Assessment Calendar

As part of our dedication to fostering academic progress, we are pleased to present the Annual Assessment Calendar. This comprehensive calendar serves as a roadmap for the academic year, highlighting key assessment milestones. It is designed to guide educators, students, and parents through a cohesive and structured approach to evaluating student growth and achievement. With this calendar, we collectively work towards unlocking the full potential of every learner within the Allentown Diocese.

Key Points:

1. **Guidance and Structure**: The calendar provides invaluable guidance, ensuring that assessments are well-timed and aligned with the academic goals of the Diocese. It helps all stakeholders—teachers, students, and parents—understand when and how assessments will take place throughout the year.
2. **Framework for Data Collection**: While the calendar outlines the Diocese's framework for assessment data collection, it is important to note that not all schools currently have the necessary student licenses to complete these assessments online. Schools without the requisite licenses will conduct assessments using traditional paper-and-pencil methods.
3. **Data Utilization**: The data collected through these assessments is used by the Allentown Diocese to:
   ○ Form a detailed profile of each student, identifying strengths and areas for growth.
   ○ Gauge the performance of individual schools and the Diocese as a whole.
   ○ Highlight successes and identify opportunities for improvement, guiding future instructional strategies and educational initiatives.
4. **Data Analysis:** The data will be regularly reviewed and discussed among grade level teams and administration.

In summary, the Annual Assessment Calendar is a vital tool in our commitment to academic excellence, providing a clear and structured approach to assessment that supports the growth and achievement of every student within the Diocese.

STAR Assessments, developed by Renaissance Learning, are a set of computer-adaptive tests (CATs) designed to evaluate students' abilities in reading and math. In grades K-1, students are given the STAR Early Reading assessment. In grades 2-5, students are given the STAR Reading assessment. These assessments serve several key purposes:

1. **Measure Skills**: STAR Assessments accurately measure students' reading and math skills,

providing a clear picture of their current abilities.

2. **Monitor Achievement and Growth**: The assessments track students' progress over time, helping to monitor both their academic achievement and growth in relation to the expected standards.

3. **Align with Diocesan Standards**: STAR's Assessments specifically measure how well students understand skills that are aligned with Diocesan standards, ensuring that their learning is on track with national benchmarks.

4. **Universal Screener**: As a universal screener, the results of STAR Assessments are used to identify students who are meeting grade-level and term-level benchmarks in literacy and math. Additionally, these results help to pinpoint students who may require additional support or interventions to meet their academic goals.

5. **Diocese-Wide Monitoring**: Within the Diocese, STAR Assessments are utilized to monitor students' progress towards meeting Diocese-wide educational goals. This data is crucial for ensuring that all students are on track to achieve the desired outcomes set by the Diocese.

In summary, STAR Assessments are essential tools for evaluating, monitoring, and supporting student progress in reading and math, aligned with Diocesan standards and the Diocese's educational goals.

Placement and Diagnostics Assessments are tools used to evaluate students' current skill levels and identify their position on the learning continuum. These assessments serve several purposes:

1. **Determine Skill Levels**: They provide specific data on students' strengths and areas for growth, helping teachers understand where each student is in their learning journey.

2. **Inform Instruction**: The results from these assessments guide teachers in tailoring instruction to meet the individual needs of students, addressing their next-step learning requirements.

3. **Prioritize At-Risk Students**: For students identified as "at-risk" (based on STAR data), these assessments are particularly crucial. In grades 1 through 5, at-risk students should undergo these assessments first to ensure timely intervention and support. This allows educators to quickly address any learning gaps and provide targeted assistance to help these students progress.

Overall, Placement and Diagnostics Assessments are essential for making informed decisions about student instruction and ensuring that all students receive the support they need to succeed.

Benchmark Assessments serve as critical tools for evaluating student progress and are typically

administered twice during the academic year:

1. **Mid-Year Benchmark**: This assessment occurs midway through the school year, offering a snapshot of how students are progressing towards meeting the year-end Diocesan Guidelines. It helps identify areas where students may need additional support or enrichment.
2. **End of Year Benchmark**: At the end of the school year, a final benchmark assessment is given. This benchmark is cumulative, covering all the material taught throughout the year. It provides comprehensive data on how well students have mastered the content aligned with the Diocesan Guidelines.

These assessments are essential for the Diocese, administrators, and teachers, as they offer valuable insights into student performance and help guide instructional decisions to ensure that all students are on track to meet the established academic goals.

Unit Assessments are tests administered periodically throughout the school year to evaluate students' performance against specific curriculum standards. Here's what they accomplish:

1. **Measure Understanding**: These assessments gauge how well students have grasped the material covered in each unit, providing teachers with a clear picture of each student's knowledge and understanding.
2. **Identify Student Progress**: The results help teachers determine where students stand—whether they are falling behind, on track, or ahead of expectations. This insight is crucial for tailoring instruction to meet individual needs.
3. **Support Inclusive, Data-Driven Instruction**: The data from unit assessments reveals the range of capabilities within a classroom. Teachers can use this information to create instruction that is inclusive, addressing the needs of all students, whether they require additional support or more challenging material.

In summary, Unit Assessments are vital for ensuring that teaching is aligned with curriculum standards and that instruction is responsive to the diverse needs of students in the classroom.

Progress Monitoring is a continuous process used to enhance student achievement by regularly tracking and evaluating students' learning progress.

The process for progress monitoring should include the following procedures:

1. **First Progress Monitoring:** Teacher should model and complete the test with students. This should not be graded.
2. **Second Progress Monitoring**: Teacher reads test to students but the students answer

independently.

3. **Third Progress Monitoring Onward**: Students should complete independently.

Ongoing Progress Monitoring: Teachers systematically check student progress over time, using various assessments and observations. This ongoing monitoring allows them to keep a close eye on how students are advancing in their learning.

4. **Adjust Instructional Strategies**: Based on the progress data, teachers can refine and adapt their instructional techniques to better meet the specific needs of their students. This ensures that instruction remains effective and responsive to students' evolving needs.

5. **Identify Effective Strategies**: By analyzing the progress data, teachers can identify which instructional strategies are most successful and which ones may need to be modified or replaced. This helps in fine-tuning their teaching approach.

6. **Formative Feedback**: The data gathered from progress monitoring serves as a formative feedback tool. It provides teachers with actionable insights that inform their decisions about the next steps in instruction, ensuring that they can make data-driven choices to support student learning.

In summary, Progress Monitoring is a crucial practice for boosting student achievement by enabling teachers to make informed, data-driven decisions about how to best support their students' learning journey.