

Beach Assessment Policy

Beach Elementary Assessment Philosophy and Agreements

The purpose of this document is to clarify the understanding of the assessment process within the school. The policy applies to the whole school and is to be communicated to and understood by all teachers, students, parents, and administrators.

Beach Elementary School aims to develop knowledgeable, skilled, compassionate, principled, and action-oriented young people through a rigorous program of inquiry.

PHILOSOPHY	ACTIONS	EXAMPLES
Why do we assess the way we do at Beach Elementary School?	What assessment actions do we take because of our philosophy?	How does assessment look at our school specifically?
If we are asked why we assess, the answer would be <i>“to guide instruction.”</i> We believe the ultimate purpose of assessment is to guide our planning and instruction so that we can support and enhance student learning, rather than to simply generate a grade.	Because assessment guides our planning and instruction, we make sure it is frequent, on-going, varied, and continuous.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubrics • Checklists • Benchmarks/exemplars • Continuums • Observations/discussions
We believe that the teaching/learning cycle starts with <i>assessment</i> , rather than teaching, based on Vygotsky’s work which describes the Zone of Proximal Development.	We assess frequently to find out what the student already knows and can do in order to discover what the next best teaching/learning steps would be.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-assessments before all units • Anecdotal records to individualize instruction
We believe that teachers are professionals with the ability to make valid and weighty informal assessments, and that parents also can and do contribute valuable assessment data, which should be actively sought.	We collaborate regularly with other teachers and with parents, to design, discuss, and reflect on student learning.	At the beginning of units we solicit parent input, support, and involvement. At the end, we ask for parents to reflect and give feedback as to how students were demonstrating new learning from the unit at home.

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<p>In order to become somebody who is action-oriented students must be able to self-assess competently, to reflect on learning and subsequently grow and change as a life-long learner.</p>	<p>We actively teach our students to be competent at self-assessment in both academic and behavioral areas.</p>	<p>We constantly solicit fresh assessment data from students and parents throughout the year and use this data to help guide our planning and instruction. At the end of units, students are asked to reflect on experiences and make contributions to their portfolios.</p>
<p>We believe that the best assessments are those that are most authentic.</p>	<p>We assess reading by reading and writing by writing, rather than assessing these complex tasks by doing an artificially contrived task that real readers and writers do not do.</p>	<p>We seek assessments that reflect and affect the real world, e.g. by writing a letter to a publication.</p>
<p>We understand that whatever knowledge, skill, grade level expectation, or ability is being assessed, there are many possible and valid ways for a student to show their understanding to us.</p>	<p>We do not require all students to have their knowledge and abilities assessed in the same way. We believe that the important thing is to know if a student <i>got it</i>. We honor and validate multiple and creative forms of assessment.</p>	<p>Every summative assessment in every unit offers choice in how a student can demonstrate his or her acquisition of the central idea of that unit.</p>
<p>Assessment data is not just important for teachers, but for everyone involved in the academic life of the student.</p>	<p>We regularly communicate assessment data to students, teachers, parents, administration, and the community.</p>	<p>We share assessment data and/or concerns with parents in a timely manner and do not wait for scheduled parent conferences and/or official report cards.</p>

Teachers, students and parents will assess, record, and report learning through:

Units of Inquiry
Learner Profile
Student Portfolios
Conferencing
District/State Assessments

Units of Inquiry

Purpose: Each unit of inquiry will include both formative and summative assessments which will be fair, consistent and developmentally appropriate. All essential elements will be assessed: knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and action. The purpose and means of assessment will be clearly explained to the children in advance.

Formative Assessment is interwoven within each unit of inquiry. Pre-assessment is considered a form of formative assessment. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked; neither can function effectively or purposefully without the other. The tools and strategies of formative assessment can be but are not limited to:

Tools	Strategies
Anecdotal notes	Observations
Checklists	Performances
Open-ended Tasks	Process-focused assessment
Performance Tasks	Selected Response: quizzes and tests

Summative Assessment takes place at the end of each unit of inquiry and is an opportunity for students to demonstrate what has been learned through the unit of inquiry. Summative assessments may include one or any combination of the following: acquisition of data, synthesis of information, application of knowledge and process.

