

NBCOT®

Exam Development

Beginning of Each Exam Cycle
Every 5 Years

OT Practice Study

Through this study, we determine the essential knowledge required for safe and effective OT practice. These findings shape the content of the certification exam to make sure it assesses the competencies needed for quality client care.

Standard Setting

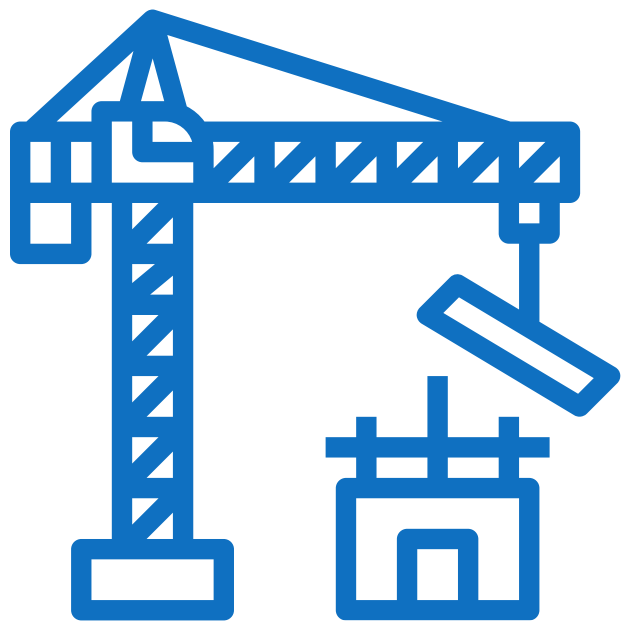
We work with OT professionals, under the direction of our psychometrician, to set the passing standard for the exam. This confirms the exam assesses the minimum level of knowledge that corresponds with safe and competent OT practice.

**These next steps happen
throughout the exam cycle to
support high-quality exams.**



Question Development

We work with OT professionals to develop new questions for the exam that reflect current practice.



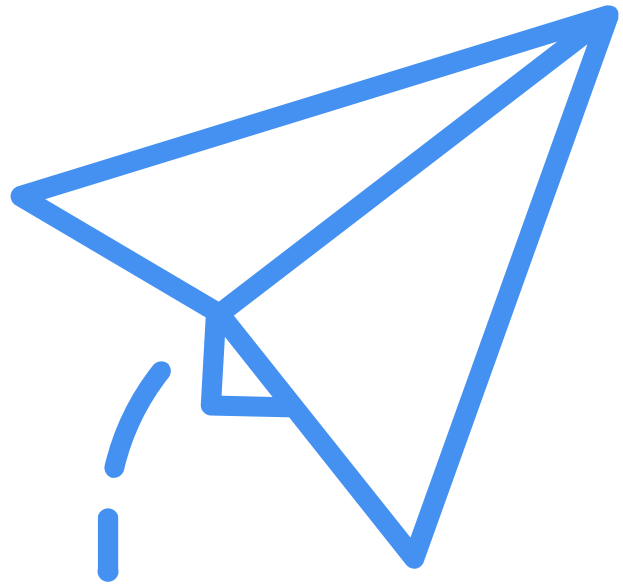
Exam Development

We ensure consistency by using a blueprint to build all exams to identical specifications.



Exam Validation

Before an exam is released, OT professionals review the exam and confirm all questions reflect current practice and are accessible and unbiased.



Exam Delivery

Once validated, the exam is prepared for test delivery through a network of secure and accessible testing centers.



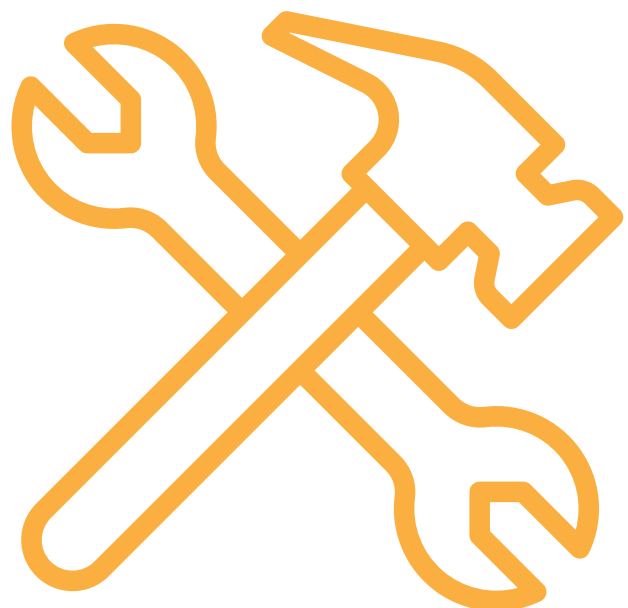
Field Testing

We pilot test all newly developed questions to verify they meet statistical and fairness standards before they are included as scored questions on the exam.



Exam Analysis

We conduct statistical analyses on all aspects of our exams to affirm they accurately and fairly assess the essential knowledge for OT practice.



Question Enhancement

We continually review and validate the exam questions to confirm the exams continue to stay relevant, clear, and up-to-date with current OT practice.

New Infographics to Showcase Importance of Certification

Pathway to Safe and Competent Occupational Therapy Practitioners

NBCOT® Certification Matters

Education

1 Graduate from an accredited OT or OTA program to gain essential knowledge and skills for practice.

2 Experience

Complete hands-on fieldwork experience by working with real clients under the supervision of experienced OT professionals in a variety of practice settings.

Ethics

3 Abide by the NBCOT Code of Conduct, which holds certified OT professionals to high standards for personal

NBCOT National Board
for Certification in
Occupational Therapy

How We Develop Fair and Defensible Occupational Therapy Certification Exams

A Continuous Commitment to Excellence

Beginning of Each Exam Cycle

Ocurring every 5 years:

OT Practice Study

We conduct a study to determine the essential job tasks and knowledge required for safe and effective OT practice. These findings shape the content of the certification exam to make sure it assesses the competencies needed for quality client care.

Standard Setting

We work with OT professionals, under the direction of our psychometrician, to set the passing standard for the exam. This confirms the exam assesses the minimum level of knowledge that corresponds with safe and competent OT practice.

Tasks Throughout the Exam Cycle

These steps continuously support high-quality exam:

Question Development

We work with OT professionals to develop new questions for the exam that reflect current practice.



Exam Development

We ensure consistency by using a blueprint to build all exams to identical specifications.



National Standards for Occupational Therapy

Ensuring Safe, Competent Care for All

Why Certification Matters



Supports a Consistently Qualified National OT Workforce
Ensures OT professionals meet established national standards, regardless of their educational path, thereby enhancing access to competent practitioners for all.



Protects the Public
Verifies that practitioners meet rigorous safety and competency standards.



Backed by Research
Studies show certification enhances care quality and patient outcomes.

Public Protection is Critical



Licensure alone is not enough
Requirements and scope of practice vary from state to state, which can lead to inconsistencies in standards of care.



Without Certification, Client Safety is at Risk
In the absence of a uniform, national standard, quality of care could be jeopardized.



Certification Validates Competency
NBCOT's initial certification and renewal processes are designed to uphold safety and effectiveness in OT practice.



Upholding Ethical Standards & Accountability
Certified OT professionals are held to NBCOT's Code of Conduct and as such are subject to a disciplinary action process to protect the public and safeguard the integrity of the profession.

Independence & Objectivity

Exam Trends

First Time New Graduate Pass Rates



	2024	2023	2022
Total candidates	8,876	9,214	9,145
Pass rate	68%	73%	77%

First Time New Graduate Pass Rates



	2024	2023	2022
Total candidates	2,932	3,439	3,884
Pass rate	68%	74%	71%

New Graduate Pass Rates



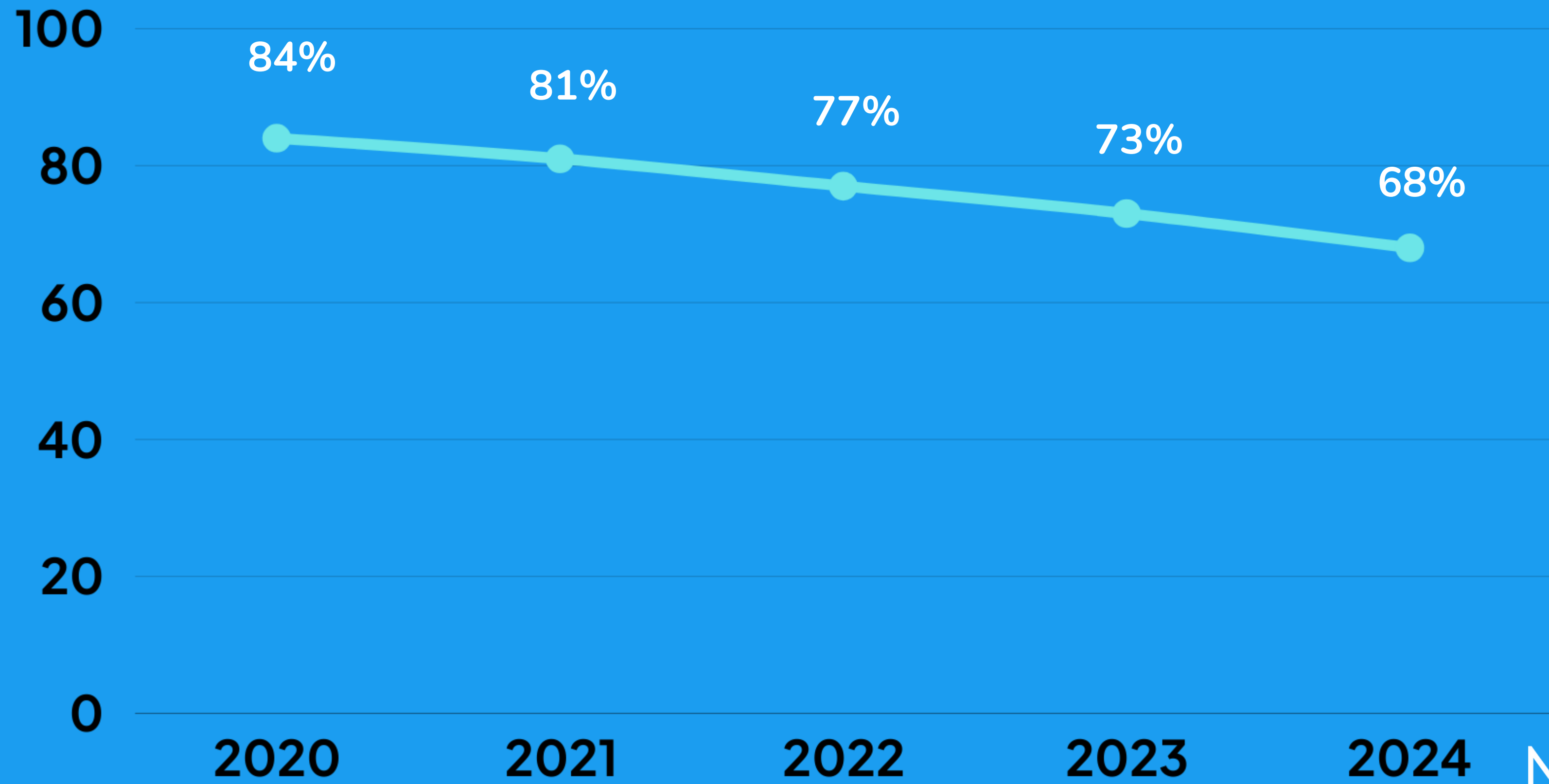
	2024	2023	2022
Total candidates	8,640	9,034	9,168
Pass rate	93%	95%	96%

