

Dundee Elementary Academy Assessment Policy



Mission Statement

Through shared values, Dundee Elementary Academy provides a transdisciplinary inquiry-based education that builds the foundations for further learning and for contributing to our increasingly global society.

Introduction & Purpose

The purpose of this document is to communicate to all stakeholders in our IB community – administrators, teachers, students, and parents – the programmatic expectations for assessment for all learners as required by International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). This document also provides clear guidelines and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

Assessment is integral to Dundee Elementary Academy's mission. This policy provides the instructional staff at DEA with a system for effective assessment practices and creates an essential agreement that is the professional expectation for all members of the instructional staff and administration. The contents of this policy are based on best practice and information as found in educational research, IB assessment workshops, and other school-based and external professional development. The policy also fulfills verification and evaluation requirements for the Primary Years Programme (PYP) set by the International Baccalaureate (IB).

At DEA, we believe that the ultimate purpose of assessment is to guide our planning and instruction so that we can support and enhance student learning rather than simply generate a grade. We believe that setting high standards and providing appropriate instructional support, while encouraging critical thinking and application of meaningful knowledge through the IB PYP, is vital for student success. Teachers at DEA regularly discuss assessment in order to ensure alignment of our philosophy and practices and are committed to working collaboratively to design instruction that actively engages and appropriately challenges all students. We believe that in order to improve learning, assessment needs to:

- Provide frequent and effective formative assessment feedback to students and guidance on how to improve and help students set goals and timelines for improvement.
- Ensure students are reflecting upon, analyzing and evaluating their own work and that of their peers.
- Generate data that teachers use to reflect upon and adapt their teaching strategies, which includes strategies for differentiation based on the differing needs of students.
- Celebrate the progress of students, based on actual academic progress as well as effort.

- Empower and encourage IB students to become lifelong learners, who take ownership of their learning.

We have developed this assessment policy to:

- Align with current Florida Common Core Standards.
- Align with current Florida's Best Benchmarks.
- Align with current Florida, district, and IB assessment practices and policies.
- Vertically align across all grade levels and subject areas, with a balanced range of tools and strategies.
- Focus on the process of learning as well as the final product, and encourage reflection on both.
- Students participate in quarterly student-led conferences with their parent/guardian that allow them to reflect on their learning throughout the year.
- Communicate expectations and foster common understanding amongst all stakeholders.

Dundee Elementary Academy's assessment policy encompasses six closely related components: Planning, Assessing, Recording, Evaluating, Reporting, and Reflecting. This policy outlines and clarifies the school's approaches to each of these important areas of assessment.

Planning for Assessment

At DEA, we believe that the teaching and learning cycle starts with assessment, rather than teaching. We begin our lesson planning with the end goal in mind. Assessment is the gathering and analysis of information about student performance and is designed to inform practice. This information is used to drive teaching in our classrooms to ensure academic mastery from our students.

Assessment practices at DEA allow teachers to effectively plan and differentiate for learning by evaluating students' current ability and level of understanding. This understanding allows teachers to collaboratively plan and design curriculum that ensures students continuously grow and progress in socially and academically relevant and meaningful ways.

When planning for student learning within the IB PYP, DEA teachers strive to provide opportunities for learners to construct meaning primarily through structured inquiry. This is accomplished by emphasizing the connections between subject-specific knowledge and the transdisciplinary skills and themes. At DEA, PLCs collaborate and plan regularly to ensure that the PYP transdisciplinary themes for learning provide a focus for inquiry.

DEA's philosophy of assessment recognizes the value of assessing the process of inquiry as well as the product(s) of inquiry, and aims to integrate and support both. During PLC collaboration, teachers implement the principles of backward design (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005) and begin with the "end in mind" to identify summative assessments that allow students to reflect and demonstrate their understanding of the "big ideas" explored within the planner (PYP Central Idea). Summative assessments measure students' understanding of new learning and application of strategies. Our teachers identify, define and align assessments based on students' current understanding and grade level content and standards throughout each unit.

Student progress and growth is also regularly assessed using formative assessment tools and strategies. This allows teachers to continually analyze, track and communicate student learning. Formative assessments used during instruction help identify what students are learning so teachers can differentiate and adjust the pace and content of instruction. Because the zone of proximal development differs for every child, assessment strategies and tools are adapted to meet individual student needs.

