

Oregon Department of Education
Office of Teaching, Learning & Assessment
<https://www.oregon.gov/ode>

Where can I go to find out more about assessment in my child's classroom?

Introduction:

Welcome to the Oregon Department of Education's learning session on *Where can I go to find out more about assessment in my child's classroom?* In this session Kenji and Dr. Brown will discuss:

- The importance of parents reaching out to teachers as a critical first-step in supporting their children's learning;
- Who to go to with in-depth assessment questions; and
- Who makes assessment decisions, both in general, and for students who need targeted supports.

Kenji and Dr. Brown are ready, so, let's join their conversation!

Kenji: Dr. Brown, I'm so glad I found you.

Dr. Brown: Hi Kenji! How can I help you?

Kenji: I'd like to know more about the assessments that take place in the classroom and at school. I want to be aware of the different tests that children are taking and what is going on.

Dr. Brown: Well, that's a pretty broad topic. Where we start depends on what you want to know.

Kenji: Ok, let's start with the statewide summative assessments my kids take at the end of each school year. Those seem like a pretty big deal. Who could tell me more about those?

Dr. Brown: That's easy—start with me! As your child's teacher, I can tell you when the assessments take place, help you understand your child's scores, and explain the ways in which the school and district use assessment results. If you have a question I don't have the answer to, we can take it to our *School Test Coordinator*.

Kenji: So, I've noticed my children aren't just assessed at the end of the year. Can the School Test Coordinator tell me *all* the assessments my children take?

Dr. Brown: The *School Test Coordinator* knows a lot, but they don't know every assessment taken in every classroom. Some assessments are selected by individual teachers, while others are chosen by grade-level teams, schools, or the districts. There is even a *District Test Coordinator* who helps select, organize, and schedule district-wide assessments.

Kenji: Wait a minute! Are you saying that I need to talk to all of these people?

Dr. Brown: Not necessarily. If you have a question that I can't answer, I'll suggest someone who can help. Between me, the *School Test Coordinator*, and the *Principal*, we can answer almost all of your questions. But it's good to know that there are other experts if you want more in-depth information.

Kenji: Thank you. Even if I never need them, it's nice to know they're available.

Dr. Brown: I feel the same way. Sometimes even our experts have questions. That's when we turn to the Oregon Department of Education. So, there will always be someone who can help you.

Kenji: That's good to know, but I mostly want to know about my children. For example, my daughter has an *IEP*, which I think stands for *Individual Education Program*?

Dr. Brown: That's right.

Kenji: I would like a refresher on how that program was developed, and which assessments she took to find out if she needed extra supports. Who would I talk to?

Dr. Brown: *Individual Education Programs* are created by teams of people who have worked with your child and understand her learning needs. You've already met some of them; I can connect you with your child's *Case Manager*, who knows all the details about the assessments that your child took regarding her *Individual Education Program*. These assessments are selected at the district level.

Kenji: Thanks. Are these the same people I would talk to about her English language development?

Dr. Brown: Some people are on both teams. If you haven't already met our *English Language Development* teacher, I'll make sure to introduce you. She will explain why, when, and how your child is being assessed for English language proficiency. The important thing is, no matter what you want to know, we can find the right person to help you.

Kenji: Thanks, that makes sense. A minute ago, you said that some assessments are chosen by the district. Doesn't the State make all the decisions?

Dr. Brown: I can see where you're coming from, but actually most of those decisions, such as which assessments are administered and when, are made by the school or district. For example, in our class your daughter just completed an end-of-unit interim assessment that our school team created to measure how much students have learned in the first few weeks.

Kenji: Really? I'm excited to see how much she has learned in class!

Dr. Brown: Well currently, we are still working on those results, but parent-teacher conferences are coming up pretty soon. That would be an ideal opportunity to discuss your daughter's assessment results and identify some of her strengths and areas for improvement.

Kenji: I'll make sure to bring it up at the parent-conferences.

Dr. Brown: Please do, and I'll be prepared to discuss them with you.

Kenji: So, Dr. Brown, to sum it up, it sounds like you're saying that my first points of contact should be always my child's teacher, and then the *Principal* and the *School and District Test Coordinators* as necessary. If I have more questions about assessment, you can help me find the right expert for the right assessment.

Dr. Brown: Exactly! Of course, there are other independent sources of guidance you can find on the internet and also parent groups that are available. But, the folks you mentioned are the personnel who can help address your assessment questions that are specific to your child's classrooms, school, and district. We want to make it easy for you to get all the answers you need.

Kenji: Thank so much, Dr. Brown.

Dr. Brown: Sure thing, Kenji. I look forward to seeing you at parent conferences in a couple weeks.

Conclusion:

This concludes Oregon Department of Education's lesson on *Where can I go to find out more about assessment in my child's classroom?* During this conversation, we discussed who to contact for answers to questions about why, when, and how assessments are chosen and administered. We hope this information will help parents partner with teachers to support children. Please check out the other video learning sessions on assessment-related topics, including the highly-related session on *How do I support learning at home*, as well as ODE's website for more helpful information. Thanks for joining!