

Montessori Assessments, Testing, Progress Reports and Report Cards

Assessment in the Montessori classroom is the hourly, daily, and weekly appraisal of student progress at CMP. Early in their educational career at CMP, students learn self-assessment from the prepared environment of self-correcting materials and the examples/modeling provided by the adult teaching staff. Self-assessment, self-reflection and self-correction are important lifelong skills that students acquire from the earliest years in a Montessori environment. Additionally, students also learn from their earliest years that their learning is a partnership with their teachers and parents.

Adults and students establish and agree upon daily, weekly, and monthly goals. Teachers maintain written records of the work presented and mastered, and each child has an individualized “work plan” which is used to guide them through the lessons and academic work required for that week.

At any given time, a Montessori teacher knows precisely where a child is: academically, developmentally, socially and emotionally. With frequent one-on-one interaction and individual, personalized assessment of student work by the classroom teacher, issues and concerns are quickly addressed as they emerge.

CMP teachers conduct Montessori Assessments (Albanesi) for placement in Montessori Math, Geometry, and Language materials. Pretests and posttests are conducted to assess student mastery of concepts. Reading assessments are conducted for appropriate reading levels, and additional assessment tools are utilized to determine areas where a student may need reinforcement, as well as, to demonstrate a student’s academic advancement in any subject area.

In such a highly structured program, parents are alerted quickly to any concerns throughout the year. Additionally, CMP provides formal documentation of the student’s progress four times each year: Progress reports are presented to the parents/guardians at Parent/Teacher Conferences twice each year (in the Fall and the Spring), and end-of-semester reports are sent home in January and June). While parents are most familiar with the traditional “A-B-C-D” report card, CMP’s grade report has been carefully designed to give parents and students a progressive account of the student’s academic mastery within the Montessori curriculum for a specific grade level which incorporates the California State Curriculum Standards.

As a result, the traditional “A-B-C-D” grades have been replaced with assessments that give a view of the child as a whole. Mastery of concepts at a student’s ability level is balanced with information pertaining to the state grade level standards. A student’s goal is to attain proficiency/mastery in all subject areas, yet we recognize that some students may require more time to reach this goal. Effort put forth in their lessons at their ability level is also a necessary element in determining a child’s progress. Conversely, a student whose abilities are above grade level will be challenged academically, and the assessments will reflect that advanced work.

Through this multi-level approach, performance and progress, not grades, become the focus of assessment and the heart of any discussion about the child.

Annual State Testing

As a public school, CMP administers annual state testing assessments for all students in grades 2 through 8. The process and results of such state measurements can be used as *one* of *many* indicators of an individual child's progress from year to year. Seen in this light, state assessments can be useful - to help parents, teachers and the student develop individual academic work plans.

Each spring CMP participates in the state's official assessment system, the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program. The STAR testing consists of two components:

1. The California Aptitude Test, 6th Edition: CAT 6, a nationally-normed, multiple-choice test; and
2. The California Standards Test aligned to the new, rigorous, and challenging California curriculum standards in language arts, science, history/social science, and mathematics.

These assessments address the subject areas of vocabulary, reading, comprehension, and language, spelling (grades 2 and 8); science (grades 4 and 8); and writing (grades 4 and 7).

Testing materials are processed by state specified agencies and individual results are usually available in late summer/early fall. All assessment reports are sent to the school and will be sent home to parents soon after receipt.

School Records and Student Privacy

You child's school record is available for your access by making a request to the Principal. You may request an amendment of your student's education records if you believe that there is an inaccuracy. These records are confidential and unavailable to other outside unauthorized parties.