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IB-MYP ASSESSMENT POLICY

PHILOSOPHY OF ASSESSMENT - The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program is guided by three core principles: holistic learning, intercultural awareness, and communication. In essence, assessment is simply a form of communication. The word itself is derived from the Latin *ad sedere*, meaning “to sit beside.” Effective assessment is a tool that promotes learning by providing guidance to the learner.

During the process of learning, the feedback that students receive is called ***formative assessment***. It answers the question “How am I doing so far?” The teacher takes on the role of a coach, providing quick, direct, and useful information to the student about his or her learning and growth. In addition, peers can respond and give feedback, and the learner will reflect upon his or her learning in journals or discussions. This information can be used by the student to get better at the task and to deepen and refine his or her understanding of a concept. The IB-MYP places great value on formative assessment, which could also be termed “assessment *for* learning.”

Summative assessment refers to a judgment that is made about a significant, culminating demonstration of learning. A summative assessment looks to see whether a student can show growth in understanding, awareness, and application of skills. If formative assessment is like athletic coaching, then summative assessment is the sport/game itself. It could also be termed “assessment *of* learning.” Both types of assessment are important in IB instruction.

COMMON PRACTICES IN ASSESSMENT - In designing MYP units of study, teachers “begin with the end in mind.” In other words, they determine what it is that students should know and be able to do at the end of the unit. Then they design activities and create rubrics to guide students in understanding the qualities necessary for a successful demonstration of learning. Teachers refer to these rubrics throughout the unit. **A final project may take the form of a presentation, an essay, a design project, a research paper, or other significant activities that allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the essential concepts and content of the unit.**

Formative assessment throughout the unit will help students understand what needs to be improved so that they can demonstrate their understanding successfully. Knowledge of content (such as vocabulary) and skills (such as math calculations) will be assessed by the teacher through tasks such as quizzes, tests, and short writing assignments throughout the unit of study. Students will also monitor their own progress through activities such as journal reflections and peer critiques. The most significant assessment will be a rubric-based summative judgment regarding the major project that completes each unit. Researching, designing, creating, and reflecting on major projects are distinguishing elements of the IB. Through guidance in development of IB approaches to learning (ATL),

teachers help students develop the skills necessary to become independent learners, such as organizing/completing tasks, demonstrating knowledge, and using task-related techniques.

RECORDING AND REPORTING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT - There are several audiences to whom assessment information should be communicated. First of all, assessment should serve the student: it is a tool to help students understand their own learning so that they can assume greater responsibility and become more independent. Secondly, assessment must serve parents and other teachers: their role as caring adults is to support student learning, and in order to do so, they need to understand where strengths and weaknesses lie. Third, assessment must communicate clearly and efficiently to outside entities, such as the school district and high schools, about levels of achievement.

Assessment structure is consistent across subjects. Each area has four main objectives. Subject groups must address all strands of all four objectives at least twice in each year of the MYP. In all IB subject areas, an 8-point scale is used to make judgments about the level of a student's achievement on a particular task, in light of the specific criteria for that subject area. The scale is separated into bands. Generally, they are as follows:

0	The student does not meet a standard described by any of the descriptors below.
1-2	The student shows a limited or partial understanding.
3-4	The student shows adequate or satisfactory understanding.
5-6	The student shows solid understanding.
7-8	The student's work is successful at the highest levels of challenge.

The Archdiocese of Baltimore requires that grades also be reported on a traditional scale. When assignments are graded at St. Francis, the 8-point IB scale translates as follows:

8 = 100%	4 = 80%
7 = 95%	3 = 75%
6 = 90%	2 = 70%
5 = 85%	1 = 65%

In the form of rubrics, this grading scale will be used frequently, on both minor and major tasks in all subject areas, so that students, parents, and teachers become very familiar with its meaning and purpose. The percentages will be recorded in PowerSchool for those assignments that are graded. Summative assessments will be weighted more heavily than formative assessments. Some formative assessments are simply communication tools and will not be included in PowerSchool.

Three times a year, midway through each trimester, the students and teachers will assess student progress towards independent use of skills and self-management strategies. These narrative reports will supplement the traditional Archdiocesan report card. The reports will be organized around the five broad categories of the Approaches to Learning:

Communication Skills, Social Skills, Self-Management Skills, Research Skills, and Thinking Skills. Student self-reflection can play a role in these reports, with increasing prominence as the students progress through the grades. For example, sixth graders' reports will be written by the teachers. Seventh graders' reports will be written by the teachers but will draw upon the students' own reflections. In eighth grade, students will initiate the reflection narrative and teachers will build upon their statements.

IB grades are incorporated into the Archdiocesan Report Card. Summative assessments for each IB unit are scored according to the eight point rubric for one or more criteria for that subject. The scores, ranging from 0-8, are recorded as Standards on the report card. The final grade for each standard is assigned by the teacher at the end of each trimester. The teacher considers progress throughout the trimester to determine a "best fit", not an exact average. In addition, the score for each summative assessment is converted to points and entered as an assessment that is linked to the traditional final grade.

Other formative assessments, such as homework, drills, and quizzes, are also entered into Powerschool and linked to the final grade. Formative assessments are given less weight than the summative assessments. The final trimester grade will be in the traditional format of A+ to E.

CONCLUSION - The content of courses is directed by the curriculum standards of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. The design of the units of study, including the formative tasks and the summative projects, is the responsibility of the teachers in collaboration with the IB Coordinator. Teachers will meet regularly to share assessment strategies so as to achieve consistency of expectations across disciplines.

Assessment in the Middle School at SFA aims to conform to IB Standards while also meeting the assessment expectations of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. To be successful in the IB program, students must be able to "recall, adapt, and apply knowledge and skills to new questions and contexts" (*From Principles Into Practice, 2014*). Hence, according to IB expectations, assessment in the MYP aims to:

- Support/encourage student learning by providing feedback on the learning process.
- Inform, enhance, and improve the teaching process
- Provide opportunities for students to exhibit transfer of skills across disciplines, such as in the community project and interdisciplinary unit assessments
- Promote positive student attitudes towards learning
- Promote a deep understanding of subject content by supporting students in their inquiries set in real-world contexts
- Promote the development of critical and creative thinking skills
- Reflect the international-mindedness of the program by allowing for assessments to be set in a variety of cultural and linguistic contexts
- Support the holistic nature of the program by including in its model principles that take account of the development of the whole student. (*From Principles Into Practice, 2014*)