

HIGHER STANDARDS, QUALITY INSTRUCTION, & BETTER TESTS

MOVING TO SMARTER BALANCED TESTS IN
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATH



WHAT'S NEW IN OREGON EDUCATION?

- How are we improving education in Oregon?
- What do assessments have to do with standards?
- Why are we changing our tests in **English & Math**?
- How are these new tests **different** from our old tests?
- What do these new tests mean for **my child**?
- How can I help my child through this transition?
- Where can I go to learn more?



OVERVIEW



Keeping our communities informed about
important changes to education in
Oregon

WHERE WE ARE NOW:

Our K-12 education system needs to better prepare our students for success after high school:

- **COLLEGE**

- Anywhere from **28% to 40%** of college freshmen are not ready for college level **work** and have to take extra classes just to catch up to their peers.
- “Catch-up” courses cost states and students around **\$2.3 billion each year** in school and lost earnings.

- **21ST CENTURY WORKPLACE**

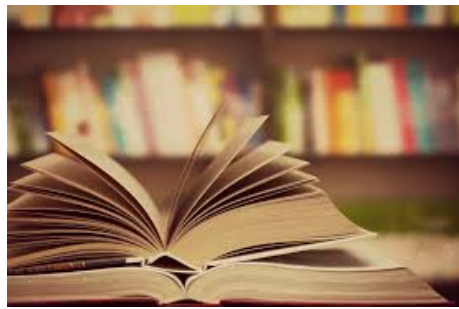
- **7 of every 10 new jobs** created in Oregon between 2008 and 2018 will require some type of formal education beyond high school.
- Just **57%** of students who enter public colleges in Oregon earn their degrees.
- Only **39%** of Oregon adults have a postsecondary degree (associate’s or higher).
- Local companies **have to import qualified workers** due to a shortage of skilled Oregon workers in areas like technology and science.



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HOW ARE WE IMPROVING EDUCATION IN OUR STATE?

THE STORY BEGINS WITH
STANDARDS



LITERACY

- Read and understand more challenging texts
- Learn how to better comprehend and engage with informational texts
- Develop literacy across school subjects

Common Core State Standards promote **21st Century skills** and were developed toward the goal of preparing all students across the nation for college and career in **literacy and math**

MATH

- Use and understand whole numbers, fractions, and decimals over the course of K-5
 - Prepare for geometry, algebra, and probability/statistics during grades 6-8
 - Apply math to solve problems arising in every day life, society, and the workplace



Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

English Language Arts, English Language Proficiency, Mathematics, Science, Social Sciences

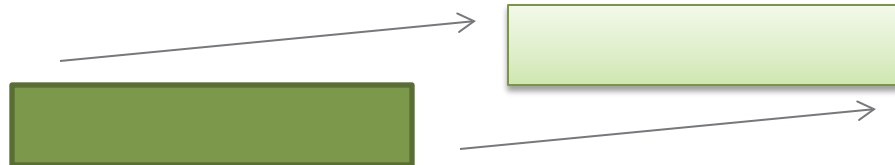
KEY SHIFTS OF NEW STANDARDS

ENGLISH

- A. Regular practice with complex texts and academic language
 - ❖ Students grow their vocabularies through conversation, instruction, and reading.
- B. Reading, writing, and speaking using evidence
 - ❖ Students carefully read texts and use evidence from multiple sources to build their ideas and arguments.
- C. Building knowledge by reading more nonfiction
 - ❖ Students develop knowledge about the world and build literacy in all subject areas.

