# Roberts Elementary Assessment Policy

**What do we believe?**

Assessment is integral to the teaching and learning at Roberts Elementary. Assessment is a tool that drives instruction. It is the gathering and analysis of information about student performance. We believe that through the use of various methods of assessment we can strengthen our teaching and guide our instruction. This is an ongoing process that involves the teacher and student to track progress and improve practice. Assessment allows us to identify what students know, understand, can do, and feel at various stages in the learning process. By understanding our learners we can adapt and change our instruction to help students and teachers reach expectations set forth by our program. Information gathered from assessments should be reflected upon by parents, teachers, and students in order to identify strengths and areas of growth as we pursue our commitment to overall success. Various assessment strategies and tools will be used to help students achieve in all domains throughout their years in the PYP program.

**Why do we assess the learned curriculum?**

***Purposes of assessments:*** Assessment is an essential part of the instructional cycle. It provides information about student learning and development, as well as a framework for planning, self-reflection, and collaboration. In addition, it is used to:

- collect data that drives instruction
- evaluate teaching and students' inquiry
- assess the mastery of a body of knowledge
- identify student's strengths and weaknesses
- individualize instruction
- track progress and growth within a community of learners
- provide a picture of student learning over time
- strengthen our learning process and practices as educators
- guide teacher planning and presentation
- inform students and parents of progress
- provide the school staff with a measure of progress towards goals and proficiencies

***Effective assessments allow the student to:***

- Demonstrate and share their learning and understanding
- Set goals for reaching expectations
- Use their own learning strategies and build on their own strengths
- Expand on multiple intelligences to enhance their understanding
- Build confidence in their own work and self
- Express their points of view and understanding

- Understand what their own needs are and how to improve
- Use their prior knowledge to build on and guide the inquiry process

***Effective assessments allow the teacher to:***

- Create instructional plans to guide inquiry
- Understand feedback from students
- Clearly define student needs
- Direct instruction
- Define expectations and outcomes for students and teacher-led inquiry
- Adapt for learning styles and multiple intelligences
- Acquire data that can be used to inform students, teachers, grade levels, school, and community
- Collect both future inquiries and student questioning
- Show awareness of learning style, cultural, gender, linguistic, and racial differences

***Effective assessments allow parents to:***

- See evidence of student learning and development
- Provide support outside of school
- Celebrate learning and student accomplishment
- Observe and track student progress and growth

**What do we assess?**

Assessments should be given numerous times throughout all units of study, both within and outside of the Programme of Inquiry. Units of study should include the following:

***Pre-assessments*** allow teachers to gather information on students' prior knowledge, misconceptions, and experiences about the topic or concept. This data is used to guide instruction. This form of assessment looks like: K-W-L charts, pretests, surveys, checklists, and goal setting.

***Formative assessments*** are woven into the daily learning process. They will be used throughout the learning process to assess specific skills or concepts and to check for understanding. These assessments are connected to instruction and learning to provide frequent and on-going feedback on the learning process. This allows teachers and students to guide instruction and plan for the next stage in the learning process. This form of assessment looks like: anecdotal records, student reflections, student/teacher feedback, peer to peer evaluations, student conversation, classroom participation, individual and group progress, and skill development.

***Student self-assessments*** will be integrated into the teaching and learning process. They will be used for students to assess their own learning and progress throughout the entire PYP program. Students should assess their understanding of the central idea and concepts. They will reflect upon their own

development of the learner profile, attitudes, and transdisciplinary skills. This form of assessment looks like: rating scales, rubrics, checklists, and reflections.

***Summative assessments*** occur at the end of a teaching and learning cycle. They are designed to show students' understanding, abilities, and feelings about a central idea and concept at the culmination of the teaching or learning process. These assessments can allow students to apply their knowledge and skills in new contexts. Students are aware of the expectations of the summative assessment at the beginning of teaching a unit or concept. This allows the teacher to measure the understanding of the central idea and inquiry points, but also can inform and improve student learning and instruction. This form of assessment looks like: collections, presentations, tests, individual or group projects to demonstrate the understanding of an entire unit.

***Exhibition as Summative Assessment*** is undertaken by students in their final year of the PYP. The exhibition is the culmination of the PYP, allowing fifth grade students to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and concepts they have gained during their experience in the program. It requires students to synthesize their prior knowledge and to apply it in a self-directed manner. The subject of the Exhibition is a student-selected real-world problem which warrants an extended inquiry and action. It is a celebration for all students, parents, and teachers.

