

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

It is the intent of the Biddeford School Department to provide the young people of our community with access to a comprehensive curriculum that will assure that all students receive an education which prepares them for the future. A Comprehensive Local Assessment System (CLAS) has been developed to ascertain student progress on Maine's Learning Results. The goal of the Comprehensive Local Assessment System is to provide for and verify student successes – not to chart their shortcomings.

Evaluation of student achievement is essential to the instructional process, the certification of student progress towards meeting the content standards of the Learning Results, the tracking of progress toward individual and district learning goals, and communication between schools and parents. The evaluation of student learning and achievement is based on the recognition that students have different abilities, learning styles, cultural backgrounds, and developmental levels. Evaluation of student achievement provides staff with information important to assessing students' educational needs, providing appropriate instruction, and identifying learning problems and areas in which remediation may be required. Sharing of information among parents, staff, and students is an integral part of the evaluation process.

The Biddeford School Department will use multiple assessments, both informal and formal, at the classroom, school, and district levels to evaluate each student's performance and to monitor his/her progress toward meeting the content standards of the Learning Results. Assessments over the course of each school year shall include formats that allow students to demonstrate in different ways what they know. Students shall have multiple opportunities to practice, apply, and demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

Individual classroom assessments may include but are not limited to student tests, quizzes, presentations, laboratory work, writing samples, teacher observations, portfolio constructions, and student self-assessments.

School and district assessments will include "common assessments" designed to provide consistent evaluation and reporting of student knowledge and skills in the same content areas across same-grade classrooms within the school and district.

Large-scale assessments will include the MEA, administered in grades 4, 8, and 11, and assessments required for the purpose of determining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), and may include other nationally normed standardized tests.

Although all measures of student achievement will “count” toward certifying achievement of the content standards of the Learning Results and for making decisions concerning assignments to grade levels (i.e. promotion and retention), neither the MEA or commercially produced test may be the only measure of student achievement. The MEA will be given the weight provided in the Biddeford School Department’s Role of the Maine Education Assessment Policy , adopted January, 2005.

A. Replacement Assessments

Given variations in overall development, as well as individual learning styles, the Biddeford School Committee recognizes that some students may need more time and/or additional opportunities to demonstrate competence or mastery.

To ensure that each student has an ample opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the content standards of the Learning Results, the Biddeford School Committee supports the concept of “replacement” of common assessments. Replacement is the means by which a student with low performance is provided the opportunity to demonstrate an acceptable level of proficiency in a content area at a grade span through another, additional assessment. Replacement assessments will be used only if the student is in danger of not being certified in specific content areas. CLAS will include a detailed plan regarding when and how these replacements will be administered.

B. Remediation / Additional Information

Students shall be given an opportunity to participate in remedial intervention before taking a replacement assessment. The Superintendent / designee shall establish a system for remediation and/or additional instruction and for administration of replacement assessments. As practicable, this system may include in-class support, tutoring, before and/or after-school learning programs, summer school, another course, computer-assisted learning, and other methods of instruction and review.

C. Communicating Information Concerning Student Achievement

Parents shall be informed at regular intervals of their child’s academic progress through report cards, conferences or other written and verbal means. They shall also receive information regarding concerns about promotion and retention.

Parents are encouraged to confer with their child’s teacher when performance as measured by classroom assessments, common assessments, or standardized tests indicates a need for

remediation or additional instruction. The conference should include discussion of the student's level of achievement, specific indications of the need for remediation, additional instruction and replacement assessments.

D. Assessment Accommodations and Alternate Assessments

Assessment accommodations and alternate assessments will be provided for identified students in accordance with their Individual Educational Plan (IEP), 504 Plan, or Limited English Proficiency Plan, and the school system's Local Assessment System.

Adopted: April 12, 2005