New Graduate Pass Rates

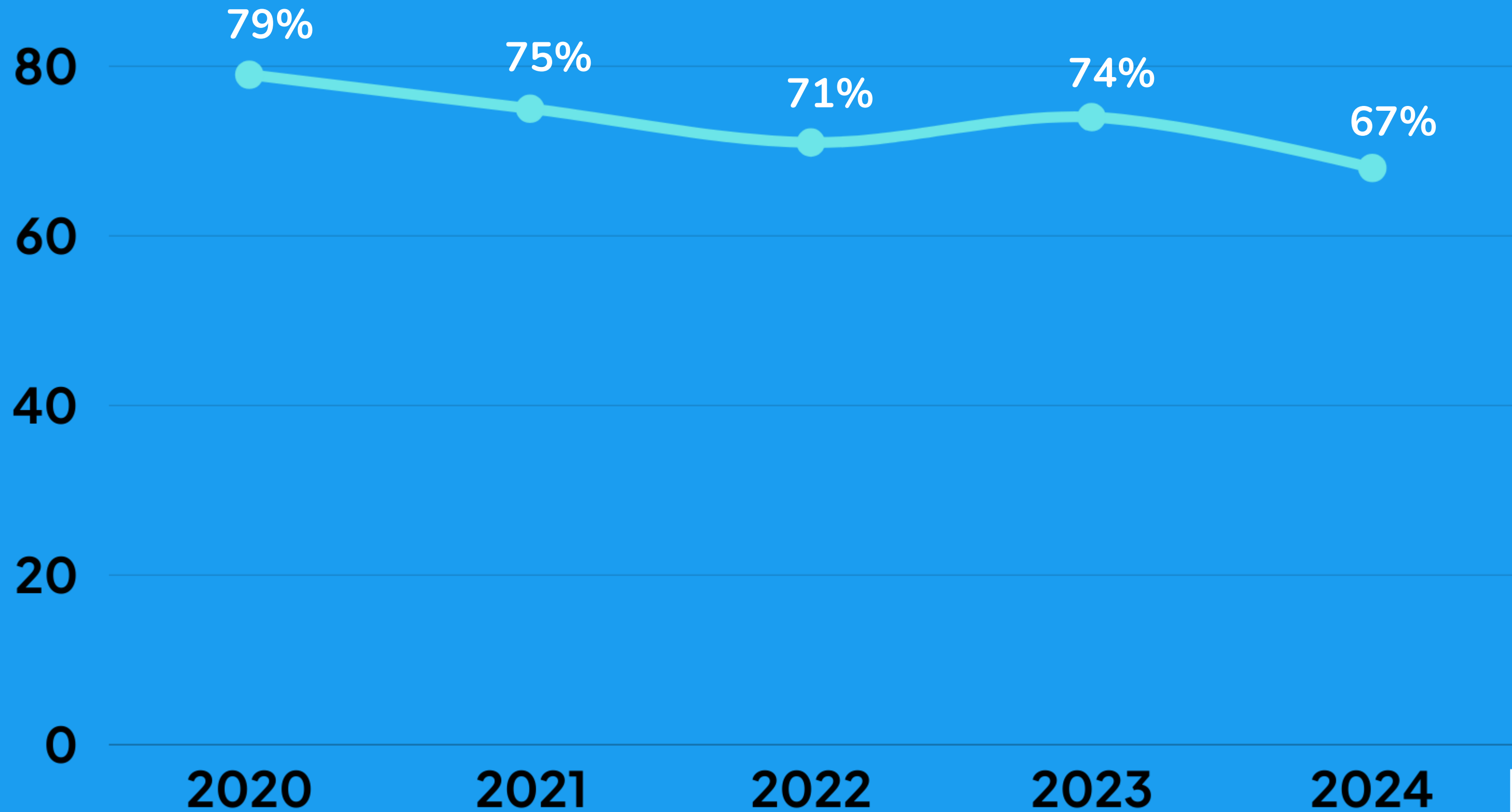


	2024	2023	2022
Total candidates	2,883	3,472	3,966
Pass rate	84%	87%	85%

OTR FTNG Pass Rate



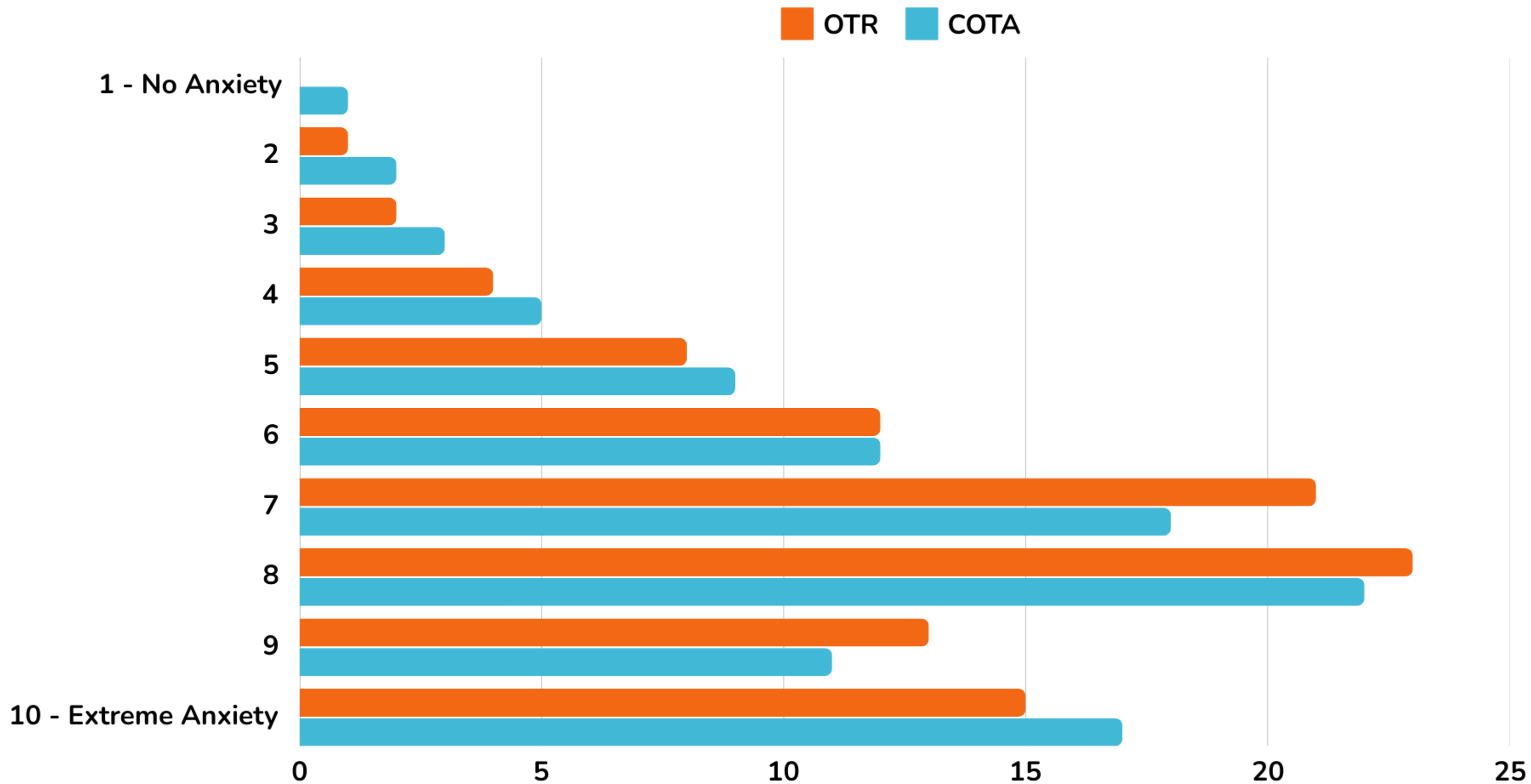
COTA FTNG Pass Rate



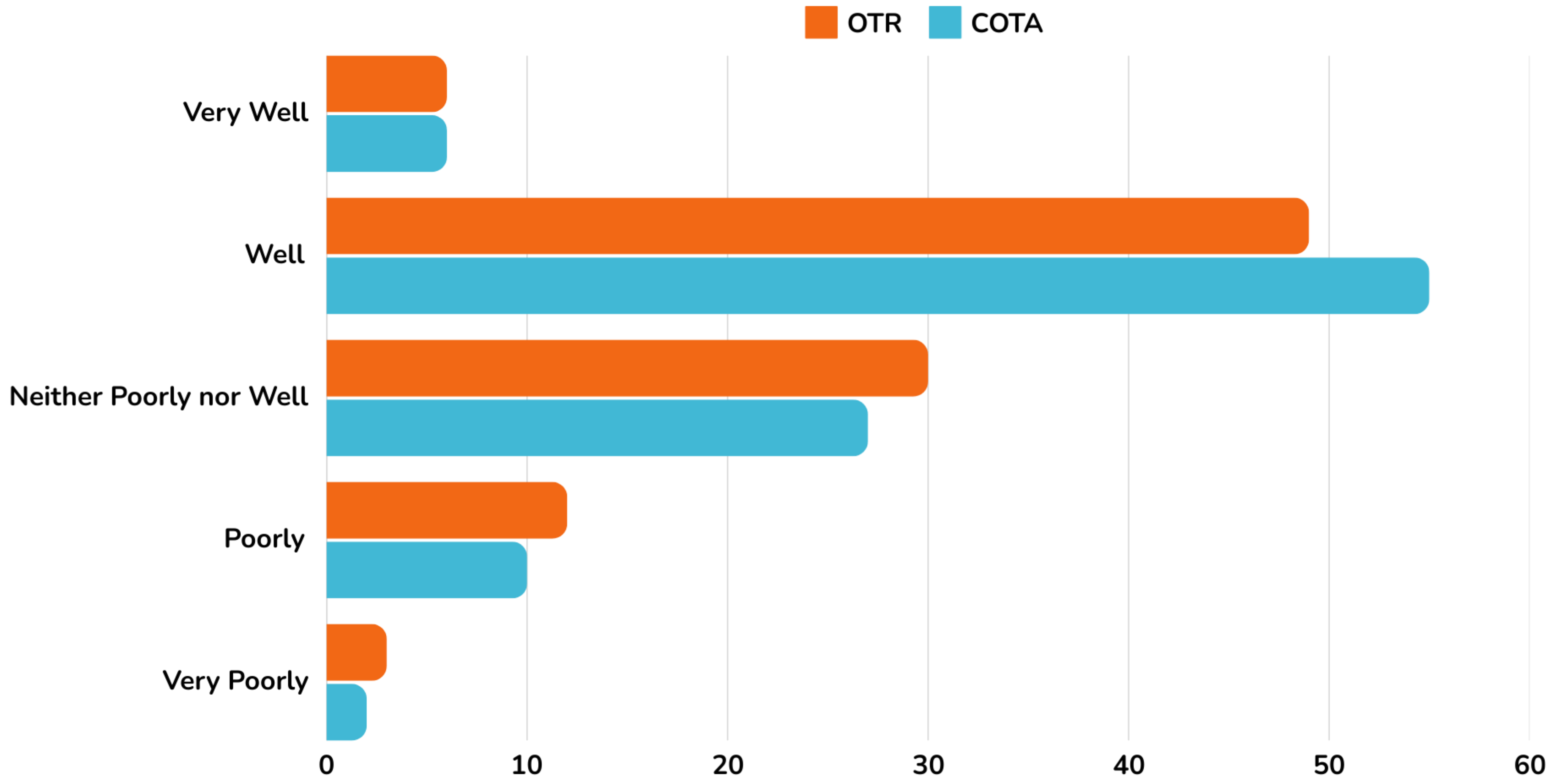
nbcot.org/certification-activities

Post Exam Survey Results

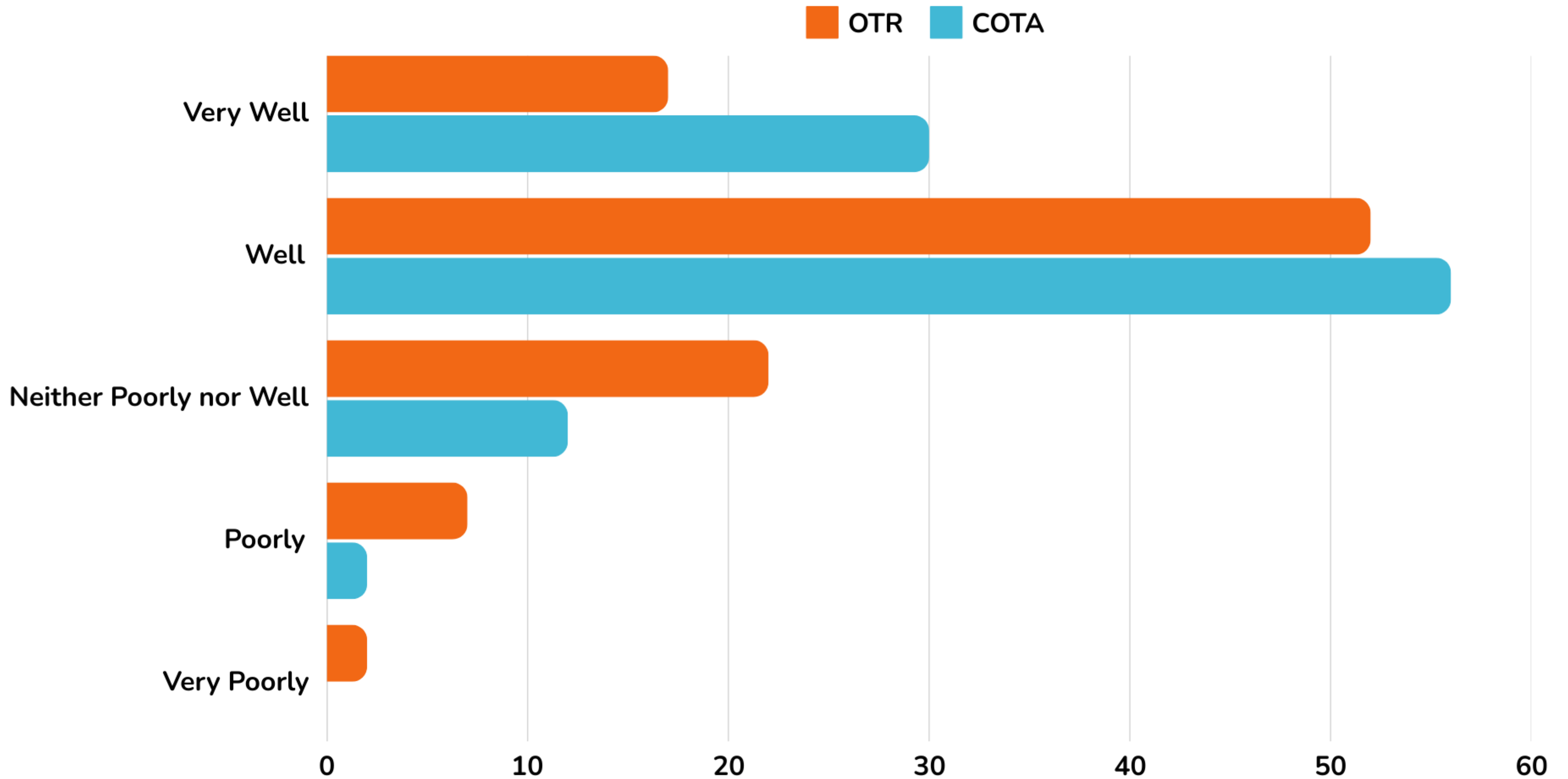
On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is no anxiety and 10 is extreme anxiety, please rate your level of anxiety going into the exam.



