

GUAJOME PARK ACADEMY

Assessment Policy



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ASSESSMENT POLICY

Guajome Park Academy Charter (2010), Excerpt

Governing Law: The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the Charter School. "Pupil outcomes," for purpose of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school's educational program. -- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(B)

Governing Law: The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is measured. -- California Education Code Section 47605(b) (5) (C)

Guajome Park Academy's (GPA) commitment to student programs is demonstrated through extensive assessment and philosophical commitment to the educational programs. The *Guajome Park Academy Assessment Policy* pertains to the area of assessment that is integral to the GPA educational program and its commitment to student learning.

Assessment Core Values

Core values within GPA are that assessments

- are criterion based and integral to unit design,
- are products of ongoing staff collaboration and calibration,
- engender a systematic and consistent framework for interpretation of student performance,
- articulate both internal and external expectations for student mastery,
- measure students' growth over time,
- portray a benchmark of students' learning,
- offer students multiple and varied opportunities to illustrate knowledge and mastery of skills,
- address all types of student diversity,
- constitute opportunities to extend learning, deepen understanding, develop skills and attitudes,
- develop students' critical thinking skills,
- generate opportunities for self-reflection and peer assessment by students,
- provide students timely and relevant feedback concerning their performance,
- inform subsequent instruction,
- supply parents with ongoing and relevant feedback about students' learning,
- align common core standards with MYP objectives,
- enhance teaching and learning.

Formative and Summative Assessment

At GPA formative assessment is defined as assessment for learning, whereas summative assessment is defined as assessment of learning. While both are valuable, we have established a philosophy around the importance of frequent, low-stakes formative assessment to support student learning and differentiate instruction.

Both formative and summative assessments are utilized and evaluated, using student, department, or collaborative all-staff articulated rubrics. Formative assessments are used to gauge ongoing learning, to allow students to practice new knowledge and skills, to inform about necessary adjustments in instruction, and to invite students to evaluate one another and self. Summative assessments are administered within and at the end of the units to assess the skill and knowledge students have gained, as articulated by the unit's initial goals and objectives. Assessment tasks frequently require that students apply their knowledge in a real world context in order to practice critical thinking skills. Additionally, assessment tasks create opportunities for self-reflection and peer assessment.

Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLOs)

Defining GPA's ESLOs is an on-going process, reviewed annually. During the 2010 WASC accreditation self-study, the GPA community articulated that GPA students are expected to be self-directed learners, effective communicators, critical thinkers, and responsible citizens. In all levels of GPA grades—elementary, middle school, and upper secondary grades – the goal of instruction is to promote student mastery of these ESLOs. The four ESLOs are incorporated into instruction in all subjects and are integral to school-wide assessments on an ongoing basis. This focus is evident in the individual subject area content rubrics, in the ESLOs that are infused into subject area benchmarks, are woven into the school's unit design, in the performance tasks designed for the instructional units, and in the school's Senior Exit Outcomes which require student's reflection about the ways they have met graduation requirements.

Assignment of Grades

Teachers have the primary responsibility in assessing student performance within a consistent and systemic K-12 framework for assignment of grades to evaluate student work. This collaborative task of assessing and defining student performance was begun through publication of a grading scale and a school-wide rubric that defines levels of achievement in the areas of knowledge, understanding, communication, and technology. The school's work to further define student achievement based on alignment with learning objectives and assessment criteria is ongoing and evident in staff collaboration on instructional unit design and benchmarks (see next page).

Grading Scale

A	90 - 100%
B	80 - 89%
C	70 - 79%
D	60 - 69%
F	59% and below

Instructional Unit Design

GPA assessments are integral to an instructional unit design template that has been adopted across the campus. Following the principles of backward design and California Content Standards, the template requires formation of a global essential question as well as clarity about what students should know and be able to do. Student levels of knowledge and skills are assessed against defined assessment criteria. The assessment criteria include the IB criteria articulated for each subject area as well as additional criteria created by each department. The specific assessment tools for a given task are determined based on the desired outcomes. Both formative and summative assessments are utilized and evaluated, using student, department, or collaborative all-staff articulated rubrics. Formative assessments are used to gauge ongoing learning, to allow students to practice new knowledge and skills, to inform about necessary adjustments in instruction, and to invite students to evaluate one another and self. Summative assessments are administered within and at the end of the units to assess the skill and knowledge students have gained, as articulated by the unit's initial goals and objectives. Assessment tasks frequently require that students apply their knowledge in a real world context in order to practice critical thinking skills. Additionally, assessment tasks create opportunities for self-reflection and peer assessment.

