

Jose S. Ramirez Assessment Policy

Beliefs

At Jose S. Ramirez Elementary School, we believe assessment to be more than a paper and pencil test; assessment is a tool that drives the curriculum. We understand that students have a multitude of ways to demonstrate that they understand a concept, thus we provide a multitude of ways to assess the students. The outcomes of the assessment are taken into consideration when planning instruction, thus making it a powerful tool to diagnose the direction of instruction. By using diverse methods of assessment we can strengthen our teaching, provide true and accurate feedback to the students, and guide our instruction.

Purpose:

To evaluate the direction of the inquiry
To track purpose and growth (student and teacher)
To individualize instruction
To identify student strength and weakness
To strengthen our learning and teaching practices as educators
To collect data to drive instruction
To increase relevance and rigor

Guiding Principles:

At Jose S. Ramirez Elementary School, we agree that:

- Assessment is ongoing and includes pre-assessment, formative, and summative assessments.
- Assessments are designed prior to planning teaching and learning activities.
- A variety of assessment strategies and tasks are utilized in order to obtain a complete understanding of each student's attainment of skills, concepts, academic behaviors and Learner Profile traits.
- Student progress is reported to students, staff, and parents.
- Data from assessments is analyzed to establish future learning goals and to improve teaching and learning.

Types:

Pre-assessment- Assessments are used before a new stage of learning begins and are necessary for determining student's prior knowledge and mastery of prior instruction. Pre-assessments are not put in the gradebook, but are used solely to plan for future instruction. After administering pre-assessments, teachers analyze the results in relation to the unit planner. Instructional activities and student groups are adjusted based upon pre-assessment data. Pre-assessments are administered to all students prior to beginning each unit of inquiry.

Formative Assessment- Assessment given throughout the unit. It is connected to instruction and learning to provide feedback on the learning process. This allows teacher and student to guide instruction, giving a glimpse into the effectiveness and enthusiasm of the unit. Examples are the following:

1. Anecdotal records
2. Student reflections
3. Student/teacher feedback
4. Peer to peer evaluations
5. Student conversations
6. Classroom talk
7. Individual and group information or progress
8. Skill development
9. Literacy groups
10. Questioning
11. Writing to learn
12. Collaborative group work

Summative Assessment- Assessment given at the end of a unit. The assessment is thought of before the rest of the unit is created in order to drive the inquiry. Expectations are clearly defined by the teacher. Students will have a model and learning strategy to demonstrate the desired results. This allows the teacher to measure the understanding of the central idea and inquiry points but can also inform and improve student learning and instruction. It looks like the following:

1. Presentation
2. Tests
3. Individual and group projects

Assessments are administered at a variety of levels: classroom, grade level common assessments, district-wide assessments, and required state assessments. The information provided by assessments is analyzed by campus stakeholders in a variety of team meetings (grade level teams, Student Support Team, campus leadership team and vertical teams) and is the basis for all campus decision-making in the areas of core instruction, student support and staff professional development.

Students and parents are provided with feedback on each student's progress in order to inform and improve learning. Feedback is provided to students daily through oral and written teacher feedback, conferences with the teacher, and class discussions. Formal feedback is provided to parents and students in home-school communication folders in all grade levels, during fall goal-setting conferences, on report cards, and through data assessments. If the need for more frequent communication about a student's progress arises, an in-person or phone conference between the teacher and parent is arranged.

Portfolios

Each student (K-5th) maintains a Portfolio to document his/her growth as an IB learner throughout the Programme of Inquiry. The portfolio provides dates to parents, teachers and students on student progress for individual reflection, student-led conferences, parent-teacher interview, and teacher reflection/data collection.

By the end of the year there should be 12 pieces in their portfolio and 6 reflections. Students maintain their Portfolio, with teachers providing assistance as needed. Each student's Portfolio is stored in a binder in the classroom.

Exhibition

Fifth grade students develop and present a collaborative unit of inquiry to demonstrate their cumulative growth as an IB student in the essential elements of knowledge, skills, concepts, attitudes, and actions. The project unites staff, students and parents in synthesizing students' learning throughout our Program of Inquiry. A showcase and celebration will be held in the second semester of each year to share our students' exhibition projects with the school community.

Learner Profile

Teachers at Ramirez emphasize the Learner Profile attributes in all areas. During each unit of inquiry, two to three learner profile traits are emphasized; however, we recognize and encourage students' internalization of each of the IB learner profile traits throughout the school by the following:

1. Students who receive an office referral complete an "I Want to Make Things Right" form in which they reflect upon their behavior choices and how they could improve by exhibiting the Learner Profile traits in the future. Think sheets then serve as a discussion guide for the teacher, administrator, student, and parent.
2. Common area behavior expectations (posted throughout the school) are linked to the Learner Profile traits.
3. One Learner Profile is highlighted in the daily morning announcements with a quote or examples of how to embody that attribute.
4. Each semester (two total for the year) we hold a school-wide assembly where teachers recognize students in their class who display a particular attribute. These students are celebrated by our campus and receive an award.

Assessment Strategies:

The assessments utilized at Jose S. Ramirez Elementary School include:

1. Assessments required by the state of Texas- Including the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR Tests), and the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) for students with limited English proficiency.
2. Assessments required by Lubbock ISD-district six week assessments, Stanford 10, Aprenda, MAP and NNAT 2 screener for 1st/5th students.
3. Language Assessment- for students with limited English proficiency, the Woodcock-Munoz Oral Language test is administered.
5. Common Assessments developed by grade level teams- Including pre-assessments, formative and summative assessments that are administered to all students on the grade level. Common assessments include, but are not limited to, performance tasks, open-ended inquiry task, research, written responses, presentations, projects, and reflections. Students self-evaluate their work using rubrics and feedback from peer and teacher conferences.
6. Classroom assessments by individual teachers- Including ongoing, brief pre-assessments and/or formative assessments. Student/teacher conferences, teacher observation, class discussions, questioning, reading running records, student written work, and performance task are frequently used by classroom teachers.