Interpreting Assessment Scores to Inform Next Steps, Connect with Families and Support Students

Thank you all for your work in helping students participate in state assessments. These tests help everyone understand where our students are today, especially during these unprecedented times. State tests traditionally serve as a snapshot that helps schools and districts evaluate their instructional programs by providing information about student readiness in math, English language arts and science. State test scores provide three levels of information about performance: **Performance Levels, Performance Index Scale Scores (OPI) and Reporting Categories** as explained in the graphic below.

Performance Levels

- Relates **level of readiness** for the next grade, course or level by connecting student test scores to the **OAS** as described in the **Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs).**
- Four Levels- **Below Basic, Basic, Proficient or Advanced**

Performance Index Scale Score (OPI)

- Provides a **more specific measure** of readiness to be on track by relating where a score is relative to a **performance level.**
- **Comparable** scale across all tests from **200-399** wherein **300** is always **Proficient**

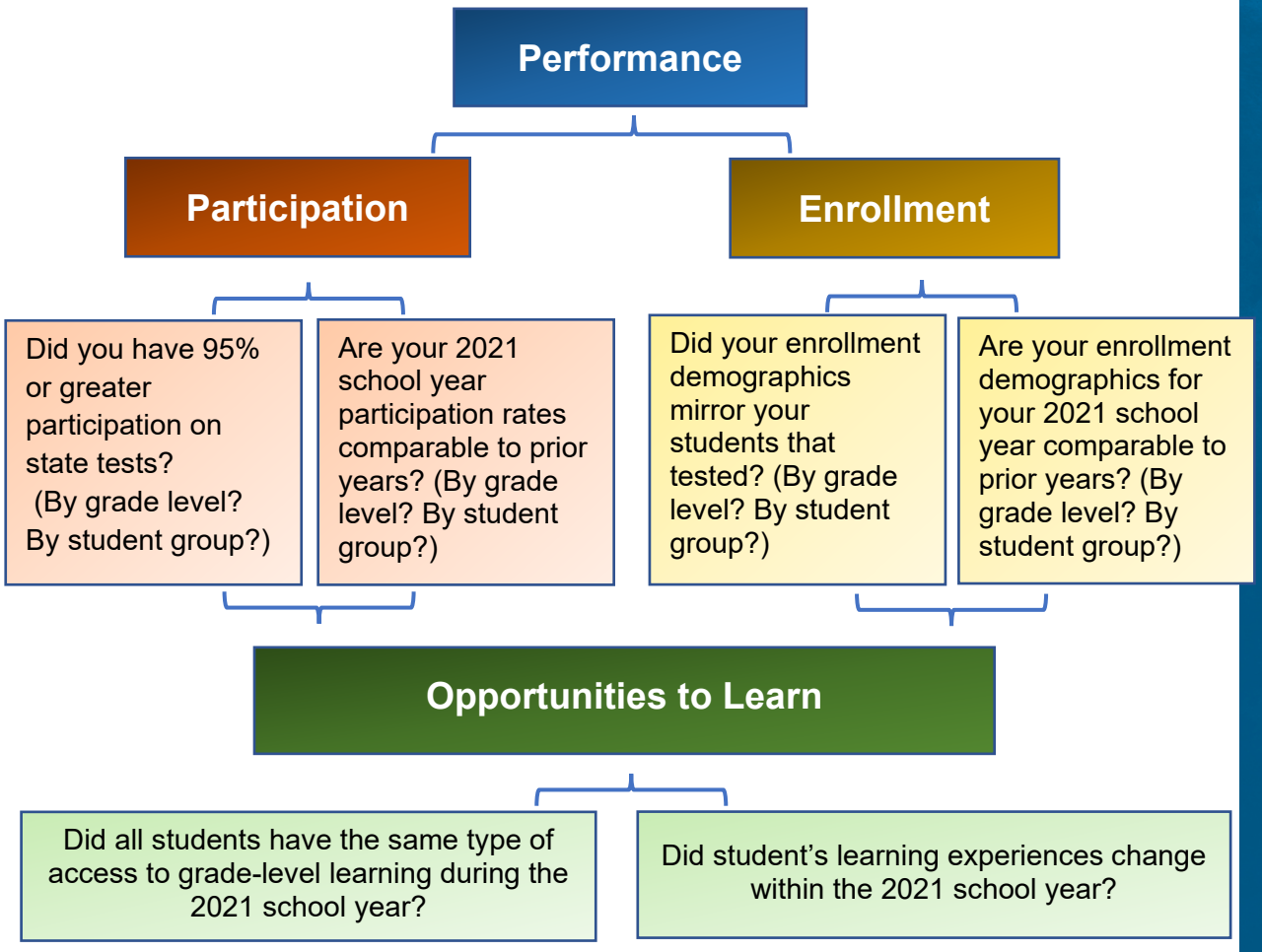
Reporting Category

- Relates **confidence level** to which students are **likely to demonstrate** the **Proficient level** knowledge, skills and abilities **(KSAs)** with respect to the content represented in the **STANDARD and** performance on related questions on the state test.
- Three Levels- **Below Standard, At/Near and Above Standard**
- Students scoring **At/Near or Above** are likey to demonstarte the Proficent level KSAs

