



Hephzibah Elementary School

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Assessment Policy

Statement of Belief

At Hephzibah Elementary School we believe the purpose of assessments is to communicate to students and parents, areas of strength and needed growth through various types of authentic assessments. Parents also gain information concerning their child's status in relation to grade level expectations and state requirements. For teachers, regular assessments help gather information needed to adjust instruction or to reteach for continued learning. Hephzibah Elementary School focuses classroom time on instruction with formative assessments along the way, and summative assessments at the end of major concepts or skills. Differentiated assessments are provided to accommodate the different learning styles of students. Hephzibah Elementary School administers the county benchmarks and the state standardized assessments. The school values self-assessment and reflection by students and teachers. Regular opportunities for reflection and self-assessment are provided within the classrooms and in staff development activities.

Assessment in the Classroom

Forms of assessments within individual classrooms include both formative and summative instruments and are tailored to meet different modalities and individual needs. These include, but are not limited to:

- Pre-assessments – knowledge of a student's prior knowledge should drive the instruction within the classroom. A simple pre-assessment is given before each of the major concepts taught within our math program. In that way, teachers can determine whether the student is not at grade level so that content can be adjusted to teach foundational elements that might be missing. If students are at grade level, they are taught as the program directs, or if the student has already mastered the concept, they are given either an advanced level of difficulty or taught through higher levels of thinking such as real-world problem solving. Pre-assessments or provocations are done in each of our unit planners through oral discussion, use of KWL charts or other graphic organizers, or activities.
- Formative assessments – Informal assessments are administered throughout the grading periods. This can be accomplished by use of anecdotal notes, checklists, completion of simple graphic organizers, or in some instances, quizzes. It can also be accomplished through regular student reflection, both oral and written, and teacher conferencing opportunities. Formative assessments in relation to the lines of inquiry are developed as common assessments. Grade levels may also utilize common formative assessments in reading, writing, and math.
- Summative assessments – Summative assessments are given to gauge the student's progress related to primary concepts and content areas of instruction. They include the summative assessments focused on the central idea of each unit planner. A full reading inventory through our adopted reading program is used to assess fluency, comprehension and word recall. Within the writing program, we utilize summative assessment tools to identify student growth in content and conventions.
- Self-Assessment and Reflection – Opportunities for self-assessment and reflection are given on a regular basis within the classroom. Self-assessments are an ongoing part of teaching and learning.

Formal Assessments

As a Georgia public school, Hephzibah Elementary School is obligated to participate in state assessments in grades 3-5. This includes the following:

- Georgia Milestone Assessment (GMAS) - These exams will be given to students in grades 3-5 in subjects dependent upon grade level. At Hephzibah Elementary students in grades three, four, and five take assessments in reading, math, and writing. Students in fifth grade also take an assessment in science. The results are used to determine not only academic instruction, but also grade level placement.
- Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS) – These assessments are given to students in Kindergarten. These assessments determine students’ fine and gross motor skills, social skills, and academic performance.

Additional formal assessments include:

- I-Ready – These assessments are given to students in grades K-5 to determine their reading and math levels.
- Work Sampling Online (WSO) – These assessments are given to students in Pre-Kindergarten. These assessments determine students’ fine and gross motor skills, social skills, and academic understanding.
- Cognitive Abilities Test (CoGAT) – These assessments are given to students in second grade. They are used to measure students’ general reasoning abilities and cognitive development in comparison to students of similar age and grade.
- Content Mastery Assessments (CMA) - These assessments are given to students in grades 3-5 to determine mastery of specific content area standards.

Information communicated to Parents:

Information about student learning is communicated in a variety of ways. Types of communication to parents include, but are not limited to:

- PBIS rewards
- Class Dojo
- Seesaw
- Canvas
- Progress Reports
- Title I Parent Information Meetings
- Summative Tasks
- Work Samples
- i-Ready Diagnostic Data
- Infinite Campus Parent Portal
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Test Results: Georgia Milestones (GMAS), Content Mastery Assessments, GKIDS, CoGAT
- First in Math
- Extended Learning Program
- FEV Tutor

Reporting Student Growth:

In order to keep parents as well as students informed about their progress, Hephzibah Elementary School communicates student achievement data in the following ways:

- Academic Report Cards/Progress Reports – Progress reports are sent home with students every 6 weeks. Report cards are sent home with students at the end of each semester.

- Conferences – Richmond County School System has a mandated parent conference window during each semester. Additionally, parents are encouraged to schedule conferences throughout the school year as needed.
- Parent Contact/Communication – Teachers are required to keep parents informed through email communication, Class Dojo, and phone calls. All forms of communication are documented in Infinite Campus.

Assessments and the Program of Inquiry

Assessments through the unit planners focus on both formative and summative assessments. Common formative assessment tasks are developed by teams of educators with the intent of assessing student learning related to the lines of inquiry. Common summative assessments are developed by teams to assess student learning and understanding of the central idea. These tasks, particularly the summative itself, are not necessarily complex activities, but simple assessments to answer the question, “does the student understand the concepts within the central idea?” These can include simple question and answer formats, oral responses, graphic organizers, and at times presentations. They also can be modified to address specific student modalities and/or individual needs. Teachers work in teams to decide the criteria needed to determine the student’s knowledge of the concept, then devise a task for students to do, as well as a tool for evaluation. This often includes a type of rubric which can be used in advance by students to understand the criteria and can be used to assess and give a type of “grade” or anecdotal summary.

Students in Fifth Grade participate in Exhibition, the culminating experience of the PYP. During the school-based project students will be expected to demonstrate all attributes of the learner profile, participate in an in-depth collaborative inquiry, and take action based on their learning. Fifth Grade teachers, along with the PYP Coordinator, will aid in the Exhibition process, working with students to develop their action plan based on one of the six transdisciplinary themes studied throughout the program.

Assessment Recording and Reporting

At Hephzibah Elementary School, students in grades K-3 receive anecdotal report cards which classify students as advanced, proficient, developing, or beginning learners. These classifications are used for the core areas of reading, writing (content and conventions), math, science, and social studies. Anecdotal reporting to parents and students provides opportunities to provide a clear picture, with detailed information regarding student progress. Students in grades 4 and 5 receive standard report cards with numerical grades. Teachers also give comments on these report cards to be as informative as possible regarding individual student progress and areas of need. All students in grades K-5 are also assessed in PE, Health, Art, Music, and Spanish based on conduct and level of engagement. Progress reports are provided to parents at the midpoint of the report card period. This is provided to keep parents informed of their child’s academic progress.