

# **2024 Poe Elementary School**

## **Assessment Policy**

### Our Philosophy:

Poe Elementary School 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 toward fulfillment of our school's mission to prepare students to function successfully in a global & changing world. Assessment allows us to gauge how well our students are mastering state standards, elements of the programme, and skills for living and learning in our world.. At Poe Elementary, 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 stakeholders involved. It is our belief that in order for an assessment to be effective, teachers should embrace backwards and forwards design with learning experiences and instructional techniques aligned toward mastery of unit objectives. This backwards and forwards approach will help students to understand where they are in the learning process as well as where they are going next. 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 aligned to objectives and varied in format 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 an assessment is given, teachers and students will review and reflect upon the results to plan and further guide instruction. It is also our goal to assess not only the outcomes of learning but also the process of learning. We believe that how students learn is just as important as what students learn. Students need to be able to reflect on the skills they use for learning, and how they can build upon those skills. Students and teachers will regularly assess themselves on attributes (learner profile) and skills (approaches to learning) that are vital to the learning process.

#### 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. Teachers will help students develop their goals by providing feedforward to help guide students in where their learning will go next.

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. Parents will partner with teachers in reviewing assessment data and assisting students in setting and meeting their 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 Poe Elementary will be thoughtfully designed to consider structure, frequency, feedback, feedforward, and reflection. In order to achieve this, we will use a variety of strategies and tools. Teacher assessments of students and student assessment of themselves 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 learning experiences. Pre-assessments will help students gauge their understanding of the content before it is taught and it will give them an opportunity to preview the upcoming content. Throughout the delivery of instruction and the learning process, teachers will conduct formative assessments. These may be more formal (e.g. written responses, demonstrations of learning) 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. Feedforward will allow teachers and students to make a plan for where they are going next. They can decide if reteaching is necessary or if students need enrichment in the area that is being assessed. 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? (Monitoring Learning)

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. In addition, teachers implement district-mandated assessments in order to track student growth throughout the year.

Our campus utilizes 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** allow students to share their learning at the end of a unit. These are used across content areas, as well as within units of inquiry for students to show their overall mastery of longer-term learning goals. Summative assessments give students, teachers, and parents information about students' understanding of larger concepts and the central ideas they have been studying throughout a unit.
- **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 (Documenting Learning):

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 and/or the district as needed.

Strategies to be used include, but are not limited to: reflections, demonstrations/reenactments, models, presentations, conferences, open-ended responses, writing samples, student reflections, performance assessments, running records, NWEA MAP, 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 (Measuring Learning):

As a public school in the state of Texas and in the Houston Independent School District, we are required to administer several assessments throughout the year.

- The State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) test is administered yearly in grades 3 through 5 in the areas of math, reading/language arts, and science (5th grade only).
- To monitor the progress of our English Language Learners, we administer the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS).
- To identify gifted and talented students, we administer a universal screener to our 2nd 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.
- Kindergarten-5th Grade students are assessed 3 times per year using the NWEA MAP & DIBELS (K-1 only) assessments. Students set goals for each benchmark point in the year and track their growth in reading, math, and science (2-5 only).

Poe 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 (Reporting on Learning):

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.
- **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.

#### Professional Learning Communities (PLC):

Grade level teams meet weekly 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 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.
- **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.

Poe Elementary ensures that assessment is consistently happening per state and local guidelines and that results are communicated in a timely manner to all stakeholders. We understand the value in assessing students and ourselves in a variety of ways and will continue to seek strategies for fair and meaningful assessment as we move forward.