How well do you think the
classroom portion of your
academic program prepared you
for the exam?



**Overall, how well do you think your
fieldwork experiences prepared
you for the exam?**



Overall, how prepared did you feel
to take the exam?

OTR COTA

Very Prepared

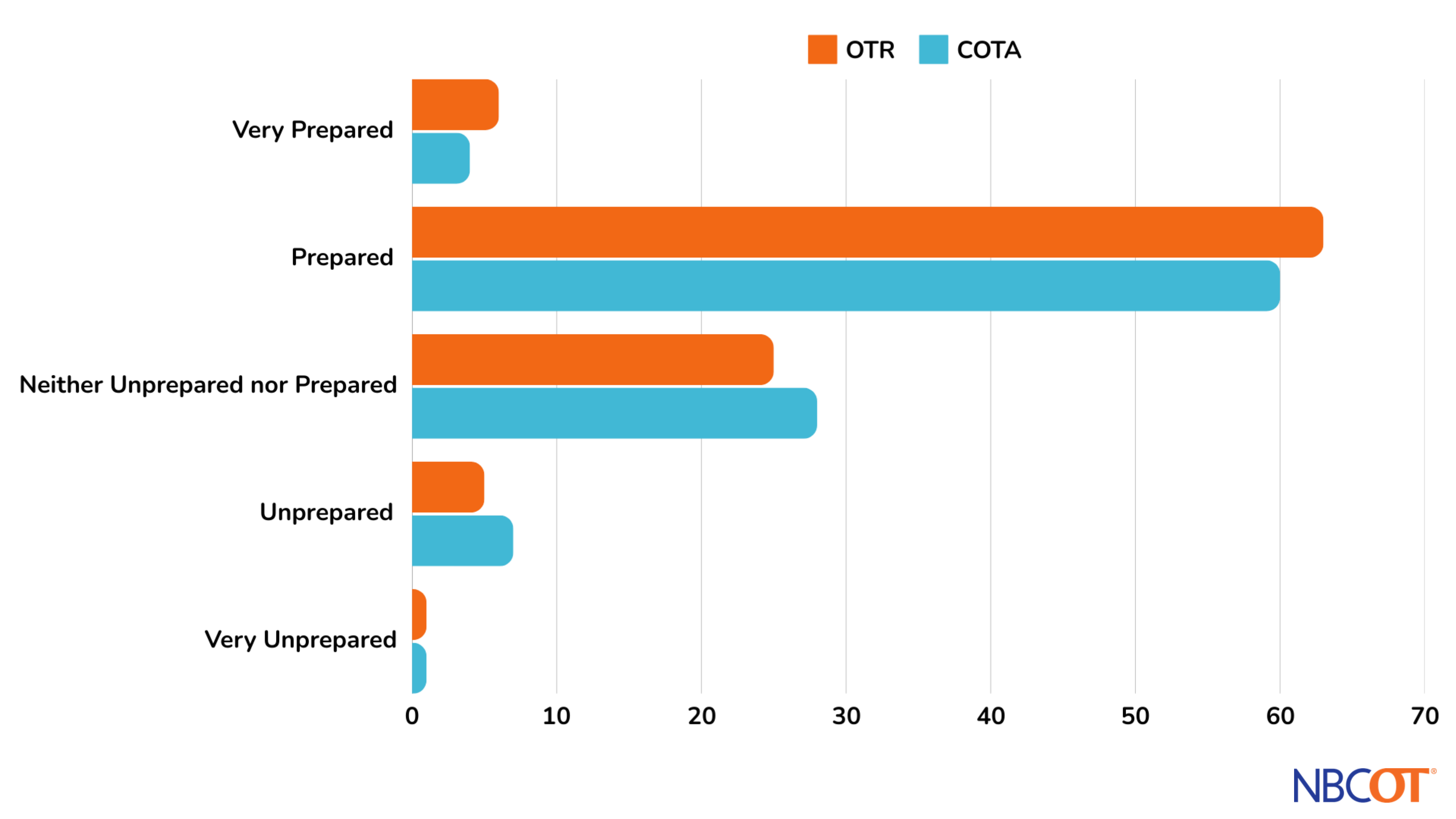
Prepared

Neither Unprepared nor Prepared

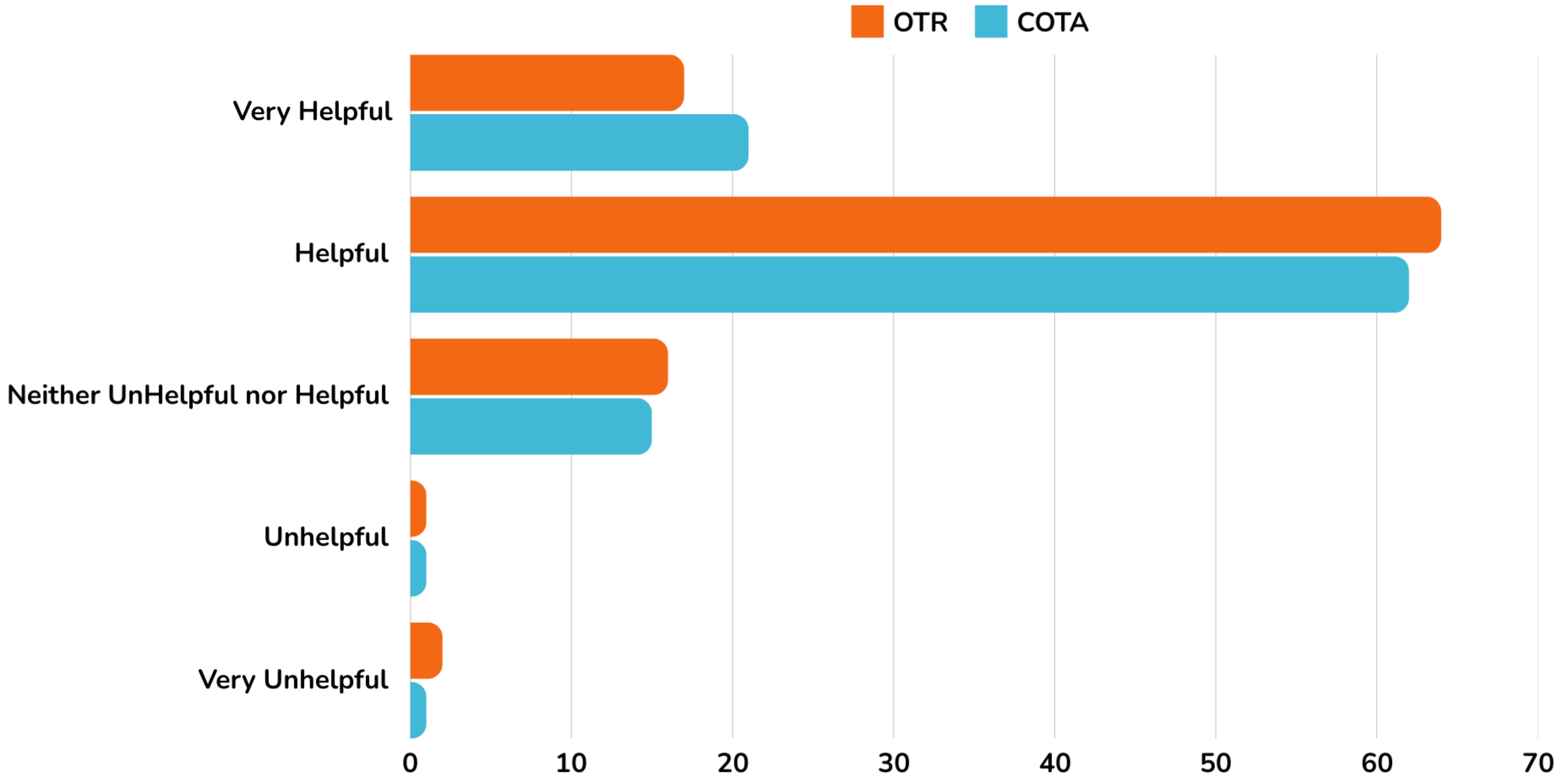
Unprepared

Very Unprepared

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70



How helpful did you find
the exam tutorial?



