Assessment

Policy

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Purpose of Assessment

At Charter Oak International Academy we believe assessment is integral to all teaching and learning. It is central to the PYP goal of thoughtfully and effectively guiding students through the five essential elements of learning:

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

Charter Oak's approach to assessment recognizes the importance of assessing the process, as well as the product, of inquiry.

The purpose of assessment at Charter Oak International Academy is to provide feedback on the learning process and the development of the five essential elements to inform further learning. Students and teachers are actively engaged in assessing progress as part of the development of students' wider critical thinking and self-assessment skills.

The assessment component in the school's curriculum can itself be subdivided into three closely related areas.

- Assessing – how we discover what the students know and have learned
- Recording – how we choose to collect and analyze data
- Reporting – how we choose to communicate information

Assessing

The assessment of student development and learning is an essential component of the curriculum, and helps to inform continued development, learning and teaching.
Students are observed in a variety of situations and a wide range of assessment strategies are implemented.

At Charter Oak, the teacher employs a range of formative and summative assessments which demonstrate student achievements.

Summative assessment: aims to give teachers and students a clear insight into student understanding. Summative assessment is the culmination of the teaching and learning process, and gives students opportunities to demonstrate what has been learned. It can assess several elements simultaneously: it informs and leads to improvement in student learning and the teaching process; it measures understanding of the central idea; and prompts students towards action.

Formative assessment: provides information that is used in order to plan the next stage in learning. It is interwoven with learning, and helps teachers and students to find out what the students already know and can do. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked and function purposefully together. Formative assessment aims to promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback throughout the learning process. This process helps learners to improve knowledge and understanding, to foster self-motivation and enthusiasm for learning, to engage in thoughtful reflection, to develop the capacity for self-assessment, and to recognize the criteria for success. Formative assessment also helps teachers identify obstacles to understanding and address them through informed instruction.

Assessing the process of inquiry provides insight into how students engage in the inquiry process. To foster deeper level questioning, assessments provide opportunities for students to synthesize and evaluate concepts. Summative assessments look at a continuum of levels of questioning. Through summative and formative assessments, students reflect on the essential elements and how they were developed throughout the unit of inquiry. Students reflect on how they have utilized the key concepts, approaches to learning, attitudes, and learner profiles as related to the lines of inquiry and central idea. After completing formative assessment measures, students are given the opportunity to reflect on past goals and re-establish new goals. This also leads students to acquire knowledge about themselves in order to direct their learning.

Assessment in the classroom includes:
- using representative samples of students' work or performance to provide information about student learning
- observation and collecting evidence of student understanding and thinking
- documenting learning processes of groups and individuals
- engaging students in reflecting on their learning & use/application of the IB elements
- students assessing work produced by themselves and by others
- developing clear rubrics and checklists
- identifying exemplary student work
- keeping records of test/task results and tracking progress
- class recognition and peer feedback of the application of IB elements
- teacher recognition and feedback of the application of the IB elements
- ELA (English Language Arts) and Math national Common Core assessments/performance tasks
- District and state mandated assessments

Recording

Charter Oak International Academy uses a range of methods and approaches to gather information about a student's learning. The information is recorded using a variety of tools.

Assessment Strategies and Tools					
Assessment Tools / Assessment Strategies	Rubrics	Exemplars	Checklists	Anecdotal Records	Continuums
Observations	✓		✓	✓	✓
Performance Assessments	✓	✓		✓	✓
Process-focused Assessments	✓		✓	✓	✓
Selected Responses	✓	✓	✓		✓
Open-Ended Tasks	✓	✓		✓	✓

Teachers use a range of methods to document the evidence of student learning and understanding. This at times includes video, audio, photographs and graphic representations. Teachers also have written records of standard conversations, comments, explanations and hypotheses as well as annotated pieces of student work that form part of a student portfolio. Teachers are increasing the use of technology to collect evidence of student learning (Google docs; iPad apps; etc.).

Reporting

Reporting on assessment at Charter Oak includes communicating what students know, understand and can do. Reporting involves parents, students and teachers as partners and is honest, comprehensive and understandable to all parties.

