Cavalier School is rewriting its curriculum, and the administration is trying to figure out how they should measure students’ progress. Many people think that there should be a lot of testing in order to track students’ progress. They argue that this will also help students prepare for end-of-year standardized testing. Others say that that is too much pressure on the students, and that there should be just a few tests, with most of the assessing happening through classroom activities, group discussions, and student participation. They also ask why all the time testing isn’t spent learning… or is it? Still others believe that there should be some mix between the two options.

The school administrators are also trying to figure out how to deal with students far above and below average expectations, and how they should be assessed (in relation to their advanced or novice class, or in relation to the grade average, or another solution).

In thinking about this issue, please address the following aspects fully and in-depth. Your responses will be rated on your ability to think and respond critically and creatively. Responses will be judged against others of the same age and grade and are not expected to be competitive with students of older groups.

Consider multiple perspectives or points of view on assessment (for example, from students, families, and teachers to administrators, community members and researchers). In a format of your choice that you feel best suits your information, represent and describe what you consider to be the key or most important perspectives on this issue. What issues are important? Not important? Are some issues more important than others? Why? These are some of the questions you can begin to ask. Feel free to consider other relevant questions as well. Please include a list of where you got your information (interviews you conducted, research articles you read, etc.)

Thinking about all of these perspectives, construct what you believe is the most effective school policy regarding assessment. Be sure your policy is described in detail so that the students, parents, principal, and district administrators will really understand what you mean. Please describe your reasoning. How did you design this policy? What were your reasons for including what you did? What makes this policy effective?

Sometimes applicants have questions about what outside help is allowed when working on an SEP application prompt. Part of adequately responding to this prompt does require talking with people, listening to their ideas and input, and discussing your own ideas with other people. Responding to this prompt also requires you to spend a substantial amount of time thinking, researching, and writing on your own. It is a good idea to have someone proofread your response before you submit it. The final product that you submit to us should be the result of your own work to synthesize the information and ideas you have researched and discussed with other people.

Please note the SEP online application system will only accept ONE uploaded file, so please consider this when responding to the prompt. If your response is not in a format that you can upload online, you should call us at 434-924-3182 for assistance.