**How do we assess the learned curriculum?**

***State Mandated Assessments:***

The state of Texas requires all third through fifth grade students take the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) during the spring semester. The STAAR is a rigorous assessment designed to measure a student's college and career ready trajectory. Students are assessed in the areas of reading and writing, mathematics, and science ($5^{th}$ grade only). STAAR scores are used to guide instruction and determine if a student needs intervention with an accelerated instruction plan. Parents receive official score reports with their child's test data.

The state of Texas requires all kindergarten through second grade students be given an assessment to screen for early reading language deficiencies. The HISD has adopted the use of Reading Running Records (Developmental Reading Assessment and/or Fountas & Pinnell) to be given three times annually to all students in Kindergarten through fifth grade. Using running records is a highly reliable early reading assessment designed to identify the reading development of students. This diagnostic instrument is a one-on-one assessment which helps teachers provide targeted instruction so that students improve as readers.

Any student who has a language other than English spoken in his home is required to receive language proficiency testing for placement upon enrolling in school. Children categorized as limited English proficient will be given the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment Scale (TELPAS) each spring

until they are considered fluent in English. The results of this test are sent to parents at the end of each school year. Teachers use the results to determine language proficiency levels and individualize instruction to meet the needs of the English language learners.

***District Mandated Assessments:***
IOWA (K)
High Frequency Word Evaluation (1st & 2nd grade)
CogAT (K)
STAAR formatted Benchmarks (3rd-5th grade)
Developmental Reading Assessment (K-3rd grade)
Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment (3rd – 5th grade)
STAR/Ren360 BOY, MOY and EOY benchmarks (k-5th grade)

***School-wide Assessments:***
Within the classroom setting the teacher is constantly gathering data and recording anecdotal notes on each student through observation, student participation and performance in order to better inform instruction. Each grade level has benchmarks for math and reading progress. On-going formative assessment in all curricular areas is a standard practice. Grade level assessments include, but are not limited to:
Currently TXGoMath, soon to be: Math Eureka [New Adoption] (K- 5th grade)

***Portfolios:***
Student portfolios provide the most comprehensive way to show growth in student learning. Therefore, every student at Roberts (K-5th grade) keeps a portfolio of work from the current and previous school years. Each year students collect work to represent their accomplishments as a learner as well as the growth they have made throughout the year. Work is chosen and reflected upon so that the students can gain a better understanding of how they are progressing as learners. The portfolio provides data to parents, teachers, and students on student progress for individual reflection, student led conferences, parent-teacher conferences, and teacher reflection/data collection. Evidence will include work from units of inquiry, evidence of development of the learner profiles, student reflections, and samples which exemplify the learner's understanding and growth.

**What tools are used to assess the learning?**
Assessments come in many forms. It is important to use a variety of strategies and tools for assessment in order to allow students multiple opportunities and methods to show what they have learned. The following tools are used to help teachers record their findings:
***Anecdotal records*** are brief, written notes based on observations of children. These records need to be systematically compiled and organized.

***Continuums*** are visual representations of developmental stages of learning. They show a progression of achievement or identify where a child is in a process.

***Benchmarks/Exemplars*** are samples of children's work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged. Benchmarks/exemplars are frequently used with rubrics or continuums. ***Checklists*** are lists of information, data, attributes, or elements that should be present in student work. ***Rubrics/checklists*** define specific criteria used for scoring or rating children's tests, portfolios, or performance. The descriptors tell the child and the assessor what characteristics or signs to look for in the work and then how to rate that work on a predetermined scale. All summative assessments will have an accompanying rubric or checklist. Students will aid in developing such assessment tools whenever possible.

***Tests/Quizzes*** are single-occasion assessments, providing a snapshot of students' specific knowledge.

**How do we report the learning?**

Reporting is a means of giving feedback from assessments. Reporting communicates what students know, understand, and can do. Effective reporting should:

- involve parents, students, and teachers as partners
- reflect what the school community values
- be comprehensive, honest, fair, and credible
- be clear and understandable to all parties
- allow teachers to incorporate what they learn during the reporting process into their future teaching and assessment process.

***Written Reports-***

***End of Unit Reflections:*** At the end of each unit of inquiry, students and teachers will formally reflect on the essential elements, Learner Profile, and transdisciplinary skills, as related to the unit of inquiry and central idea.

***Progress Reports:*** Parents will be notified during the 3rd week of each 6-week grading period of their child's progress in each academic subject. Progress reports will also be sent for a 10 point or more decline in grades, failing grades, poor conduct, and /or poor attendance.

***Report Cards:*** In addition to ongoing classroom evaluations, every 6-weeks students will receive a formal report card. Houston Independent School District requires all schools to use a numeric report card. This report card includes grades for all curriculum areas – reading, language arts, math, science, social studies, visual arts, physical education, and dance. Grades for student work habits and conduct will also be reported.

