

## **Blair Community Schools Assessment Glossary for Parents**

**Assessment** – The systematic process of observing learning and gathering information. In education, typically we are gathering information about what students know and are able to do.

**Standardized Assessment/Testing** – Gathering information under a standardized set of conditions (items/tasks, administration, and scoring). This allows us to make comparisons between test scores.

**Norm-Referenced Testing/Assessment (NRT or NRA)** – Assigning meaning to a student’s performance by comparing this performance to other students who took the same test under the same testing conditions. Percentile Ranks and Standard Scores are the typically used for reporting.

- **Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)** – Published by Riverside, designed to measure achievement, administered in the fall in grades 2, 4, 6, and 8.
- **Iowa Test of Education Development (ITED)** – Published by Riverside, designed to measure achievement, administered in the fall in grade 11.
- **Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)** – Published by Riverside, designed to measure developed abilities, administered in the fall in grade 3, subscales for Verbal, Quantitative, and Nonverbal.
- **EXPLORE/PLAN/ACT** – Published by American College Testing (ACT), designed to measure achievement, administered in the fall in grades 9 and 10/spring in grade 11, subscales in Reading, Math, English, and Science Reasoning.

**Criterion-Referenced Testing/Assessment (CRT or CRA)** – Assigning meaning to a student’s performance by comparing this performance to a predetermined set of criterion. Performance levels are typically used for reporting (met vs. not met; beginning, progressing, proficient, and advanced).

**Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA)** – State assessments, designed to measure proficiency; administered in grades 3 through 8 and 11. Reading (NeSA-R), Math (NeSA-M), Writing (NeSA-W), and Science (NeSA-SC).

**Common Assessments** – Developed by Blair Community Schools’ staff to measure outcomes associated with BCS curriculum. Administered in various grades and typically embedded in courses.

**Classroom Assessments** – Assessments developed and used by classroom teachers. Assessments may be developed and implemented by members of Grade Level or Professional Learning Communities, and/or individual teachers.

**Formative Assessment Processes (Assessment for Learning)**– Assessments are used by teachers and their students to gather information to be used as feedback during the process of a unit or a course. Adjustments are made in instruction to support additional learning and to close identified learning gaps.

**Summative Assessment Processes (Assessment of Learning)**– When assessment results are used to determine how much students have learned at a particular point in time in order to report achievement status.

**Evaluation**– A systematic judgment about the amount, number, and/or value of something/assessment. When we are assigning grades we are engaging in evaluation.