

School Lane Charter School

Middle Years Program Assessment Policy

Philosophy of Assessment

School Lane's assessment policy is developed to reflect the beliefs stated in our mission and vision statements. We recognize and value the unique capacity for learning in our students and develop assessment methods to support their success. Our assessment policy includes the processes of collecting, measuring, analyzing, recording and reporting data on what students know and can do. We believe that teaching, learning, and assessment are interdependent and serve to support student learning and contribute to their success. School Lane's assessment practices consider the different learning styles, abilities, and attitudes of our students. Assessments are authentic and provide students with a variety of means to demonstrate what they know, understand, and can apply to the real world.

Assessment at School Lane Charter School aligns with the IB Middle Years Program and information regarding our assessment policy is communicated to the school community via our website.

Guiding Principles

The MYP Faculty believes:

- Assessment is the key to planning, teaching, and learning
- There is a balance of formative and summative assessments
- Opportunities are given for self-reflection
- Assessments are relevant to the student and are meaningful to the content
- Assessment is connected to the IB Learner Profile and Global Contexts
- Assessment is connected to the Pennsylvania Common Core Standards

Purposes of Assessment

Assessment serves many purposes for both students and teachers at School Lane. Assessment data is used to set goals that address students' learning needs, plan units, and drive instruction. Assessments offer support and encourage further learning by providing meaningful feedback on students' learning processes; improve teaching strategies by recognizing student work and abilities; and to determine the level of student understanding using formative and summative assessments. School Lane uses assessments to influence school-wide planning and to provide meaningful professional development opportunities for

staff. Together students and teachers can use the information gathered from assessment to determine their next teaching and learning steps. Parents and families of our students are kept informed about student progress and take an active role in the children's' learning.

School Lane Charter School believes the purpose of assessments is to:

- Provide feedback for setting goals that address students' learning needs, plan units, and drive instruction
- Provide teachers a means to offer support and encourage further learning by providing meaningful feedback on students' learning processes
- Determine the level of student understanding of content and concepts
- Influence school-wide planning and goal/objective development to support student academic achievement
- Promote critical and higher-order thinking skills
- Facilitate student inquiry and reflection as critical components of independent learning
- Develop international mindedness by examining links to the world
- Support the development of the student through the Learner Profile and Approaches to Learning skills

Principles of Assessment

General assessment practices While the IB program guidelines lay down the parameters of assessment, they also ensure that each student is evaluated individually and not ranked or graded to fit into a comparative scale of performance. In the hypercompetitive context of contemporary societies, it is particularly necessary to emphasize that assessment is for learning, that it provides guidance for purposive directed learning, and for meeting program standards. It is not for producing a rank ordering which compares one student's performance against another's.

- Assessments will be reported generally in English, which is currently the medium of instruction. Assessment of learning of languages other than English will be reported in those languages.
- A wide range of tools of assessment will be used and shared among teachers and students. A shared understanding of the purpose and accuracy of assessment tools will nurture a constructive climate for assessment and the reporting of that assessment.
- Assessment criteria will be explained to and understood by students prior to learning. This will enable learners to reflect upon and assess themselves based upon agreed criteria, and thus empower them as learners. It will also enable learners to communicate with teachers and peers, to reflect on their own learning, from

achievements to analysis of strengths and weaknesses, and to understand and evaluate trajectories for learning.

- Assessments will also be used for review of learnt knowledge and skills before advancing to the next unit of inquiry, or level of learning.
- SLCS will ensure that assessment is for learning and not the other way round. While both formative and summative assessments guide learning, the former is used in daily practice to shape next steps. Summative assessment comes at the end of a unit of learning. In other words, the former is development oriented and the latter measures mastery of knowledge and skills.

Formative assessment

Formative assessment is assessment for learning, and is on-going throughout the teaching and learning process. It provides information that is used in order to plan the next stage in learning. It is interwoven with learning, and helps teachers and students to find out what the students already know and can do and how well they are learning new knowledge and skills. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked and function purposefully together to direct and shape curriculum planning. Formative assessment aims to promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback throughout the learning process. This process helps learners to improve knowledge and understanding, to foster self-motivation and enthusiasm for learning, to engage in thoughtful reflection, to develop the capacity for self-assessment, and to recognize criteria for success. Students will grow to engage in self- and peer-assessment opportunities to develop the confidence needed if they are to be stewards of their own learning.

Assessment in the classroom involves teachers in:

- developing task-specific clarifications in advance of starting teaching so that the basis of assessment can be made known to students before learning commences as part of the strategy of giving shape to the learning objectives
- using representative samples of students' work or performance to provide information about student learning
- collecting evidence of students' understanding and thinking
- documenting learning processes of groups and individuals
- identifying exemplary student work
- keeping qualitative as well as quantitative records of test/task results.

Assessment in the classroom involves learners in:

- reflecting on their learning

- communicating their learning to teachers and peers
- evaluating work produced by themselves and by others against known rubrics (level descriptors)
- sharing their learning and understanding with others
- using a variety of styles and abilities to demonstrate their learning
- analyzing their learning and understanding; what needs to be improved.