At DEA, we believe that students should see assessment as a tool to help them self-assess and reflect on their own work and the work of their peers. Active involvement in the assessment process empowers students to work toward standards by setting personal goals and action plans, and to celebrate and reflect on their achievements and understanding along the way. At DEA, students and parents play an active role in monitoring student learning and planning for success. Teachers meet with individual students regularly in “data chats” to discuss strengths and weaknesses and set goals for future learning. This information is also shared and collaborated upon with students’ families at scheduled conferences.

Planning and assessment at DEA is an ongoing evaluation of how we analyze the effectiveness of our teaching and the degree of student learning. Assessment is integral to all teaching and learning and the cornerstone to guide instructional practices. The prime objective of assessment in DEA’s implementation of the PYP is to provide feedback on the teaching and learning process and drive future instruction.

Why do we assess?

- To reflect, set goals and plan for continuous student learning and growth.
- To guide children through the five essential elements (acquisition of knowledge, the understanding of concepts, the mastering of skills, the development of attitudes and the decision to take action) of learning contained in the PYP.
- To support and encourage student learning by providing feedback on the learning process.
- To know and celebrate what students can do, rather than what they cannot do.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the learning program.

What do we assess?

- Understanding of concepts across the transdisciplinary (PYP) subject areas.
- Mastery of Approaches to Learning (ATL) and other identified skills.
- Student progress and performance in all subject areas.
- Ability to develop, understand and apply the IB learner profile attributes and attitudes.

Assessing, Recording & Evaluating

At DEA, we recognize the importance of establishing a consistent process and criteria for assessing student work through the use of exemplars. We assess student work for three reasons; to promote student learning, to provide information about student learning and to guide teaching.

Student work is assessed to promote student learning through...	Information about student learning is provided by...	Guide teaching to...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing students' prior knowledge and experience about a topic or task • Planning to differentiate the teaching and learning to meet individual or group needs • Engaging students in reflection on their learning and in the assessment of their work • Engaging teachers in reflection on student learning and in the assessment of their teaching • Using IEPs, EPs and PMPs when applicable • Refining and re-evaluating teaching methods in order to maintain rigor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of students' work and performance tasks • Student wonderings • Statistics based on explicit benchmarks and/or rubrics • Classroom test results • Standardized test results • Special education diagnostic assessments • Teacher observations/ anecdotal notes • Student/teacher reflections • Goal setting conferences with students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess students' performance in relation to the general & specific expectations of the program • Assess group performance in relation to other classes or groups both internally and externally • Inform parents, students, teachers and community • Assess student thinking processes/ metacognition • Refine instruction • Differentiate according to individual needs of students • Promote further inquiry

Assessment & Recording Strategies

We use a variety of strategies to provide a comprehensive view of our students' achievement across all subject areas. These cover a range of approaches, from the subjective and intuitive to the objective and scientific, to assure a balanced view of the whole child.

The following section includes examples of assessment tools and strategies. For more specific details, please refer to the section "Assessment at A Glance" grade level/subject area matrices.

Formative/Diagnostic Assessment

- **Observations** – all students are observed often and regularly, with the teacher observing from a wide angle (focusing on the whole class) to close-up (focusing on one student or activity), or focusing observations as a non-participant to observing from within as a participant. A system of note taking and record keeping is created that minimizes writing and recording time. Rubrics, checklists, inventories and narrative descriptions are common methods of collecting these observations.
- **Selected responses** – These are single occasion, one-dimensional exercises. Tests and quizzes are the most familiar samples of this form of assessment.
- **Exit slips** – A quick progress check of the expected learning goal. These are usually given at the end of a lesson to evaluate students' understanding and identify misconceptions.

- **Running records** (progress monitoring tools) – a reading assessment that uses benchmark books to determine a student's instructional reading level. Allows the teacher to plan differentiated lessons and students to track their growth.
- **Reflection using IB and Writing Portfolios** – an ongoing collection of student work selected by teachers and students, with teacher feedback, student reflections and connections, as well as goals, and reflections on the progress of their learning.

Summative Assessment

- **Open-ended tasks** – These are situations in which children 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.
- **Performance assessments** – These are goal-directed tasks with established criteria that are authentic challenges and problems. There are numerous approaches to the challenges/problems that require the use of many skills and there is rarely only one correct response. Audio, video and narrative records are often useful for this kind of assessment.

