



## **Edgar Allan Poe Elementary School Assessment Policy 2015**

The purpose of this policy is to define the assessment process that will be practiced at Poe Elementary School. The content of this document applies to all teachers, students, administrators and parents. It is a living document, developed and refined to meet our assessment needs.

### **Edgar Allan Poe's Mission Statement**

The Mission of Edgar Allan Poe Elementary School is to prepare children to function successfully in a global and changing world by helping every student:

- develop a love of learning
- become caring of others and the world we live in
- practice and demonstrate critical thinking skills through inquiry
- strive for maximum academic growth and knowledge
- recognize and enhance strengths and talents
- value and respect one-self and other's backgrounds, beliefs and cultures
- develop a sense of international-mindedness

The parents, teachers, staff and administrators, working in partnership, will promote communication and pursue growth to maximize the educational environment.

### **Philosophy**

The Poe Elementary community supports the IB philosophy of backwards design. This philosophy includes understanding and communicating to teachers, students, parents, staff and administrators what will be assessed, the methods used to assess, the purpose of the assessment and the criteria of success for each type of assessment.

Assessment is ongoing throughout the learning process and is used to guide teaching and learning. This assessment process includes assessment of prior knowledge, formative assessments to drive instruction and summative assessments to demonstrate conceptual understanding.

Student and teacher self-assessment and reflection serve as valuable steps in the learning process. It enhances student learning throughout the Programme of Inquiry and guides them through the PYP five essential elements of learning:

- the acquisition of knowledge
- the understanding of concepts
- the mastery of skills
- the development of attitudes
- the decision to take action

Teachers are mindful that students are unique and may be at different stages in the learning process. They also understand that there are various types of learners, with various interests. Assessments should accommodate for these variations.

## **Principles of Effective Assessments**

A variety of approaches is used to assess the students' understanding of the five essential elements of learning (knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and actions). The following characteristics describes some of the principles of effective assessments administered at Edgar Allan Poe Elementary:

- ongoing student, teacher, parent, peer and self-assessments and reflections
- inquiry based
- builds on previous knowledge
- connected to the IB Learner Profile and Attitudes
- connected to the Central Idea of the unit of inquiry
- connected to the concepts and the lines of inquiry of the unit
- meaningful and relevant to the learner
- age and grade appropriate
- diverse and varied to meet a variety of learning styles and interests including, but not limited to:
  - Gifted and Talented (G/T)
  - students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP)
  - students with Response to Intervention (RtI) Plan
  - English Language Learner (ELL)
  - Students with Early Intervention Plan (EIP)
- clear and concise
- supports the understanding of concepts
- without cultural, racial, gender, ethnic or religious bias
- provides timely and relevant feedback
- supports the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)
- data driven

## Assessment Practices

The ways in which we practice assessments will lead to effective assessments for our students. These practices lead to significant feedback for students, teachers, parents, administrators and all other stakeholders, for the purpose of improving the performance and the understanding of concepts and content. Effective assessment practices include:

- collaborative planning to develop assessment tools, analyze data and reflect on strategies
- assessment of students' prior knowledge
- formative assessments for each line of inquiry
- summative assessments that assess the central idea
- assessing the Learner Profile and attitudes
- gathering evidence to draw sound conclusions for planning instruction
- criteria for the learning tasks are clear and known in advance by students, teachers and parents
- monitoring and assessing progress in the development of the five essential elements- skills, attitudes, concepts, knowledge and student-initiated action
- creating opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding of the Central Idea in a variety of ways that are interest based, as well as appropriate for various learning styles and abilities
- a variety of assessment tools are used and selected according to the task to be assessed
- assessments allow for different perspectives
- student progress is assessed in the unit of inquiry, as well as the individual subjects
- grade level grading policies are established for the purpose of consistency
- student-led conferences are practiced to best prepare students for success
- celebrate and support student learning

## Types of Assessments

### Pre-assessment

Before teachers begin a unit of inquiry or any new learning experience, they will assess the student's prior knowledge to determine what and how to teach. Pre-assessments include:

- prior knowledge of the Central Idea for each unit of inquiry
- Beginning of the Year (BOY) assessments, district or assessor approved for each subject area

### Formative Assessments

These assessments are ongoing throughout the learning process for the purpose of informing teachers what the students have learned in order to plan for the next stage of learning.