Reporting to parents, students and teachers may occur through:
- **Conferences (parent-teacher) (student-teacher) (student-student) and (student-parent-teacher)**
- **District Report Cards (specials/Special Ed/Quest)**
- **The IB Portfolio**
- **Exhibition**
- **Standardized Test Reports**
- **The Inquiry Gallery**
- **Star Recognition Assemblies (student projects are presented)**
- **Daily Video Announcements (including videos of student learning)**
- **Weekly Progress Reports**
- **Weekly Student Reflections focus on the current unit's essential elements**
- **Weekly Grade-Level/Classroom Newsletters**
- **E-mail Communication**
- **IB Inquirer** (newsletter outlining all of the IB elements in an upcoming unit, including a snapshot of the summative assessment, websites and ideas for parents to complete with their children, *IB at Home* parent reflection on the essential elements)
- **Send home student work with comments**
- Note: Formal student-led conferences are held in November and March to discuss student achievement and share assessment data with parents and students. Conferences are a collaboration involving classroom teachers, specialists, and students in order to communicate clear and comprehensive information on student progress. Report cards are also sent home at the end of the school year in June; however a conference is not required.

Student-Led Conferences

Student-led conferences are formal reporting sessions with parents, led by the students themselves. The teacher's role is to guide and prepare the students for this important role. The emphasis is on the discussion between a child and his/her parent.

The focus of the student-led conference is on student progress – academic and PSPE. Student-led conferences are designed to give students ownership of their own assessment of their learning, so they can become more actively involved and committed. These conferences hold students accountable for their learning and encourage student/parent communication. Parents are provided with a list of questions to help elicit discussion.

By reflecting on their academic progress and their use of the IB elements, students learn to evaluate their own progress and build critical thinking skills, self- confidence and self-esteem. Parents become an active participant in their child's learning, and have an opportunity to help their child set positive goals. Beginning in Pre-K and kindergarten, students learn to become confident participants by sharing a piece of work they are proud of with their parents; and explaining the IB units and elements through photos. In first grade, students share their strengths with parents and reflect on their own learning. The teacher guides the student to set a goal for future achievement and share this with his/her parent. In second and third grade, students select two or more pieces of work to share and discuss with their parents, as well as set a goal for future achievement. Second and third graders are able to discuss their strengths and weaknesses and develop confidence and self-awareness. By fourth and fifth grade, the student leads the conference almost entirely. Fourth and fifth grade students at Charter Oak International Academy are able to reflect in writing on their accomplishments and areas where growth is needed, as well as set appropriate goals for future growth. The students are self-reflective and use reflection sheets or checklists to communicate effectively with their parent to provide accurate information. Parents are supported and guided with checklists and suggested questions so that they get the most information possible from their child. Report cards and reflection sheets are sent home prior to the conference for the parents' review and reflection. This level of involvement on the part of the teacher, parent and child ensures a process that is reflective, highly motivating and engaging for the child.

Student Portfolios

Portfolios are collections of student work that are designed to demonstrate successes, growth, student-initiated action, creativity and reflection. The portfolio is an exhibition of an active mind at work.

Portfolios celebrate student learning through the PYP, showing the development of the whole child, both within and outside of the Program of Inquiry in all subject areas. Portfolios are used by students to communicate this development with parents at conferences and with teachers and peers throughout the year. Portfolios items at Charter Oak International Academy include evidence of learning within each unit of the Program of Inquiry (POI) including one student generated reflection for each unit from our POI, reflection on the IB elements, and evidence of literacy development, mathematical and thinking skills, writing development, and student learning in Art, PE, Music and Spanish.

The Exhibition

Students in the final year of the PYP carry out an extended, collaborative inquiry – the PYP Exhibition. At Charter Oak International Academy this takes place towards the end of fifth grade. One of the purposes of the PYP Exhibition is to provide a forum for student-driven reporting. Other key purposes include the following:
- To allow students to engage in and report on a globally significant, in-depth, collaborative inquiry
- To provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate independence and responsibility for their own learning
- To provide students with an opportunity to explore multiple perspectives
- To enable students to synthesize and apply their learning of previous years, and to reflect on their journey through the PYP
- To provide an authentic process of assessing student understanding
- To demonstrate how students can take action as a result of their learning
- To show students exhibiting the attributes of the learner profile they have developed over the years
- To unite the students, teachers, parents and other members of the school community in a collaborative experience that incorporates the essential elements of the PYP
- To celebrate the transition of learners from primary to middle/secondary education
- To produce and publish their research using a variety of digital tools.

