



## Cullen Middle School

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# Assessment Policy

Standard B1.5c: The school has developed and implements an assessment policy that is consistent with IB expectations.

## **Philosophy**

Assessment and data disaggregation are an important component of curriculum planning and the instructional process for teachers at Cullen Middle School. Teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessments to direct their instruction and to determine student mastery. Grades are based exclusively on Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and achievement levels from IB-related rubrics.

Each of the eight IB MYP core courses are responsible for developing units and summative assessment tasks for each six-week grading cycle. For each unit of study, the teachers meet and work collaboratively to determine the summative assessment task based on local, state, and IB content requirements. The statement of inquiry forms an essential part of the curriculum in IB World Schools. When creating MYP units of work, the statement of inquiry outlines the selection of subjects and tasks to be assessed. Teachers determine which MYP objectives and strands will be used to develop unit plans, lessons, and assessments. Currently, teachers also work to standardize summative assessment task grading using the IB Rubrics. A variety of assessment methods will allow students to provide evidence of conceptual understanding gained through the learning activities.

## **Principles of Assessment:**

- Tasks will be designed to appeal to a variety of learning styles.
- Assessments will be differentiated to account for students' diverse needs.
- Assessment tasks will be rigorous, involving critical and creative thinking skills.
- Assessment tasks will encourage transfer of skills, interdisciplinary learning, and real-world contexts.
- Assessment tasks will include clear, consistent use of command terms.
- Students with identified learning needs will receive accommodations based on their learning plans.
- All work submitted for assessment must be the student's own work.
- Students will receive timely and meaningful feedback on their performance on assessment tasks.

- There is a balance between formative (ongoing throughout the unit) and summative (end of unit) assessment.

### ***Purpose of Assessment for Teachers:***

To enhance student learning

- To monitor the individual progress of student achievement
- To determine the effectiveness of teaching
- To guide curriculum development and review
- To guide instructional practice

### ***Purpose of Assessment for Students:***

- To provide consistent, timely feedback and opportunity for reflection
- To give a “time stamp” of what students know at various points in learning
- To identify strengths and weaknesses in components of the subject area
- To promote student responsibility for and ownership of learning
- To encourage students to self-advocate

### ***Purpose of Assessment for Parents:***

- To communicate consistent, timely feedback and opportunity for conversation.
- To allow parents and teachers to work together as advocates of student learning.
- To provide transparency of curriculum.

## ***General Assessment policy***

### **Pre-assessments**

Pre- assessments are used in all subject areas. Teachers will conduct pre-assessments to collect data for future comparison. Pre-assessments allow teachers to activate prior knowledge, adjust lessons accordingly, and assesses what students want to learn about.

### **Formative assessments**

Formative assessments are used in all subject areas. This refers to ongoing assessments that will take place during the teaching and learning process. This gives teachers and students important information used to revise teaching and learning activities in a way that students can improve academic achievement. During formative assessments students engage actively in the process of learning. Students learn to self-assess, peer-assess, and improve their performance with the assistance of the teacher's meaningful feedback. Students can learn new skills and achieve better grades while taking risks and not being afraid to make mistakes. Formative assessments can include discussions, questioning, oral presentations, and quizzes.

### **Summative assessment**

At the end of a teaching and learning period, summative assessment tasks are carried out. These assessments summarize what a student knows, comprehends and/or is able to do. The assessment is designed so that learners can demonstrate their knowledge and

comprehension in authentic tasks and apply their skills in new ways. Examples of summative assessments could be projects, oral and visual presentations, essays, or performances.

### **Self-assessment**

Reflections and self-assessment are essential components of the assessment process. Students examine their strengths and weaknesses, which is useful throughout the student's learning experience. Reflections allow the learner to take responsibility for his/her own learning, guides them to service, and at the end, their reflections help to set their personal goals.

### **Common Practices for Grade Reporting**

Teachers at Cullen are expected to record a minimum of two grades per week. Assessment tasks include tests/quizzes, projects, journals, portfolios, presentations, essays, research, and more. The scores for summative assessment tasks are graded using subject-specific IB rubrics. Once the score for a task is determined, the IB score is converted to the HISD point system. Both the IB score and the HISD grade are recorded in the teacher's electronic grade book (GradeSpeed).

### **Reporting to Parents**

We believe that parents, teachers, and students are partners in education. Open and consistent communication strengthens this partnership. Students and parents are kept informed in the following ways:

- Parent Night
- Communication of class-specific information: HUB, Active Classroom, Google Classroom, and/or Student Assignment Notebooks
- GradeSpeed online grade book
- Teacher and/or Counselor e-mails, phone calls, and meetings
- Progress Reports
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Report Cards (six-week cycle)
- MYP Reports of Progress (two: Fall and Spring semester)
- School Kiosk
- IEP: Individual Educational Plan for Special Education students

### **Grading Policy**

Each subject area teacher's grading policy and curriculum materials will be communicated to parents at the beginning of the school year.

### **End-of-Semester MYP Reporting**

A summative semester end score, given for each criterion within each subject area, reflects a student's level of demonstrated competence. Scores for each criterion are reported as whole numbers, using the 1-8 scale. Six-week courses at the middle schools report on criteria

that have been assessed by the culmination of the course, and MYP criteria scores may be communicated apart from the MYP report of progress.

Students who complete the requirements of the Middle Years Programme, including completion of the Personal Project, receive documentation on their high school transcript. (Cullen Middle School students will complete Year 1, 2, and 3 during middle school; Year 4 and 5 are completed at the high school level.)

### ***Communication Plan***

The Assessment Policy will be made available on our schools' websites and will be shared with parents and students at the beginning of each school year.

### ***Review of the Assessment Policy:***

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually by designated Cullen Middle School faculty members, parent support members, and community partners.

Written by Eltoncia Bradley. Reviewed and updated May 2020 by Jacqueline Thompson, Donica Arnold-Brown, Quinton Chapman, Tyson Dillard, and Johnetta Earnest.