***Conferences-***

***Parent-teacher conferences*** may be held anytime throughout the school year, but at least one parent-teacher conference per year will be held during the fall semester. This is an opportunity to discuss progress toward learning goals and concerns for the year to come.

***Student-led conferences "Portfolio Picnic"*** will be held during the spring semester. This is an opportunity for the student to lead their own conference with their parent and to reflect on their learning and progress during the year. The student is able to highlight what they feel is important and share their strengths and areas for improvement. In these conferences, students will plan their own presentation, with teacher modeling and practice beforehand. Student portfolios will be used during student-led conferences to share examples of their growth and progress.

***Teacher-student conferences*** will be held on an on-going basis throughout the school year to provide students with feedback on their progress towards a learning goal. These conferences occur in all subjects and in all grade levels.

**How do we evaluate our assessment policies?**

As a staff we will review and update our assessment policy annually.

Appendices
Appendix 1: Student Portfolios
Appendix 2: Student-Led Conferences
Appendix 3: Grading Policy

**What Our Portfolios Show and How They Are Used:**

Portfolios are collections of student work that reflect each child's learning throughout their years of study at Roberts Elementary. They contain authentic reflections of the whole child and help portray a full picture of the student's school years. Collecting work that is submitted into portfolios is ongoing. Throughout the school year we provide time for students to work on their portfolios. Portfolios are used to discuss learning with our students. They can be used to assess a student's understanding and to document the process of learning. They are used as a communication tool during student-led conferences and parent meetings and are available to relevant teachers, staff, students and families.

**How Portfolio Items Are Selected:**

Portfolios will include *self-selected* pieces of student work, goals, reason for including the piece, and reflections.

Portfolios will include *products* (from the summative assessment) and a *reflection* from each Unit of Inquiry each year.

Portfolios will include reflections of the Learner Profile attributes, Skills, and Actions. Portfolios will contain examples of work that reflect *student inquiry*.

**How Portfolios Are Stored:**

Following Portfolio Picnics (student-led conferences), student work samples will be collected and stapled together behind the year's cover sheet. These collections will then be added to the student's portfolio and stored in each student's plastic storage envelope. At the end of the school year, teachers will turn in the students' portfolio for summer storage. In fifth grade, students take their portfolios home at the end of the year.

**Essential Agreements**

| | |
|---|---|
| Portfolios | • Portfolios will be created for all students.<br>• A variety of work samples will be collected, representing a variety of subject areas and Units of Inquiry.<br>• Captions will be included on most selected pieces, indicating student's reflection.<br>• At least 2 pieces will be selected every month.<br>• Work samples will be selected by both student and teacher.<br>• All portfolio items must have a date.<br>• The teacher and student will choose 10 samples (1-2 math, 1-2 writing, 1-2 reading, 2 art, 1 repetitive task, 1-2 summative assessments, one project) to send to the next grade level. All other portfolio work will be sent home at the end of the school year. |

Appendix 2: Student-Led Conferences

**Portfolio Picnics**

At the end of each school year, students will meet with their parents for a student-led conference during "Portfolio Picnics." For one lunch time during Portfolio Picnic week, parents make a date with their child and bring a picnic lunch to share together on the front lawn of Roberts. Parents and their child have this special time to eat lunch together and go through their child's portfolio. Parents will also have an opportunity to share their thoughts about their child's work and progress, through their own written reflections.

**Preparing Students for Conferences**

Prior to their conference, students will complete end of year reflections on their work samples, overall portfolio, and their progress on the Learner Profile. These reflections and reports will be shared with parents during the conference.

**Steps for Preparation**

1. Students organize the pieces in their portfolio either by date or by subject type.
2. Decide which pieces are moving up to the next grade level and which pieces will be going home.
    - refer to the grade level's list of required portfolio items for items to move up
    - all End of Unit Reflections move up to the next grade level
    - approximately 10 additional work samples should remain in the student's portfolio
    - reflections completed for and during the Portfolio Picnic should remain in the portfolio

3. Students complete reflections on specific portfolio pieces or on their portfolio in its entirety. Allow students to look through their portfolio from previous years to look for growth areas.

4. Students write their parents a letter using the Student Portfolio Picnic letter format.(this remains in the portfolio)
5. Decide how the students will share their work with their parents at Portfolio Picnic. Students should only be sharing work from the current year.
    - Will the work be in a folder? Will it be clipped together?
    - Will there be a checklist for them to cover?
    - Is there a script or a list of questions to guide the conference?
6. Students should practice sharing their portfolio with other students, prior to their conference.

