



Primary School Assessment Policy

Uplift Mighty Primary's Assessment Philosophy

Assessment is crucial to driving quality curriculum and instruction to empower scholars to reach their potential. Assessment pinpoints where scholars are in their learning, and provides teachers guidance in their mission to help scholars in reaching higher levels of achievement. Assessment is central to the Mighty Preparatory effort to achieve its mission: "to create and sustain public schools of excellence that empower each student to reach his or her highest potential in college and the global marketplace and which inspire a life-long love of learning, achievement, and service in order to positively change the world".

Grades are designed for us to assess progress in scholar mastery of standards. In order for us to effectively use formative data to inform the teacher, scholar, and parents on how to improve on our weaknesses (or celebrate on our strengths), we need that data to be consistent, regular, and accurate. Additionally, we need speedy access to the data (teacher, scholar, and parents) in order to correct in case a problem arises.

Mighty Preparatory Beliefs, Practices, and Purposes of Assessment

At Mighty Preparatory we believe that:

- Assessment is a central tool driving instruction to support scholar learning.
- Assessment strategies are necessary to...
 - determine scholars' level of knowledge and skills prior to new instruction,
 - set goals,
 - determine needs to edit and revise teachers' planning for future lessons,
 - design learning activities according to group and individual needs identified by assessment,
 - track and guide scholar progress during instruction, and
 - evaluate scholar understanding and the success of activities based upon the achievement of goals.
- A variety of assessment tasks...
 - allows for a balance between summative and formative assessment tasks,
 - accommodates a variety of learning styles and points of view while challenging scholars to grow in new modes of learning and to understand differing points of view,



- exposes scholars to the many different academic and authentic, real-world applications of their knowledge and skills, and
- enhances scholars' love of learning by demonstrating the variety of authentic applications of knowledge and skills.
- Assessment should go beyond memorization and drill, focusing upon higher order thinking skills (such as application, interpretation, analysis, synthesis, and creation), as both enables true, durable learning for scholars; this builds a passion for life-long learning.
- Feedback on assessment should be timely, specific, and supportive. It will provide guidance that enables scholars to understand where they are in relation to their goals and plan strategies for goal achievement. Feedback can come both from teachers and from peers.
- Reflection is vital to quality assessment, as...
 - teacher reflection upon assessment allows the development of strategies for the improvement of learning activities and assessment,
 - scholar peer and self-assessment enables scholars to set goals and develop strategies for improvement, and
 - a solid understanding of where we are and our successful growth increases our comfort in establishing more lofty goals for the future, encouraging risk-taking and the expansion of our learning horizons.

Assessment Practices/Structure

Types of Assessment

- Assessment of Prior Knowledge (also known as diagnostics) should be carried out before embarking upon new instruction. This is consistently done with new scholars to Mighty. All Kindergarten scholars are given a diagnostic that consists of assessing their knowledge of letters, numbers, and shapes, to give initial data within the first week of instruction. All other scholars are given the nationally normed MAP test.
- Formative Assessment is ongoing and daily assessment that both guides scholar learning and informs the teacher as to scholars' learning progress. Formative assessment tasks will reflect learning objectives and assessment criteria. There are many informal methods of formative assessment, such as classroom participation, discussion, exit tickets, observation, notes, scholar reflections, peer-to-peer evaluations, etc. More formal formative assessment includes pre-tests, practice activities, charts, lab reports, quizzes, summarization, and reflection journals. At Mighty Preparatory, all teachers use the Fountas & Pinnell assessment to assess scholars' reading level. This assessment is given approximately six times each year and helps guide literacy instruction and gauge scholar growth.
- Summative Assessment occurs at the end of the learning process and is used to determine scholar achievement of learning goals and the effectiveness of



teaching activities. Examples of summative assessment include projects, portfolios, presentations, research papers, exams, etc.

- Standardized Tests, particularly multiple choice formats are not the default method of assessment at Mighty Preparatory – they are one tool within a variety of assessment strategies. However, there are exams that are standardized and mandated, and we work to prepare scholars for those required tests, which at the Primary level include the state accountability test called STAAR (taken by 3-5 grade scholars) and the nationally-normed NWEA MAP test (taken by K-5 scholars). Based on data taken from formative and summative assessments, teachers can identify scholars who need extra support to prepare themselves for these exams and the following school year. These identified scholars attend after-school tutoring or Saturday tutoring with their teachers. As such, scholars are given the practice necessary to be successful in a variety of standardized test formats.
- Collaborative Group Work constitutes a valuable means of collaborative learning, and is encouraged as one strategy for formative assessment. Scholars are encouraged to achieve goals together, have group discussions, learn as a team, etc. Collaboration will facilitate learning however scholars must be assessed according to their individual achievement. Group work will not be used for summative assessment unless the contributions of individual scholars are clearly visible and assessable using the assessment criteria.