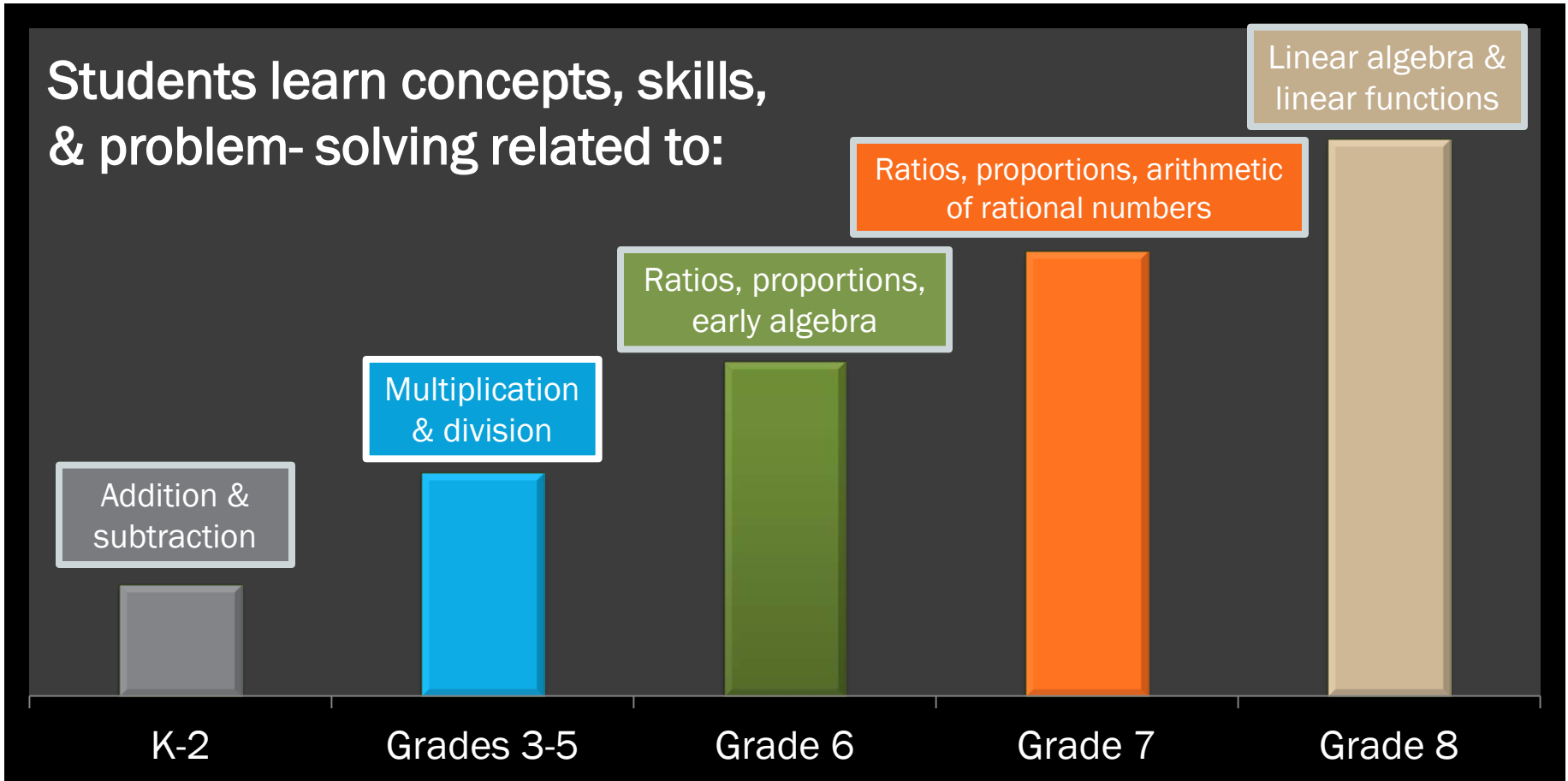
MATH

1. Greater focus on fewer topics
 - Math teachers now focus more deeply on a few key areas of math per grade.
2. Linking topics across grades (“coherence”)
 - Students build on their skills and knowledge so that each standard extends previous learning.
3. Develop understanding of concepts, procedures, and application (“numerical literacy”)
 - Students go beyond simple memorization to become “fluent” in math concepts and procedures.



COMMON CORE MATH STANDARDS BY GRADE

Students learn concepts, skills,
& problem-solving related to:





Common Core State Standards connect learning
across grades.



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WE ADOPTED NEW STANDARDS

COMMON CORE STANDARDS	
DO: 	DON'T: 
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Inform meaningful classroom instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Tell teachers what to teach
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Help teachers tailor instruction to meet the needs of their students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Require teachers to “dumb down” instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Guide responsible use of assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Force teachers to use select materials or tests

Now we need new tests to measure student learning of our standards.



WHAT DO TESTS HAVE TO DO WITH STANDARDS?

A LOT, ACTUALLY

NEW TESTS MEASURE HOW WELL STUDENTS ARE LEARNING CONTENT WITHIN THE STANDARDS

Smarter Balanced Tests

DO 

- Include various tools that teachers use to measure student learning
- Help teachers pinpoint areas of improvement for students
- Improve the quality of instruction students receive in schools

DON'T: 

- Include only multiple-choice tests
- Require teachers to teach to the test
- Require teachers to teach the same way to all students



WHY ARE WE CHANGING OUR TESTS IN ENGLISH & MATH?

WE HAVE NEW STANDARDS,
NOW WE NEED NEW TESTS.

A SHIFT TO NEW TESTS

2013-14	2014-15
OAKS Reading and Writing	Smarter Balanced ELA
OAKS Math	Smarter Balanced Math

Aligned to Common Core

Our statewide assessment system is known as the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, or OAKS.



HOW ARE SMARTER BALANCED TESTS DIFFERENT FROM OUR PREVIOUS STATE TESTS?

❑ Format

- Test questions go beyond multiple choice

❑ Grading

- Portions of the test will be hand-scored

❑ Difficulty

- Tests are aligned to Common Core
- Measure higher-level thinking and skills
- Student test scores will look different but will provide a more realistic picture of student achievement in Oregon



HOW ARE SMARTER BALANCED TESTS DIFFERENT FROM OUR PREVIOUS STATE TESTS?