This year it is particularly important to consider other information when interpreting state test scores from the 2021 school year administration. **We urge caution when examining summary reports because of the possibility of uneven participation rates or because of changes to learning conditions that may have been disrupted by the pandemic.** The standard participation threshold is 95%. When participation falls below that level, inferences about overall performance are uncertain. Therefore, it is particularly important this year, that other information (e.g., opportunity to learn, mode of learning, access to grade-level content, attendance, course grades, etc.) be considered when interpreting your data to plan next steps. Additionally, because of unique COVID-related disruptions, we ask that you please consider your local context before comparing 2021 data to previous years or other school sites. This toolkit is designed to support you in this work so that you can support families, message stakeholders and plan actionable next steps.

Considerations for reviewing and interpreting SY 2021 state performance data

Schools and districts typically use state testing data to identify strengths and gaps in their curricular and instructional programs. Because of pandemic-related educational disruptions, it is particularly important to consider other information when interpreting state test scores from the 2020-21 school year administration. Even though tests provide objective information, to interpret performance data, we must understand who tested compared with who was enrolled and then consider variations in learning across student groups as shown in the graphic below.



Doing so allows schools and districts to determine what group comparisons are appropriate and defensible. In addition, 2021 school year test scores can help educators and administrators better understand how to provide students with grade-level content to help them thrive and grow this school year.

With that in mind, please use this toolkit, and other resources when working with families and stakeholders, interpreting your school's or district's state test scores and planning next steps.

Connecting with Families to Support Students

How can we use state test score reports to work with families and support students?

In any year, a single test score does not provide a complete measure of student achievement. This year it is particularly important to use other information about a student's experience (e.g., learning environment, access to grade-level content, attendance, course grades, etc.) to provide a more complete picture of what students learned this past year. Therefore, when working with families, consider how COVID-19 may have impacted a student's learning,

Paper reports for each student in grades 3-8 who took a state test in the spring of the 2021 will be available in the fall. Paper reports provide an opportunity to talk with families about their student's progress and next steps. Additionally, a student's test scores are available to families through the secure Oklahoma School Testing Program (OSTP) Family Portal.

What tools are available to support this work

- Sample Logins to be used by educators so that they know what is in the portal
- Parent Portal Overview video shows families how to access the portal
- Understanding Your Student's Scores provides information about test scores to support families and teachers in working together
- Oklahoma Family Guides provides ways families can support students at home

School Site Support

Where can I find my school site's test scores and participation rates?

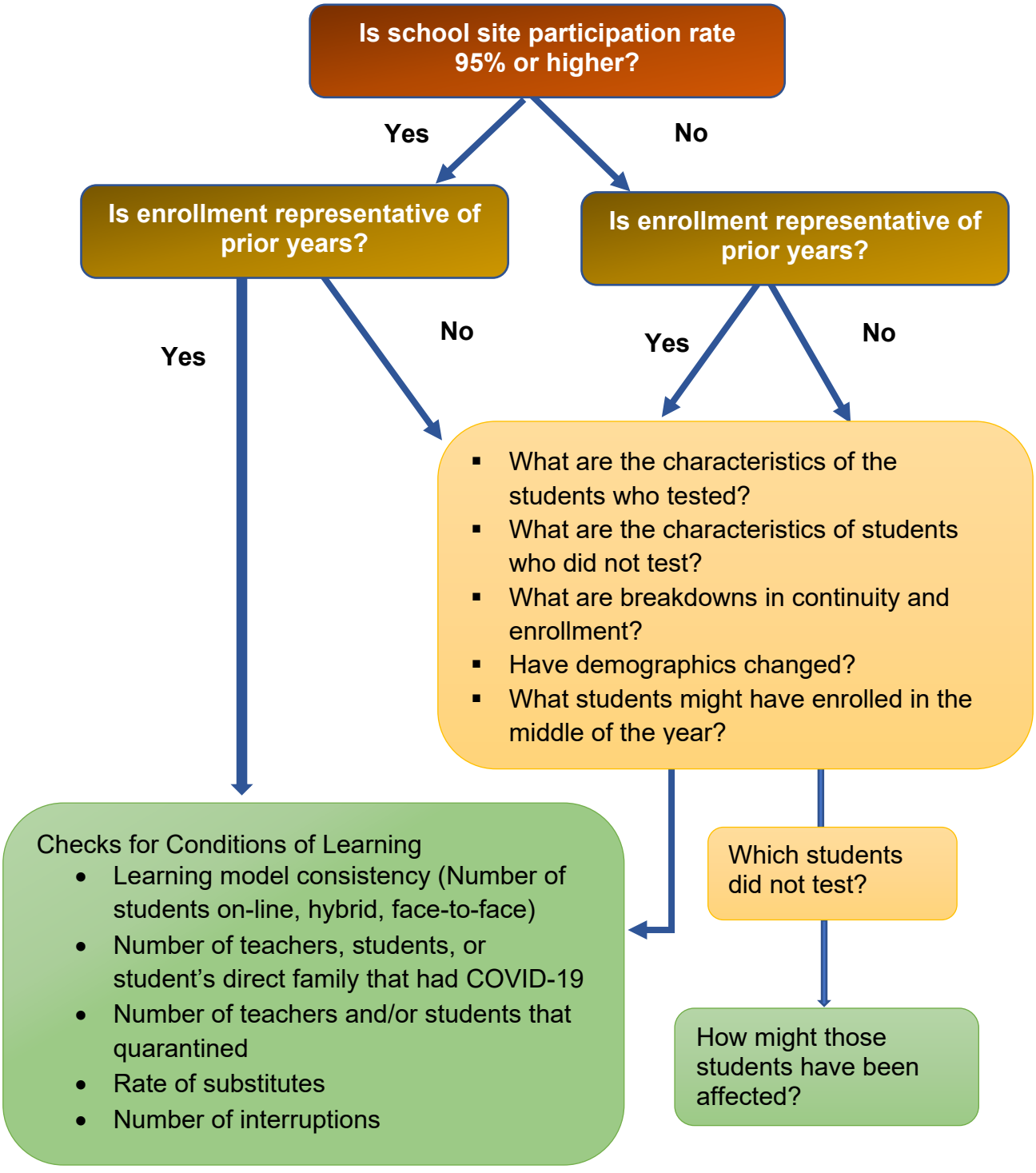
Different levels of performance data are available through the OSTP Data Portal and the Accountability Reporting Application in Single Sign-On as shown *here:*