Staff Collaboration

GPA Staff collaborates on the design of formative and summative assessments during staff collaboration sessions dedicated to that purpose during pre-assigned Friday afternoons. This subject area articulation occurs both across and within grade levels. It follows the Understanding by Design backward unit design model that is implemented across the campus, ensuring that what students should know and be able to do is articulated first and is aligned with state content standards. Assessments are only then designed by staff to gauge what students know and be able to do. Upon execution of the instructional unit, staff analyzes students' products to evaluate students' mastery and to implement required revisions. The assessments imbedded within the units include, but are not limited to, tests, projects, compositions, performances, and presentations.

Communication with Students and Parents

Expectations for student performance are articulated to students and their parents within web published course outlines, teacher web sites, and within the classroom, at the start of each unit. Parents have access to an electronic Parent Portal that provides data about a student's ongoing academic performance on all marked assignments. In courses that constitute the two years of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (DP), students participate in internal and external assessments that are aligned with course and assessment design mandated by the DP. In addition to final semester grades generated in December and May, parents receive in the mail progress report grades twice each semester. To support student learning, feedback about student performance is informative and timely. Select formative assessments are not integrated into a student's semester mark but are planned, designed, and executed only to inform teachers and students about student's mastery and required consequent instruction. A student's final grade is expressive of the ultimate learning that takes place and is not, therefore, an average of all marked assignments. Teachers exercise discretion in determining what assessments—formative and summative--are reflective of the ultimate proficiency exhibited by the student.

ASSESSMENTS

External Assessments

GPA students participate in various external assessments, some mandatory and others voluntary.

Mandatory assessments:

- California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) – see description on next page
- The California English Language Development test (CELDT) for students whose home language is a language other than English and who have not yet been re-designated (grade K-11)
- The California Physical Fitness test, grades 5, 7 and 9.
- Guajome exit assessments

Voluntary Assessments:

- ReadiStep, to measure skills students need to be on track for college success, (grade 8)
- Preliminary SAT (PSAT) National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test to measure critical reading, math solving and writing skills, grades 9-11
- Early Assessment Program (EAP) to measure college-level English and math readiness, grade 11
- Army Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), grades 10-12
- SAT and ACT assessments to measure readiness for college work, grades 11-12
- International Baccalaureate (IB) assessments for Full IB Diploma or Course Certificates, grades 11-12
- Advanced Placement (AP) assessments for college level credit, grades 11-12

Guajome Park Academy Internal Assessments

Senior Exit Outcomes

Senior Exit Outcomes may include a culminating representation of student learning consisting of assessments such as projects, portfolios, essays, etc.

External Assessments

California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)

CAASPP has replaced Standardized Testing and Reporting (“STAR”) Program. This system is administered annually, and was authorized October 2, 2013 by state law (AB 484). The purpose of the CAASPP is to assist teachers, administrators, and pupils and their parents by promoting high-quality teaching and learning through the use of a variety of assessment approaches and item types. ***The results from CAASPP may be used as one measure for placement in academic classes.*** All GPA students in Grades 6-11 participate in the CAASPP System.

The CAASPP includes for the 2016-17 school year:

- The Smarter Balanced system of assessments for mathematics and English-language arts in grades 3-8 and 11
- Pilot California Science Test in grades 5, 8, and 10.
- The California Alternative Assessment (“CAA”) is a grade-level test for students who have an IEP, are receiving grade-level instruction, and, even with interventions, will not achieve grade-level proficiency within the year covered by the student’s IEP. The purpose of the CAA test is to allow a student with disabilities a greater opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the California content standards in science.
- The California Alternate Performance Assessment (“CAPA”) is administered in Science to students in grades 5, 8, 10.
- Optional for local educational agencies in (LEAs) to administer, the standards based test in Spanish.

Questions about the AB 484 should be directed to the CDE CAASPP office by phone at (919) 445-8765 or by email at caaspp@cde.ca.gov.

