

Tulsa Public Schools Standard District Curriculum Benchmark Assessments

Purpose

Tulsa Public Schools curriculum is aligned to the Oklahoma Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS). Teachers plan lessons to teach the benchmarks that are part of each PASS standard. Students are given an assessment at periodic check points throughout the year to see if they have mastered the benchmarks. If they have not, the concepts and/or skills are taught again, either in a class setting or tutorial session. The local benchmark assessments prepare students to be successful on the Oklahoma Core Curriculum Tests (OCCT's) and help Tulsa Public Schools teachers plan their instruction.

History

Several years ago, Tulsa Public Schools initiated the assessment process by first creating benchmarks to align to state standards and accompanying pacing calendars. The District benchmark assessments were then introduced the following year.

During the 2004-2005 school year, the Evans Newton Company assisted TPS to further align our curriculum with the state assessments to improve test scores. Twenty five schools were involved in the first year. These schools were considered full implementation schools and received Target Teach Strategies, Target Teach Fundamentals, PALS Parent Materials, and Aligned Teaching Units (ATU's).

In the 2005-2006 school year, following the success of the first group of schools on the 2005 OCCT's, all Tulsa Public Schools started using the Standard District Curriculum and participated in the local benchmark assessments. Schools that were in need of improvement were considered full implementation schools and received the same materials as the first year schools. Other schools were considered partial implementation and received the ATU's only.

During the spring of 2006, several committees of teachers and administrators worked to make recommendations to the testing process for the 2006-2007 school year. This year all buildings will have Target Teach Strategies, Target Teach Fundamentals, PALS Parent Materials, and Aligned Teaching Units (ATU's). Additional changes are noted below.

Evans Newton Company

Evans Newton Company was hired by Tulsa Public Schools to align curriculum to state assessments. While the company has been helpful in aligning the curriculum and writing local assessments, the product that we are measuring is the Standard District Curriculum for Tulsa Public Schools. Remember, that while Evans Newton did help us align our curriculum, this is the Tulsa Public Schools instructional and assessment process designed to measure the Standard District Curriculum adopted by the Board of Education.

Testing Cycles for 2006-2007

The following is testing cycle for the 2006-2007 school year.

Grades	Testing Cycle	Pre-Test (September) and Post-Test (March)
3 rd grade through 5 th grade math and reading (including CLC schools)	4 week cycle with one week included each nine weeks to re-teach.	Yes
Middle school math and reading	4 week cycle with one week included each nine weeks to re-teach.	Yes
High school math	6 week cycle	Yes
High school language arts	Nine Weeks Test (3)	No

Grades K, 1, and 2

The study committee recommended that grades K, 1, and 2 not be included in the local benchmark assessment process. These grades follow the ATU's designed for their grade. They also focus on skills identified on the BEAR or the Dibel's Reading Assessments. During second semester of 2nd grade, practice assessments are given to prepare them for testing in the third grade.

Pre-Test and Post-Test

A pre-test at every grade level (with the exception of high school English classes) is given within the first few weeks of the start of school. The pre-test exposes students to content not yet taught in class. A post-test is given in March to measure what has been learned. The post test in March provides teachers with valuable information for deciding what needs to be reviewed and/or retaught before the OCCT's.

Testing Window

This year schools have a choice of testing days within a five day test window. Schools pick up tests on a Friday and Scantrons are delivered to the school on the same day. The following week is the testing window and schools may test on the day of their choice. Test booklets and Scantrons are returned on Friday in the testing week. Results of the tests are delivered the following week.

Principals are expected to consult with teachers to determine the most appropriate day(s) within the test window for each grade level, team or department to administer the benchmark assessment. Sites may decide to administer all benchmark assessments on a single day within the test window, or they may decide to test one grade level or subject on different days within the test window.