**Essential Agreements**

| | |
|---|---|
| Student–led conferences | • Conferences will be used as a time for celebration.<br>• Students will share their learning with their parents.<br>• Students will share examples of their work from Reading, Math, Units of Inquiry and additional areas of student choice.<br>• Teachers will prepare students for sharing their learning.<br>• The child's current year portfolio will be used to show evidence of growth.<br>• Conferences will end with a reflection and goal setting.<br>• Conferences will occur during the month of May.<br>• Parent-teacher conferences will be held separately from student-led conferences. |

Appendix 3: Grading Policy

**Roberts Elementary Grading Policy**

Grades become a part of a child's permanent record and are used in making programmatic decisions which will affect him throughout his school life. Tangible evidence to support grading is essential. Careful and accurate preparation of grades is imperative. This school-wide grading policy has been developed and approved by the faculty prior to the start of each school year. All teachers are expected to follow it once approved.

**Grade Reporting**

Students will receive report cards at the end of each 6-week period. Report cards must be signed by the parents and returned. If a student receives a grade below a "70" or an "N," "P," or "U" in any subject on the report card, the parents will be notified of the need for a conference with the teacher who issued the failing grade. All conferences must be documented by the teacher.

1. At the end of the first 3 weeks of a grading period, the teachers will send progress reports home to every child in 1st through 5th grade.
2. A classroom teacher shall be required to assign a grade that reflects the student's mastery of an assignment which is linked to a learning objective as defined by the TEKS.
3. A classroom teacher shall not be required to assign a minimum grade for an assignment without regard to the student's quality of work.
4. A student shall be allowed a reasonable opportunity to make-up or redo a class assignment or assessment for which the student received a failing grade, after re-teaching occurs. Summative assessments receiving a failing grade must be redone. Students receiving a failing grade on a formative assessment will be given the opportunity, but not required to redo the assignment.
5. The teacher will keep accurate grade sheets each 6-week grading period on Power School.
6. Teachers will post on average two grades a week per core content subject to Power School. All grades must be posted as soon as practical, but not later than 2 calendar weeks from the date of the assignment. All grades for the grading period will be posted before the cycle ends.

**Grading System Criteria for Grading Academic Subjects (Grades 1-5) - with documentation of Parent Contact**

| | |
|---|---|
| Excellent | 90-100 (A) |
| Good | 80-89 (B) |
| Satisfactory | 75-79 (C) |
| Passing | 70-74 (D) |
| Failing | 50-69 (F) |

The lowest numerical score that will be reported on a report card will be a “50.”

**Criteria for Grading Conduct**

E……..Excellent quality of behavior
S……..Satisfactory quality of behavior
P……..Poor quality of behavior
U……Unsatisfactory quality of behavior
* Before a student can receive a "**U**" on the report card, a detailed discipline report must be submitted for administrative review. This report must be signed by the principal and the teacher, stating specific incidents, dates, and documentation of parent contact.

**Criteria for Grading of Specialists Courses and Supporting Content**

Fine Arts, Physical Education, Health/Safety, Music, and Handwriting
E……..Excellent quality of performance
S……..Satisfactory quality of performance
N……..Needs Improvement in quality of performance
U……..Unsatisfactory quality of performance

**Make-up work due to an absence**

Students with excused absences will be allowed to make-up all work within a reasonable time following their return to school. Students will not be given a “0” for missing assignments or be penalized for late work as a result of an absence. Teachers may choose to excuse a child from nonessential work.

**Incomplete or late work**

Students will not receive a lower grade for incomplete or late work. However, a notation will be made when recording the grade in the grade book and will be documented on the student’s work habit section of the report card.

**Reteaching**

When a student receives a failing grade, the teacher should select re-teaching activities that present the content in a new or different learning modality. If the initial instruction was primarily visual, the corrective activity might be manipulative.

- Documentation that re-teaching has occurred may consist of entries in the teacher’s lesson plans and/or grade book.
- There must be documentation of at least one instance of re-teaching when the teacher has determined that the student has not mastered the TEKS.
- Re-teaching and retesting is appropriate for all assignments.
- Reassessment methods include, but are not limited to: class discussions, review, demonstration, observation, oral questioning, re-teaching in another unit, retesting.

- When averaging grades for a reporting period, passing redo grades will be counted as a 75.
- If the redo grade is failing, the higher of the two grades (original/redo) will be used.
- Reteaching will continue until the student reaches mastery; however a student will only be given one additional attempt to redo an assignment.

**Weighting Grades**

- Weighting of grades must be done very carefully.
- No single grade should be worth more than 10% of the overall subject average.

