

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

The Alexandria City School Board believes that each and every child is capable of mastering a rigorous and relevant curriculum and performing at high academic levels. Goal 1 (“Academic Excellence and Educational Equity”) of **ACPS 2020**, the division’s strategic plan for the period 2015-2020, projects that every student will be academically successful and prepared for life, work, and college.

The Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) provide only the minimal foundation for the school division’s curriculum and assessment program to achieve the objectives of Goal 1. Therefore, the division’s curriculum includes additional clearly defined instructional standards, objectives, and assessments that are used to challenge and engage students in the learning process and provide them with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to succeed academically, emotionally, physically, and socially.

The Alexandria City Public Schools is committed to ensuring that all students become proficient in five competencies required for success in post-secondary education and the 21st century workplace:

- Reading Complex Text
- Writing to Promote Post-Secondary Success
- Discourse within the Disciplines (i.e., thinking like a professional, e.g., like a biologist, like an economist, like a writer, etc.)
- Analyzing and Interpreting Statistical and Linguistic Data
- Speaking and Listening

The Superintendent shall ensure that student achievement is evaluated across all grade-levels on an ongoing and consistent basis. Teachers shall use multiple assessment practices to evaluate student mastery of the content and skills taught in their courses.

All students shall be given the resources, time, and academic supports needed, and will be expected to meet or exceed the prescribed standards and benchmarks. The delivery of instruction shall ensure that all students are able to succeed in mastering the ACPS curriculum. Learning shall be challenging and engaging for all students, ensuring that they perceive their education as relevant, authentic, and purposeful. Instruction [i.e., the taught curriculum] shall be differentiated to help every student move toward advanced levels of proficiency and understanding. The taught curriculum, therefore, should successfully address all students’ varying readiness levels, interests, and learner profiles. Additionally, instruction should address the whole child, including students’ academic / intellectual, emotional, social relational, and physical development and well-being.

Assessment shall be balanced and multi-faceted, including diagnosis/pre-assessment, ongoing formative assessment, periodic nationally-normed assessments, and summative assessment. All assessment shall be aligned with curriculum-based standards.

Assessment data should be collected and analyzed in an ongoing fashion with students receiving support to become self-assessors and self-regulating learners. Formative assessment should provide regular standards-based feedback to students so that they can adjust their learning and achieve mastery of designated lesson-, unit-, and course-based standards.

Reassessment is a powerful tool that assists students in their pursuit of achievement by providing them the opportunity to demonstrate that they have mastered the required skills and content. Students shall be expected and permitted to revisit work when, in the teacher's professional judgment, it is clear that additional study, effort, and time will produce higher achievement.

Assessment is not evaluation. The purpose of assessment is to provide feedback to learners to help them move toward standards mastery. Formative assessment, in effect, is the basis for daily coaching of learners, helping them move towards successful completion of summative evaluations [i.e., tests, culminating performance assessments, projects, essays, etc.]. In contrast, evaluation uses student performance data to make judgments about the quality of student work products, levels of standards mastery, and degrees of proficiency. Grades are predicated upon student demonstration of standards mastery and are the product of evaluation. Diagnostic and formative assessment should prepare students for success on summative assessments.

The Superintendent shall develop regulations detailing administrative procedures and monitoring processes to ensure consistent implementation of this policy across all schools and departments.

Adopted: October 22, 2009
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