PD Portal



[Home](#) [Verify Students](#) [Degree Verification](#) [NBCOT Reporting](#) [NBCOT Products](#) [OTKE](#) [Resources](#)

[Passing Candidates](#) [Program Data](#) [Customized Score Report](#) [Examination Performance Feedback Reports](#)



Performance Feedback Report

Program directors have access to the same score report students receive after an unsuccessful event via your PD portal

Only if student gives permission during exam application



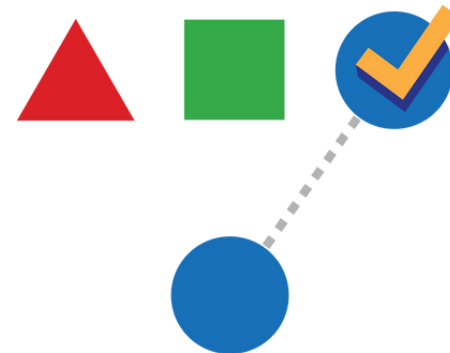
OTKE[®]



NBCOT Exam
StudyPack[®]

myEBPtool
an evidence-based digital notebook


feelReadySM
WORKSHOP





Home

Verify Students

Degree Verification

NBCOT Reporting

NBCOT Products

OTKE

Resources



feel ReadySM
WORKSHOPS

plan. practice. breathe.



Deconstruct questions



**Learn & apply
test-taking strategies**



Assess exam readiness



Reduce test anxiety



Engage in fun activities & interact with others



Develop a personalized study plan



feel/Res
WORKSH
plan. pract

dySM
O P
ice. breathe.

Empower Your Exam Prep

The feel

Insights & Takeaways

Working

from workshop attendees
at Stanbridge

Interested in hosting a workshop?

 Home

Verify Students

Degree Verification

NBCOT Reporting

NBCOT Products

OTKE

Resources

Exam Vouchers



Home

Verify Students

Degree Verification

NBCOT Reporting

NBCOT Products

OTKE

Resources



OTKE[®]

Occupational Therapy Knowledge Exam



Dr. Sara Walters

DrOT, LOTR, BCP

Program Director & Assistant Professor
LSU Health Shreveport

And then



Dr. Sandra Whisner

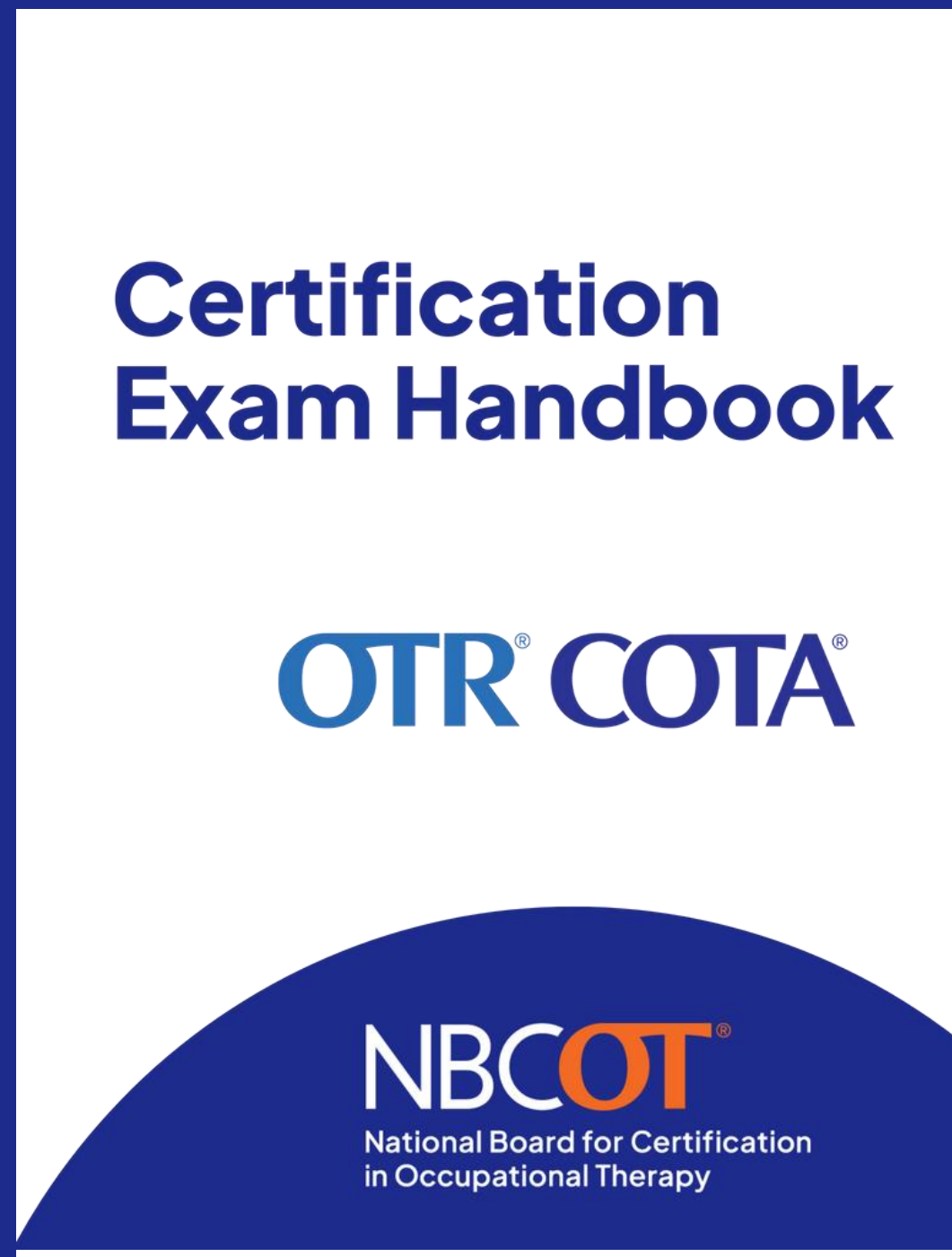
PhD, OTR

Program Director & Assistant Professor
Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center