Grade Bump: State Assessment Incentive

- A student who receives **Standard Met** or **Standard Exceeded** on an SBAC assessment will receive a **third of a letter grade bump** for the respective year long course. A student who scores **Proficient** or **Advanced** on a science CST will receive a **third of a letter grade bump** for the respective year long course.
- A student who **increases from Below Standard to Near Standard** will receive a **third of a letter grade bump** for the respective year long course.
- If a student qualifies for a grade bump, his/her parent/guardian will be responsible for initiating the petition with the registrar for a grade change.
- The grade bump will be posted on the student’s transcript prior to the Spring Semester of the following school year.

Early Assessment Program

The Early Assessment Program (“EAP”) was developed in collaboration with the California Department of Education, the State Board of Education, and the California State University (“CSU”) system. The program is a voluntary assessment program designed to provide students in the eleventh grade early indicators for college-level English and mathematics readiness. Students who seek to enroll in a CSU or California Community College (“CCC”) should check the option in the EAP Readiness for College English and Mathematics EAP Augmentation sections within their math and ELA smarter balanced assessments during CAASPP testing. The EAP results can only be released to the CSU or CCC through this process. By taking

this assessment, students may be exempt from having to take an English and/or mathematics placement exam for the CSU or CCC system. For more information on the EAP tests, visit www.csumathsuccess.org/eap or www.csuenglishsuccess.org/eap_esw

The CSU system recently enacted a policy known as the “Early Start” program requiring incoming students who do not demonstrate readiness for college-level math and/or English to begin remediation during the summer before coming to the CSU. The goals of Early Start are to better prepare students in math and English before their first semester, thereby improving their chances of completing a college degree. For more information regarding the “Early Start” program, visit www.csuenglishsuccess.org/students/early_start_faq_msw

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Assessments

As rigorous, criterion-related performance assessments, the internal and external IB assessments are highly aligned with GPA’s Core Assessment Values. As outlined in the *IB Diploma Programme Assessment: Principles and Practice* guide the assessments of the diploma programme include the following aims:

- DP assessment should support the curricular and philosophical goals of the programme, through the encouragement of good classroom practice and appropriate student learning
- The published results of the DP assessment must have sufficiently high level of reliability, appropriate to a high-stakes university entrance qualification
- DP assessment must reflect the international-mindedness of the programme whenever possible, must avoid cultural bias, and must make appropriate allowances for students working in their second language.
- DP assessment must pay appropriate attention to the higher-order cognitive skills (synthesis, reflection, evaluation, critical thinking) as well as the more fundamental cognitive skills (knowledge, understanding, and application)
- Assessment for each subject must include a suitable range of tasks and instruments/components that ensure all objectives for the subject are addressed
- The principal means of assessing student achievement and determining subject grades should be the professional judgment of experienced senior examiners, supported by statistical information

IB Internal Assessments

Internal assessments are assessments that are evaluated by the subject area teacher who gives the assessment a score, based on the IB prescribed rubrics, which may then be moderated by external examiners to ensure international parity aligned to the IB assessment criteria in that subject area. Examples of internal assessments include oral examinations in Group 1, Language A (English) and Group 2, Language B (World Languages), projects and portfolios in Group 5, Mathematics, presentations in Theory of Knowledge, practical laboratory work in Group 4, Science, artistic performances and presentations in Group 6, Arts and more. Internal assessments often allow for greater student flexibility in exhibiting their acquired knowledge and skills according to IB criterion-referenced rubrics as well as the opportunity for students to show their work over time and outside of the restrictions of the examination environment.

IB External Assessments

External assessments also enable students to show their work over time and outside of the restrictions of the examination environment. Similar to internal assessments, external assessments are evaluated according to the established subject area criteria as prescribed by the IB. External assessments are not evaluated by the subject area teacher, however, but are marked externally by IB examiners. Many of these

assessments are given during a specific assessment window defined by the IB. External assessments are heavily focused on the quality of a finished written product in the IB subject area.

IB Assessment Marking

IB markings are determined through the criterion-referenced rubrics established by IB's standards and practices in each content area. Multiple components are assessed to specific criterion and are then combined to determine the final mark. Each subject area has its own defined internal and external assessments. The majority of IB assessments are marked on a 1-7 scale, with 1 being low and 7 being high. Theory of Knowledge and the Extended Essay are marked as: A-excellent, B-good, C-satisfactory, D-mediocre, E-elementary, or N-no grade.