2006--2007 Testing Calendar

August 7	CLC classes begin
August 11	CLC rosters completed
August 16	CLC test coordinator meeting
August 21-24	CLC pre-test window
August 21	Traditional classes begin
August 25	Traditional rosters completed
August 28-1	CLC Gates MacGinitie Reading Test window, grades 4-5
August 28- September 8	CLC Reading Sufficiency window, Grades K-3
August 30	Elementary and middle school test coordinator meeting
September 5-7	CLC Test 1 window
September 5-7	Elementary and middle school pre-test window
September 11-14	Gates MacGinitie Reading Test window, grades 4-8
September 11-21	Reading Sufficiency window, grades K-3
September 18-21	Elementary and middle school test 1 window
September 20	High school test coordinator meeting
September 25-28	High school math Test 1 window
October 2-5	CLC Test 2 window
October 16-17	Elementary and middle school Test 2 window High school language arts Test 1 window
October 11	Middle and high school test coordinator meeting
October 23- November 2	PLAN test window EXPLORE test window
October 18	PSAT, high school
November 6-9	High school math Test 2 window
November 13-16	Elementary and middle school Test 3 window
November 20-21	CLC Test 3
December 4-14	Block schedule End of Instruction test window
December 6	Test coordinator meeting (all levels)
December 11-19	Elementary and middle school Test 4 window High school math Test 3 window High school language arts Test 2 window
December 18-19	CLC Test 4 window
January 17	Elementary and middle school test coordinator meeting
January 23-25	Elementary and middle school Test 5 window CLC Test 5 window
February 7	High school test coordinator meeting
February 14	Elementary and middle school test coordinator meeting

February 20-22 CLC Test 6 window
February 21 State Writing Test, Grades 5 and 8
February 28-March 1 Elementary and middle school post-test window
February 28-March 1 Traditional elementary and middle school Test 6 window
February 28-March 1 CLC Post-Test window
High school math Test 4
February 28-March 1

March 5-8 **High school language arts Test 3 window**
March 5-8 **Traditional elementary and middle post-test**
March 5-8 High school math post-test window
April 10-18 OCCT State Test window, Grades 3-8
April 10-27 OCCT online geography test window, 7th grade
April 16-May 1 EOI State Test window
April 17-18 EOI English II Writing Test, one day only
May 7-18 Advanced Placement (AP) Test window

* Test materials are picked up at ESC on Friday prior to testing and returned to ESC the following Friday.

** Scan sheets are delivered to schools by Friday prior to testing and picked up the following Friday morning.

Accommodations and Modifications of the Standard District Curriculum

Special Education Students

A special education student's IEP states whether he/she takes OCCT's or if he/she takes the alternative assessments. Be sure to consult all special education students' IEP accommodations or modifications for instruction and assessment. Special education students who are expected to take the OCCT's should be given teacher developed assessments and benchmark assessments for the Standard District Curriculum at their grade placement in order to be prepared for the state assessments. It is best practice that the regular education teacher test the special education students, with assistance from the special education teacher. The special education teacher should be involved in identifying and providing appropriate accommodations.

English Language Learners

English Language Learners (ELL) who were enrolled in the 2005-2006 school year for the first time and have not previously enrolled or attended school in the United States have the option of taking the state assessment in Reading/Language Arts. However, they are still required to take the English Proficiency Assessment and the state assessments for all other subjects (with accommodations, if appropriate). English Language Learner students who are expected to take the OCCT's should be given teacher developed assessments and benchmark assessments for the Standard District Curriculum at their grade placement in order to be prepared for the state assessments.

What can we do to help all students be successful on the assessments?

Since students will be tested on their grade level assessments, they need to be taught and tested on their grade level pacing calendar. In order for all students to experience on-grade-level success, teachers should differentiate instruction by using their knowledge of multiple intelligences to design hands-on, real world learning activities that are taught at the appropriate depth of knowledge. Teachers are encouraged to vary their instructional delivery so that students' learning needs are accommodated. Accommodations are appropriate for special education students, ELL students, 504 students and low-performing students and include, but are not limited to the following:

Setting of Test (Test administration)

- Individual testing
- Small group (no more than five students) testing
- Testing in individual carrels

- Testing in a separate location (such as in a special education resource classroom or with ELL teacher) that will minimize student distractions
- Special lighting accommodations
- Adaptive or special furniture accommodations

