

<b>FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS</b>	<b>Reg. No. 500-26</b>
<b>Subject: SECONDARY BENCHMARK ASSESSMENTS</b>	<b>Issued: 8/25/82</b>
<b>Preparing Office: Office of the Superintendent</b>	<b>Amended: 8/8/16</b>

I. Policies 438 and 511

II. Procedures

A. Definitions

1. County Assessment Program - All approved, county-wide required assessments (formerly referred to as CRES). The County Assessment Program consists of two categories of assessment: benchmark and other required assessments. Other required assessments are utilized in all areas of the curriculum and include but are not limited to pre and post assessments, performance based assessments, portfolio assessments, and oral proficiency interviews.
2. Formative Assessment - Formative assessment is a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievement of intended instructional outcomes. Formative assessment can vary on many dimensions including: informal vs. formal, individual vs. group, oral vs. written, graded/scored vs. ungraded/unscored, process oriented vs. task/product oriented.
3. Benchmark Assessment - Approved, county-wide formative assessment that measures student mastery of the essential curriculum standards for a portion of the content taught in designated secondary school courses of study. The approved, county-wide formative assessment (referred to as the "Benchmark") counts as a regular test grade for the course.
4. Standards - Essential curriculum indicators that tell what a student should know and be able to do upon completion of a course of study.

B. Purpose for Benchmark Assessment

The purpose of Benchmark Assessment is to provide formative feedback to students, parents, and educators about student performance and achievement in secondary school courses of study in mathematics, science, social studies, English/language arts, world languages, and other designated secondary school subjects as approved by the Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Innovation.

These assessments are the secondary school components of the County Assessment Program (CAP) and are administered for the purposes of determining the extent to which all students have mastered the essential curriculum, adjusting instruction and as part of the student's course grade as determined by the teacher's syllabus.

The guidelines in this regulation ensure that Benchmark Assessments are developed and administered in a consistent manner.

C. Development of Benchmark Assessments

1. The Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Innovation shall approve the addition of any Benchmark Assessment.
2. Curriculum specialists direct a team of classroom teachers in the development and revision of Benchmark Assessments, scoring keys/rubrics, testing time and method of administration.
3. Assessments count as no more than one test grade as determined by the teacher's syllabus during the marking term it was administered. Scoring keys and rubrics shall be provided to teachers.
4. Teachers of secondary school courses may administer cumulative, end-of-course tests that count as no more than a test grade for the marking term.

D. Administration and Scheduling of Benchmark Assessments

1. All students (IEP, 504, & ELL) will receive accommodations in instruction and assessment as indicated on their plan.
2. The Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Innovation will notify principals and curriculum staff of the Benchmark Assessment testing windows. The assessment windows shall provide sufficient time for teachers to score the assessments prior to the specified reporting date.
3. The principal of the school is responsible for developing the Benchmark Assessment schedule at the school. Schedules should be developed to minimize multiple assessments for students in a single day and preserve instructional time whenever possible.
4. Students are required to take a Benchmark Assessment in all courses designated as having a Benchmark Assessment.
5. Benchmark Assessments must be administered in the established assessment window.
6. A student with an excused absence will be granted an opportunity to make up the Benchmark Assessment at a later date. If the student fails to make up the assessment a failing grade will be assigned.
7. Benchmark Assessment materials are not considered to be secure items.
8. As the Benchmark Assessments are formative in nature, students are encouraged to review individual performance.

E. Grading and Reporting of Benchmark Assessment

1. Teachers are responsible for grading and reporting of student Benchmark Assessment, using the scoring keys, rubrics, and procedures provided by the respective curriculum specialist.

Teachers are responsible for using professional judgment in assigning a test grade for the Benchmark Assessment.

2. Graded Benchmark Assessment will be maintained for one semester following the assessment to allow for any appeals. After that time period, the graded assessment may be destroyed.
3. Parents and students are encouraged to review an individual student's Benchmark Assessment after it has been given and scored.

Approved:

*Original signed by*

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Theresa R. Alban  
Superintendent