❑ Format

- Test questions go beyond multiple choice

❑ Grading

- Portions of the test will be hand-scored
- Students will be scored on a 4-point scale (level 3 and 4 are considered on-track to graduate)

❑ Difficulty

- Tests are aligned to Common Core
- Measure higher-level thinking and skills
- Student test scores will look different but will provide a more realistic picture of student achievement in Oregon



HOW LONG DO THESE TESTS TAKE?

Test Type	Grade(s)	CAT	Performance Task	Total	In-Class Activity	Total
English Language Arts/Literacy	3 – 5	1:30	2:00	3:30	:30	4:00
	6 – 8	1:30	2:00	3:30	:30	4:00
	11	2:00	2:00	4:00	:30	4:30
Mathematics	3 – 5	1:30	1:00	2:30	:30	3:00
	6 – 8	2:00	1:00	3:00	:30	3:30
	11	2:00	1:30	3:30	:30	4:00
COMBINED	3 – 5	3:00	3:00	6:00	1:00	7:00
	6 – 8	3:30	3:00	6:30	1:00	7:30
	11	4:00	3:30	7:30	1:00	8:30



WHAT DO THESE NEW TESTS MEAN FOR MY CHILD?

- ❑ Students who receive a 3 or 4 (on a 4-point scale) are considered on track to graduate school college- and career-ready
- ❑ Tests provide important feedback for students, parents, and teachers on where student's strengths are, and where they need more help



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HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD THROUGH THIS TRANSITION?

**AND WHERE CAN I GO TO
LEARN MORE?**

HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD THROUGH THIS TRANSITION?

✓ GET INFORMED

- Read more about what your child is expected to know and do on Smarter Balanced tests
- Take the practice test for yourself so you can see what your child will do

✓ GET INVOLVED

- Talk to your child's principal about your school's plan for implementing the new tests
- Talk to your child's teacher about what your child is learning in school that involves critical thinking and problem-solving and how you can get involved at home



HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD THROUGH THIS TRANSITION?

✓ GET READY

- Regularly check in with your child about how school is going and how you can be more involved
- Encourage your child to read a variety of books, including both fiction and non-fiction
- Practice typing and writing at home
- Take the training and practice tests with your child at:
<http://oaksportal.org/>



WHERE CAN I GO TO LEARN MORE?

❖ www.corestandards.org

❖ www.smarterbalanced.org

❖ ODE's Website



The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium website features a navigation bar with links for ABOUT, SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS, K-12 EDUCATION, and HIGHER EDUCATION. The main content area is titled "Parents & Students" and includes a photograph of a woman and a child. Text on the page states: "The Smarter Balanced Assessment System will give parents and students more accurate and actionable information about what students are learning. Because these assessments are computer adaptive, they will also provide better information about the needs and successes of individual students." Below this, it notes that the assessments are aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for language arts/literacy and mathematics for grades 3-8 and 11, and that Smarter Balanced will provide a clearer window on whether students are ready to graduate high school, ready for college and the workplace. It also mentions that results will be provided in an easy-to-understand format, most likely online.



The Common Core State Standards Initiative website features a navigation bar with links for Video, Map, and Search. The main content area is titled "COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS INITIATIVE" and "PREPARING AMERICA'S STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE & CAREER". Below this, it says "HOME · ABOUT THE STANDARDS · WHAT PARENTS SHOULD KNOW · STANDARDS IN YOUR STATE · READ THE STANDARDS · OTHER RESOURCES". The main heading is "Preparing America's students for success." and there are three columns of content with icons: "Learn why the Common Core is important for your child" (with a "WHAT PARENTS SHOULD KNOW" button and a "MYTHS VS. FACTS" button), "Explore the Common Core" (with a "READ THE STANDARDS" button and a "RESOURCES" button), and "Understand how the Common Core was created" (with a "PROCESS" button and a "FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS" button).



The Oregon Department of Education website features a navigation bar with links for Standards, Teaching & Learning, Reports, Programs & Services, Education Funding, and Testing & Accountability. The main content area is titled "Oregon Department of Education" and "How Do I...?". Below this, it says "Search" and "GO". The main heading is "Online Course Supports Teachers of English Learners" and there is a photograph of a young girl. Text on the page states: "Supporting English Language Learners under New Standards is a free, eight-week course funded by the Oregon Department of Education and co-developed by Stanford and Oregon State universities. Click here to learn more." Below this, it says "SUPPORTING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS under New Standards" and "The Oregon Department of Education fosters excellence for every learner through innovation, collaboration, leadership, and service to our education partners." Below this, it says "News and Announcements" and there are two news items: "U.S. Department of Education 'Future Ready District Pledge'" and "Two Weeks left for First Session: Educator Institute on Networking and Transition".

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