

PHILOSOPHY OF ASSESSMENT

The purpose of assessment is to promote learning. Assessment is a process of gathering a variety of evidence to identify a student's level of attainment of learning goals. The evidence helps students understand their strengths and how they can improve their learning and helps teachers understand how they can improve instruction. In addition, assessment forms the basis of reporting to students and parents the current level of students' attainment of learning goals. A robust system of assessment is relevant and accurate, ongoing, informative and timely, and understandable to all.

Relevant and Accurate

Assessment is tied directly to the learning goals of a given course or program. The goals are made explicit in the course's standards and benchmarks as well as the school-wide SLRs.

Expectations around these goals are clear for all students as developmentally appropriate. Students need to know the level of attainment they are expected to reach as they work toward these clear learning goals. Likewise, measurement of attainment in these goals needs to be accurate, using a variety of methods appropriate to measure the targets set and appropriate to the age of the students.

Ongoing

Assessment is an ongoing process built into the cycles of teaching and learning. Though there are times (such as final exams in upper grades) when assessment is a culmination of learning, in general assessment is incorporated into teaching and learning and the results of assessments are used by teachers and students to guide future learning.

Informative and Timely

Results and feedback are most useful when they are provided as close to the assessment as practical, so students and teachers can employ strategies for growth. Given the opportunity to reflect on results, students are able to set goals for future learning and performance of learning tasks that enhance progress.

Understandable

As developmentally appropriate, students are fully involved in the assessment process and are able to understand and explain the ways in which assessment evaluates and enhances their learning.