

***Post Oak Academy
Primary Years Programme
Assessment Policy***

Beliefs: Assessment results are designed to inform and improve practice. At Post Oak Academy, it is our philosophy that through implementing a variety of assessment strategies and tools, we can strengthen our teaching and guide our instruction. Assessment is an ongoing process that involves teachers, administrators, parents and students. Assessment allows us to identify what students understand, know and can do. By understanding our learners, we can adapt and change instruction to assist students and teachers in reaching the goals and expectations set forth by our program.

Purpose:

- Collect data that drives instruction
- Strengthen our learning process and practices as educators
- Identify students' strengths and weaknesses
- Individualize instruction
- Track progress and growth within a community of learners
- Evaluate teaching and student inquiry

Types:

- *Formative assessment:* These assessments are connected to instruction. They are designed to evaluate learning to provide instant and frequent feedback on the learning process. This allows teachers to guide instruction while giving students a glimpse into what they have learned and include formative assessment for each line of inquiry. Formative assessments include, but are not limited to:
 - Anecdotal records
 - Student reflections
 - Student/teacher feedback
 - Peer to peer evaluations, student conversation
 - Classroom participation
 - Individual and group information or progress
 - Skill development
 - Tests
 - Quizzes
 - Selected responses

Formative assessments can be used to evaluate all parts of the learner.

- *Summative Assessment:* This type of assessment allows learners to demonstrate what they have learned at the culmination of the learning experience within a specific unit or theme of study. Expectations are clearly defined. As students model their learning strategies, they will demonstrate their understanding of the central idea and prompt them toward taking thoughtful action. This allows teachers to measure the understanding. Thus it informs and improves student learning and instruction. Summative assessments include, but are not limited to:
 - Presentations
 - Tests
 - Individual and/or group projects to demonstrate the understanding of an entire unit
 - Student reflection of their assessment completion process
 - Situation/stimulus that requires an original response on part of the student(s)

Effective Assessments:

- *Students will:*

- Demonstrate, share and reflect upon their learning and understanding
 - Set goals for reaching expectations based on the given criteria
 - Use their own learning strategies and build on their own strengths while striving to improve areas of weakness
 - Expand on multiple intelligences to enhance their understanding
 - Build confidence in their own work and self
 - Express their points of view and explanations
 - Use their prior knowledge to build on and guide the inquiry process
- *Teachers will:*
 - Create instructional plans to guide inquiry
 - Understand responses from students
 - Clearly define students' needs
 - Explicit instruction
 - Define expectations and outcomes for students
 - Adapt for learning styles and multiple intelligences
 - Acquire data that can be used to inform students, teachers, grade levels, school, and community
 - Collect both quantitative and qualitative data to collaboratively make inferences on the teaching and learning that is occurring
 - Prepare for future inquiries and student questioning
- *Parents will:*
 - Understand student learning
 - Observe and track student progress and growth
 - Provide support outside of school
 - Celebrate learning and student accomplishment

Assessment Tools:

- Anecdotal records
- Classroom observations
- Rubrics, student and teacher created
- Peer review
- Individual review
- Portfolios
- Checklists
- NWEA
- Aimsweb Plus
- Parent and student surveys
- Benchmark Summaries
- Data Binders

Portfolio Documentation:

- *Purpose:*
 - To exhibit student growth
 - Provide a continuum for students to track their progress in learning
 - Define students' growth as learners
 - Provides parents, teachers, and students with data for individual reflection, student-led conferences, parent-teacher interviews, and teacher reflection/data collection
- *Includes:*
 - **Units of Inquiry (6/year):**
 1. 2 pieces of student work demonstrating the process of the learning of the central idea per Transdisciplinary Theme
 2. Chinese Foreign Language example

3. Student Choice (final piece of work the student takes pride in and chooses to showcase)
 - **Reflections:** This section is for students to include reflection pieces on their Learner Profile and Attitudes development as well as for students to reflect on their growth over time.
 - **Showcase Work:** This section is for students to “show off” the work that they are most proud of (1-2 pieces per year). These items may or may not be within the units of inquiry.
 - *Format:* The portfolio will be an “Accordian-Style” folder with pockets for each grade level (K-5) as well as a reflection pocket. Portfolios will be kept with the classroom teachers and passed along each year to the students’ next teacher. The portfolio, itself, ultimately belongs to the student and will be a record that they can take with them when they either leave Post Oak Academy or complete 6th grade.
 - *Selection/Collection Process:* Both students and teachers will select items to go into the portfolios. The work collected will reflect the students’ growth as inquirers/learners.
 - *Time Frame:* The portfolio is created when the students enter Post Oak Academy. Their portfolios will follow the student from year to year, gathering various work samples over time.

Conferences:

- *Parent/teacher conferences:* Two parent/teacher conference will be held annually, one in the fall; one in the spring. These are formal opportunities to address goals and concerns.
- *Student-led conferences:* Where appropriate, one student lead conference per year will be held in the spring. This is an opportunity for students to lead their own conferences with their parents and/or teacher to discuss their own learning and progress during the year. The student will highlight what they feel is important and share their strengths as they see fit. In these conferences students will plan their own presentation, with teacher modeling and practice beforehand.
- *Teacher-student conferences:* These conferences will be held on a continuous basis throughout the school year. This is an ongoing process. These can be formal or informal.

Reporting:

- The Lansing School District, grade levels and/or classroom teachers will determine and administer appropriate assessment tools across the school year.
- Every 9 weeks, as per the Lansing School District requirements, students/parents will receive a formal report card. That report card will include their grades, as well as, their progress related to the central idea and lines of inquiry. A Learner Profile Report card addendum will be included with the district report card.

Mandatory Requirements:

All staff will be required to administer the following assessments:

- All formative and summative assessments as well as student self reflections from all 6 planners during the school year.
- Informal and formal assessments necessary for student success such as classroom observations, anecdotal records, student discussion, conferring, conferences, running records, etc.
- The DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) to be administered 2-3 times during the year, dates determined by the district administration.
- The MSTEP test as required by the State of Michigan grade 3 and above only.
- For our ELL students the WIDA assessment as determined by the State of Michigan.
- Any other assessments that match this criteria and as required by our stated curriculum and resources.
- Aims-Web Plus ELA and Math for grades K-3
- NWEA for 4th -5th grade.

Accessibility:

- Portfolios will be available to students, teachers, staff members, authorized school visitors, and/or parents. However our formative assessments, records kept aside from the student portfolio, will be accessible only to the student, teacher, parent, any staff member that works with that student and the administration. These records are otherwise considered confidential and will not be shared.

Assessment Review:

- As a staff we will review our assessment agreements annually at the end of each school year.