

# Bess Streeter Aldrich Elementary Assessment Policy



## **Philosophy**

Assessment involves the gathering and analysis of information about student performance and is designed to inform practice. It identifies what students know, understand, can do, and feel at different stages in the learning process. Students and teachers should be actively engaged in assessing the students' progress as part of the development of their wider critical-thinking and self-assessment skills. Assessment will be reflected upon and should effectively guide students through the PYP five essential elements of learning: the acquisition of knowledge, the understanding of concepts, the mastering of skills, the development of attitudes, and the decision to take action  
~IB PYP *Making the PYP Happen*, 2009

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Our assessment philosophy is directly linked to our mission statement which is:  
*Bess Streeter Aldrich Elementary, an International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme World School, is to guarantee academic excellence through the development of principled young people who become active, inquiring and compassionate life-long learners and global citizens by providing innovative opportunities and challenging programs of international education through guided inquiry.*

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## **Essential Agreement**

At Bess Streeter Aldrich we believe assessment:

- Is vital to guiding instruction, teaching and learning
- Is on-going, purposeful and effective
- Involves teachers, students, peers and parents
- Is both formative and summative
- Uses a variety of strategies and tools
- Makes learning expectations and assessment strategies clear to students
- Provides regular opportunities for students to reflect on their own learning
- Shows students' progress over time
- Will be used for evaluation of the programme

Bess Streeter Aldrich is committed to the IB PYP standards and practices and ensuring that the assessment policy is implemented, understood and supported by all staff members. Parents will be informed about the policy through parent meetings, the school newsletter and at student/parent/teacher conferences. (<http://aldrich.mpsomaha.org/>)

## **Guiding principles of assessment**

Effective assessments allow students to:

- share their learning and understanding of others
- demonstrate a range of knowledge, conceptual understanding and skills
- use a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities to express their understanding
- know and understand in advance the criteria for producing a quality product or performance
- participate in reflection, self- and peer-assessment
- base their learning on real-life experiences that can lead to further inquiries
- express different points of view and interpretations
- analyze their learning and understand what needs to be improved.

Effective assessments allow the teacher to:

- inform every stage of the teaching and learning process
- plan in response to student and teacher inquiries
- develop criteria for producing a quality product or performance

- produce evidence that can be reported and understood by the whole school community
- collaboratively review and reflect on student performance and progress
- take into account a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities including different cultural context
- use scoring that is both analytical and holistic

Effective assessments allow parents to:

- see evidence of student learning and development
- develop an understanding of the student's progress
- provide opportunities to support and celebrate student learning

Effective assessments allow schools to:

- build a community of practice with shared approaches and a common language
- connect their assessment philosophy to their mission and vision statements as well as the expression of these in the school's action plan
- align teaching, learning and assessment, develop a fuller picture of assessment as an ongoing process as opposed to a single event in time
- identify ways of working that can be transferred from teacher to teacher and encourage greater consistency and quality over time
- ensure assessment practices are positive and meaningful
- develop an environment of trust and respect by demonstrating, as a school, a model for continual improvement where everyone is held accountable

*IB PYP Making the PYP Happen, 2009*

### **Reporting**

Reporting on assessment communicates what students know, understand and can do. It describes the progress of the student's learning, identifies areas for growth, and contributes to the efficacy of the programme. 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 practice

*IB PYP Making the PYP Happen 2009*

Teachers, students and parents will assess, record and report learning through:

- Units of Inquiry
- Learner Profile
- Student Portfolios
- Conferencing
- District/State Assessments
- Millard Public Schools District Report Card
- IB Teacher/Student/Parent Reflections
- Data Digs

### **UNIT OF INQUIRY:**

Purpose: Each unit of inquiry will include both formative and summative assessments. Assessment addresses all the essential elements of the programme: knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and action.

Formative Assessments are interwoven within each unit of inquiry. Pre-assessment is considered a form of formative assessment and will demonstrate a students' prior knowledge to plan the next stage of learning with the context of the

lines of inquiry. Formative assessments and teaching are directly linked; neither can function effectively or purposefully without the other. The tools and strategies of formative assessment can be but are not limited to:

Tools	Strategies
Anecdotal notes	Observations
Checklists	Performance Assessments
Rubrics	Process-focused Assessments
Exemplars	Selected Response
Continuums	Open-ended Task

Formative assessment provides teachers with an opportunity to incrementally deepen and extend learning by giving students regular and frequent feedback, helping learners to:

- recognize the criteria for success
- engage in thoughtful reflection
- become more knowledgeable and improve understanding
- develop the capacity for self-assessment
- foster enthusiasm for learning.