- Evaluation methods to measure proficiency may be through performance based assessments, student initiated action or through selected response items.
- Those involved in evaluating student responses, products or performances may include any one or combination of the following; teacher(s), student(s), parents/community members, expert judges.
- Feedback methods may be in one or any combination of the following: verbal report/conference, developmental proficiency scale, narrative report, checklist , numerical score, or letter grade.

Student generated reflections will take place at the end of each unit. They may be any of the following:

- A general reflection on the unit of inquiry, including knowledge and understanding of the central idea and possible future investigations
- A response to a piece of work from the unit of inquiry
- Each student will maintain a running record of *big ideas* taken from each unit to be passed from grade to grade so students/parents will have cumulative student generated assessment from their PYP experience.

Learner Profile

Tools / Strategies:

- Kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade will introduce the Learner Profile focusing on one attribute a month and use the unit of inquiry to further teach the selected ones.
- 3rd through 5th grade students will use the Beach Learner Profile Reflection to self-assess their growth and understanding of the Learner Profile. Teacher(s) agree to give students time at least 2-3 times a year to complete the document. This will be housed in the student's portfolio.
- All units of inquiry will focus on aspects of the Learner Profile that are particularly valuable in exploring the central idea or lines of inquiry
- Grade 5 students will reflect on their PYP experience through the exhibition using electronic data and portfolio pieces.

Agreements:

- Students, parents, teachers and school administration are expected to model the Learner Profile while at Beach Elementary.
- Students are held accountable to show evidence of understanding the characteristics of all profile attributes through their behavior, writing personal reflections, and in class discussions.
- Assessment of the Learner Profile and attributes will be student driven. Teachers will communicate evidence to parents and parents will be encouraged to facilitate using the profile to set goals with their student.

Student Portfolios

“Portfolios are collections of children’s work that are designed to demonstrate successes, growth, higher order thinking, creativity and reflection. The portfolio is an exhibition of an active mind at work.”

PYP Assessment Handbook

The portfolio will include the following:

- A cover sheet from each grade level illustrating their units of inquiry
- A self-selected piece of work and corresponding reflection from each unit of inquiry, labeled on the sheet protector for clarification
- Student generated PYP Learner Profile Reflection
- Any significant student action that the student selects to add to portfolio
- Parent Reflections

Management Guidelines

The 3-ring notebook or electronic portfolio will be kept for each student, kindergarten through grade 5, as the portfolio. The entire portfolio will be sent home at the end of 5th grade. If a student moves before 5th grade, it will be sent with the student.

Conferences

Philosophy:

The primary function of reporting student progress is to establish, encourage and maintain communication between the home and school, the child and parent/ guardian, and the learner and teacher.

The type of fall conference offered is determined by the teachers. Special accommodations may be needed to suit individual family needs.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conference is an opportunity to establish a relationship with the parent(s), to learn about the student from the parent, to set goals and compare observations, and to share evidence of student learning through the grade level expectations, the curricular standards, and through measures of growth via ipsative comparisons.

Student Led Conferences:

Student led conferences are an opportunity for students to talk to their parents about their growth from the beginning of the year through November, to have the student reflect on their

growth and take ownership for their own learning, and to set goals with the student and parent to insure the student's continued success.

Teacher /Student Conferences

Teacher/Student conferences are an opportunity for students to get and to give feedback that will be critical for differentiation and individual growth, for teachers to get information that can guide instruction, and to help students with self-reflection through modeling and discussion.

District/State Assessments

District/State Assessment	Students	Time
Measures of Academic Progress MAP	Grades K - 5	Fall, Spring
Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills DIBELS	Grades K - 5	Fall, Winter, Spring
Smarter Balanced ELA	Grades 3 - 5	Spring
Smarter Balanced Writing	Grades 3 - 5	Spring
Smarter Balanced Math	Grade 4	Spring
Measure of Student Progress MSP Science	Grade 5	Spring