Support for Scholars with Diverse Learning Needs

Scholars possess diverse learning needs, and additional support is provided for scholars with learning differences, scholars who speak English as a second language, and/or those who possess extraordinary intellectual gifts and talents. Mighty Preparatory provides a variety of accommodations and modifications of instruction and assessment to enable each scholar to reach his or her highest potential. Accommodations will remain consistent with teacher of record, Special Education teachers, and individual scholar's IEPs. Constant communication and consistent routines need to be in place so that everyone is on the same understanding to best benefit all scholars with accommodations. Further, teachers are encouraged to differentiate where appropriate in order to allow all scholars to demonstrate learning in various forms.

Assessment Criteria

Achievement is assessed using assessment criteria drawn from appropriate subject and course objectives. These objectives are provided by the state of Texas, International Baccalaureate, Uplift, or Mighty Preparatory grade teams or content vertical teams, where applicable.

MAJOR ASSESSMENT POLICY

- **Multiple Assessments:** Weekly quizzes often occur on Fridays. Teachers should not administer more than one unit exam on a given day. These dates should be uniform across the grade level, and all scholars in a grade should take these assessments on the same day.
- **Test Retakes:** At Uplift Mighty Preparatory, we believe that the final grade a scholar receives should represent his/her level of mastery by the end of the learning period. All scholars learn at different paces, and for this reason we allow scholars who do not achieve mastery the first time around to retake a test or exam once they have had adequate practice and can reach mastery. The retest can be done during tutoring, small-group instruction during class, or through independent practice. Scholars do not receive an initial grade lower than 50% in order for scholars to show improvement and gain the ability to receive a passing grade.

STATE TESTING & REMEDIATION.

- **STAAR Test:** Mighty Preparatory is committed to scholar success on the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) and takes seriously its obligation to provide scholars the support and assistance they need to succeed.
 - All scholars at STAAR-testing grade levels (3 – 5) will be regularly benchmark tested to ensure that they are making appropriate progress through the required STAAR curriculum. Scholars who are not making satisfactory progress will receive remedial help through after-school, before school, and Saturday tutoring.
 - Scholars who have failed a STAAR test in the previous year will be monitored and strategically checked on by their current teacher. They will also be able to attend after-school tutoring if their progress in the current school year is not up to standard. Scholars are also able to receive extra support through our Intervention team.
 - All scholars in the bottom 20% of readers nationally receive small group intervention on average 4 times a week for 30 minutes to assist with increasing their grade level proficiency in reading.

In addition, Mighty uses data to ascertain the needs of scholars, collectively and individually. Based on that information, Mighty provides either content support for the aforementioned exams, test taking skills, or both to all scholars. We use formative assessments such as Tri-weekly Assessments and Common Assessments to gather scholar data and scaffold them up to being prepared for STAAR.



Communication of Learning Expectations, Activities, and Assessment Strategies

Assessment Feedback

Assessment feedback is returned to scholars promptly. At no point will a scholar undertake an assessment that builds upon feedback from a formative assessment which has not yet been returned. Furthermore, parents should be notified if their scholar receives a score less than a 70 on any assessment, whether through verbal or written communication.

Reflection

Scholars engage in reflection over their progress towards their educational goals through both self and peer evaluation. Teachers utilize data from both formative and summative assessments, as well as scholar surveys, to reflect upon and adapt their goals and instructional strategies. Such reflection and adjustment is conducted both individually and in instructional teams. Teacher instructional teams reflect upon the adjustment of class activities and assessment strategies, and collaborate in order to standardize assessment practices horizontally across subject groups and vertically within subject groups.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences to communicate scholars' progress are built into the school schedule during the academic year. Conferences are held in both the fall and spring semester. Teachers, parents, and scholars hold additional meetings as needed.

Standardization of Assessment

Consistency of assessment quality and marking is addressed through departmental collaboration in each subject group, as well as the implementation of certain assessments that have been standardized on the school district, and state level, depending on the assessment.

Honor Code

As stated in our Mighty Preparatory Scholar Handbook:

“To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the School family, I pledge, on my Honor, not to lie, cheat, or steal in either my academic or personal life, or tolerate those who do.”



OVERVIEW

Every scholar is expected to uphold the highest standards of honor with regard to academics, activities, and other related pursuits. By means of the Honor Code, scholars practice responsible leadership, accept personal responsibility, and develop strong character to create an atmosphere free from suspicion. Violation of the Honor Code include but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, forgery, which are considered severe discipline problems and are subject to disciplinary action within the by-laws of the Honor Code.

We believe that scholars can and must take responsibility for establishing and maintaining standards for their own behavior. At its core, the Honor Code is based on mutual respect and trust. It serves as a written model for what is expected from scholars. It also serves as a pledge to uphold the school's values while maintaining college preparation as the number one priority. Taking responsibility for one's actions is vital to the maturity of each individual. The trust among all scholars in the school builds confidence in the overall school community and enables each scholar to be grounded in the leadership core values of INTEGRITY, INQUIRY, CHOICES, and REFLECTION which guide the scholar's every decision. Teachers may require scholars to write the full honor code on major assignments.