use it as an

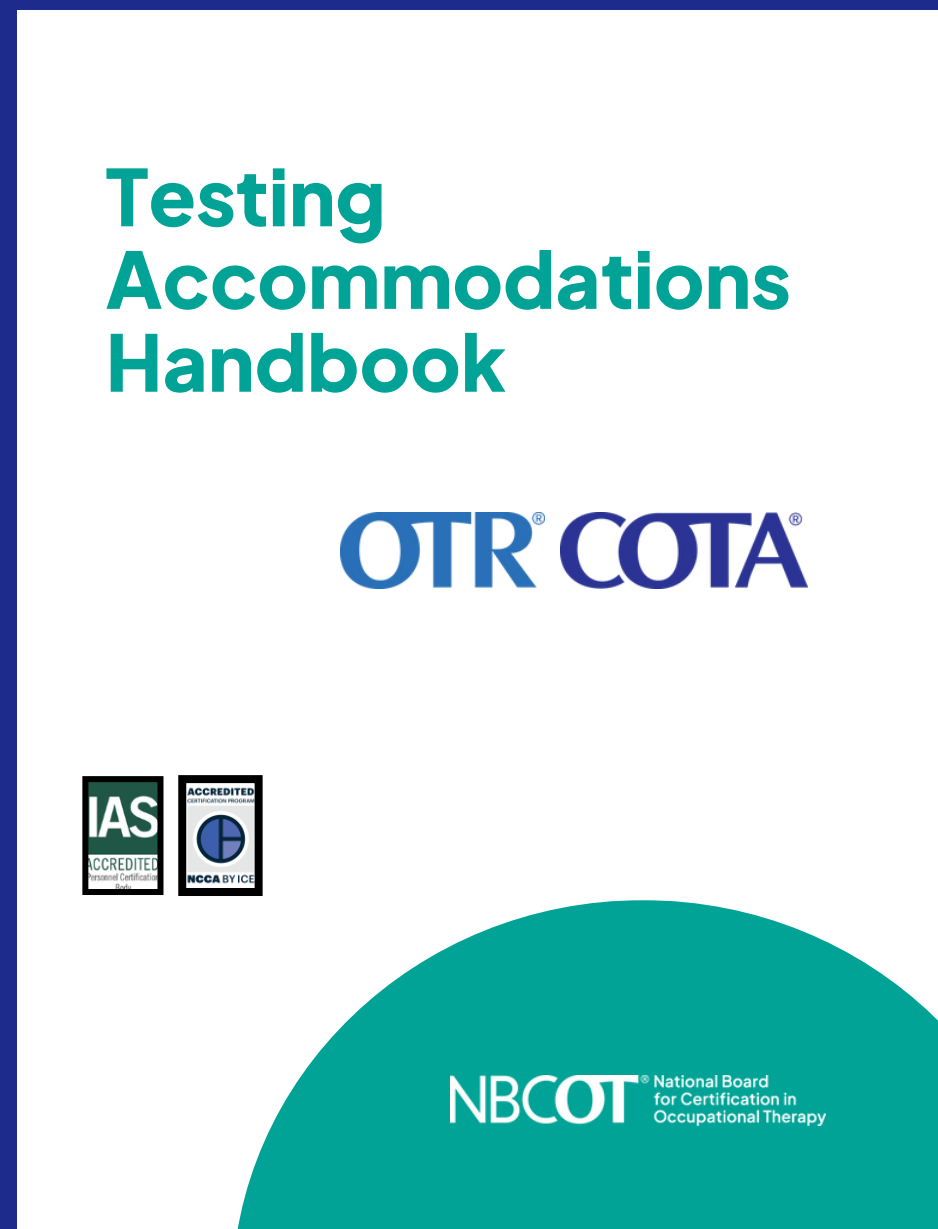
Exam Administration

Exam Handbook



**Read prior to applying
for the exam**

Testing Accommodations



Read prior to applying
for the exam

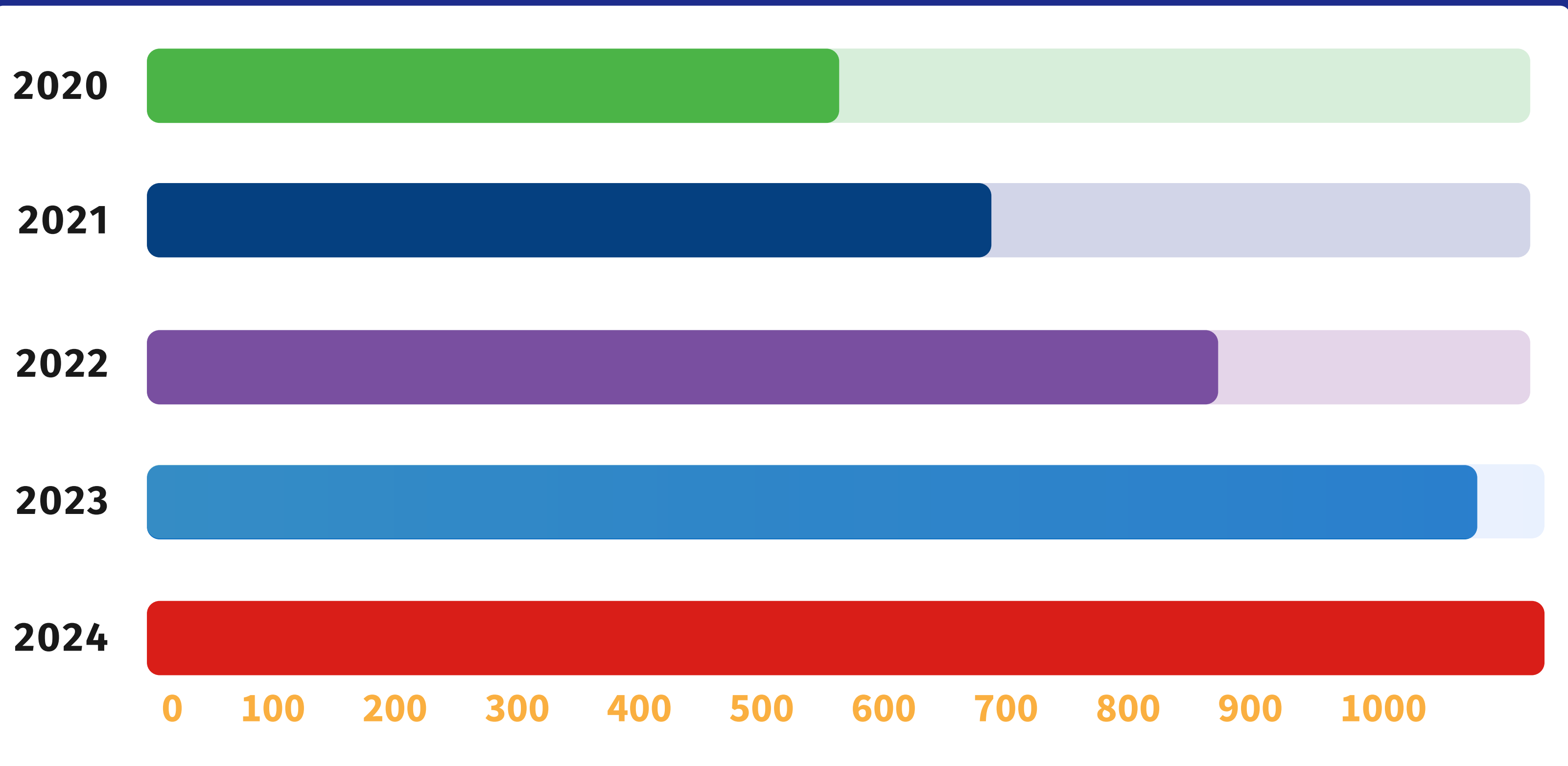
Testing Accommodations

Get documentation in order

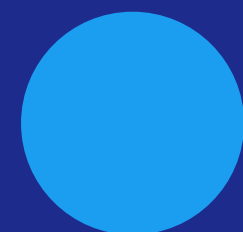
Request during the exam app

Being prepared prevents delays

Testing Accommodations



Exam Scoring Calendar

 Last day to take
the exam to be
included in
release date

 Score Day

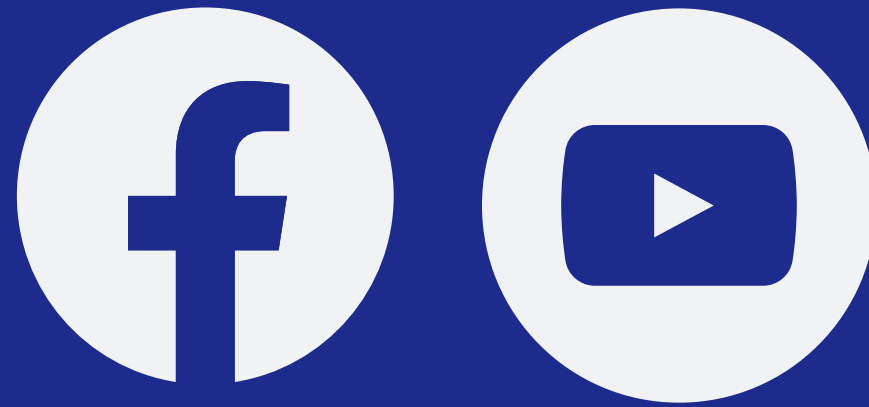
June

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Student Presentations



nbcot.org/news-events/events



@nbcotcertification



@nbcot



company/nbcot/

Ambassador Program





OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

L I C E N S U R E C O M P A C T

Conference

OT Student Presentation
Thursday, April 3 @ 9 a.m.

OTA Student Presentation
Thursday, April 3 @ 10 a.m.



#FutureOTR®



#FutureCOTA®

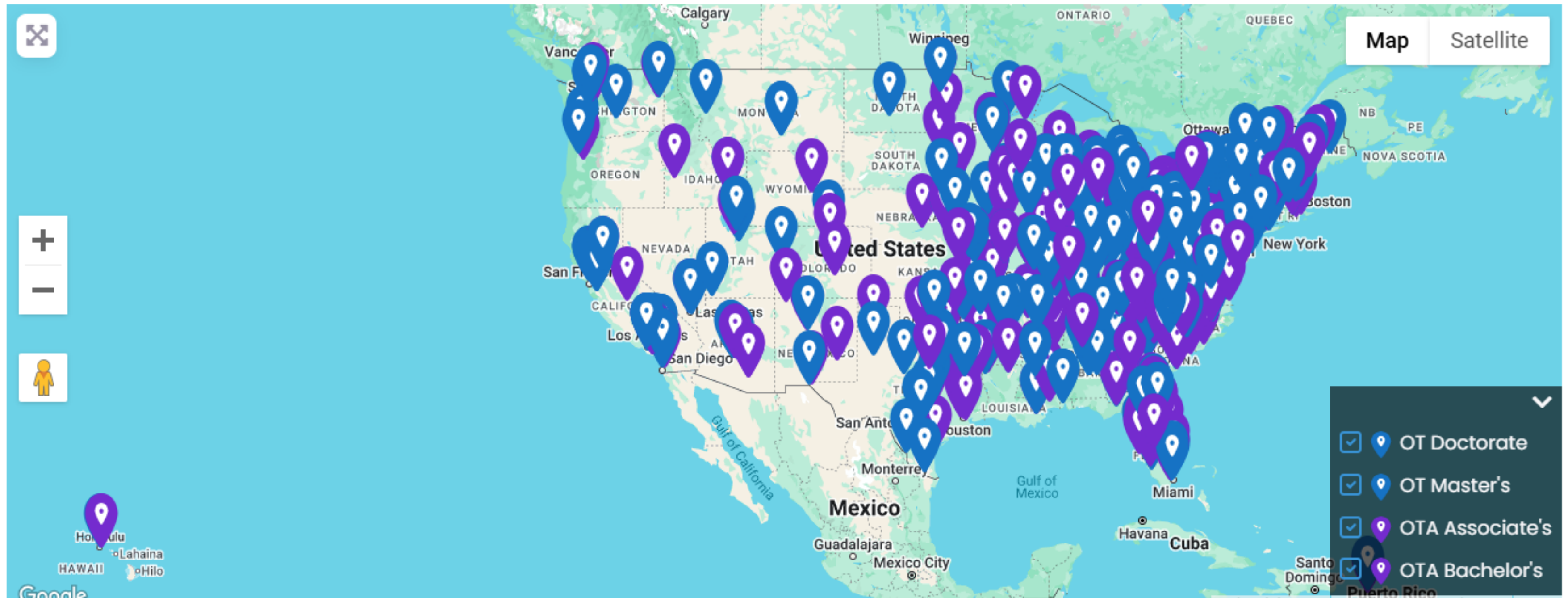
pdirectors@nbcot.org





WhyChooseOT.com/Pathways

...e you to make a meaningful impact in the lives of individuals and communities.





What is OT? ▾

Become an OTP ▾

Resources ▾

OT IRL



Find an Occupational Therapy Program

Alabama State University: OT Doctorate

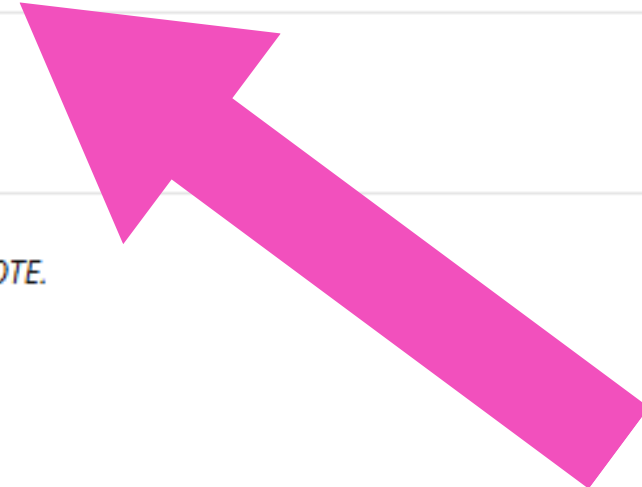
📍 915 South Jackson Street, Montgomery, Alabama, United States, 36101-0271



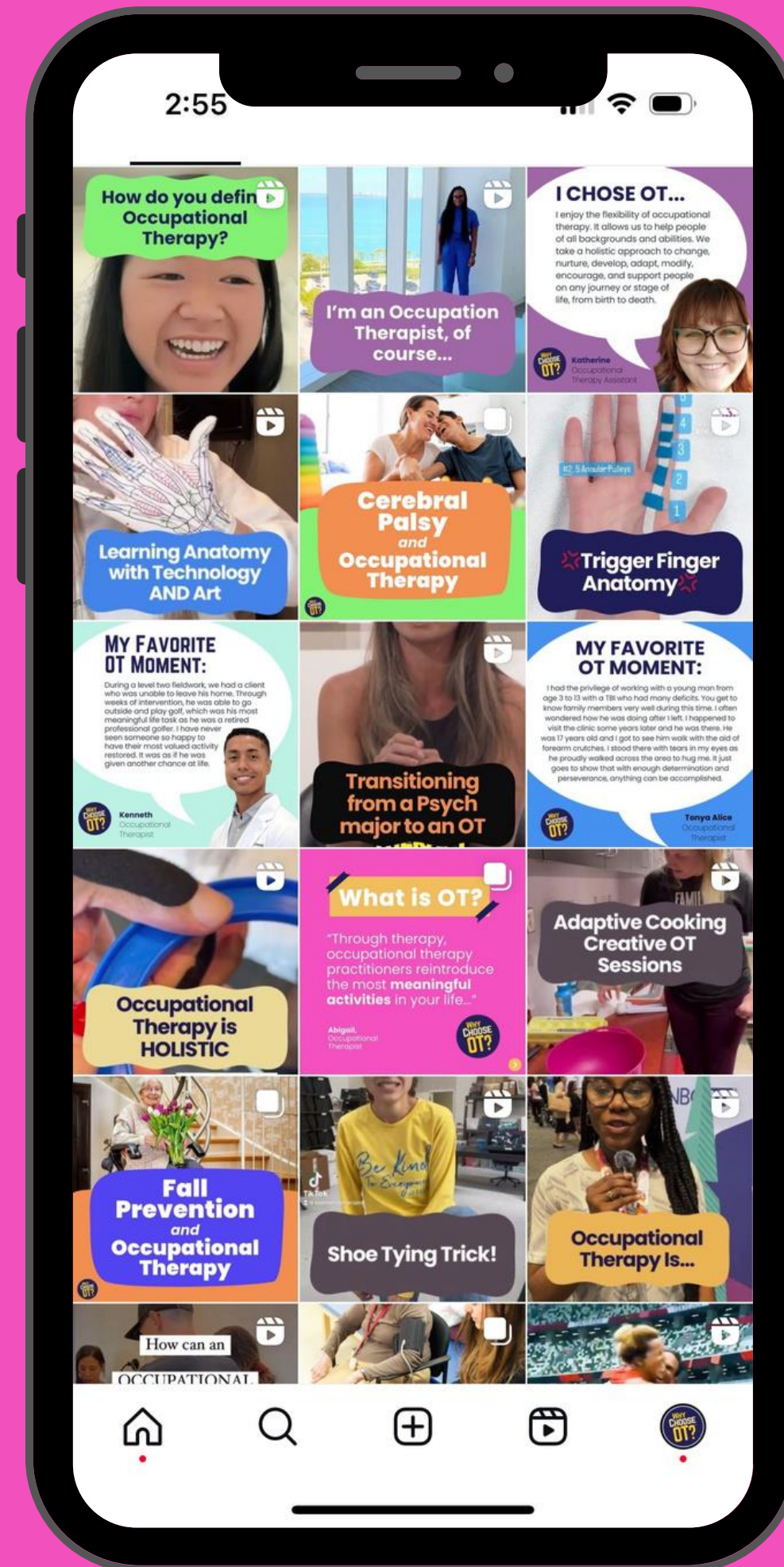
OT Doctorate

OT Programs

You can verify the current accreditation status of this program at ACOTE.



