our message to families. By state law, this is a parent's right and we absolutely respect that right. I want our families to be well-informed before they make a decision about opt-out or exemptions and have provided links to additional information. I am encouraging participation because of the value of receiving this kind of data.

For those of you who will be responsible for assisting with test administration or answering questions from families, please pay close attention to the information forthcoming from our assessment department. If you have any questions along the way, please reach out to your direct supervisor for clarification.

PPS Expectations for Oregon State Assessments

Administrators are expected to provide parents and families with information about how SBAC results will be used to inform decision making and resource allocation in the future.

Administrators should share the district's position about the value of state assessments and the importance of gathering data. Administrators are responsible for ensuring successful administration of state assessments in their schools.

Educators are expected to administer state assessments and to provide the best assessment conditions possible for gathering clean and reliable data. While I understand in the past it was considered acceptable for educators to promote opt-out to families or students, this is no longer the case. The state assessments are part of the required curriculum and more importantly, we need to have data that can be used to evaluate the success of instruction from year to year. I want to be very clear that It is not appropriate for staff to discourage participation, or to actively promote opt-out.

It is important for our families and students to be well-informed about student assessments. The role of PPS staff is to provide information and ensure an environment that is conducive to the successful administration of assessments.

Please see the attached letter that will go to parents today.

Thank you for your commitment to serving our students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Yvonne Curtis

Deputy Superintendent, Instruction and School Communities