

Bellevue Children's Academy



Assessment Policy

Revised February 2018



Bellevue Children's Academy Assessment Policy

Primary Years Programme Definition

Assessment involves the gathering and analysis of information about student performance and is designed to inform practice. It identifies what students know, understand, can do, and feel at different stages in the learning process. Students and teachers should be actively engaged in assessing the students' progress as part of the development of their wider critical-thinking and self-assessment skills (*Making the PYP Happen, 2009*).

Assessment Philosophy

At Bellevue Children's Academy, assessment is an essential element of the learning process. Frequent and ongoing assessment allows teachers and students to evaluate a learning experience as well as modify strategies for learning. We use a variety of assessment tools to support each individual's learning style.

Purpose of Assessment

Assessment guides and informs practice via the analysis of student performance. It identifies what students know, understand, and are able to do throughout the learning process. We deem that the purpose of assessment also includes the following:

- Helps students recognize their level of understanding
- Informs parents/guardians of their child's learning, development, and accomplishments
- Encourages teachers to reflect on instructional effectiveness and differentiate learning activities for students
- Guides the pedagogical leadership team in school-wide planning, support, and determine future professional development opportunities

Guiding Principles of Assessment

At Bellevue Children's Academy, there are several guiding principles of assessment that drive instruction. Specifically, assessments should:

- occur often via formative assessments to provide teachers and students information about the development of learning.
- be designed at the beginning of the unit and modified if necessary to meet the needs of each student.
- allow for student choice when possible.
- differentiate for ability and learning styles.
- provide criteria to students that is known and understood in advance.
- promote self evaluation and reflection.
- motivate students to take action.
- allow students to synthesize and apply their learning.
- be authentic to the learning experience.

Types of Assessments

Pre-Assessments:

- Assess prior understanding of skills, concepts, and knowledge
- Gauge student interest and motivate inquiry
- Guide instruction and adjust learning experiences as needed

Examples: KWL charts, provocations, class discussions, pre-tests

Formative Assessments:

- Interwoven into daily instruction
- Allow teachers to modify instruction
- Provide feedback for students

Examples: Quizzes, exit slips, observations

Summative Assessments:

- Occur at the end of the unit, providing students with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of the central idea and lines of inquiry
- Are developed before a unit is taught
- Address a wide-range of learning styles
- Allow students to understand grading criteria prior to the assessment

Examples: Essays, models, creative projects, performances/presentations, action, tests

Reflections:

- Encourage students to document and observe their own growth
- Provide understanding of the process and product of the student's learning

Examples: Journaling, student-led conferences, portfolios, action

Student Portfolios: (Implementation has begun during the 2017-2018 school year with 2nd grade students)

- Are a purposeful collection of each student's work that demonstrates growth over a period of time
- Have evidence of learning from a range of experiences and subject areas
- May be used to document student action
- Can be used as a tool for reporting purposes for students, teachers, parents, and administrators

Assessment Communication Opportunities

Effective reporting of assessments occurs via the following framework:

- Involves administration, teachers, parents/guardians, and students
- Is comprehensive, honest, credible, and fair
- Is clear and understandable

Conferences:

- Bellevue Children's Academy builds into the school calendar two parent-teacher conferences for Pre-K through 4th Grade (fall and spring).
- The 5th Grade team conducts two student-led conferences with parents in lieu of teacher-directed conferences (fall and spring).
- *Fall:* Goal setting- The first trimester is built around creating a positive relationship with the teacher, parents/guardians, and student. The purpose of this conference is to discuss social and academic strengths and areas of improvement. Goals will be determined and a plan is discussed for how the student can be supported to achieve these goals.
- *Spring:* This conference reviews the progress of the goals that were set in the fall, in addition to sharing recent academic progress and work samples. Goals for the conclusion of the school year and summer are established.
- Teachers and parents are encouraged to hold additional conferences on an as-needed basis throughout the school year.

Written Reports:

- Report cards are sent home each trimester and assess citizenship skills, behaviors that promote learning, and academic skills.
- Numerical grades 1-4 (1 indicates the student is working above standards or expectations) are provided for each skill.

- Each trimester, teachers complete a comprehensive written comment for the report card. Teachers describe progress in academic areas in addition to the IB learner profile.
- Specialist teachers provide numerical grades for each trimester, as well as a detailed written comment at the conclusion of the third trimester.
- These report cards are then given to parents/guardians during parent-teacher conferences with the exception of third trimester. The final report card for the school year is placed into each student's file.

Presentations:

- Parents/Guardians are often invited into the school to observe summative assessments for various units of inquiry. Examples of these assessments include gallery walks, collaborative projects, and student presentations.

Standardized Assessments

Students in grades 1-5 complete the ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills) each spring. In Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten, students complete an in-house created math and language assessment. Results for all assessments are provided to the parents in June and are sent home in the final report card envelope.

Strategies for Recording and Reporting Assessments

At Bellevue Children's Academy we use the following tools to report assessments:

- *Rubrics*- Rubrics designate the set of criteria used for scoring or rating a student's performance. The descriptors inform students, teachers, and parents/guardians what criterion was assessed, as well as how to rate that work on a predetermined scale. Rubrics can be developed by teachers as well as with student input.
- *Anecdotal records*- Anecdotal records are brief, written notes or photographs based on observations of students. They are systematically compiled and organized.
- *Tests/Quizzes*- These assessments provide a snapshot of students' subject-specific knowledge.
- *Portfolios*- Portfolios are a purposeful collection of work samples that identify growth, creativity, and reflection in a student's academic career.

Assessment Policy Review

This policy will be formally reviewed by Bellevue Children's Academy staff on a yearly basis and revised as needed to adapt to changing best practices and the needs of our learning community.