@WhyChooseOT



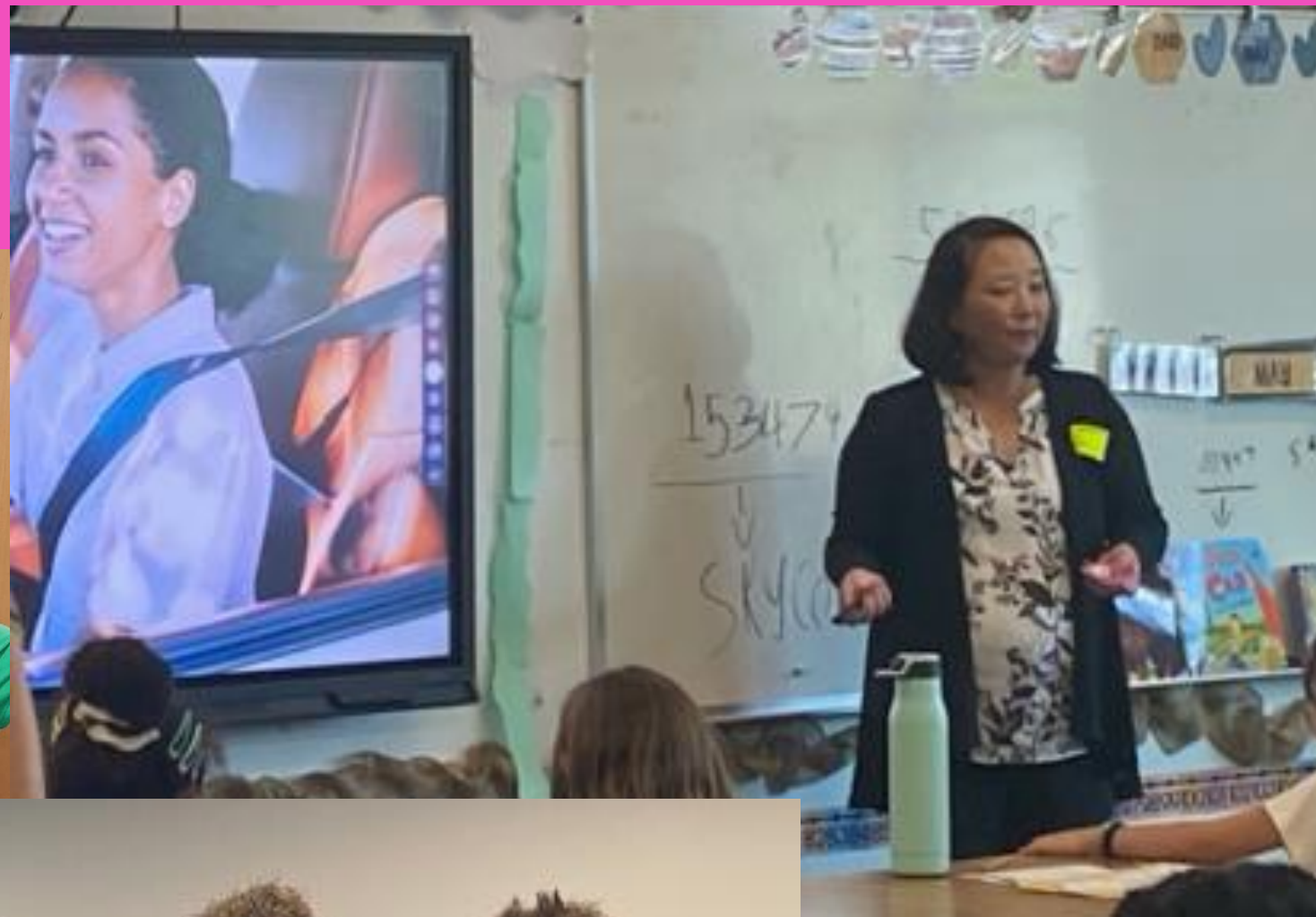
Advertising

277,637,104

WhyChooseOT.com/resources



Events





HOSA is a global student–led organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services and several federal and state agencies.

The mission of HOSA is to empower HOSA–Future Health Professionals to become leaders in the global health community through education, collaboration, and experience.





300,000
members





OT Competition





50 Question Multiple- Choice Test





50 Q MC Test + Skills Competition





hosa.org/guidelines





2025 International Leadership Conference



New Partnership



NSHSS

Be Honored. Be More.



info@whychooseot.com



**Help share the
message!**



Virginia Promote OT Challenge

A collaborative advocacy effort among
Virginia OT & OTA programs



Virginia Promote OT Challenge

- Friendly competition among Virginia OT & OTA programs
- Goal of raising awareness of the profession
- Students go back to their high school*
- Faculty visit a Virginia high school
- Use “**Why Choose OT**” Materials
- Thank you to NBCOT for support, prizes & incentives!



WHY CHOOSE OT?



Virginia

Occupational Therapist Educational Programs

Entry-Level Doctoral Programs (OTD)

Emory & Henry University
★ Marion, VA

Mary Baldwin University
★ Fishersville, VA

Old Dominion University/EVMS
★ Norfolk, VA

James Madison University
★ Harrisonburg, VA

Radford University
★ Radford, VA

Occupational Therapy Assistant Educational Programs

Associate Degree Programs (OTA)

Shenandoah University
★ Winchester, VA

Virginia Commonwealth University
★ Richmond, VA

Northern Virginia Community College
★ Springfield, VA

South University Richmond
★ Glen Allen, VA

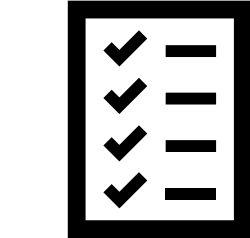
Eastern Virginia Career College
★ Fredericksburg, VA

Southern Virginia Community College
★ Richlands, VA

Tidewater Community College
★ Virginia Beach, VA

Virginia Western Community College
★ Roanoke, VA

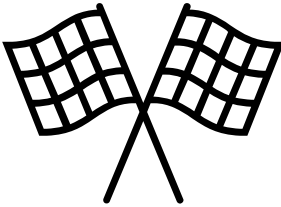
Planning:
Idea brainstorming & creation of materials



Participant Sign-up:
Priority sign-up date, additional sign-ups

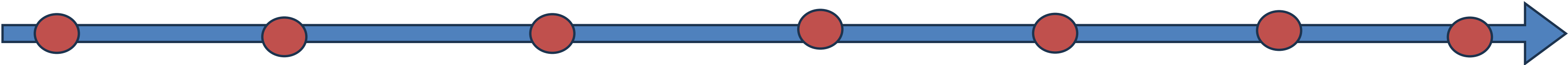


Monthly Updates:
Emails to school liaisons with reminders & updates

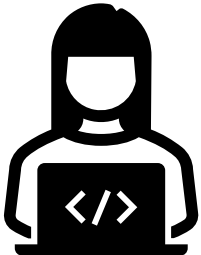


Challenge Conclusion:
Ends April 30th

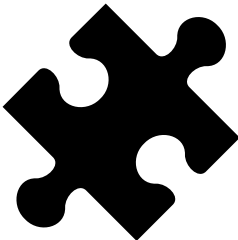
Recognize winning school & individual participants



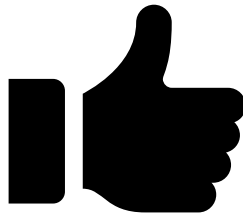
School Liaisons:
Recruitment & online training



Participant Matching:
Maximizing outreach to different high schools



Ongoing Support:
Challenge State Coordinator supports participants throughout

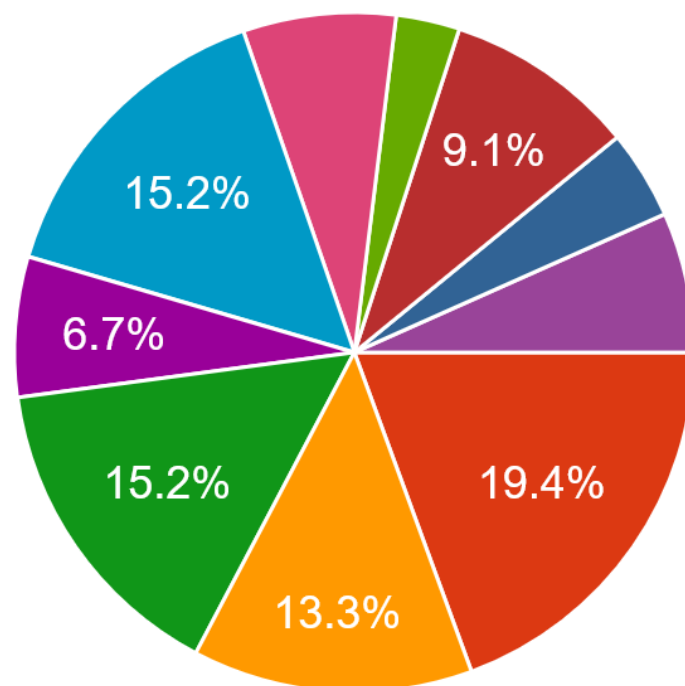


How is the Challenge going so far?

- 165 sign-ups!
- 10 schools participating (91% of schools)

