

The School at St. George Place

Assessment Policy

Our Philosophy:

The School at St. George Place believes that assessment is a consistent, ongoing process used to improve student and teacher performance, as well as to provide feedback and communication to students and parents. Assessment is valued as an integral tool at every stage of student learning via pre-assessment, formative assessment and summative assessment tasks. As an authorized IB World School within the Texas public education system, we assess in an effort to meet multiple standards. Assessments will be used to determine the following:

- student progress in fulfilling the attributes of the Learner Profile,
- the extent to which students have demonstrated understanding of their units of inquiry and the elements of the programme, and
- mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) at every grade level.

Additionally, assessment allows us to move students toward fulfillment of our school's mission to create knowledgeable, open-minded thinkers who take action and make the world a better place. Assessment allows us to gauge how well the elements of the programme have been understood and applied to instruction in the classroom. At The School at St. George Place, we strive to bring success to all students through the cyclical process of collecting, reflecting upon, and reporting assessment information. Our assessment policy outlines the principles that guide our assessment decisions and practices, including tools, strategies, and inclusive assessment arrangements, utilized to ensure that authentic and effective assessments are the norm on our campus.

An effective assessment process includes teachers, students, parents, and any other stakeholder involved. It is our belief that in order for an assessment to be effective, teachers should embrace backwards design with learning experiences and instructional techniques aligned toward mastery of unit objectives. In addition, when planning for assessments, teachers should take into account a variety of learning styles and allow students to demonstrate understanding in a variety of ways. Effective planning will ensure that assessments are open-ended to allow all students the opportunity to achieve success in the classroom. During the delivery of instruction, teachers will use formative assessments to track student progress toward learning goals. Once a formative or summative assessment is given,

teachers and students will review and reflect upon the results to plan and further guide instruction.

Student and Parent Roles in Assessment:

The student's role in effective assessment is to share their learning and demonstrate their knowledge and skills during and after the delivery of instruction. Students are held accountable for accessing prior knowledge, building upon it, and then utilizing it to drive their inquiries and acquire new knowledge. Once students have been assessed and teachers have provided feedback, students will reflect upon their own progress toward their learning goals and create new individual goals.

The parent's role is to work with both the teachers and their children to encourage and support the accomplishment of students' individual learning goals. The parents will support students as they reflect on their goals and help them set and accomplish new goals.

Assessment Practice:

The assessment practices we embrace at The School at St. George Place will be thoughtfully designed to consider structure, frequency, feedback, and reflection. In order to achieve this, we will use a variety of strategies and tools. Assessments of students will be conducted before, during, and after learning experiences. Pre-assessments will gauge learning before instruction has occurred and will serve as a tool to help teachers further develop content and summative assessments. Throughout the delivery of instruction and the learning process, teachers will conduct formative assessments. These may be more formal (e.g. journal responses, checklists, or exit tickets) or informal (e.g. discussions or anecdotal notes). Pre-assessment and formative assessment are ongoing with student success always being the ultimate goal. Effective assessment provides direct and immediate feedback to allow teachers and students to address any misunderstandings and to facilitate the learning process. Additionally, students will have various opportunities to reflect upon their learning in regards to knowledge acquired and achievement of learning goals. Students will also assess their own progress toward development of the IB Learner Profile. Reflections will occur throughout the learning process and at the end of units of inquiry to develop and adjust future goals.

How Do We Assess?

Classroom teachers use a variety of tools to assess students throughout the year, document their progress, and plan for future instruction. Grade level teams collaborate on the creation

of and reflection on assessment tasks to ensure their effectiveness and alignment with learning goals.

Our curriculum includes several types of assessments:

- **Pre-assessments and formative assessments** are a part of daily practice in the classroom and serve to show teachers what students already know and still need to learn. Thoughtfully designed pre-assessments give teachers valuable information regarding students' thoughts on subject matter and possible misconceptions they may have. Formative assessments are directly aligned with learning experiences and activities. These assessments are used to check student understanding and provide teachers, students, and parents with feedback on how students are progressing toward their learning goals. Formative assessment data is used consistently by teachers to drive instruction. Students use formative assessment data to evaluate their own learning and set further learning goals.
- **Summative assessments** are completed at the completion of learning, both within and outside the unit of inquiry. Teachers collaboratively create summative assessments that include a goal (what students will accomplish), role, audience, scenario, product/performance, and standards for success. Students are given choice in how they present their learning in the summative assessment; this promotes agency and ownership within students and increases engagement.
- **Student reflection and self-assessment** allows students to reflect upon their progress toward their own learning goals. Students are able to evaluate their starting point, growth, and next steps they would like to accomplish. Students may also create action plans for their own growth.

Strategies and Tools- Recording Assessment:

The strategies and tools we employ to assess students will vary depending on the content addressed. The ultimate goal in using these tools and strategies is to gain an authentic picture of student learning. Pre-assessments, formative assessments, and summative assessments will be collaboratively designed by teacher teams. District-wide assessments will also be administered as required.

Strategies to be used include, but are not limited to: reflections, demonstrations/reenactments, models, presentations, conferences, open-ended responded, writing samples, student reflections, performance assessments, running records, Renaissance 360, High Frequency Word Evaluations, selected responses, benchmarks, and state & district tests.

Certain tools will be used to quantify and qualify students' progress toward goals. The use of these tools will further inform stakeholders regarding student success and will ultimately inform teachers regarding instructional decisions. The tools listed below are created in collaboration with students and will be utilized to provide feedback and inform instruction:

- Rubrics
- Records
- Trackers
- Checklists
- Continuums
- Learning Goals

State and Local Requirements:

As a public school in the state of Texas, we are required to administer several assessments throughout the year. The STAAR test is administered yearly in grades 3 through 5 in the areas of math, reading/language arts, and science (5th grade only). In Kindergarten through 5th grade, we administer a variety of assessments to obtain a comprehensive picture of a student's academic growth. Students in grades 1-5 are given the Renaissance 360 Star Math and Reading assessment 3 times per year. In addition, we administer Benchmark Running Record assessments during the beginning, middle, and end of the year to monitor growth and development in reading. To monitor the progress of our English Language Learners, we administer the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS). Students also take district benchmark assessments at assigned points during the school year. To identify gifted and talented students, we administer a universal screener to our Kindergarten and 5th grade students, as well as students nominated in other grade levels. All students participating in GT testing complete an achievement and abilities test to determine eligibility for this program.

The School at St. George Place offers inclusive assessment arrangements based on student need and eligibility. Possible accommodations are as follows:

- Extended time
- Reminders to stay on task
- Oral Administration
- Small group testing
- One on one assessment administration
- Modified Assessments

- Chunked Assessments
- Designated supports and content resources (e.g. dictionaries, multiplication charts, etc.)

Reporting Assessment:

Student progress will be reported in a variety of ways in order to ensure that parents, students, and teachers are all aware of student progress. Just as teachers are continuously assessing student learning, they will also be providing immediate feedback to address student misunderstanding and provide further support to students. Reporting on student progress will occur in several modes:

- **Report Cards** will be sent home at the end of each 6-week grading cycle and **Progress Reports** will be sent home in the middle of each grading cycle. Report cards and progress reports provide parents and students with information about students' progress toward mastery of grade-level material.
- **Student-Led Conferences** will occur once per year and will serve as a way for students to reflect on and share their learning with their families. Students will use their IB Portfolio as a guide for discussing their learning with parents.
- **Learner Profile Reflections** will be sent home after units of inquiry are completed. Teachers, students, and parents will reflect on development of the IB learner profile and set goals for continued growth.
- **Exhibition (5th grade) and EXPO (Pre-K-4th Grade)** are extended, collaborative experiences that our students participate in at the end of the school year. Exhibition serves as a culmination of the Primary Years Programme and allows fifth grade students to develop, research, and create a project based on a real world problem under the guidance of teachers and adult mentors. EXPO in grades Pre-K-4 serves to prepare students for this experience by allowing them to complete an extended, student-driven project during their final unit of inquiry. These projects are shared with parents and community members. Students are assessed throughout the process of Exhibition and EXPO.

IB Portfolios: Collecting and Sharing Learning

The IB portfolio serves to show students' learning and growth over time. It provides a picture of each student as a learner and their abilities to think creatively and critically about real world issues. Portfolios hold evidence of students' learning and reflection throughout their time in the Primary Years Programme. Students and teachers collaborate to choose

authentic student work for portfolios and maintain them throughout the school year. The work within the portfolio is shared at Student-Led Conferences and is available in the classroom for students to add to as they finish their units of inquiry.

Portfolio Policy:

Portfolio contents will differ by grade level and will include the following items:

- Pre-K-1st Grade:
 - One piece of authentic student work related to the unit of inquiry- Teacher- or student-selected
 - One writing sample related to the unit of inquiry
 - Self-reflection on the Learner Profile for each unit of inquiry
- 2nd-5th Grade
 - Two pieces of authentic student work related to the unit of inquiry- Teacher- or student-selected
 - One writing sample related to the unit of inquiry
 - Self-reflection on the Learner Profile for each unit of inquiry
- Enrichment Subject Areas
 - Music, Art, PSPE, Library, Science Lab, and Mandarin will each contribute one artifact per student per year in a transdisciplinary theme that they are supporting in their instruction.

Portfolios are organized in a 3-ring binder in chronological order, with the most recent work samples on the top of the binder. Each unit will be delineated by a divider which states the transdisciplinary theme, central idea, and lines of inquiry that students explored during the unit. Students are expected to reflect on the work in their portfolio to identify strengths and areas of growth. They should be able to share these reflections during Student-Led Conferences in the Spring.

Professional Learning Communities (PLC):

Grade level teams meet twice a month with the school administrative team as a professional learning community to review grade level assessment data and implementation of the IB Programme. Some elements of these PLC meetings are as follows:

- **Inquiry-Based Protocols-** During the PLC, the leadership team presents inquiry-based provocation questions and statements to drive the reflection process throughout the

meeting. Teachers discuss, reflect, and plan to ensure we are meeting the learning needs of students.

- **Student Reflections-** All students complete a reflection after they take a district benchmark assessment. Students are asked to review their assessment and identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth. Students consider what individual actions contributed to their successes and identify action steps they can take to improve on the next benchmark. Students use their individual results to set goals for themselves. Student tracking of academic progress and goal setting promotes student agency and is a motivating factor to promote further academic growth.
- **Teacher Reflections-** Prior to coming to PLC meetings, teachers spend time analyzing their individual classroom assessment data and/or authentic student work samples. During our PLC time, teachers drive the conversation and identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth within their classroom or grade level. Teachers support one another in analyzing student work samples and sharing best practices.
- **Gallery Walks-** During PLC time, teachers will have the opportunity to share student work samples. Teachers are given time to assess the work samples collaboratively to plan further instruction and ensure that elements of the programme are being implemented across the grade level.