Self and Peer Assessments

Peer and self-assessments involve students in evaluating and monitoring their progress in order to make them more aware of their personal strengths and challenges. DEA uses IB and Writing Portfolios to collect learning artifacts, some of which are teacher-selected, while others are selected by the students themselves. In addition to teacher feedback, student work may include peer feedback. This encourages students to develop metacognitive skills and promotes the development of students as self-directed learners. With peer assessment students see each other as resources for understanding and checking for quality work against previously determined criteria. This is achieved at Dundee Elementary Academy through the use of checklists, rubrics, and collaborative tasks and reflections.

IB Culminating Activities - The culminating artifacts to document progress and success.

- **PYP Portfolios** – These are collections of student's work that are designed to demonstrate successes, growth, higher order thinking, creativity and reflection. A portfolio should be thought of as an exhibition of active mind at work. DEA teachers and staff developed an essential agreement regarding the use of PYP portfolios. This essential agreement is an addendum to the Assessment Policy.
- **PYP Exhibition** – A transdisciplinary inquiry conducted in the spirit of personal and shared responsibility, as well as a summative assessment activity, that is a celebration as students move from the PYP into the middle years of schooling.
- **IB Showcase** – These are individual grade level events that allow students to showcase their learning in specific IB units. These events allow parents and peers to view summative projects produced by the students.

At Dundee Elementary Academy, we believe students and teachers need to have ready access to information regarding student progress, to be shared with all stakeholders. Student progress is tracked and documented to allow for goal setting and development of action plans in the following formats:

- PYP – All students monitor their assessment data and complete reflections on their progress. PYP Unit of Inquiry artifacts are maintained in student portfolios.

- Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS) – The intervention team and teachers work together to differentiate and track student progress in identified areas of need. Please refer to the Dundee Elementary Academy [Diverse Learners Policy](#) for further information.

At Dundee Elementary Academy, assessments are collaboratively reviewed, articulated and communicated to drive teaching and learning consistent with the framework of the IB. Evaluating is how the evidence of learning is judged based on assessment data and the success of teaching efforts of the child as a whole.

Evaluation processes take a myriad of formats depending on who is reviewing the data. Teachers regularly meet in PLCs to discuss assessment data and differentiate accordingly. Students may review data by themselves or with peers, based on rubrics. Focused on a standards-based approach to learning, success is determined by progress made toward the Florida State standards within each subject area and grade level.

Reporting

At Dundee Elementary Academy, we use multiple reporting practices and tools to share information derived from assessments. This allows us to communicate and report about students' progress and growth as determined by set expectations. Information about school and subject area progress is shared with all stakeholders: students, parents, teachers and the external community.

All stakeholders can:

- Track evidence of grade level and subject area progress
- Develop an understanding of the school's progress from multiple perspectives.
- Create opportunities and/or join the celebrations of school success and learning.

Teachers/Parents/Students can:

- Track evidence of individual student learning and development
- Develop an understanding of the individual student's progress from multiple perspectives
- Create opportunities and/or join the celebrations of individual student success and learning.

The following practices provide a reliable and consistent way to share students' progress, celebrate successes and plan for future learning goals and opportunities:

Ongoing Communication

- Agendas – daily communication log between home and school
- Goal tracking sheets (individualized as needed) – to track progress across academics and social settings
- Tracking IB Learner Profile attribute growth to develop IB international mindedness
- Tracking Approaches to Learning (Transdisciplinary) Skills to develop life skills and a passion for lifelong learning and taking action within their communities and world at large

Parent-Teacher Conferences

- Minimum of three times a year, including student led conferences each card marking

Written Reports

- Subject area end of unit assessments/reflection sheets/IB Learner Profile self-assessment/end of unit reflections

- Midterms and report cards (4 times a year) sent home to parent/guardians
- End of unit transdisciplinary theme reflections – recorded in portfolios

Celebrations

- PYP Exhibition Project – culmination of IB experience - 5th grade
- Quarterly Awards Days – celebration of student achievement
- Summative presentations for PYP Units of Inquiry
- Student Led Conferences each card marking
- International Night – school-wide
- IB Showcase – Kindergarten through 4th grades
- STEM – by grade level and school-wide
- Morning announcements celebrating of student achievements – student-led daily review of mission and vision
- Competitions at the district, national and local level allowing students opportunities to compete in the broader communities
- Classroom celebrations – data walls, author's wall, Accelerated Reader walls
- Monthly Learner Profile parades – school-wide

