**Philosophy of Assessment**:

Assessment is an essential part of all teaching and learning.  It evaluates standards, knowledge of skills and concepts, and provides feedback.  Data gathered from assessments guides instruction and creates opportunities for learning and growth.

What is the purpose of assessment?

One purpose of teaching and learning is for students to demonstrate mastery.  To achieve this goal, assessment is a key component and must be implemented consistently throughout each unit planner.  It is important to note that assessment takes many forms.

Although assessment is commonly thought of as occurring at the end of the unit, it should first be considered at the beginning of the unit as an evaluative tool leading to a desired outcome.  The desired outcome is mastery with a detailed plan of what students must know.

Formative Assessment

We view formative assessment as an evaluation tool aimed at identifying the learning needs of students.  Through the identification of misconceptions, struggles, and learning gaps, we form a plan for instruction that shapes students’ learning and allows learners to take ownership of their own learning by setting personal goals.  It is an ongoing process that takes place throughout a unit of study and it is an integral part of forming the instruction itself.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment allows the learner to show their learning outcome at the culmination of the unit. Expectations clearly defined by the teacher provide a model for students and a learning strategy to demonstrate the desired result. This allows the teacher to measure the understanding of the central idea and inquiry points, but also can inform and improve student learning and instruction. This form of assessment looks like: presentations, tests, performance tasks, individual or group projects to demonstrate the understanding of an entire unit, or problematic scenarios at the conclusion of a PYP unit.

**Principles of Assessment:**

Characteristics of Assessment

The guiding principles of assessment at E. Rivers are for them to be:

* On-going and engaging
* Unbiased and accessible to all learners
* Consistent and grade level appropriate
* Meaningful and thought provoking
* Data-driven
* Rigorous
* Adaptable
* Analyzed through PLC’s

**Roles and Responsibilities for Assessment:**

The core value at E. Rivers is the shared responsibility of assessment between the student, teacher, and parent. Each has critical roles in the assessment process.

**Students can:**

* Set learning goals
* Celebrate learner profile strengths
* Build confidence through expressing points of view
* Use prior knowledge to build on and guide the inquiry process
* Be responsible for their learning by taking initiative
* Develop important Approaches to Learning skills

**Teachers can:**

* Create instructional plans and assessments through PLC’s
* Intentionally differentiate to meet students’ needs (e.g., differentiated performance tasks or modified assessments)
* Facilitate differentiated small group instruction based on learning styles
* Analyze data to inform students, teachers, school, and community
* Use student performance to celebrate success and to provide immediate, actionable feedback to students.

**Parents can:**

* Recognize their child’s academic accomplishments
* Be active and engaged in child’s academic success
* Celebrate learner profile achievements
* Track student progress by using school platforms and communicating with the teacher

**Assessment Plan**

The school follows an annual assessment plan throughout the year. The plan includes a schedule for administration of state and local assessments. In addition, each grade level collaboratively plans formative and summative assessment tasks as part of the unit of inquiry and their yearly curriculum plan in order to assess student understanding of approaches to learning skills and key concepts. Teachers develop these tasks to match the content standards with the transdisciplinary theme, central idea, and lines of inquiry within the unit. Teachers measure student understanding of key concepts using the performance task and other formative assessment.

The school administers several required state and district assessments, including GA Milestones (once a year), STAR Reading and Math (three times a year), Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) for reading (three times a year), ACCESS for ELL’s (once a year) , selected district benchmarks as needed, and GKIDS for kindergarten students (on-going, once a year).

Assessment data is used to identify student needs and any special student support services (e.g., gifted, Special education, or SST Process).

In addition to frequent communication between teachers and parents, the school formally reports grades to parents every 4.5 weeks. These reports use the district’s pre-determined letter grading scale. Also, we annually provide a written report to parents about their child’s development of the IB Learner Profile Attributes.