**Homework**

- Homework will be assigned by the classroom teacher when it is deemed necessary to provide extra practice, maintenance of skills, or review of skills.
- Class work should not be considered homework.
- Homework should be checked for completion and accuracy, but not graded. Feedback is suggested when appropriate.
- Homework assignments should not exceed 20 minutes in Kindergarten, 30 minutes in 1st and 2nd grade, and 45 minutes in 3rd – 5th grades.
- 30 minutes of independent reading should occur every night, in addition to any specified homework.

**Graded Work**

All graded assignments and assessments will be sent home for parent review every 2 weeks.

**Kindergarten**

All Kindergarten students will be assessed using the HISD *Progression of Skills Report Card*. Student progress will be reported to parents at twelve-week intervals for Kindergarten and 6-week intervals for Kindergarten and documented on an individual performance basis. The *Progression of Skills Report Card* reflects each student's growth over time in Language Arts/Reading, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Social Development (Conduct), Health and Physical Development, and Fine Arts. The reporting scale for The *Progression of Skills Report Card* is based on observed performance, observations, checklists, student products, and anecdotal records, as well as formal and informal assessments. This data is collected for portfolio documentation during large and small group instruction as well as during independent work station activities. Objectives that are fundamental in nature, spiral throughout the year. Standards for the *Progression of Skills Report Card* are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, and the HISD Scope and Sequence and Vertical Alignment Matrix.

**Students will receive scores from 1-3 for each objective:**

1 **Discovery—First Steps**

Is a stage in which children *develop an awareness* of their surroundings and exhibit a need for more instruction and interaction with objects, people, events and concepts. At this stage the child still needs multiple experiences coupled with direct instruction from the teacher.

2 **Exploring – Showing Progress**

Is a stage in which children *develop an understanding* of the components and attributes of their surroundings and exhibit a need for more practice with objects, people, events and concepts. At this stage the child understands the concept, but needs numerous opportunities to practice the concept.

3 **Connecting - Ready to Apply**

Is a stage in which children *bring their own personal meaning* to make use of their surroundings and links purposeful interaction with objects, people, events and concepts. At this stage the child has had instruction and multiple experiences to practice a particular concept and can transfer his/her learning from one area of learning to a new area of learning.

**1st – 5th grade**

***Subject: Reading***

Grading: Approximately 2 grades should be taken each week with 9-12 grades collected each grading period. Grades should come from the following:

- Literature response
- Reading/writing connection
- Comprehension, accuracy, fluency, and vocabulary
- Characteristics of literature/genre
- Use of reading strategies
- Other TEKS-based concepts

***Subject: Other Language Arts***

Grading: Approximately 2 grades should be taken each week with 9-12 grades collected each grading period. Grades from spelling assignments/tests will make up 25% of the Other Language Arts grade. The remaining 75% will come from writing, listening, and speaking activities and/or tests. Grades should come from the following:

- Spelling tests
- Spelling activities
- Oral presentations
- Listening comprehension
- Organization
- Development of ideas
- Focus and coherence
- Conventions

- Voice
- Revision and editing
- Other TEKS-based concepts

***Subject: Mathematics***

Grading: Approximately 2 grades should be taken each week with 9-12 grades collected each grading period. Grades should come from the following:

- Pages from adopted series
- Resource books
- Fact Drills
- Teacher–made test and activities
- Individual and group problem solving
- Other TEKS-based concepts

***Subject: Science***

Grading: Approximately 1-2 grades should be taken each week with a minimum of 6-12 grades per grading period. Grades should come from the following:

- Hands-on activities (science lab)
- Vocabulary
- Individual/group projects
- Illustrative drawings
- Performance tasks
- Learning centers
- Activity sheets
- Lab notebooks, reflections
- Teacher-made test
- Process skills
- Other TEKS-based concepts

***Subject: Social Studies***

Grading: A minimum of one social studies grade should be taken weekly. Grades should come from the following:

- Hands-on activities
- Vocabulary
- Individual/group projects
- Illustrative drawings
- Performance tasks
- Learning centers
- Activity sheets

- Lab notebooks, reflections
- Teacher-made test
- Other TEKS-based concepts

***Subject: Physical Education***

Grading: A minimum of three physical education grades will be documented each 6 weeks. Grades should come from the following:

- Participation
- Skill progression

***Subject: Music***

Grading: A minimum of three music grades will be documented each 6 weeks. Grades should come from the following:

- Participation
- Skill progression

***Subject: Fine Arts***

Grading: A minimum of three fine arts grades will be documented each 6 weeks. Grades should come from the following:

- Participation
- Skill progression