



Harvard Elementary School

Primary Years Programme

Assessment Policy

Mission:

The mission of Harvard Elementary School, with the support of our community, is to empower each student with global awareness, knowledge, skills and values necessary to make a better world.

Philosophy:

Assessment and instruction are interconnected to foster a globally-minded student. Assessment helps drive students through the following five essential elements of learning: “The acquisition of knowledge, the understanding of concepts, the mastery of skills, the development of attitudes, and the decision to take action,” (*Making the PYP Happen* 44). Assessment is an ongoing process where students assess their knowledge and then reflect to motivate future learning. This helps develop students to become lifelong learners. Through effective assessments, students are encouraged to integrate their learning with real-world tasks utilizing the action cycle.

Purpose:

Assessments have various purposes to be distinguished as a dynamic process of the learning cycle:

- Evaluate teaching and student inquiry
- Provide information about student mastery of skills
- Communicate feedback to students and parents about progress
- Show growth in the deepening of concepts, skills, and attributes of the Learner Profile through the years in the Primary Years Programme (PYP)
- Guide and facilitate students’ inquiry to provide insight and improve their learning upon reflection
- Inform every aspect of the teaching and learning processes
- Analyze areas for improvement in individual goal-setting
- Engage students in self-reflection and accountability for their learning
- Utilize successes to direct new endeavors

Practice:

Formative Assessment is interwoven with daily instruction and helps teachers and students find out what the students already know in order to plan the next stage of learning. Formative assessment and learning activities are directly linked -- neither can function effectively or purposefully without the other (*Making the PYP Happen*, p. 45).

Summative Assessment occurs at the end of the unit of inquiry and provides students with opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned. It aims to give teachers and students a clear insight into students' understanding (*Making the PYP Happen*, p. 45).

Primary Years Programme Perspective on Assessment:

Formative assessment is interwoven within each unit of inquiry. Pre-assessment is used to gather information from the students' prior knowledge, experiences, and misconceptions. Inquiries elicited from the pre-assessment are used to guide instruction. Ongoing formative assessments measure and guide the students understanding of the lines of inquiry; they enable us to evaluate the process of inquiry itself.

Summative assessment takes place at the end of each unit of inquiry. Each unit of inquiry begins with the end in mind. The summative assessment enables students to demonstrate their understanding of the central idea while prompting the students to take action. This will reflect the product of the students' inquiry.

Types of Assessment

- ✓ Portfolios
- ✓ Student reflection
- ✓ Self-Assessments
- ✓ Student/teacher feedback
- ✓ Peer-to-peer evaluations
- ✓ Student conversations
- ✓ Classroom discussions and activities
- ✓ Individual and group projects
- ✓ Oral administration
- ✓ Presentations, authentic work products, and multimedia
- ✓ Teacher observations

Houston Independent School District (HISD) Perspective on Assessment:

Formative assessments are used to gauge student mastery of content objectives, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), throughout instruction. These assessments are administered throughout the learning process to direct and inform instruction. Students reflect on their mastery of skills. Then they are able to determine their areas of growth.

Summative assessments are given at the conclusion of a unit of instruction to evaluate students overall mastery of content objectives (TEKS). These assist in holding the students, teachers, and parents accountable for the student learning. They are used as evidence of student learning throughout the school year.

Types of Assessment:

- ✓ NWEA Map Growth Screener (Reading, Math & Science)
- ✓ Classroom discussions and activities
- ✓ District Benchmarks
- ✓ State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)
- ✓ Unit tests
- ✓ Lesson quizzes
- ✓ Zearn Math
- ✓ Eureka Math Problem Sets
- ✓ Benchmark Running Records (K-5)
- ✓ DIBELS (K-1 only)
- ✓ CIRCLE (Pre-K only)

Reporting Learning

Reporting on assessment allows the teacher, parents, and students to work together using what the students know and understand to further student learning. It should reflect the values of the school community while being honest, fair, and credible for all students. In reporting, teachers identify the student's areas for growth while describing the student's progress through the programme. Additionally, the teachers and school report the student's progress to the district and state as an accountability measure for student learning.

Teachers provide feedback to the students and parents on a weekly basis by reporting grades on coursework assignments. Parents also have access to the student's grades through HISD's online gradebook. Through the weekly Home Communication Folders and our 2-way digital communication platform (Parent Square), teachers provide weekly anecdotal records for the student's conduct based on the IB Learner Profile attributes.

Every six weeks, students' averages on graded course work are calculated and distributed to parents in the form of report cards. These averages are accompanied by overall conduct grades determined by the student's conduct in all classes, including specialty classes. Classroom essential agreements, IB Learner Profile attributes, and restorative discipline practices are used to evaluate student conduct. Teachers also provide feedback and support to students through reflection sheets, which are a tool used to incorporate the IB Learner Profile attributes as well.

Conferences occur throughout the year with students and parents. Students are required to be an active participant in the parent/teacher conferences. Teachers meet with students and parents to conference about their progress in all content areas. Prior to the end of each school year, students and parents will participate in a student-led conference where they will share their IB Learning Portfolios with their parent(s).

Student scores on district assessments (universal screeners, benchmarks, running records, etc.) are reported directly to the district as the tests are administered using the online program OnTrack. State and other standardized assessments are also reported to the district to maintain student and teacher accountability.

Evaluating Assessment Policy:

This policy will be reviewed annually by our staff and revised when necessary.

Reference

Making the PYP Happen: A Curriculum Framework for International Primary Education.
Cardiff, Wales: International Baccalaureate Organization, 2007. Print.