- strategies to gather information about student learning
  - observations – These observations should be done daily, with the teacher taking notes on how students work independently and in groups.
  - open-ended tasks – The students respond with an original response that demonstrates an understanding of what is being assessed.
  - process-focused assessments – The students are observed and recorded on their transdisciplinary skills.
  - selected responses – multiple choice, fill-in the items, true-false, matching, short answers
- district benchmarks – measure the students’ progress toward meeting the state standards

### Summative Assessments

These assessments take place at the end of each teaching and learning process and allow students to demonstrate what they have learned.

- summative assessments take place at the end of each unit of inquiry to measure the understanding of the Central Idea.
- performance assessments – Students are able to apply what they have learned to an authentic task.
- reflections – Students reflect on what they have learned at the end of a unit.
- district required standardized tests
  - State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) – grades 3-5
  - Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) – kindergarten – grade 5

### Other District Required Assessments

- High Frequency Word Exam - grades 1 & 2
- Texas English Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) – kindergarten – grade 5
- Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) – kindergarten – grade 5
- CIRCLE Assessments – pre-kindergarten only

### **Assessment Tools**

- rubrics – an established set of criteria for rating students in all areas
- checklists – lists information that should be present in students’ work or performance
- exemplars – samples of students’ work that exemplifies the standard of expected work products
- anecdotal records – written notes on the observations of student work
- continuums – representations of the progress students achieve over the expected developmental stages of learning

## **Documentation**

### Portfolios

The purpose of a student portfolio is to provide samples of student learning and growth. The portfolio should include 2-3 examples of student learning for each unit of inquiry. It will also include student, teacher, parent and peer reflections of the learner profile. Other significant examples of student progress in learning may be included in the portfolio. The portfolio will serve as a tool for student-led conferences, as well as parent/teacher conferences and student/teacher conferences. The portfolio should serve as an example of student progress toward their learning goals. It should encourage students to take responsibility and pride in their learning and be able to communicate this to their parents, teachers and others.

### Reports (Written)

All written reports should be clear and readily understood by parents and other stakeholders. They should include development of academic as well as non-academic learning. Each report is followed by opportunities for discussion between student, parents and teacher.

- weekly parent communication folder
- report cards every nine weeks
- Learner Profile reports/ twice a year
- parent information report on each upcoming transdisciplinary unit of inquiry and the subject-specific teaching planned – all essential elements are included
- standardized test results

### Conferences

- student-teacher – can take place as needed during the day or after school
- teacher-parent – scheduled by parent or teacher when needed
- student-led – scheduled once a year, with students prepared to discuss their learning with parents and/or staff members
- three-way (student, parent, teacher)
- growth plans – designed with a plan to improve student performance

### Fifth Grade Exhibition

Under the guidance of their teachers, the fifth grade students carry out an extended, collaborative inquiry, called “The Exhibition”. The students demonstrate the five essential elements of the PYP (knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and action.) They also exhibit the attributes of the learner profile and demonstrate the IB attitudes in this extended unit of inquiry.

## **Plan for Implementation and Review**

The Edgar Allan Poe Elementary Assessment Committee members include the PYP Pedagogical Leadership Team members, one representative from each of the grade level and specialist teams and parents of students. The assessment policy will be communicated with parents by the teachers and administrators. The school technology specialist will post the policy on the school website. The implementation of this policy will be evaluated by the IB Pedagogical Leadership Team during classroom observations, parent/student /teacher conferences and school presentations.

The Edgar Allan Poe Assessment Policy will be effective January, 2015. It will be reviewed in August, 2015, or as needed by the assessment committee.

## **Resources**

- Making the PYP Happen, A curriculum framework for international education, IBO
- Category 2 Assessment Workshop, Texas IB Schools (TIBS)
- Common Elements for PYP Assessment Policy, Houston ISD IB Steering Committee