Common Vocabulary

Term	Explanation
Annual State/District Assessment	<p>At DEA, we abide by the State of Florida and the Polk County School Board mandates. These two governing bodies require students to participate in the Florida Standards Assessment FSA in the spring for ELA, math and FCAT science. We recognize that the general public requires some measure of accountability addressed through these tests. However, we believe standardized tests alone do not provide a total measure of student achievement. Standardized tests are used by teachers at DEA as one of the many pieces of data we collect on students when planning and evaluating curriculum. These assessment are being revised by the state for the 2022-2023 school year.</p>
Interim State/District Assessment	<p>Forms of assessment evaluate where students are in their learning progress and determine whether they are on track for future assessments such as annual State/District assessments. They are administered in regular cycles throughout the school year with designated cycle performance expectations.</p>
Summative	<p>Essential question, central idea</p> <p>Summative assessment: Summative assessment takes place at the end 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 improves student learning and the teaching process; it measures understanding of the central idea, and prompts students towards action. Summative assessments may include any of the following in any combination: acquisition of data, syntheses of information, application of knowledge and processes. When developing summative assessment tasks, at DEA we consider using the "GRASPS" from Understanding by Design (Wiggins & McTighe)</p> <p>G: Goal...What is the "enduring or transferable conceptual understanding" that we want for students. Language from the Central Idea is used within the summative assessment.</p> <p>R: Role...What is the role your students will take?</p> <p>A: Audience...Who is the desired reader/viewer/listener of their work/project?</p> <p>S: Situation/Scenario...What is the situation or scenario in which the communicator (student) and the audience are working? (It is authentic, "real-world" task).</p> <p>P: Performance/Product...What will the students create?</p> <p>S: Standards...What are the criteria for success? (Students are included when developing criteria).</p>

Formative	<p>Learning goals, lines of inquiry</p> <p>Formative assessment: Formative assessment is interwoven with the daily learning and helps teachers and students discover what they already know in order to plan the next stage of learning. It also indicates if more time is needed on the engagement tasks. Formative assessment aims to promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback. This helps learners to improve knowledge and understanding, to foster enthusiasm for learning, to engage in thoughtful reflection, to develop the capacity for self-assessment, and to recognize the criteria for success. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked; neither can function effectively or purposefully without the other.</p>
Progress Monitoring	<p>Progress monitoring: Progress monitoring is a set of specific assessments used to monitor student response to instruction and specialized interventions. Assessments are given in regular cycles (weekly, biweekly, or monthly) depending on the intensiveness of the intervention. Progress monitoring is used not only to gauge effectiveness of instruction, but is an essential part of analysis and modification of the intervention plan and provides important information for eventual placement decisions. Effort is made to complete with fidelity.</p>
Assessment Tools	<p>Assessment tools: Assessment tools are the methods used for sampling a student's behavior or knowledge. These tools follow important criteria for: purpose, validity, reliability, & efficiency.</p>
Tiers 1, 2 & 3	<p>Tiered instruction involves delivering researched-based instruction to students at increasing levels of intensity that appropriately match the need for every student.</p> <p>Tier 1 includes providing high quality instruction to all students while implementing universal screenings to ensure adequate progress in grade level standards. Students who are not making sufficient progress are targeted for a Tier 2 research-based intervention.</p> <p>Tier 2, instructional programs or strategies are differentiated to match the specific nature and severity of the student's challenges. Diagnostic and formative assessments are used to determine specific skill deficits. A researched-based intervention designed to target specific skills needed is implemented and progress-monitored weekly. Achievement progress is monitored and compared with norms and the peer group. Comparison data is used to determine if a student needs the next level of intervention at Tier 3.</p> <p>Tier 3 level students are provided with a targeted intervention with increased intensity which is monitored weekly. Students who do not achieve the desired level of progress in response to these intensive, targeted interventions are referred for a comprehensive evaluation and considered for eligibility for exceptional student education services.</p>

