

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Students with Disabilities and the OAAP Portfolio Assessment

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Are students with disabilities required to participate in statewide assessment?

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Yes. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) prohibits schools from excluding students with disabilities from the educational accountability system. The Act requires states to implement statewide accountability systems covering all public schools and students. Excluding students with disabilities from testing is also a violation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). IDEA addresses the participation of children with disabilities in assessments with appropriate accommodations in administration, as necessary, as well as their participation in alternate assessments for those children who cannot participate in state and district-wide assessment programs. States are required to provide accommodations and alternate assessments as needed, to ensure that students with disabilities participate fully in NCLB testing. Students with disabilities should participate in the same tests taken by their peers. However, some students need accommodations to show their knowledge on a regular assessment, or they need to participate in an alternate assessment which is linked to the same standards found in the regular assessment. These assessment requirements were put into place as a way to determine if the school is adequately educating every student in critical core academic areas.

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What is the Oklahoma School Testing Program?

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The Oklahoma School Testing Program (OSTP) is a statewide assessment program that was established to improve academic achievement for all Oklahoma students, and includes grades 3–8 and high school end-of-instruction assessments, for which students who complete an area of instruction must also take the corresponding statewide standardized assessment. Every student enrolled in a tested grade-level or course in an Oklahoma public school must participate in the statewide assessment program.

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What are the assessment options for students with disabilities?

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The OSTP developed three types of tests to assess the three groups of students defined by the NCLB: (The OCCT, OMAAP, and OAAP Portfolio for Mathematics, Reading, and Science are accountability tests required by the 2001 Federal Legislation No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.)

- 1) The Oklahoma Core Curriculum Tests (OCCT) general assessment with or without accommodations;
- 2) The Oklahoma Modified Alternate Assessment Program (OMAAP) with or without accommodations, or
- 3) The Oklahoma Alternate Assessment Program (OAAP) Portfolio

Students with disabilities on an IEP and students on a 504 plan are eligible to receive accommodations. Only students with disabilities on an IEP may participate in the OMAAP or OAAP.

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What are appropriate accommodations?

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The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) makes it very clear that the use of accommodations in state assessments is permissible and requires that states develop guidelines for the provision of appropriate accommodations.

Guidelines must identify only those accommodations for each assessment that do not invalidate the score and instruct IEP teams to select only those accommodations that do not invalidate the score (See **34 CFR § 300.160: Participation in assessments**). Oklahoma’s “Accommodations for Students on an IEP or 504 Plan” can be found at <http://ok.gov/sde/accommodations-students-iep-or-504-plan>.

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What is an alternate assessment?

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Alternate Assessments based on Alternate Achievement Standards (AA-AAS) are for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. These assessments are based on the grade-level content covered by the general assessment, but at reduced depth, breadth, and complexity. These assessments describe achievement based on what a state determines is a high expectation for these students. A State may develop, through a documented and validated standards-setting process, alternate academic achievement standards that—

- Are aligned with the State's academic content standards;
- Promote access to the general curriculum; and
- Reflect professional judgment of the highest achievement standards possible.

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What is the OAAP Portfolio?

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The OAAP Portfolio is a portfolio-based assessment that assesses students in their mastery of Oklahoma's content standards. The OAAP Portfolio is an assessment developed for a small population of students with significant cognitive disabilities for whom the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team has determined are unable to participate in the general or modified assessment, even with accommodations. The OAAP Portfolio format was selected for assessing the knowledge and skills of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in 2001. The OAAP Portfolio requires teachers to demonstrate students' levels of academic knowledge and skills through collections of academic evidence. The pieces of evidence are submitted online via Pearson's system, PearsonAccess. Pearson then scores the portfolio evidence using a team of professional scorers.



For more information contact:

Special Education Services

Oklahoma State Department of Education

<http://www.ok.gov/sde/special-education>

Phone: (405)521-3351

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What subjects does the OAAP Portfolio assess?

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Grades and Subjects assessed with the OAAP Portfolio

Grade 3–Math and Reading

Grade 4–Math and Reading

Grade 5–Math, Reading, Science, Social Studies and Writing

Grade 6–Math and Reading

Grade 7–Math, Reading and Geography

Grade 8–Math, Reading, Science, Social Studies and Writing

Note: Grades 5 and 8 Writing Assessments are completed as a part of the OAAP Portfolio and should not be taken by students during the February Writing Assessment period.

End-of-Instruction (EOI)

Required by all students for graduation regardless of graduation tract:

Algebra, English II/Writing, Biology and U.S. History

Required only if student enrolled and completed these courses:

Algebra II, Geometry and English III/Writing

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Why is video evidence required in the OAAP Portfolio?

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The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requires that states seek approval from the United States Department of Education for their standards and assessment systems. This process is called Peer Review. The federal Peer Review process examines each state's standards and assessments in two basic areas: 1) general assessments in reading, mathematics, and science; and 2) alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards in reading, mathematics and science for students with severe cognitive disabilities.

After Peer Review in 2009, the OAAP Portfolio went through many changes to become consistent with requirements outlined in the Peer Review notes that were provided to our state. As a result of the Peer Review process, the OAAP Portfolio assessment now requires videos as part of the evidence to be collected by teachers. The inclusion of videos signified a major improvement in the validity of the assessment.