

**ASSESSMENTS:** One of many tools to measure student success

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and math. According to ODE, the tests focus on critical thinking, problem-solving, and reasoning. In addition to Oregon, nine other states use the Smarter Balanced exams, including Washington, Idaho, Delaware, California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Montana, Nevada and South Dakota.

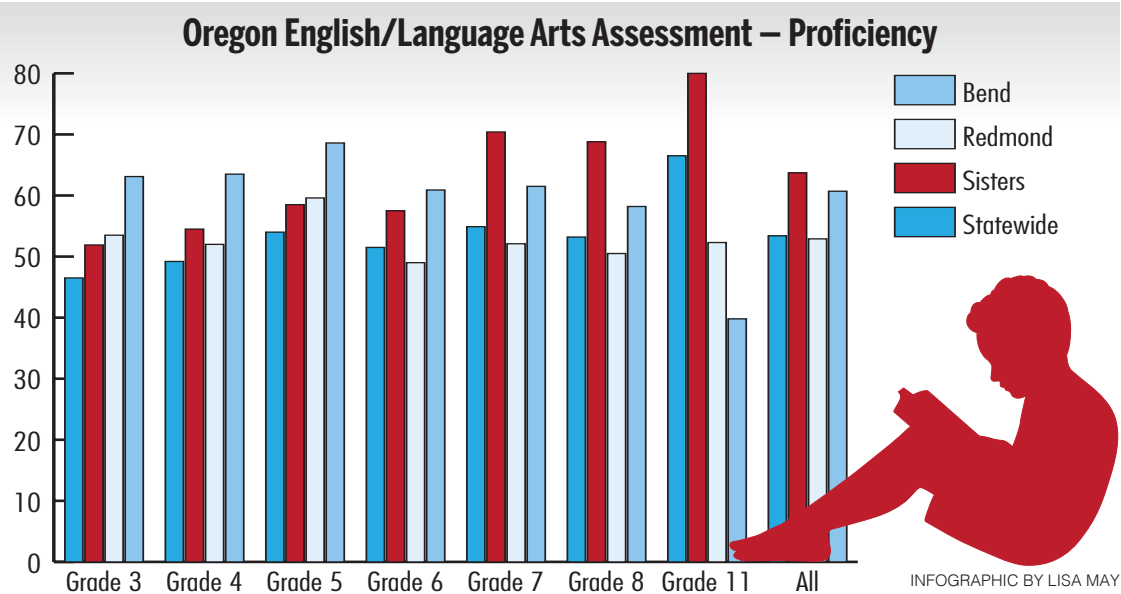
In Sisters School District for English/Language Arts 51.9 percent of last year’s third-graders and 54.5 percent of fourth-graders scored in the proficient range (level 3 or 4). For the middle school, the percentages were fifth grade (58.5), sixth grade (57.5), seventh grade (70.4) and eighth grade (68.8). The elementary and middle schools had close to a 100

percent participation rate, although the State of Oregon does allow a choice by parents to have their students “opt out.”

At Sisters High School the percentage came in at 80 percent among the 90 students who took the assessment. High school students who elect to opt out or who don’t meet the proficiency requirement on the assessment can use scores from other tests to meet the Oregon Essential Skills requirement for graduation, including the PSAT, SAT, or ACT.

In math proficiency, rates were lower than language arts across the board, but better than the state average in most grades.

Percentages meeting proficiency in grades 3-8 included grade 3 (51.9), grade 4 (41.8), grade 5 (25.6), grade 6 (43.8), grade 7 (46.5), grade 8 (35.8). The high school showed proficiency among 52.3 percent of those tested.



The graphics show how Sisters School District students compared to the Oregon average.

An article published October 14 in *The Oregonian* included work by a researcher named Douglas McRae, a retired California educational measurement expert who found that, overall, Oregon students in grades 3-8 scored only above Nevada in math

and only above California, Montana, and Nevada in language arts. Washington had the highest average scores in both categories among the 10 states.

Administrators and teachers throughout Oregon point out that the Smarter Balanced assessments are one of many tools used to measure student performance. Colt Gill, director of ODE, along with Sisters School District administrators understand that the Smarter Balanced assessments are just one strand of data that schools use each year to measure learning.

In an article published by Oregon Public Broadcasting on September 20 by Rob Manning, Gill said that internal assessments by teachers throughout the year are equally, if not more, important than a summative assessment in the spring.

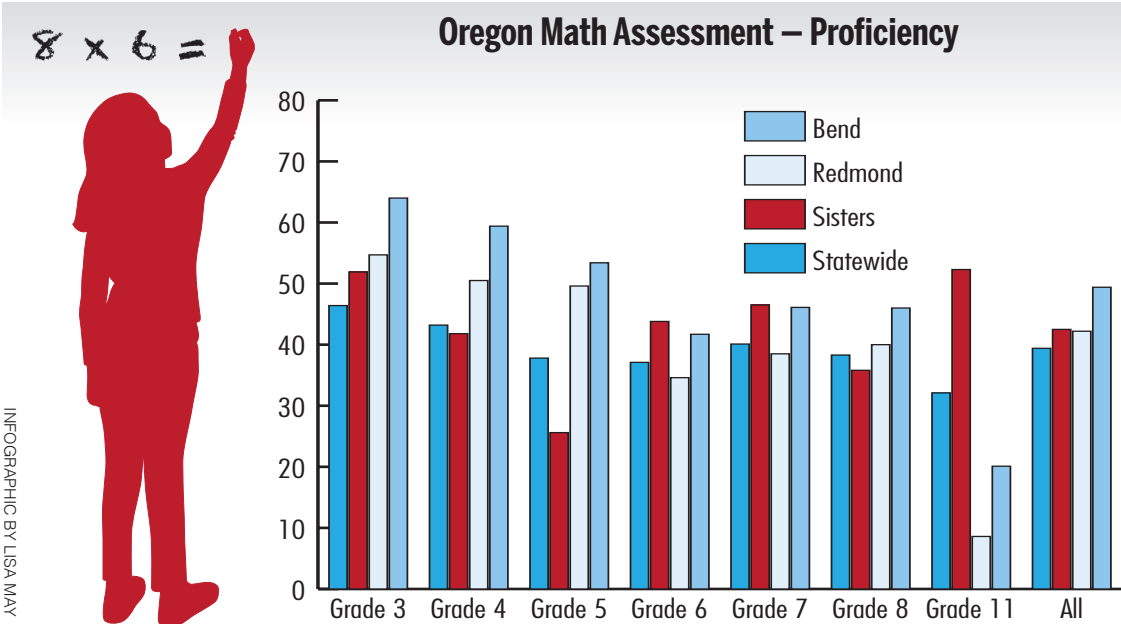
He said, “We do believe in a balanced assessment system and we would like to see a greater investment in balanced assessment

systems, so that teachers do have all the tools — most of the other states that use Smarter Balanced have other assessment measures that do include formative and interim assessment measures.”

Sisters High School Principal Joe Hosang said, “Sisters School District does currently have goals using Smarter Balanced results for the elementary and middle schools. As a district we focus on making sure students have the skills and competencies necessary for the next grade, college or the workforce.”

The ODE website ([www.oregon.gov/ode](http://www.oregon.gov/ode)) includes Smarter Balanced results for all districts in Oregon for the past five years that Smarter Balanced has been in existence that include detailed breakdowns of scores by grade, ethnicity, gender, language, and more.

To learn more about the Smarter Balanced Academic Consortium (SBAC) visit [www.smarterbalanced.org/](http://www.smarterbalanced.org/) about.



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