Learning Scales	<p>When learner goals have been articulated in scale format, the teacher and students have clear direction about instructional targets as well as descriptions of levels of understanding and performance for those targets.</p> <p>Scales should be: • related to the learning goal, • posted and able to be read by students, • written in student-friendly language (when appropriate), • referenced during the lesson</p> <p>Students should be able to explain: • the meaning of the levels of performance articulated in the scale or rubric.</p>
RTI/MTSS	<p>Response to Intervention (Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS))</p> <p>Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) in Florida means to provide high quality instruction and intervention matching to student needs using learning rate over time and level of performance to inform instructional decisions.</p>
Differentiation	<p>Differentiation means tailoring instruction to meet individual needs. Teachers differentiate content, process, products, or the learning environment. The use of ongoing assessment and flexible grouping makes this a critical component of instruction and meeting the unique needs of students.</p>
Individualized Educational Plan	<p>An IEP is written for each child with a documented disability. To create an effective IEP, parents, teachers, and other school staff come together to look closely at the student's unique needs and goals for learning. The IEP is written for 1 year and is updated annually.</p>
EP	<p>Educational Plans (EPs) are designed for gifted students. The plan is created with the child's strengths in mind. Parent and teacher information is compiled and based on the Florida Standards for Gifted Learners. There are four levels of performance: mastered, satisfactory, minimal, and unsatisfactory. The EP is written for 3 years and can be updated as the child meets his or her goals.</p>
PMP	<p>Students are issued a Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP) when they are performing below grade level, score a level 1 or 2 on the state assessment, or retained. The document is designed to focus on needs of students with suggestions as to help them achieve the required level. Teachers are required to create a plan that meets the individual needs of the student. Parents are required to sign the plan and be aware of the academic and social plans set out for progress.</p>
RTI B	<p>Any student that is suspended from school is placed on behavior probation. Administration, guidance counselor, teacher, parent, and student meet as a team to develop a plan to monitor the student's behavior. The guidance counselor and/or administration checks in with the student once per week to talk about their behavior. Parents are required to check in twice during their student's probation period with the team. Continued misbehavior can then lead to a loss of privileges (lunch with peers, field trips).</p>

Assessments at a Glance

	State/District Assessment		Summative	Formative	Progress Monitoring
	Annual	Interim			
Kindergarten	STAR Early Literacy (FLKRS) Kindergarten Screening	F & P Testing District Report Cards IB Report Cards Progress Reports	End of standard/module assessments UOI Products: Student performances and presentations measured by a pre-determined rubric Self & Peer Assessment	Observations Anecdotal Evidence Running Records	STAR Early Literacy Running Records Sight word checklist Letter/sound checklist Writing Portfolio
1ST Grade		STAR Reading + Early Literacy STAR Math F & P Testing District Report Cards IB Report Cards Progress Reports	End of standard assessments UOI Products: Student performances and presentations measured by a pre-determined rubric Self & Peer Assessment	Observation Anecdotal Evidence Running Records	Running Records STAR Reading Sight Word Checklist Writing Portfolio F & P Testing Early Star Literacy STAR Math
2ND Grade		STAR Reading STAR Math F & P Testing District Report Cards IB Report Cards Progress Reports	End of standard/module assessments UOI Products: Student performances and presentations measured by a pre-determined rubric Self & Peer Assessment	Observation Anecdotal Evidence Running Records	Running Records STAR Reading Sight Word Checklist Writing Portfolio F & P Testing STAR Math

3RD Grade	Florida Standards Assessment (Reading, Math)	STAR Reading STAR Math End of module assessments 3 rd Grade Portfolio Assessments F & P Testing District Report Cards IB Report Cards Progress Reports	End of standard/module assessments UOI Products: Student performances and presentations measured by a pre-determined rubric Self & Peer Assessment	Observation Anecdotal evidence Running Records I- Station Assessment	Running Records Writing Portfolio F & P Testing STAR Reading STAR Math Writing Portfolio
4TH Grade	Florida Standards Assessment (Reading, Writing, Math)	STAR Reading STAR Math End of module assessments F & P Testing District Report Cards IB Report Cards Progress Reports	End of standard/module assessments UOI Products: Student performances and presentations measured by a pre-determined rubric Self & Peer Assessment	Observation Anecdotal evidence Running Records I- Station Assessment	Running Records Writing Portfolio F & P Testing STAR Reading STAR Math Writing Portfolio
5TH Grade	Florida Standards Assessment (Reading, Writing, Math, FCAT Science)	STAR Reading STAR Math End of module assessments F & P Testing District Report Cards IB Report Cards Progress Reports	End of standard/module assessments UOI Products: Student performances and presentations measured by a pre-determined rubric Self & Peer Assessment	Observation Anecdotal evidence Running Records I- Station Assessment	Running Records Writing Portfolio F & P Testing STAR Reading STAR Math Writing Portfolio