

Middle School Benchmark Assessment Plan – 2007-2008

Purpose of the Benchmark Assessment Program:

- Is to assess individual AKS concept proficiency.
- Identify students' strengths and weaknesses within course strands based on GCPS instructional calendars.
- To function as a tool to identify gaps in students' conceptual knowledge as related to the CRCT assessment.
- To allow teachers and administrators to analyze classroom data, and use it for instructional planning to maximize teaching and learning opportunities.
- To provide opportunities for classroom data to be analyzed (by teacher, class, subgroup, student, and school) to identify effective and ineffective instructional strategies, chart progress on goals, and improve overall student achievement.

Assumptions:

- All middle schools will participate in the testing plan outlined in this document.
- The benchmark tests will align to the AKS in the AKS Instructional Calendar for 2007-8 found in the Lotus Notes AKS Lesson Plan Data Base (Target May).
- The content strand weighting of the Pretest, Posttest and benchmarks will be similar to the weighting of strands on the CRCT.
- The benchmarks (9 and 18 week) should have some grade significance attached to them.
- The accommodations for Special Ed. and ESOL students should be the same as those provided for regular teacher developed classroom assessments.
- Teachers in the school should have the opportunity to review the draft copies of the benchmarks for school review and provide feedback on the test before it is finalized.
- The Office of Student Accountability (OSA) will provide responses to teacher feedback, make appropriate revisions, and provide class sets of hard copies of the test for administration.
- Principals will recommend highly effective, content rich teachers to participate in assessment development training, summer development and review.
- Principals will assign an instructional contact person for the benchmark assessments who will be responsible for coordinating with the Office of Student Accountability, coordinating the implementation, and helping us plan and implement an effective program to improve student achievement.
- At least two people will need to be trained in each school to be able to scan answer document on the provided scanner and manage the technical components of TestGate.
- If your teachers have been developing common assessments that are working well in your school, please send copies to Lorna Gallimore, ISC, for us to review and possibly use on next year's assessments.

- The pilot has taught us that benchmarks should be implemented as part of instructional team collaboration. After the administration of each assessment, the appropriate grade and content teachers should review the results at the strand, item, and subgroup level to identify patterns of achievement that instruction can address. The OSA will provide “lessons learned” sessions for the contacts and will be available to work with schools in the fall.

Benchmark Assessments will be provided for the following grades and content areas.

Sixth Grade	Language Arts	Math	Science
Seventh Grade	Language Arts	Math	Science
Eighth Grade	Language Arts	Math	

The following tests will be provided centrally for the content areas listed above.

- Pretest: Administered during the second/third week of school. It will cover all appropriate AKS for the year. This test will probably take more than one class period.
- Benchmark IA, 9 week benchmark: Given at the end of the week 9 through week 10. Coverage - AKS identified for teaching/learning on GCPS Instructional Calendar. 1 class period.
- Benchmark IB, 9 week benchmark: Administered to students who were not successful on Benchmark IA after intervention/ re-teaching session with students who need additional help. 1 class period.
- Benchmark IIA, 18 week benchmark: Given at the end of 18 weeks (before winter break). Coverage will be AKS taught in weeks 10-18 in instructional calendar.
- Benchmark IIB: Administered to students who were not successful on Benchmark IIA after intervention/ re-teaching (AKS/CQI) session with students who need additional help.
- Post test 1A: Administered between Feb 15 and March 15. Will cover all appropriate AKS for year. The purpose is to identify areas that need teaching or re-teaching (AKS/CQI) before administration of CRCT.

Optional Assessments:

- Post test 2: May be administered after remediation or at the end of the school year. Will cover appropriate AKS for the entire year. At end of the year could be used for RBES data.
- Benchmark III: Administered at week 27 or 28. Will assess AKS for weeks 19-27.
- Benchmark IV: Administered at the end of school. Will assess AKS for weeks 28-36.