

## Teacher Directions

### Performance Tasks

Purpose: Why are we doing this?

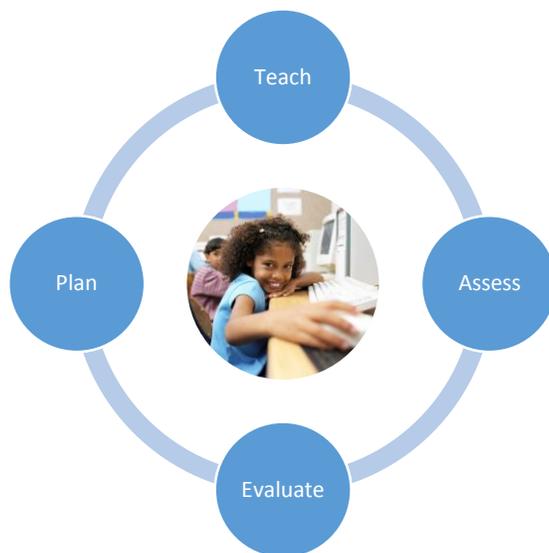
In standards based programs, when assessing students' performance, teachers gather information from a variety of sources to determine what the student knows and is able to do in a given subject area. They are assessing the child's:

- Conceptual understanding of the content
- Growth in their understanding of the content
- Process skills (reasoning, problem-solving, and critical thinking)
- Ability to communicate their thinking and understanding of the material
- Ability to apply content knowledge
- Creativity
- Writing

The key to accurately evaluating student achievement is in the alignment of the teacher's objectives with instruction and, articulation of these objectives to the students and parents, and the development of a system that will explain how student achievement will be assessed and reported. At the beginning of the school year or semester the teacher's evaluation and grading policy must be clear. In order to accomplish this, teachers need to:

- Identify clear learning objectives (Common Core State Standards).
- State objectives in terms of student performance (i.e. Standards for Mathematical Practice).
- Implement performance assessments and rubrics that support the standards.
- Score assessments and report the student growth and progress.
- Align teaching practices with student understanding of the content.
- Translate the teacher's evaluation of student performance into grades.

For teachers this is an on-going process that continues throughout the year because the information they gather from assessments will provide feedback to them on how best to proceed in teaching the concepts to the students. It becomes a cycle of:



The district performance tasks are one way of evaluating student work to a common learning target across the district. These tasks form the foundation for conversation of professional practice and help establish periodic benchmark checks on progress towards the learning goals.

#### Teacher Responsibilities for Administering the Performance Tasks

**Goals of the Performance Tasks:** The District Formative Assessment is performance based and aligned to the Common Core State Standards. The goals of the tasks are to:

- ❖ Give students the opportunity to show teachers what they know.
- ❖ Inform classroom instruction.
- ❖ The assessments should be one of the focal points of professional development at schools.
- ❖ Collaboration: Use the assessments to facilitate departmental and grade level conversations about Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) Common Core State Standards (CCSS).
- ❖ Provide teacher insights about students' performances.
- ❖ Establish consistency in evaluating student work across the district.

#### Who will participate in the District Performance Tasks?

- Students in all grades will be administered common Performance Tasks from a bank provided by the district and selected by the teachers at the school.

- Students will be asked to complete these tasks three times per year in Math and three times per year in ELA.
- All scoring will occur at the school site.
- There is no need for exemptions from participation in the District Performance Tasks as teachers may scaffold for students with special needs.
- See *Teacher Instructions* for each of the districts assessments for information on administering the tasks to special needs students.

#### What To Do Before The Tasks Are Administered

##### **Before the tasks are administered to students, grade level teachers should meet to:**

- ❖ Read all of the teacher instructions.
- ❖ Do the Performance Tasks themselves.
- ❖ Review and discuss the content and standards in the task.
- ❖ Discuss the proficiency level for student performance at the grade the task will be administered. Teachers should use the District Rubric to facilitate their discussion.
- ❖ Plan a grade level administration of the task by coordinating a time for all students to participate in the task (day or week), administer any pre-tasks activities, and schedule time as a team or a department to evaluate student work.

##### **Pre-Tasks Activities & Implementation Tips for Teachers:**

- Give students experience with problems that focus on the standards being addressed in the task. Each task includes the CCSS in which it is aligned. Teachers should pick and choose pre-assessment activities that correspond with their classroom instruction.
- Before the student takes the District Performance Tasks, give students experience with taking performance tasks and review the criteria. For example, review what it means to use pictures, words and numbers to represent their mathematical thinking.
- Use one of the Performance Tasks to model for the students how to take the assessment and use that time to answer students' questions regarding the tasks.