Standardized Test Reports

Standardized assessments are used as a part of the whole school assessment policy in an effort to gain as much information as possible about the student as a learner. The types of assessment used in the school are many and varied (see Appendix) and each assessment is seen as a photograph to be placed in an album of student learning, resulting in a story of what the child is able to do and understand in a variety of ways. Standardized assessments are specifically used for the following reasons:

- Teachers are able to discover those students whose basic skills fall outside the normal range expected for students of that particular age. This information is used alongside other assessment information to determine a need for intervention services.
- As a part of the process of reporting to parents, information which shows growth over time and comparison of a peer group is useful.
- The collection of standardized assessment information is provided to all class teachers at the beginning of each year to provide teachers with information that helps them to form initial groups, plan the program and be aware of those with special needs.
- Standardized assessment data is essential as a measurable tool for funding, grants, government accountability etc. It is important to track specific data with targeted objectives to assess a student's rate of progress and understanding of state standards and district expectations.

Charter Oak International Academy's Assessment Policies

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

To assist parent understanding of assessment, Charter Oak International Academy informs parents about the PYP and program of inquiry units using many forms of communication:

- Curriculum Night/Family Open House at the beginning of the year
- Class Newsletters
- Articles in the GLOBE (school newsletter)
- Daily Video Announcements
- Invitations to parents to view the learning of their children formally (monthly recognition assemblies; author celebrations, Inquiry Gallery, Kindergarten Museum Event) or informally (when parents visit classes or student learning is sent home to share)
- Student portfolios
- Progress reports or updates
- Student-led conferences
- *IB Inquirer* description packet for each grade-level unit of study
- *PYP Perspective* newsletter
- School website
- PTO presentations and family informational sessions
- Inquiry Gallery
- Exhibition

ASSESSMENT

- Assessment should be planned at the start of the unit and should demonstrate clear links between the assessment tasks and all components of the planner, i.e.: central idea and inquiry into, key concepts, teacher and student questions, and learning activities.
- Assessment strategies and tools should be varied and can include pre- and post-assessment tasks and formative and summative assessments.
- Assessments should include peer and self-assessments where appropriate.
- Students should be involved in the development of some of the assessment activities and tools (rubrics, checklists). When students are not involved in the development of assessment activities they need to be informed of assessment requirements.
- Assessment outcomes will inform and direct future learning.
- Assessment at the school is working towards addressing all five of the essential elements(knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and action) and the learner profile.
- Teachers and parents will be familiar with the assessment policy of the school.

REPORTING

Report Cards:
- Are to be completed by classroom teachers, specialists, special education teachers, and ESOL Teachers, in November, March and June.
- Reports are to be submitted to school principal for review one week prior to conference time.
- Reports are to be sent home to families on the night before the scheduled conference.

District Assessments and Standardized Assessments:
- Assessment calendar is to be closely followed.
- Assessments are to be entered into class spreadsheet/Pearson Inform data warehousing.
- Assessment data is to be shared at data meetings, team planning and special education or Student Success Team (SST) meetings as necessary.
- Data is to be kept up-to-date and comprehensive.

Portfolios:
- At each grade level the student portfolio includes:
  – One student-generated reflection for each unit from our POI
  – Reflections on the IB elements: learner profile/attitudes/key concepts/approaches to learning
- The portfolio also contains evidence of:
  – literacy development
  – mathematical thinking and skills
  – writing development and skills
  – student learning in Art, Music, PE and Spanish

- Portfolios are intended to be student-managed with teacher guidance so that students may take ownership of their portfolios. The balance of "teacher-selected" versus "student-selected" content in portfolios depends on the age and maturity of students.
- Portfolios are easily accessible to students with opportunities for the students to revisit and reflect on selections.
- A variety of media can be represented in the student portfolio to reflect different learning styles and experiences, including drawings, photos, voice recordings, videos, and multimedia.
- Portfolios follow students from one grade to the next.
- Portfolios are delivered to the next year's teacher.
- At the end of 5th grade, or when students leave the school, portfolios are given to students to take home.
- Each selection relating to a POI unit will include the Transdisciplinary Theme, Central Idea and Date.