Students at GPA can choose to participate in individual IB courses, or pursue a full IB Diploma. Those students pursuing the full diploma have basic requirements they must meet including:

Minimum of 24 combined points from External Assessments

Up to 3 additional points can be earned from Theory of Knowledge (TOK) and Extended Essay (EE)

At least a mark of D in both TOK and EE

No mark of 1 in any class

No more than two marks of 2

No more than three marks of 3 or lower

At least 12 points in higher level (HL) courses

At least 9 points in standard level (SL) courses

Grading/Marking

The GPA grading scale is used along with IB assessment rubrics as specified in each of the subject guides. Both are given to students at the beginning of each course and are applied to formative tasks. Summative results are analyzed and assist in shaping formative assessment. IB grades are determined through the criterion-referenced rubrics established by IB's standards and practices in each content area. Multiple components are assessed to specific criterion and are then combined to determine the final grade. Each subject area has its own defined internal and external assessments in addition to the subject area examinations, administered in May of each year. In general those marks are described as follows:

IB Rubrics and Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentages	IB Criterion Rubric Points
A	90 - 100%	5.0
B+	87 - 89%	4.5
B	80 - 86%	4.0
C+	77 - 79%	3.5
C	70 - 76%	3.0
D+	67 - 69%	2.5
D	60 - 66	2.0
F (E)	59% and below	1.0
N	0%	0.0

Teachers are responsible for electronically filing and archiving their gradebook with their administrator by the last work day according to the electronic gradebook procedures. The marking system will be based on letter grades with the following explanation of each grade:

A - Excellent Achievement

“A” means academic performance that

- Demonstrates thorough understanding of course content
- Demonstrates significant growth in subject area
- Consistently surpasses course expectations

B - Above Average Achievement

“B” means academic performance that

- Demonstrates good understanding of course content
- Demonstrates noticeable growth in subject area
- Often surpasses course expectations

C - Average Achievement

“C” means academic performance that

- Demonstrates acceptable command of course content
- Demonstrates some growth in subject area
- Meets minimum course expectations

D - Below Average Achievement--Passing

“D” means academic performance that

- Demonstrates partial command of course content
- Demonstrates marginal growth in subject area
- Meet some, not all, course expectations

E - Failure--Unacceptable Achievement

“E” means academic performance that

- Demonstrates minimal understanding of course content
- Demonstrates inadequate growth in subject area
- Does not meet course expectations

California English Language Development Test

All students who indicate home language is other than English are California English Language Development Test (“CELDT”) tested within thirty days of initial enrollment and at least annually thereafter between July 1 and October 31 until redesignated as fluent English proficient. GPA provides notification to all parents of GPA’s responsibility for CELDT administration and of CELDT results within 30 days of receiving results from GPA’s publisher. The CELDT shall be used to fulfill the requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act for annual English proficiency testing.

California Physical Fitness Test

The state mandated Physical Fitness Test, required for Grades 4, 7, and 9, and is administered annually to GPA students. Students are made aware of the state standards for gender and age group – beginning in Grade 6. Class time is spent preparing students by benchmark testing, goal setting, and providing strategies for improvement.

PSAT/NMSQT

The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test is a program co-sponsored by the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation. It is a standardized test that provides firsthand practice

for the SAT, as it measures critical reading skills, math problem-solving skills, and writing skills. The PSAT is an optional assessment (yet highly encouraged) for students in Grades 9 -11, and is offered in October. All 10th grade students complete the PSAT while attending GPA, with GPA covering the registration fees. Any 9th or 11th grade student must sign up and pay a registration fee for this test. *See the Counseling Department to register for this test, or visit www.collegeboard.com for more information about the PSAT.*

Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (“ASVAB”) assesses academic ability and predicts success in a wide variety of occupations. This assessment is highly recommended for all Grade 10-12 students, as the ASVAB Career Exploration Program serves as a valuable career exploration and planning tool. For more information on the ASVAB, please visit www.asvabprogram.com.

Full IB Diploma/IB Courses in Single Subject Areas

IB Diploma tests are administered annually per the IBO protocol. Student must be enrolled in an IB course in order to qualify to take the corresponding IB exam. A student successfully completing IB exam(s) may earn college credit. (Please contact the colleges directly to learn about IB policy.) *See the IB Coordinator for information on registering for these tests*

Advanced Placement Examinations

AP courses offer a cost-effective way for high school students to obtain college-level coursework experience and credit. A student may take an AP exam without having to take the corresponding AP course. *See the Guidance Department for information on registering for this test, or www.collegeboard.com for more information about AP Exams.*