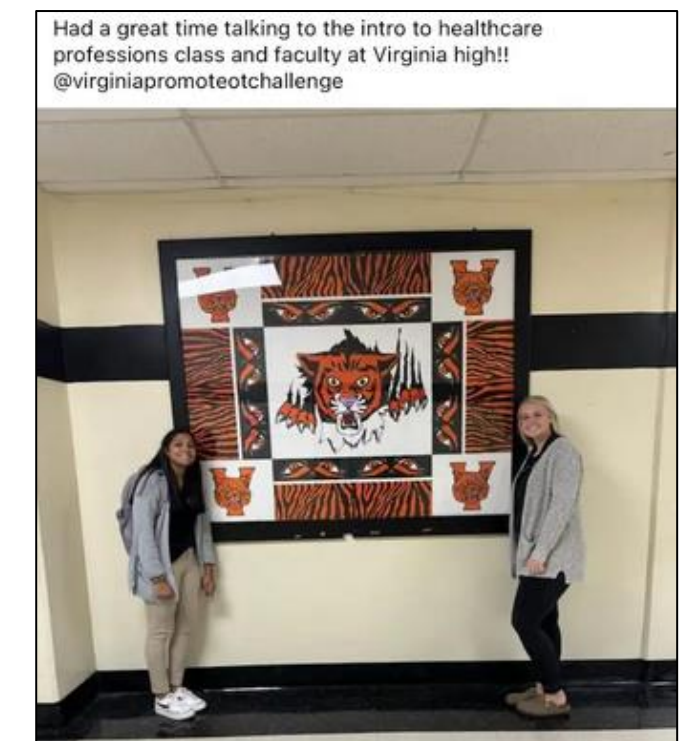
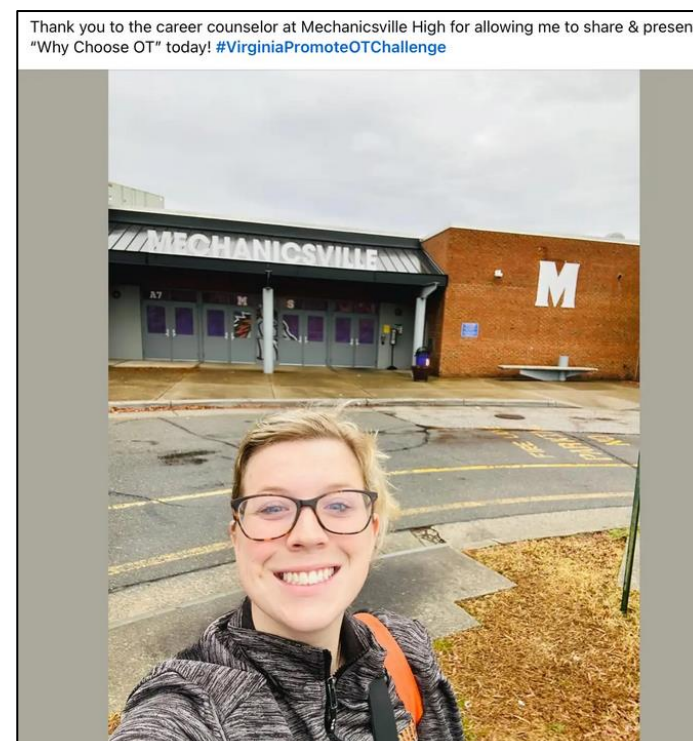
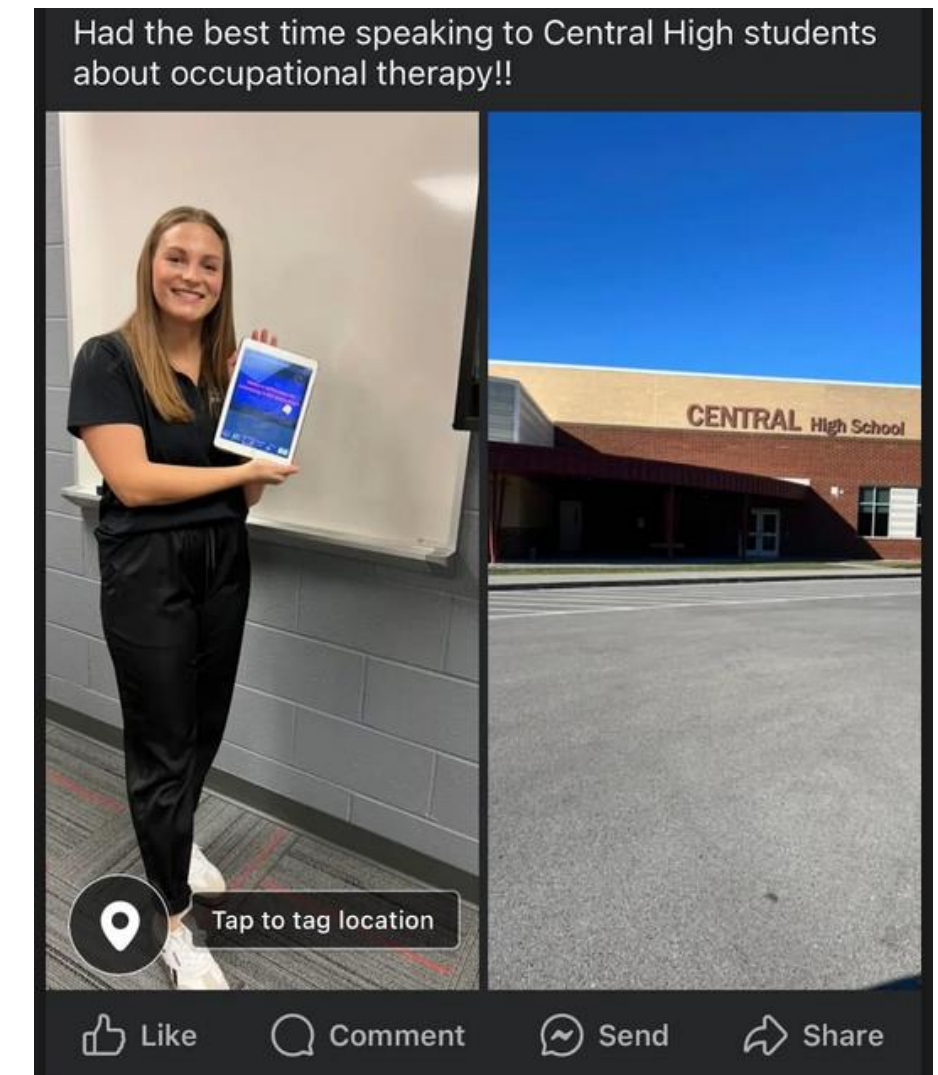
- 41 visits logged in the fall semester
- 800+ people heard about OT!
 - Visit attendance ranged from 1 to 90+

Select your OT program
165 responses



- Eastern Virginia Career College
- Emory & Henry
- James Madison University
- Mary Baldwin University
- Northern Virginia Community College
- Old Dominion University/ EVMS
- Radford University
- Shenandoah University
- South University (Richmond)
- Tidewater Community College
- Virginia Commonwealth University

Amplifying the visits: Social media



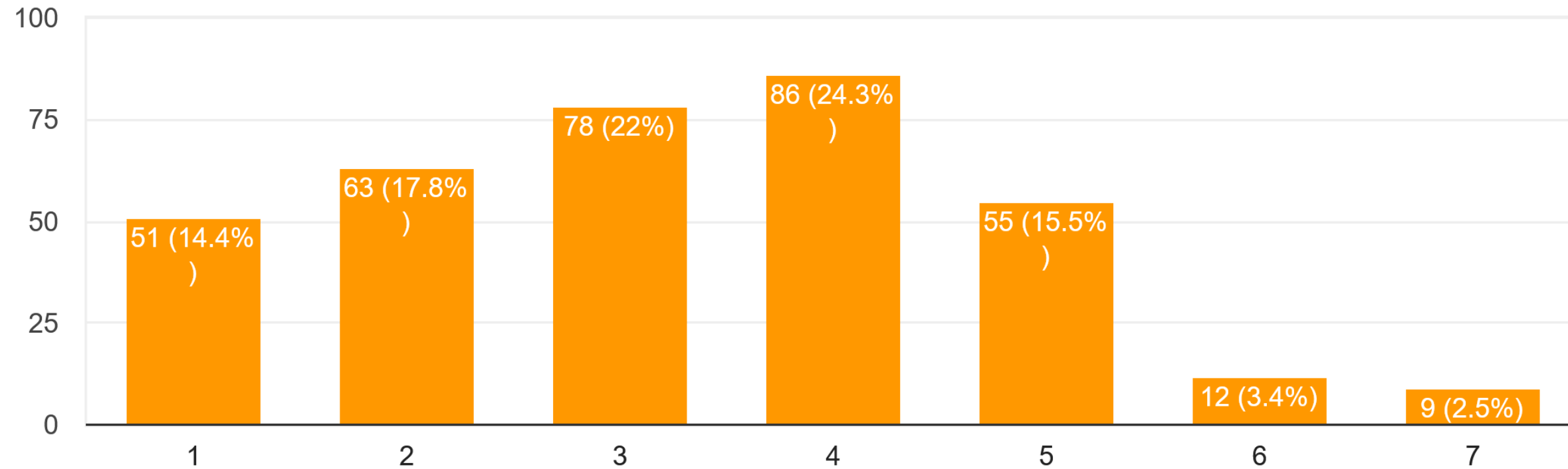
Pre-Presentation Survey

Will this make
a difference?

Post-Presentation Survey

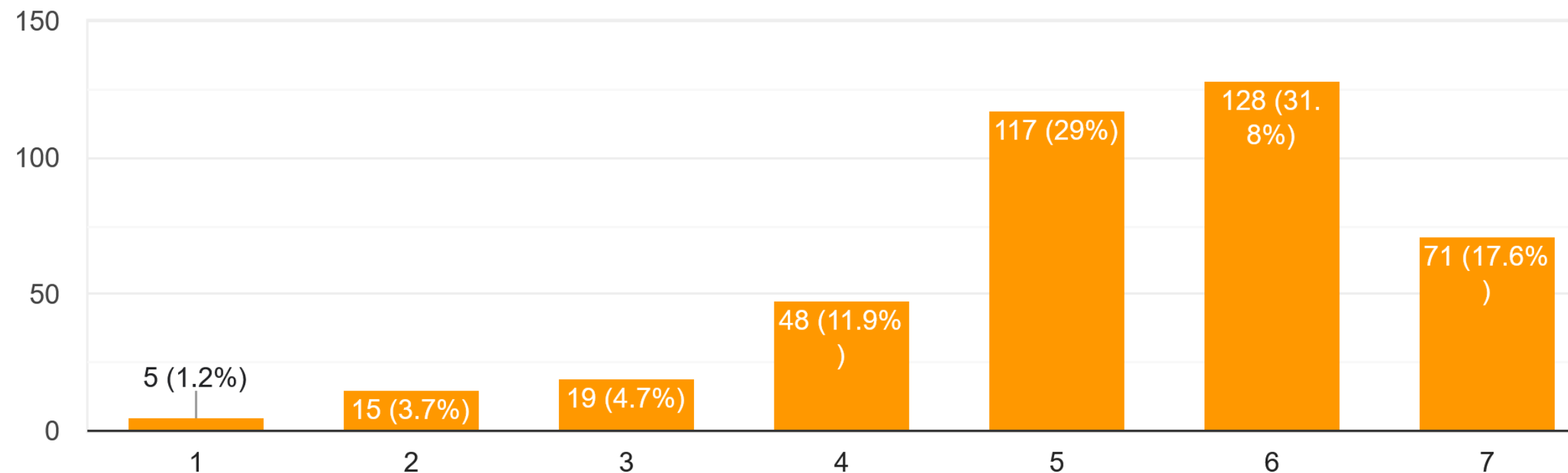
How aware are you of the profession of occupational therapy?

354 responses



How aware are you of the profession of occupational therapy?

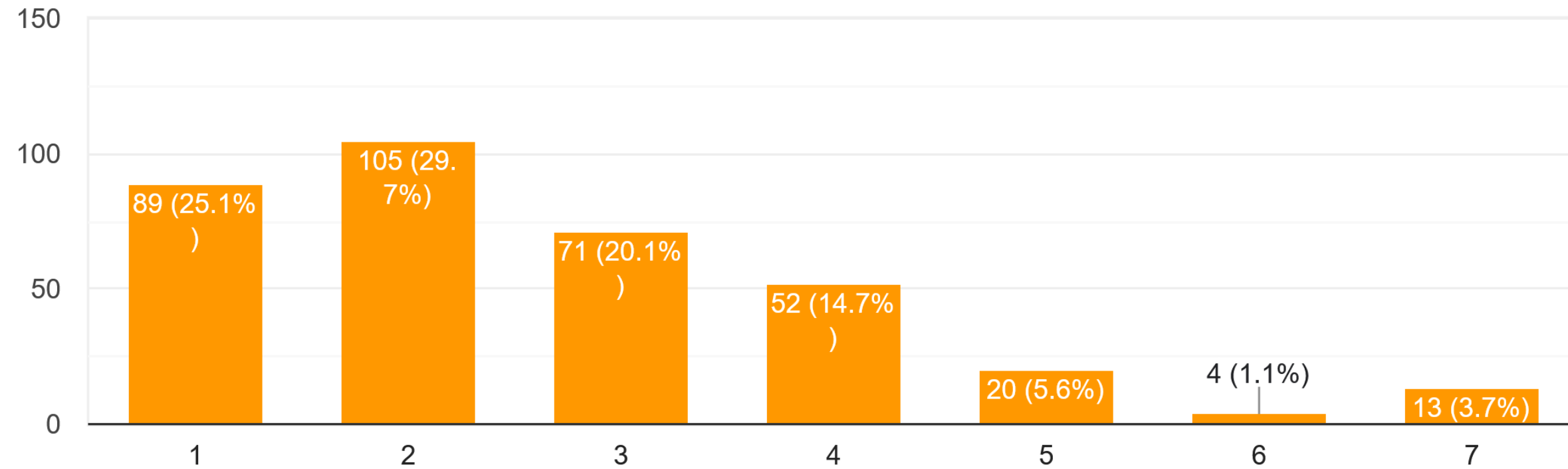
403 responses



Pre-Presentation Survey

How interested are you right now in working in occupational therapy (as an OT or OTA)?