Actions or attempted actions that run counter to these perceptions are violations to the honor code.

- A scholar's word is expected to be the complete truth; therefore, lying and forgery are violations of the honor code.

- A scholar's work is expected to be his/her own, unless properly credited; therefore, plagiarism and cheating are violations of the honor code.

- The property of others is to be respected; therefore, stealing – no matter how minor – is a violation of the honor code

In situations that seem unclear, it is each scholar's responsibility to check with the teacher or director regarding the honor code. Ignorance of the honor code will not be an excuse for a violation. Scholars who witness an honor code violation are strongly required to report the action to the teacher who will notify the Campus Director. Witnessing an honor code violation and reporting it constitutes honorable behavior and is an expectation for all scholars. Scholars may opt to report a violation through an anonymous referral. Working together, we can ALL create a community of learners that value hard work, creativity, and commitment to college success. It is crucial that every



member of the School community – scholars, parents, staff, and trustees – understands the importance of the School Honor Code and strives to maintain its integrity.

Academic Honesty

Scholars are expected to submit assignments, tests, quizzes, essays, etc. that are the result of their independent academic efforts. Forms of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, the following:

Plagiarism is a form of dishonesty where a scholar presents the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism is the taking of ideas, writing, etc. from another and submitting them as one's own (Webster's New World Dictionary). It is important to acknowledge that plagiarism is not only the stealing of words but also of ideas. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- Copying word for word and turning in as your own work information from books, magazines, essays, the Internet, etc.
- Rewording or rewriting text and information from documents not originally written by you and turning it in as your own work without proper citation.
- Paraphrasing with minimal word changes (citing the source or not).
- Borrowing ideas and patterns of thought without proper citation.
- Printing an essay from the Internet and turning it in as your own work.
- Collaboration on independent homework/assignments or tests will not be permitted unless permission has been secured from the teacher allowing for cooperative or group work. Scholars are permitted to receive assistance or guidance from others, but the entirety of the work itself and the content must always be the scholar's own.
- Copying and submitting the work of another or submitting work done by another is an act of academic dishonesty.
- Allowing another scholar to copy one's work, quiz, test, or submit one's work, quiz, or test is an act of academic dishonesty.

Cheating is defined by Webster's dictionary as "dealing with dishonesty for one's own gain." Dishonesty promotes bad character and prevents scholars from gaining a full grasp of information presented to them. Cheating also prevents teachers from fully evaluating the progress of scholars and is a form of theft. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- Using a "cheat sheet" or other unauthorized notes during a test or quiz.



- Looking at someone else's paper for an answer on a test or quiz and changing an answer.
- Having someone else do all or part of your homework or assignment for you
- Failing to mark an answer wrong when self-grading.
- Telling others or asking others the content of an exam or quiz.
- Giving a scholar or using an old test without teacher permission.
- Looking at an exam prior to taking it without teacher permission.
- Copying someone else's homework or other assignment.
- Splitting an assignment into parts and doing a section, sharing it with others and copying the rest from someone without teacher permission.
- Collaborating on any assignment unless the teacher has specifically designated it as a collaborative assignment.
- Using old assignments written by you or someone else instead of creating new work.
- Using an online translator or other translation in place of your own.

Academic Consequences

If a scholar is suspected of plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty, the following procedure will be followed:

- The scholar's exam, test, or quiz, or assignment will be confiscated by the teacher.
- The paper, exam, test, quiz, or assignment will be submitted to an Administrator for consideration.
- The scholar will be required to meet with the teacher and the Campus Director for review of the scholar's work with consequences up to and including expulsion from school, in accordance with the Uplift Scholar Code of Conduct

Formal and Informal Grade Reporting and Storage

Scholars and families are given progress reports on a regular basis, every 3 weeks, as well as formal report card every quarter (9 weeks), semester (18 weeks), and at the end of the year (36 weeks). These reports are according to a state-mandated 100 point



scale. A formal report of scholar's overall grade will be made to parents and scholars every semester. Mighty Preparatory currently utilizes PowerSchool for the capture, recording, and reporting of grading.

Formal Grade Reporting Scale for Primary Specials (Art, Music, PE, Spanish)

Number Grade	Letter Grade	Descriptor
90-100	E	Excellent
80-89	S	Satisfactory
70-79	N	Needs Improvement
0-69	U	Unsatisfactory

Formal Grade Reporting Scale for Primary, Kindergarten through Fifth Grade

Number Grade	Letter Grade	Descriptor
90-100	A	Excellent
80-89	B	Satisfactory
70-79	C	Needs Improvement
0-69	F	Unsatisfactory