Summative Assessments take place during and after a unit of inquiry is taught and is an opportunity for students to demonstrate what has been learned highlighting the knowledge, concepts, and skills acquired through the unit of inquiry. Summative assessments may include any of the following: acquisition of data, synthesis of information, applications of knowledge and processes. In order for an assessment to be considered summative, a student must be able to use what they have learned and apply it in a new way. Authentic summative assessments prompt students to take an action and communicate learning to parents, students and teachers.

IB PYP Exhibition takes place in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and is the culminating point of the IB PYP Primary Years Programme experience. Under the guidance of teachers and mentors, students carry out an extended, collaborative inquiry. It requires an extensive reflection process about what the students have learned throughout the programme. This exhibition requires that each student demonstrate the essential element of the PYP: knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and action.

Student generated reflections will take place at the end of each unit.

Teacher assessment/reflection of each unit will occur after a unit of inquiry is taught. As a grade level team, teachers will rewrite/revise sections 6, 7 and 8 in their planners. Teachers will also date notes made in section 9.

### **Essential Agreements**

1. Communication is sent home at the beginning of each unit of inquiry to introduce the focus and goals of the unit to parents. This includes:
  - a. Description of the transdisciplinary theme
  - b. Central ideas and lines of inquiry
  - c. Concepts and skills being focused on during the unit
  - d. Learner Profile attributes being focused on during the unit
  - e. How parents can support student learning at school and at home
2. At the end of each unit of inquiry, students will complete a reflection on their learning. This reflection may be written, drawn, and/or recorded and is placed in the student's online SeeSaw account. It includes the following:
  - a. A general reflection of the unit of inquiry, including knowledge and understanding gained about the central idea
  - b. A response to a piece of work from the unit of inquiry
  - c. Actions that the student was inspired to take/would like to take as a result of this unit
  - d. Application of PYP essential elements (attitudes, knowledge, concepts, skills and action)

3. One document is completed by the teacher for each unit of inquiry. This report is sent home at the end of each unit.

### **LEARNER PROFILE:**

Purpose: All stakeholders in the learning process are expected to model the attributes of the Learner Profile. Students will self-reflect and set goals on their development of the attributes.

### **Essential Agreements:**

1. Students are encouraged to reflect continuously on how they are displaying the learner profile and related attitudes.
2. Formal reporting on student demonstration of the learner profile is incorporated into the student unit of inquiry reflection for all six units of inquiry in Kdg.- 4<sup>th</sup> grade and in all five units of inquiry and the Exhibition in 5<sup>th</sup> grade.
3. All units of inquiry have focus attributes that will be revisited during the duration of the unit.

### **STUDENT PORTFOLIOS:**

**Purpose:** Portfolios are a collection of the student's work that is designed to demonstrate successes, growth, higher order thinking, creativity and reflection. They celebrate student learning through the PYP, showing the development of the whole child, both within and outside the Programme of Inquiry in all subject areas. Portfolios are used by students to communicate this development with teachers, parents, and peers throughout the year.

### ***Contents of Student Portfolios:***

- 1 piece of authentic student work per unit of inquiry with a reflection including the knowledge and conceptual understanding gained, as well as reflection of the learner profile, attitudes, and transdisciplinary skills used.
- PYP Learner Profile/Attitude Reflections
- Evidence of:
  - literacy development
  - mathematical thinking and skills
  - writing development and skills
  - student initiated action (when /if it occurs)
  - student learning in Art, Music, P.E. (a separate portfolio is maintained by the Spanish teacher)

The portfolio is a digital collection of work selected by the students and teachers and is a record of students' involvement in learning. It is designed to demonstrate success, growth, thinking skills, creativity, assessment strategies and reflection. It provides a picture of progress and development over a period of time. Portfolios enable students to reflect with teachers and parents in order to identify their strengths and growth as well as areas for improvement. Students select samples of work from each IB unit that demonstrates their success, growth, and creativity in learning. A student reflection on the work is also added to their portfolio. The reflection should be written or recorded by the student. Portfolios are a cumulative collection of student work that follows the student from Kindergarten through Fifth grade. Prior to the 2016-17 school year, the portfolios were housed in the student's classroom and were accessible to the student and his or her family at any time during the school year.

Beginning in 2016-17, we are now using a digital tool, *SeeSaw*, as our portfolio management. Students can add samples and reflect upon their work digitally throughout the year. Parents have access at all times to view the online portfolios and make comments. The paper portfolio is the property of the student and goes with the child upon leaving or completing 5th grade.