Student-led Conferences
- Students should be involved in choosing what is shared with parents.
- All students will participate in conferences.
- Students should report to parents addressing all five of the essential elements: knowledge, approaches to learning, key concepts, attitudes, and action; as well as the learner profiles.

Recognition Assembly
- Recognition of star students for the learner profiles and attitudes
- Student performance and sharing work samples
- Students go public with their learning
- Opportunities for students to lead assemblies
- Parents attend

Inquiry Gallery
- Students share work samples and reflections from IB units of learning
- Students may perform or demonstrate learning (i.e. science experiments, artistic expressions, creative endeavors)
- Students go public with their learning and present to guests, often integrating technology
- Families and community members attend

Exhibition
- Students engage in an in-depth, collaborative inquiry of a topic they choose synthesizing their learning from previous years and reflecting on their IB journey
- Topic is globally significant and locally relevant
- Mentors from within/outside the building
- Transdisciplinary approach to topic investigation
- Provides students an opportunity to demonstrate independence and responsibility for their own learning
- Express their knowledge in a variety of ways

West Hartford Public Schools
2014-2015 Elementary Assessment Calendar

*As needed

All grades have on-going district unit assessments in English-Language Arts and Mathematics	

Kindergarten

September 8- October 10	Literacy Assessments
September 8 – 12	AIMSweb Literacy (Literacy Assessment Team- LAT)
September 15 – 26	AIMSweb Math
November	Literacy Assessments*
January	DRA 2 (*Optional*)
January – May	ESOL LAS Links
January 12 – 16	AIMSweb Literacy (LAT)
January 20 – 30	AIMSweb Math
March	Literacy Assessments*
April 6 – May 22	DRA 2
May	Literacy Assessments*
May 11 – 15	AIMSweb Literacy (LAT)
May 18 – May 29	AIMSweb Math

Grade 1

September 8- October 10	Literacy Assessments* and DRA 2
September 8 – 12	AIMSweb Literacy (Literacy Assessment- LAT)
September 15 – 26	AIMSweb Math
January	DRA 2*
January – May	ESOL LAS Links
January 12 – 16	AIMSweb Literacy (LAT)
January 20 – 30	AIMSweb Math
March	Literacy Assessments*
April 6 – May 22	DRA 2
May	Literacy Assessments*
May 11 – 15	AIMSweb Literacy (LAT)
May 18 – May 29	AIMSweb Math

Grade 2

September 8- October 10	DRA 2 and Bedrock
September 8 – 12	AIMSweb Literacy (Literacy Assessment Team- LAT)
September 15 – 26	AIMSweb Math
January	DRA 2*
January – May	ESOL LAS Links
January 12 – 16	AIMSweb Literacy (LAT)
January 20 – 30	AIMSweb Math
April 6 – May 22	DRA 2 and Bedrock
May 11 – 15	AIMSweb Literacy (LAT)
May 18 – May 29	AIMSweb Math

Grade 3

September 8- October 10	DRA 2
September 8 – 12	AIMSweb Literacy (Literacy Assessment Team- LAT)
September 15 – 26	AIMSweb Math
October 20 – 24	InView Assessment
January	DRA 2*
January – May	ESOL LAS Links
January 12 – 16	AIMSweb Literacy (LAT)
January 20 – 30	AIMSweb Math
March 9	Smarter Balanced Window Opens (TBD)
April 6 – May 22	DRA 2
May 11 – 15	AIMSweb Literacy (LAT)
May 18 – May 29	AIMSweb Math

Grade 4

September 8 – 12	AIMSweb Literacy (Literacy Assessment Team- LAT)
September 15 – 26	AIMSweb Math
January - May	ESOL LAS Links
January 12 – 16	AIMSweb Literacy (LAT)
January 20 – 30	AIMSweb Math
March 9	Smarter Balanced Window Opens (TBD)
May 11 – 15	AIMSweb Literacy (LAT)
May 18 – May 29	AIMSweb Math