Presentation

- Use of assistive devices and supports such as magnifier, auditory hearing amplification devices, and pen grips
- Read or sign test items if not a reading test
- Covering overlays to reduce glare
- Simplification/repletion/"signing" of directions
- Clarification of directions given at student's request
- Use of calculators when appropriate
- Providing cues (arrows, stop signs) on answer forms
- Rereading directions for each page of questions
- Audio taping instructions in the student's native language
- Using translators to give instructions
- Using word to word dictionaries (no definitions)

Timing/Scheduling

- Testing at the time of day when student is most responsive
- Using a flexible schedule
- Scheduling subject area testing over several sessions
- Scheduling frequent breaks during testing
- Response
- Printing a copy of the test booklet for student to record answers which are transferred by the teacher to the Scantron.
- Student oral responses recorded on Scantron.

Delivery of Instruction

- Make learning hands on, experiential, and relevant to student
- Practice test taking strategies so students see the connection between what was taught and how it will be tested
- Use Marzano's Strategies from Classroom Instruction that Works
 1. Identifying Similarities and Differences
 2. Summarizing and Note Taking
 3. Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition
 4. Homework and Practice
 5. Nonlinguistic Representations
 6. Cooperative Learning
 7. Setting Goals and Providing Feedback
 8. Generating and Testing Hypotheses
 9. Questions, Ques and Advance Organizers

Definitions

Glossary of Terms

Accommodations: These are changes in instructional delivery and testing that provide options for students to access information and demonstrate learning. Accommodations do not change the instructional level, the content, or the performance criteria. Students who have accommodations take the regular state assessments at their grade level.

ATU (Aligned Teaching Unit™): This document aligns each Oklahoma Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS) objective to TPS content-specific educational resources, i.e. textbooks, curriculum guides, labs, etc. It allows teachers to focus on the specific instructional materials that focus on and relate most directly to PASS. Also included in this document are sample assessment questions and reading passages, when appropriate. This alignment document is available for K-8 reading, mathematics, English I and II, Algebra I and II, and Geometry. All schools have ATUs.

Benchmarks: The concepts that define the content and processes that students should learn within each PASS standard.

Bloom's Taxonomy: A model Benjamin Bloom, et al, designed for developing questioning strategies. It is a hierarchy of levels of difficulty, knowledge being the simplest and evaluation the most difficult or highest in the hierarchy. Bloom's model categorizes kinds of questions that can be answered and actions that can illustrate understanding and mastery of concepts, significant knowledge, and skills. Test questions on both the state assessments and local assessments are written at higher levels on the taxonomy.

Modifications: These are significant changes regarding what a student is expected to learn and demonstrate when participating in the general education curriculum. Modifications do change the instructional level, the content, and performance criteria. Students that have a modified curriculum take the alternate state assessment.

PAL Packets™: Parent Assisted Learning Packets. These documents are part of the Standard District Curriculum. Each PAL Packet™ is a short activity aligned to an important skill or objective in language arts or math. These packets are to be completed by the student with parents or guardians. Each school has received a complete set of PAL Packets™.

Pacing Calendar: District wide timeline for teaching standards and benchmarks. Pacing Calendars are available at <http://www.tulsaschools.org/depts/currsvc/currsvc.shtm>.

Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) Cycle: A method to test a change by developing a plan to test the change (Plan), carrying out the test (Do), observing and learning from the consequences (Study), and determining what modifications should be made to the test (Act). This is a quality tool that is used to drive continuous improvement and is appropriate to use when working with local benchmark assessment data.

Performance Excellence: The term “performance excellence” refers to an integrated approach to organizational performance management that results in (1) delivery of ever-improving value to students and stakeholders, that contributes to educational quality through improved student learning and organizational stability; (2) improvement of overall organizational effectiveness and capabilities; and (3) increased organizational and personal learning. The Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence provide a framework and an assessment tool for understanding organizational strengths and opportunities for improvement and thus serves as a guide for planning efforts. The local benchmark assessments and state assessments are part of the data that will measure improved student learning.

TargetFundamentals™: Reproducible prerequisite activities that provide students with the practice needed in order to develop mastery of fundamental concepts and skills. These lessons are available to all schools.