### **Essential Agreements:**

- Students will understand the purpose of portfolios, the process used to compile them and they will be able to explain why specific materials are in their portfolios.

- Portfolios are intended to be student-managed with teacher guidance so students can take ownership of their portfolios. Teacher selected versus student-selected content in portfolios will be developmentally appropriate depending on the age and maturity of students. Teachers will model for students how to thoughtfully choose which items to include in their portfolios.
- Prior to 2016-17, portfolios were stored in a portfolio container supplied by the school. Portfolios were easily accessible to students. In 2016-17, all of our portfolios are online using the digital tool, *SeeSaw*. The digital portfolio is accessible by the student, teacher, and guardians.
- Portfolio contents need not be limited to written work. A variety of media can be represented to reflect different learning styles and experiences, including drawings, photos, videos, and multimedia
- Portfolios will follow students from one grade to the next. The portfolios are passed on to the new teachers by the previous teacher before the start of the school year. At the end of 5<sup>th</sup> grade, or when students leave the school, paper portfolios are given to students to take home.

**Student/Parent/Teacher Conferences:**

Student/Parent/Teacher conferences are held 2 times a year. These conferences are in a formal setting where students along with their teachers are involved in discussing their work and progress with their parents. One portion of the conference is student-led and the other portion is teacher-led.

**Report Cards:**

The Millard Public Schools District required report cards for each quarter in grades Kdg. – 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Mandatory Requirements:**

All staff is required to administer all mandated district, state and national assessments. District and state mandated assessments are reported to parents on an on-going basis.

**Collection/Recording:**

Grade level teams will provide the PYP coordinator with copies of all Unit of Inquiry assessments. Documents may be sent via hard copy or e-mail. The PYP coordinator will keep all assessments in a designated folder for each grade level.

**Professional Development:**

All staff members will:

1. Participate in building and district professional development on assessment.
2. Engage in Professional Learning Communities which reflect on assessment policies and practices at grade level meetings, staff meetings and district workshops.
3. Implement assessment strategies that increase student achievement.

**Assessment Review:**

As a staff, we will review our assessment agreements and policy annually at the end of the school year.

**District Assessment Requirements:**

Grades	Name of Assessment	Dates of Assessments	Type of Assessment
Kindergarten	Math Screener	Fall, Winter, Spring	District developed benchmark
	Text Leveling	Fall, Winter, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
	AIMSWEB Pre-reading skills	Fall, Winter, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum

1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	Math Screener	Fall, Winter, Spring	District developed benchmark
	Text Leveling	Fall, Winter, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
	AIMSWEB Pre-reading skills	Fall, Winter, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
2 <sup>nd</sup>	MAP - Math	Fall, Winter, Spring	Nationally Normed Standardized Test
	Math Expressions	Fall, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
	MAP – Reading	Fall, Winter, Spring	Nationally Normed Standardized Test
	Text Leveling	Fall, Winter, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
	Reading Street Assessment	Fall, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
	AIMSWEB Reading Fluency	Fall, Winter, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
3 <sup>rd</sup>	MAP - Math	Fall, Winter, Spring	Nationally Normed Standardized Test
	Math Expressions	Fall, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
	NeSA-Math	Spring	State Math Test
	MAP - Reading	Fall, Winter, Spring	Nationally Normed Standardized Test
	Text Leveling	Fall, Winter, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
	Reading Street Assessment	Fall, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
	NeSA-Reading	Spring	State Reading Test
	Analytical Writing Assessment	Winter	District Developed Assessment
4 <sup>th</sup>	MAP - Math	Fall, Winter, Spring	Nationally Normed Standardized Test
	Math Expressions	Fall, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
	NeSA-Math	Spring	State Math Test
	Reading Street Assessment	Fall, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
	Text Leveling	Fall, Winter, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
	MAP - Reading	Fall, Winter, Spring	Nationally Normed Standardized Test

	NeSA-Reading	Spring	State Reading Test
5 <sup>th</sup>	MAP - Math	Fall, Winter, Spring	Nationally Normed Standardized Test
	MAP - Reading	Fall, Winter, Spring	Nationally Normed Standardized Test
	Math Expressions	Fall, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
	NeSA-Math	Spring	State Math Test
	Reading Street Assessment	Fall, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
	Text Leveling	Fall, Winter, Spring	Benchmark per curriculum
	NeSA-Reading	Spring	State Reading Test
	NeSA-Science	Spring	State Science Test
	Analytical Writing Assessment	Winter	District Developed Assessment