For free exchange of evaluative feedback to be possible, an atmosphere of trust and co-operation between teachers and learners must be established not only within the classroom but across the academy community. Without such an atmosphere, evaluation can be experienced as destructive rather than constructive, and, conversely, poor relationships can inhibit effective communication of information about what needs improvement. To be effective, formative assessment must therefore take place in an environment which is single-mindedly dedicated to being positive and supportive rather than negative and destructive.

Summative Assessments

Summative assessment (assessment of learning) is undertaken at the end of a unit or topic and aims to give teachers and students a clear insight into students' understanding. Summative assessment marks the culmination of the teaching and learning process, but it is not the purpose of the teaching and learning process; it gives students opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned. Summative assessment can, and usually should, assess several elements of learning simultaneously in order to inform and lead students to improve their integrative and trans-disciplinary learning skills; it measures understanding of central significant ideas, and encourages students to undertake action. Summative assessment will enable students, teachers and parents (the latter via the reporting process) to gauge the level of student performance and enable greater academic achievement in externally assessed components, as well as reach a more complete understanding of the topic and grasp of the associated concepts.

Assessment Methods

School Lane is committed to providing a meaningful array of assessment methods to assess the unique, individual knowledge base of our learners. The following types of assessments are used but not limited to:

- Formative assessment data collected throughout the learning process
- Summative assessments at the end of a unit of study
- Student self-assessments
- Peer review

- Written and verbal responses and reflections
- Essay and reports
- Class discussions
- Pennsylvania Standardized State Assessments
- Terra Nova standardized testing (grades K-2)
- Students' self-designed methods to show understanding
- Performance, project and inquiry-based assessments
- Exhibitions

Recording and Reporting

School Lane Charter School assess student skills using the four assessment criteria for each subject provided by IB. All graded work is scored against the IB subject assessment rubric based on the subject criterion being assessed. Teacher record all student assessment scores based on subject rubrics individual criterion either in a grade book or electronically. Teachers also keep anecdotal notes on student progress. Teachers report student progress via progress reports 3 times a year (mid-trimester) by providing a single "grade" from the IB grade boundary guidelines. At the end of each trimester, students lead a conference with their parents to review their portfolio from the semester. A report card is given after the student-led conference. Teachers report trimester grades for each subject criterion (0-8). A total overall subject score is determined when added together. The student has an overall subject score is compared to the IB grade boundary descriptors (see the chart below) to provide parents an understanding of student proficiency levels.

Grade	Boundary Guidelines	Descriptor
1	1-5	Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys main significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts & contexts. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills.
2	6-9	Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge or skills.
3	10-14	Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations.

4	15-18	Produces good quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but requires support in unfamiliar situations.
5	19-23	Produces generally high quality work. Communicates secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situations.
6	24-27	Produces high quality work, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situations, often with independence.
7	28-32	Produces high quality work, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situations.

Assessment scores are not averaged for trimester or final subject grades. Teachers look to student consistent proficiency within a particular criterion as a continuum as opposed to an average.

The Personal Project is the culminating activity for MYP for all 10th grade SLCS students. The project is assessed using the IB Personal Project assessment rubric by the Personal Project Mentor and moderated with an additional Personal Project Mentor. Students earning a 3 or higher will be considered passing the project. All students must pass the Personal Project in order to graduate from SLCS as seniors.

Furthermore, the MYP Faculty agrees to:

- Consider a wide range of performance information, formal and informal, standardized and non-standardized
- The recognition that every student is a complex learner with a spectrum of abilities, skills and knowledge
- Focus assessments on all key areas of student learning and academic, social, and emotional development of students

- Administer assessments based on valid standards such as grade levels and individual aptitudes
- Communicate assessment data to students and parents in a timely manner

Citations

"Coordinator Support Material". IBO.ORG, International Baccalaureate, 17 November 2019, ibpublishing.ibo.org/server2/rest/app/tsm.xql?doc=m_0_mypxx_tsm_1609_1_e&part=3&chapter=3.

MYP: From principles into practice. International Baccalaureate Organization. Peterson House: Cardiff, Wales, 2014, updated 2017.

"Roman Oaks Schools: MYP school policies". Roman Oaks Schools, 21 September 2019, <http://romyp.weebly.com/school-policies.html>

"WPS Middle Years Program". The Woodlands Preparatory School, 21 September 2019, <https://www.woodlandsprep.org/ourpages/auto/2017/11/30/46678665/WPS%20MYP%20Assessment%20Policy.pdf>

TO THE EXTENT THAT ANYTHING IN THIS POLICY COULD BE CONSTRUED TO CONFLICT WITH APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS, THE APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS CONTROL. THIS POLICY IS NOT INTENDED TO CONFLICT WITH CHARTER REQUIREMENTS.

ADOPTED this day 21st of November 2019



Peter Hyams, President



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