##### **Important Teacher Considerations Before Implementing Performance Tasks:**

- Teachers should make it clear to students that for math:
  - Their thinking is just as important as their answer.
  - The mathematics in the task is a starting point for solving the problem.
  - The problem should be solved one step at a time.
  - They should always record their thinking clearly.
  - They should never erase their work, but should instead cross out any work that does not help them solve the problem.
  - They must work independently on the District Performance Tasks.
- Teachers should make it clear to students that for ELA:

- There may be more than one passage or text example to read and consider.
- Students will be asked to use information from all of the written materials presented.
- That strategies such as highlighting, underlining and notes are useful for the tasks.
- Outlining is a helpful tool to use.
- They must work independently on the District Performance Tasks.
- Inform students that they need to explain all of the details of their thinking, because other teachers will be evaluating their work.
- Young children and ELL students who are still developing their writing skills may need support. Teachers may take dictation for students. *The dictation must reflect the original ideas of the student.* Teachers should not interpret or synthesize the child's ideas when taking dictation.
- **Do not 'lead' the students through the problem by breaking down the steps.** Teachers should walk around the room to observe, but should not answer questions about how to work the problem. Explain to students that there are several different approaches to the problem, and encourage them to use a strategy that makes sense to them.
- Most of the tasks should take about 20 – 30 minutes to complete, but the District Performance Tasks are not timed. Students should be given additional time to complete the task as needed. Let students know, if they finish early and have time left over, they can find more than one strategy to solve the problem or use the information from their solution to make an observation about the task. Students may wish to read their responses one more time to make sure they have all the parts to their essay they intended and cited evidence.

### What To Do During The Performance Tasks

**Warm Up Activity:** Give the students a quick warm-up activity to introduce the Performance Tasks. Examples: Read a story, review a key mathematical concept, do a quick hands-on activity, or another activity related to the mathematics or ELA.

### Implementing The Tasks With Students:

#### **Scaffolding for Math**

- Have all students read the task silently.
- Then read the Performance Tasks orally to the students while they follow along.
- Remind the students to think about the problem in their own words and take account of both what they know and what they are asked to find. (This process will help the students to organize their thinking and be clear about what the problem is asking them to do.)
- Remind the student that their work should include:
  - A representation that helps with their explanation (a representation may include a picture, charts, graphs, t-tables, etc.)

- Encourage students to think about different materials/manipulatives that would be useful to help them solve the problem.
  - An equation or mathematical sentence as appropriate for the problem.
  - A complete solution.
  - A written explanation of their work.
- Reread the Performance Task and have students begin work on the task.

### **Scaffolding for ELA**

- Read the instructions and then talk about them so students understand the task.
- Ask students why they are asked to find information that supports their answer.
- Remind students of other assignments they have completed in class that are similar to the task before them.
- Help students make connections between the text in the tasks and some experiences they may have had or read about in class.
- If there is more than one passage, suggest that the students outline the important details before going to the next text presentation.
- If students cannot read the passage fluently enough to understand it, allow the student to read the passage to another person and have that person read the question(s) to the student.

### **Teacher Interaction During the Tasks:**

While students are working on the task, circulate around the room and observe student work. Do not disturb student thinking, but observe how the students got started. **Ask Yourself:**

- ❖ Are the students confident in problem solving due to previous experience?
- ❖ Are they confident in writing and citing evidence due to previous experience?
- ❖ Do the students avoid working on the problem because they are not sure how to get started?
- ❖ Do you notice that the students seem to ‘get stuck’ at similar points in the problem? Do they seem to understand the problem or what is expected of them?
- ❖ Are students using highlighting, underlining, margin notes and other organizational strategies?
- ❖ Do the students outline their thoughts? Are the students able to write on the topic?
- ❖ Do the students have trouble selecting a strategy that works? Are the students able to complete the problem?
- ❖ Do the students do a good job of explaining their thinking?
- ❖ Do they cite evidence from the text(s) in their writing?

### What To Do After The Tasks Are Administered

**After the tasks are administered:** After students turn in their work, teachers can make the tasks an instructional activity by having their students share their strategies for solving the task to the rest of the class. Or, teachers may select an essay to display to the class to discuss the use of essential writing strategies and point out positive aspects of the work.