



## **Assessment Policy**

### **Assessment in the Primary Years Program**

The focus of assessment in an IB Primary Years Program school is to help students develop the five essential elements of learning: the understanding of concepts, the acquisition of knowledge, the mastering of skills, the development of attitudes and the decision to take action. Students, parents, staff and administration must have a clear understanding of what is being assessed, the criteria for success and the method by which the assessment is made. Active involvement of both students and teachers results in meaningful and accurate assessment.

The Primary Years Program divides assessment into three components:

- Assessing – how we discover what students have learned
- Recording – how we make note of our findings about what students have learned
- Reporting – how we pass that information on to parents, administration and other parties directly involved in students' learning

#### **Why do we assess?**

- To promote continuous student learning and growth
- To guide children through the five essential elements of learning contained in the PYP (concepts, knowledge, skills, attitudes and action)
- To celebrate what students can do
- To set goals and plan for future student growth
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the learning program

#### **What do we assess?**

- Understanding of concepts (big ideas that transcend traditional subject areas)
- Acquisition of knowledge
- Mastery of skills
- Development of attitudes
- Decision to take action
- Demonstration of the attributes of the IB learner profile
- Student progress and performance in the following subject areas: language; mathematics; social studies; science; the arts; science; personal, social and physical education

#### **When does assessment take place in a PYP school?**

Assessment is a continuous process that allows teachers, parents and children to identify areas of strength and areas that need improvement, as well as the effectiveness of the program. It is a daily activity at JISK and takes various forms. There are two main categories of assessment:

- Formative Assessment is interwoven with daily learning and helps teachers and students find out what children already know, understand and can do in order to



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plan for further student learning and growth. Formative assessment occurs throughout a learning unit or process.

- Summative Assessment takes place at the end of a learning unit or process. It is a chance for students, teachers and parents to evaluate progress and demonstrate what has been learned over the course of time. It is a formal ending point to a taught unit or of a process but not necessarily the end of student learning in the areas being assessed.

### **What are the characteristics of effective assessments in the PYP?**

- Have criteria that are known and understood in advance
- Allow children to synthesize and apply their learning, not merely recall facts
- Promote student reflection and self-evaluation
- Focus on the production of quality products or performances
- Highlight children's strengths and allows them to demonstrate mastery and expertise
- Allow children to express different points of view and interpretations
- Provide feedback regarding every stage of the learning/teaching cycle
- Based on student needs, interests and learning styles (student-driven)
- Involve collaboration between students and teachers
- Produce evidence of student growth and learning that can be clearly reported and understood by children, parents, teachers and administrators
- Identify what is worth knowing
- Begin with the end results in mind (backwards design – what students should be able to know or do by the end of a learning unit, lesson or process)

### **How do teachers record student progress?**

Teachers use a variety of assessment tools to record student progress in the PYP, including: rubrics, checklists, continuums, task or subject-specific criteria, forms, benchmarks/exemplars and narrative records.

### **How is student growth reported to parents and students?**

- Report card (three times per year)
- IB learner profile development (included in the Unit of Inquiry progress report at the end of each unit)
- Student-Led conferences (held in the second term)
- Parent-Teacher, Teacher-Student and Parent-Teacher-Student conferences (held throughout the year)
- Unit of Inquiry progress reports (sent home after each unit of inquiry)
- Teacher communication with parents via notes home, emails and phone calls

### **Who is involved in the assessment process?**

For assessment to be fully effective, students, parents, teachers and administrators must all be informed of and involved in the assessment process.



How will we know what we have learned? The assessed curriculum

Assessment strategies and tools					
Assessment tools Assessment strategies	Rubrics	Exemplars	Checklists	Anecdotal records	Continuums
Observations					
Performance assessments					
Process-focused assessments					
Selected responses					
Open-ended tasks					

Figure 15- Making the PYP happen Int'l Schools