Grade 5

September 8 – 12	AIMSweb Literacy (Literacy Assessment Team- LAT)
September 15 – 26	AIMSweb Math
January – May	ESOL LAS Links
January 12 – 16	AIMSweb Literacy (LAT)
January 20 – 30	AIMSweb Math
March 9	Smarter Balanced Window Opens (TBD)
May 11 – 15	AIMSweb Literacy (LAT)
May 18 – May 29	AIMSweb Math
TBD	Honors Math Test and Math Transition Screening

Curriculum Based Measurements (CBM)
AIMSweb Literacy 2014-2015
Administered by Literacy Assessment Team (LAT, formerly SWAT)

Universal (Benchmark) Assessments

Grade Level	September 8-12	January 12-16	May 11-15
Kindergarten			
Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)	√	√	√
Letter Sound Fluency (LSF)	√	√	√
Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)	N/A	√	√
Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)	N/A	√	√
Grade 1			
Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)	√	N/A	N/A
Letter Sound Fluency (LSF)	√	N/A	N/A
Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)	√	√	√
R-CBM	N/A	√	√
Grades 2, 3, 4, 5			
R-CBM	√	√	√
MAZE (Comprehension)	√	√	√

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Curriculum Based Measurements (CBM)
AIMSweb Mathematics 2014-2015
Administered by Teacher

Universal (Benchmark) Assessments

Grade Level	September 15 – 26	January 20 – 30	May 18 – 29
Kindergarten			
Oral Counting	√	√	√
Number Identification	√	√	√
Quantity Discrimination		√	√
Missing Number		√	√
Grade 1			
Oral Counting	√	√	√
Number Identification	√	√	√
Quantity Discrimination		√	√
Missing Number		√	√
M-COMP		√	√
Grades 2 – 5			
M-CAP	√	√	√
M-COMP	√	√	√

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Remember:
- **Progress Monitor in accordance with SRBI guidelines.**
- **Data needs to be input within 3 school days of the close of the testing window.**

Glossary

Assessment Strategies	
Observations	All students are observed often and regularly, with the teacher taking a focus varying from wide angle (for example, focusing on the whole class) to close up (for example, focusing on one student or one activity), and from nonparticipant (observing from without) to participant (observing from within).
Performance assessments	The assessment of goal-directed tasks with established criteria. These provide authentic and significant challenges and problems. In these tasks, there are numerous approaches to the problem and rarely only one correct response. These are usually multimodal and require the use of many skills. Audio, video and narrative records are often useful for this kind of assessment.
Process-focused assessments	Students are observed often and regularly, and the observations are recorded by noting the typical as well as non-typical behaviors, collecting multiple observations to enhance reliability, and synthesizing evidence from different contexts to increase validity. A system of note taking and record keeping is created that minimizes writing and recording time. Checklists, inventories and narrative descriptions (such as learning logs) are common methods of collecting observations.
Selected responses	Single occasion, one-dimensional exercises. Tests and quizzes are the most familiar examples of this form of assessment.
Open-ended tasks	Situations in which students are presented with a stimulus and asked to communicate an original response. The answer might be a brief written answer, a drawing, a diagram or a solution. The work, with the assessment criteria attached, could be included in a portfolio.

Assessment Tools

Rubrics	An established set of criteria for rating students in all areas. The descriptors tell the assessor what characteristics or signs to look for in student work and then how to rate that work on a predetermined scale. Rubrics can be developed by students as well as by teachers.
Exemplars	Samples of student work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged. Generally there is one benchmark for each achievement level in a scoring rubric. Each school is encouraged to set benchmarks that are appropriate and usable within their particular school context.
Checklists	These are lists of information, data, attributes or elements that should be present.
Anecdotal Records	Anecdotal records are brief written notes based on observations of students. "Learning stories" are focused, extended observations that can be analyzed later. These records need to be systematically compiled and organized.
Continuums	These are visual representations of developmental stages of learning. They show a progression of achievement or identify where a student is in a process.