The OSTP Data Portal aggregates different reports and displays OSTP performance related data by grade, student group and year.

The Accountability Reporting Application displays participation rates on the Report tab and Student level data on the Assessments tab.

Note: *Access for both the OSTP Portal and Accountability Reporting application are granted through your district.*

To interpret performance, we must first understand who tested, how enrollment compares to prior years and variations in student learning experiences. Participation rates are displayed in the Accountability Reporting application on the **Contextual Data→ Assessment Performance** tab in **Reports.**



What should we consider when looking at participation rates, enrollment and opportunities to learn?

Participation

Research has shown that when participation rates drop below the 95% threshold for any level of reporting (e.g., school, district, student group), there is a potential that results are not accurate signals of student performance. Therefore, please consider who participated and who did not when interpreting your scores.

- If participation rates were 95% or higher, were there one or more student group/s that had much lower participation rates than other groups?
- If participation rates were less than 95%, were participation rates comparable across all student groups?
- Were the most vulnerable groups (e.g., economically disadvantaged, English learners, students with a disability) underrepresented in participation?

Enrollment

Once participation rates are understood, it is important to further contextualize performance data by considering shifts in enrollment. Differences in performance from 2019 to 2021 may not be caused by shifts in academic performance but instead be attributed to students who have left a school or district (Ho, 2021). Because of this, please consider how the enrollment and demographics of students that tested may have changed when interpreting your scores.

- Were there big changes in the demographics of the students that tested this year compared to prior years?
- Did the most vulnerable groups (e.g., economically disadvantaged, English learners, and/or students with a disability) experience the biggest change in enrollment?

Opportunities to Learn

Early studies show that the disparities between student groups that existed before the pandemic—in access, opportunities, and outcomes—may have been exacerbated due to COVID-19. Because of this, please consider how a student's learning experiences may have differed from a "typical year."

- Did students have limited access to resources to participate in blended or virtual learning?
- Did disruptions lessen instructional time?
- Did students have access to learning supports (e.g., tutoring or student services)?
- Were the most vulnerable groups (e.g., economically disadvantaged, English learners, and/or students with a disability) more impacted than other groups?

Actions we can take

- ✓ Consider which students did not test and use their local assessment and attendance data to plan on-grade level supports.
- ✓ Utilize the resources on the Oklahoma Ready Together website to support local needs and planning around these areas:
  - Student Learning and Success
  - Prioritizing Health and Well Being
  - Ensuring Equity for All
  - Engaging Families and Communities
  - Supporting Teachers and Leaders
- ✓ If you had 95% participation for a grade level and the participation is representative of enrollment, we can be relatively confident that the performance is reflective of the group, therefore, you can
  - Compare performance by Reporting Category on the state test to local assessment data to gauge horizontal alignment and make adjustments using the Curriculum Frameworks
  - Use local assessment and Reporting Category performance data in the OSTP Data Portal and the vertical progressions for English language arts, math and science to prioritize and support concepts and skills that may not have been mastered. - See Key Questions for Educators Toolkit
- ✓ Attend or register to attend TeleEDGE Echo virtual sessions to connect and collaborate around a problem of practice related to COVID-19 disruptions and next steps.

References

Domaleski, C., D'Brot, J., Marion, S. & Boyer, M. (2021) Sensible reporting of spring 2021 state assessment results. *National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment*, Dover, New Hampshire. https://www.nciea.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/CFA-SensibleReportingSpring21-R2.pdf

Ho, H. (2021). Three test-score metrics that all states should report in the COVID-19-affected spring of 2021. https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/andrewho/files/threemetrics.pdf