TargetStrategies™: Custom designed lessons that correlate to Oklahoma PASS benchmarks offering highly focused instructional models that teachers can use to elevate his/her instruction for a greater impact on student learning. These lessons are available for reading, mathematics, English I and II, Algebra I and II, and Geometry. These lessons are available to all schools.

Teacher Summary Report (TSR)™: A document which correlates the district adopted textbook and its related resources to the core objectives of PASS. The TSR identifies the level at which the textbook addresses each PASS objective as being “absolute correlation,” “high partial correlation,” “low partial correlation,” or “fallout.” The TSR is part of the Standard District Curriculum and is to be used in conjunction with the TargetStrategies™. Teacher Summary Reports are available for reading, mathematics, English I and II, Algebra I and II, and Geometry. All schools received this document.

Testing Do’s and Don’ts

Do’s

- **Do** plan instruction that is aligned to the pacing calendars and local assessments.
- **Do** use the pre-test to determine what your students already know and what concepts/skills are in need of special emphasis is needed during instruction.
- **Do** build in time to re-teach concepts. If most of the class did well on the assessment, determine how to provide tutorials to individual students who have not mastered concepts. If most of the class did not do well on the assessment,

re-teach the benchmarks using a different instructional strategy to the complete class.

- **Do** continue to integrate curriculum benchmarks in your instruction.
- **Do** look at the textbook as only one resource to teach the standards.
- **Do** use supplemental teaching resources if content that is addressed in the Standard District Curriculum is not presented in the textbook.
- **Do** abandon teaching units that are not included on TPS pacing calendars or assessed at the grade level being taught.
- **Do** plan to review difficult concepts before the state assessments.
- **Do** have students graph their own progress on local assessments.
- **Do** use the post test to help identify and plan additional instruction for areas to be reviewed before the state assessment.
- **Do** talk to other teachers to see what is working for them!
- **Do** discuss successful strategies and test results at grade level/department/team meetings.
- **Do** think creatively when re-teaching a concept students have not mastered.
- **Do** celebrate your successes!

Don'ts

- **Don't** call the assessments Target Teach Assessments. These are local benchmark assessments that measure Tulsa Public Schools Standard District Curriculum. This is not a program but a process to measure the Standard District Curriculum.
- **Do** not be compelled to follow the textbook page by page. The Standard District Curriculum pacing calendar will differ from the order of the text book.
- **Don't** feel that all materials must be used. Look at the content that students did not master on the pre-test to make a decision about how to pace instruction.
- **Don't** hesitate to ask your principal, instructional facilitator or testing coordinator for assistance.

Common Questions

1. Do I have to participate in local assessments?

It is required that all teachers teach the Standard District Curriculum and give benchmark assessments in math and reading in all grades three through eight, and in English I, English II, Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry.

2. How do I find out about training on the Standard District Curriculum?

Training sessions for the Standard District Curriculum are found on the Fulton website at <http://www.tulsaschools.org/depts/pd/> If you have an instructional facilitator in your building do not hesitate to ask them for assistance.

3. Who will help me if I approach if I don't have the Standard District Curriculum materials I need?

Always start with your principal to see if the materials may be in the building. Next, email Marvin Jeter to let him know what materials are needed.

4. How do I use the student assessment reports to improve instruction?

Test results are delivered to sites within a few days of the completion of the testing cycle. It is important to analyze the student performance data to see which objectives have been mastered and by whom. Individual students should be re-taught objectives they did not master. If a class did not do well on an objective, the whole class should be re-taught the objective. Also, note the standards on which students demonstrated acceptable/strong levels of performance. This will help streamline the review process for state assessments. Because there are multiple reporting formats, experiment with the report that gives the most information about students' abilities. Again, the instructional facilitator and building principal should be key resources in helping understand the data and using the data to plan additional instruction.

5. Why do we have a pre-test and a post test?

A pre-test informs the teacher of what students know before the content is taught. Students are not expected to know what is on a pre-test. Results on the pre-test provide valuable information that can be used to plan and allocate time to instruction. The post-test will also provide information to guide reviews prior to the OCCT administration.

6. What if I find an error on the test or have a concern about a test question?

If you find an error on a test or have a concern, please email Marvin Jeter or Marsha Edmonds. Please also copy your principal and instructional facilitator with the same concern.