354 responses

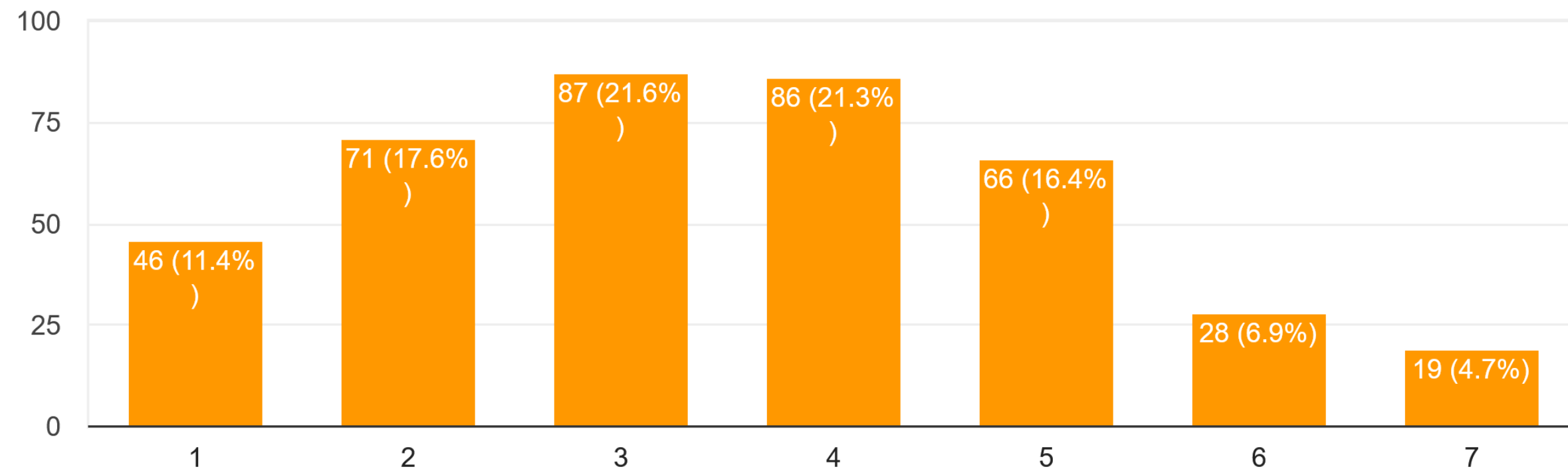


Will this make a difference?

Post-Presentation Survey

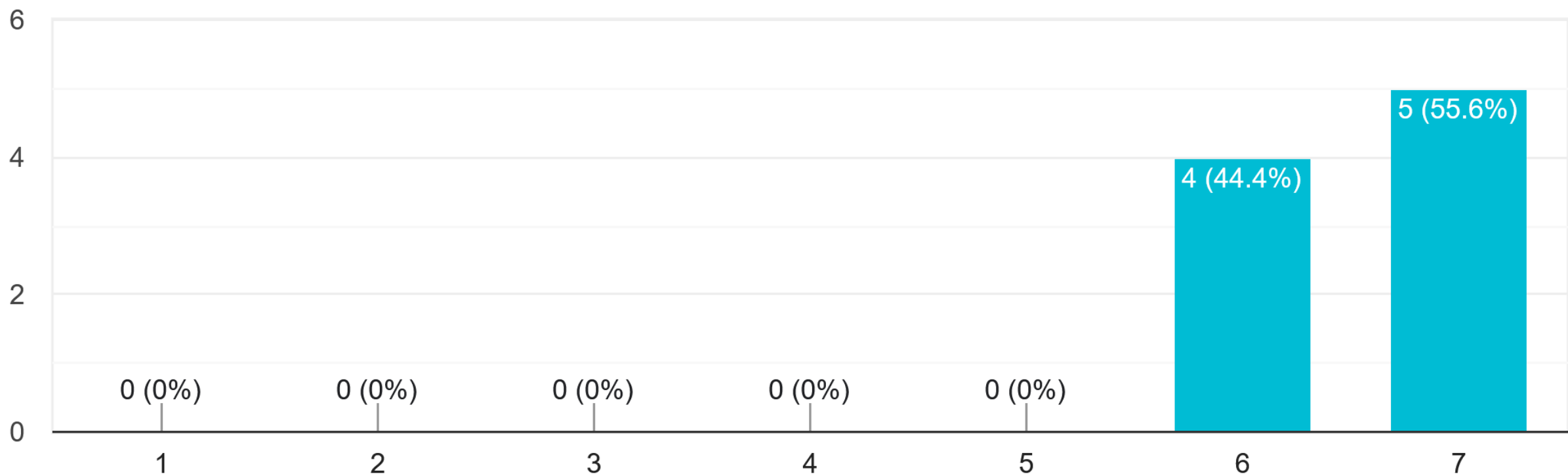
How interested are you right now in working in occupational therapy (as an OTA or OT)?

403 responses

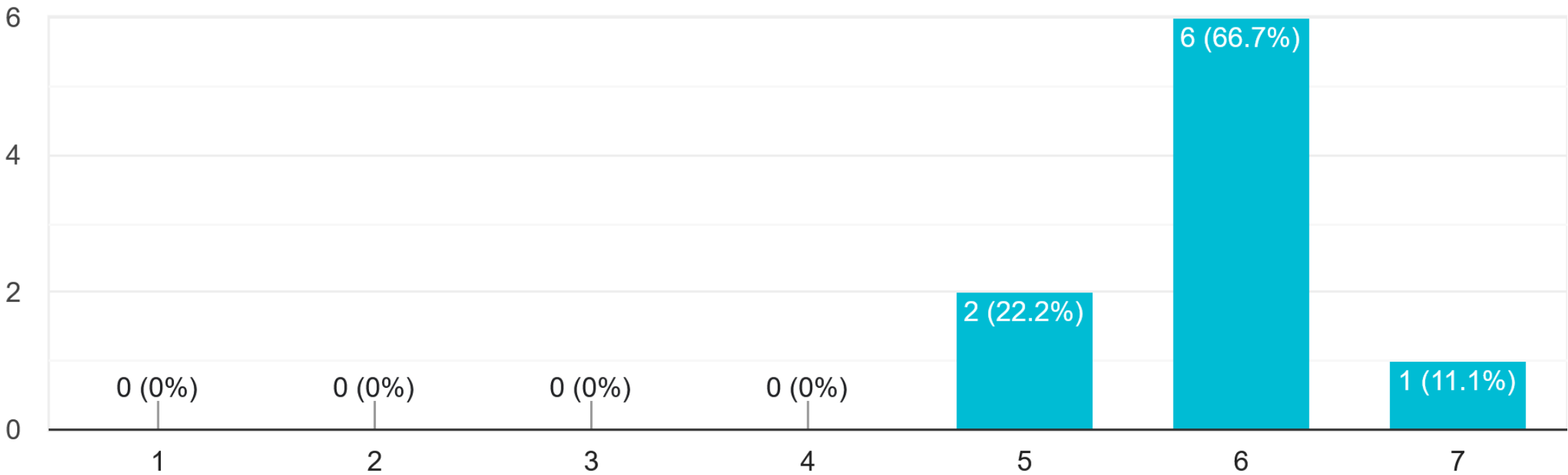


Will this make a difference?

How informative was this presentation regarding career pathways in occupational therapy?
9 responses



How prepared do you now feel to discuss career pathways in occupational therapy with your high school students?
9 responses



OT/OTA Student Participant Experience

I was really worried about the turnout of attendees for my presentation, but there were a lot more participants than I expected. It was so empowering to present about my profession.

I enjoyed speaking to kids who are from where I am from, who look and think like I once did. The kids were interested in the amount of money they could make.

None of the students were aware of occupational therapy, so it was amazing to see how many were interested after the presentation!

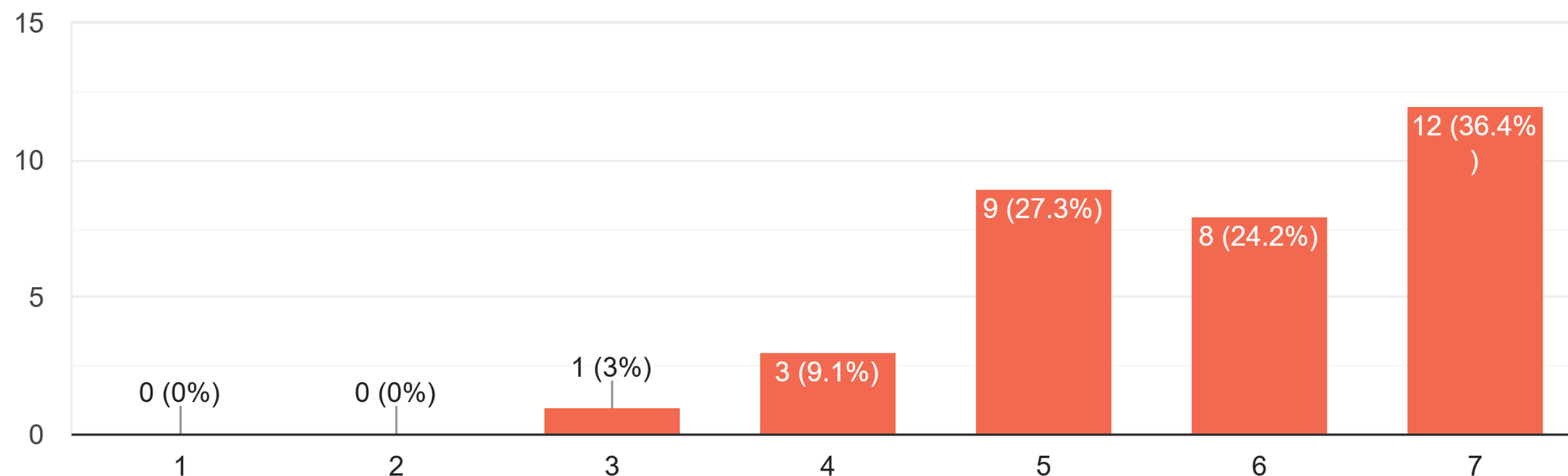
When a high school senior told me she finally knows what she wants to do, I realize I made an impact!

Most students were not aware of OT as a profession, but many students were interested in a career in mental health.

Overall, I think the challenge was very beneficial and the steps to follow were made very simple.

Reflect on your experience advocating for OT in the Challenge. How would you describe this experience?

33 responses



Next Steps: Virginia & Beyond



aellington@marybaldwin.edu

- Consider alternating audience groups (high school, middle school)
 - Grow our “contacts list” to streamline connecting with schools & support higher rate of follow-through
 - Additional incentive partners (state association?)
- Expand the pilot program with 4-5 more states (representing different regions & state sizes)
 - If you are interested:
 - Visit the NBCOT table in lobby today (or expo booth)
 - QR code or email Allison Ellington
 - Phase 2 State Coordinators will begin planning in late April/May