

Briargrove Elementary Assessment Policy

Mission of our school

The mission of Briargrove Elementary is to cultivate the development of principled, knowledgeable, and balanced inquirers through diverse and rigorous investigations in a safe, supportive environment. We aim to foster globally-minded citizens and lifelong learners, thus contributing to a better world and future for all.

Philosophy

At Briargrove Elementary, assessment will involve gathering and analyzing assessment data to drive instruction and help students, teachers, and community members make decisions about future learning. Considerate and timely reflection of assessment data will lead students through the five essential elements of learning in the PYP:

- The acquisition of knowledge
- The understanding of concepts
- The mastering of skills
- The development of attitudes
- The decision to take action

The purpose, principles, means, and criterion for success should be communicated with precision and in advance to all stakeholders to ensure reflection and growth may ensue.

Purpose for assessment

- What and why do we assess?

At Briargrove Elementary, we assess our students to gather information about mastery of prescribed learning goals. Assessment is used to drive our instruction allowing our teachers to use the data to reflect on the effectiveness of their chosen teaching practices and make decisions to enhance or revise the implementation of instruction. The data and reflection from our assessments provides feedback to our community of parents and guardians as well as the students to ensure all parties involved are held accountable for mastery of grade-level knowledge and skills objectives.

Principles for assessment

- What are the characteristics of effective assessments?

The essential criteria assessments at Briargrove Elementary maintain ensure we are fulfilling our duty to meet the needs of all learners on our campus. Through backwards design, instruction is designed with direct connections to summative and formative assessments thus ensuring focused mastery of the learning objectives. Conceptual knowledge is demonstrated through products and performances which integrate multidisciplinary design.

Effective assessments at Briargrove Elementary include, but not limited to, the following principles:

- connections to the Central Idea of each Unit of Inquiry
- connections to the objectives, key concepts, and lines of inquiry within the Programme of Inquiry for each grade level
- connections to the Learner Profile and Attitudes
- connections to the five Essential Elements of the Primary Years Programme: knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes, and action
- variance in type to address different learning styles, multiple intelligences, abilities, and interests
- differentiation to meet the needs of our student population, including but not limited to, students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP), Section 504 Plans, Response to Intervention (RtI) Plans, students received English Language Learner (ELL), Limited English Proficiency (LEP), or English as a Second Language (ESL) services, and Gifted and Talented (GT) services.
- without cultural, ethnic, racial, or gender bias
- concise, consistent, and clear expectations
- frequent and ongoing use of pre- and post-assessments to illustrate meaningful progress
- allow for relevant reflection and timely feedback by students, parents, and teachers
- advance notice of criteria for quality product or performance production driven by conceptual understanding of grade-level appropriate Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)
- data-driven, as measured by the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR); district and campus benchmarks; teacher-created and approved assessments.

Assessment practice

- How do we assess?

Effective practices in assessment include, but not limited to:

- Assessment of students' prior knowledge
- Formative assessment tasks- one for each line of inquiry
- Summative assessment tasks- assesses understanding of the Transdisciplinary Theme and Central Idea
- Criteria for learning tasks are clear and known in advance by students, parents, and teachers
- Monitoring and assessing student progress in the five Essential Elements
- Monitoring and assessing students progress in relation the Learner Profile including student and teacher assessment
- Range and variety in assessment tools and strategies to gather evidence to allow for sound conclusions about growth including but not limited to oral conversation, written reflections, daily class work, anticipation guides, and portfolios
- Flexibility in instruction, tasks, and assessments for varied perspectives and interpretation
- Offering in-depth tasks that cater to the varied interests and differing learning styles, multiple intelligences, and abilities
- Creating grade-level grading policies to ensure consistency
- Collaborative planning to build tools, reflect on implemented strategies, and analysis of data.

- Documentation of student progress, success, ability and creativity through the use of student portfolios
- Student-led conferences (minimum of two per school year) that engage students in self-reflection for celebration, analysis, and evaluation of next steps

Strategies

- How do we gather information to assess students?

Strategies for effective assessment will include, but not limited to:

- Observations
- Summative and Formative assessments
- Grade-level and District-level assessments in the following forms: performance expectations based on objectives, process-focused assessments, selected responses (multiple-choice, true/false, matching, short answer, fill-in the blank), open-ended tasks.
- Reflections on learning for learning
- Assessment by peers or self

Tools

- How do we collect data?

We believe in the continuous use of a variety of instruments to gauge various types of learning and understanding.

These instruments include, but not limited to:

- Rubrics with specific criteria and a range of abilities
- Portfolios
- Journals
- Anecdotal notes
- Checks for Understanding such as KWL, KWHLAQ, etc.
- Check-lists with specified criteria
- Student and Instructor Goal-Setting
- State, District, and Campus assessments

Reporting

- How do we choose to communicate information about assessment?

Effective reporting of growth towards our learning goals will be communicated to students, parents, and community members through parent/student/teacher conferences, student-led conference, progress reports, Learner Profile report, and report cards.

These reports will:

- Be reflective of expectations communicated clearly in advance
- Be provided, via communication folder and/or Gradespeed, in a timely manner as to allow opportunity for reflection and opportunities for growth (student products/graded work: weekly; report cards: every 6 weeks; progress reports: every 4-5 weeks)
- Involve academic and non-academic learning
- Include reflection and assessment data by student, teacher, and parent on growth in IB Learner Profile attributes, at least twice during each nine-week grading period
- Include reflection and assessment data by student, teacher, and parent on growth in grade-level specific standards, such as TEKS, Unit of Inquiry goals, and skills.
- Include, for mastery progress for each content area and skill studied, a numerical assessment grade for 1st-5th grade
- Include, for growth progress for each skill studied, a numerical rating for Kindergarten
- Be followed by opportunities for feedback and discussion between the student, parent/guardian, and teacher

Plan for Implementation and Review

The PYP Teaching Staff, Pedagogical Leadership Team, and supporting community members believe it is our ethical responsibility to the students which we serve to uphold the integrity and accept responsibility for ensuring the assessment policy is put into practice. Teachers and administrators on our campus will communicate all components of the assessment policy to parents/guardians. The IB Coordinator will ensure electronic posting of the school website. The Pedagogical Leadership Team will regularly evaluate implementation of the assessment policy as evidenced by classroom observations and school presentation regarding Briargrove Elementary expectations.

The Briargrove Elementary Assessment Policy will go into effect April 7, 2014 and will be reviewed at the beginning of each school year or earlier as needed when established by the PYP Teaching Staff and Pedagogical Leadership Team.

Resources:

Philosophy and best practices as outlined by the PYP Teaching Staff at Briargrove Elementary

Making the PYP Happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education, IBO