

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM
Series 600

Policy Title: ASSESSMENT

Code: 602.6

Since effective instruction depends on high-quality assessment, this district expects all assessments to provide accurate information about student achievement. Each assessment must meet five standards of quality. It must arise from a clearly articulated set of achievement expectations, serve an instructionally relevant purpose, rely on a proper method, sample student achievement in an appropriate manner, and control for all relevant sources of bias and distortion that can lead to inaccurate assessment. Any assessments not meeting these standards are to be discarded.

It is the expectation of this school district that all assessments will be directly linked to specific instructional uses and thus to student academic wellbeing. Two types of use are considered appropriate: (1) assessment as a source of information for decision making and (2) assessment for the purpose of promoting higher levels of student achievement.

With respect to the former, several levels of decision-making and decision makers are considered important to student academic wellbeing: classroom level (students, teachers and parents), instructional support level (principals, curriculum specialists, support teachers and guidance personnel), and policy level (superintendent, school board, citizens and taxpayers). The district will allocate assessment resources and devise assessment, evaluation, and communication programs to meet the information needs of all these users.

With respect to the use of assessment in promoting high student achievement, the district acknowledges that assessment can serve as a powerful teaching tool. By involving students in the assessment and evaluation of their own achievement under direct supervision, teachers can use assessment to help students understand the meaning of academic success and meet the highest achievement expectations.

Any assessments that cannot be specifically linked to student academic wellbeing through effective decision-making or instruction should be discarded. In this district, we expect that each student must master the knowledge base, attain appropriate levels of reasoning proficiency, develop the skills, and master the product development capabilities needed to meet these achievement standards. District staff will devise an articulated curriculum from kindergarten through high school designed to divide responsibility for helping students make continuous progress toward these targets. Further, the district will create an assessment and communication system that permits continuous and thorough tracking of student progress.

A variety of assessment forms are considered appropriate for use within this district including:

- Selected response (multiple choice, true/false, matching and fill-in),
- Essay assessments,
- Performance assessments (based on observation and judgment), and
- Direct personal communication with the student.

All staff are expected to understand all of these options and know how and when to rely on each within their context. In addition, each staff member must know how to use each method to sample student achievement appropriately and how to avoid bias and distortion of assessment results when developing and implementing each method. Given these understandings, staff are encouraged to experiment with innovative applications of these methods in the development of ever more accurate assessments of student achievement.

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January 21, 2003
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Legal References:

Related References: