



# Southlands Elementary School Assessment Policy





## IB Learner Profile

*The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.*

IB learners strive to be:

**Inquirers:** We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

**Knowledgeable:** We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

**Thinkers:** We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

**Communicators:** We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

**Principled:** We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

**Open-minded:** We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

**Caring:** We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

**Risk-takers:** We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

**Balanced:** We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives - intellectual, physical, and emotional - to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

**Reflective:** We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.



*The Southlands Elementary School community provides a child-centred education that addresses each student's academic, social, emotional, and physical development. We support learners to become compassionate, inquiring, and engaged citizens who take action to improve the local and global community.*

## **Purpose**

This policy is intended as a source of information, for the school community, on assessment at Southlands Elementary. Assessment is an important component of teaching and learning and involves both the teacher and student. This document will outline the assessment processes used by teachers and students. It will also guide the ways in which learning goals and assessment procedures and outcomes are communicated with parents and legal guardians.

*This policy is to be used in conjunction with our Inclusion Policy, Language Policy, and Academic Integrity Policy.*

## **International Baccalaureate Programme Standards and Practices**

### **Standard: Culture through policy implementation (0301)**

Schools develop, implement, communicate and review effective policies that help to create a school culture in which IB philosophy can thrive.

### **Culture 5: The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews an assessment policy or policies to help create a culture of continuous learning and growth.**

- **Culture 5.1:** The school implements and reviews an assessment policy that makes the school's philosophy clear and is aligned with the IB philosophy concerning learning and assessment.
- **Culture 5.2:** The school identifies in its assessment policy all necessary local and IB requirements, and outlines how the school is adhering to these requirements.
- **Culture 5.3:** The school describes in its assessment policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and clearly states what constitutes good assessment practice.
- **Culture 5.4:** The school ensures relevant support materials, resources and processes are implemented for fair and valid assessment.
- **Culture 5.5:** The school describes in its assessment policy the value of assessment for continuous learning and growth.

### **Standard: Coherent curriculum (0401)**

Learning in IB World Schools is based on a coherent curriculum.

### **Coherent curriculum 3: The school develops, regularly reviews, and shares its curriculum in ways that explicitly engage the school community.**

- **Coherent curriculum 3.3:** The school reviews IB requirements for learning, teaching, and assessment, and communicates them to the school community.

### **Standard: Approaches to assessment (0404)**

Learning, teaching, and assessment effectively inform and influence one another.

### **Approaches to assessment 1: Students and teachers use feedback to improve learning, teaching and assessment.**

- **Approaches to assessment 1.1:** Students and teachers use feedback to support stated outcomes and expectations, in accordance with IB philosophy and assessment documentation.

- **Approaches to assessment 1.2:** The school uses specific and constructive school-based reporting to provide students and teachers with information that can be used to improve learning, teaching and assessment.

**Approaches to assessment 2: The school uses assessment methods that are varied and fit-for-purpose for the curriculum and stated learning outcomes and objectives.**

- **Approaches to assessment 2.1:** Teachers use a variety of assessment methods that are connected to stated learning objectives and outcomes.
  - PYP: Teachers document and analyse student learning over time to design learning experiences based on data.
- **Approaches to assessment 2.2:** The school demonstrates that assessment practices are formed around conceptual learning.
- **Approaches to assessment 2.3:** The school ensures that from the time of enrolment students and legal guardians are aware of and have access to documentation describing the relevant programme regulations and requirements regarding assessment.

**Approaches to assessment 3: The school administrates assessment consistently, fairly, inclusively and transparently.**

- **Approaches to assessment 3.1:** The school administrates assessment in accordance with IB rules, regulations, and/or relevant programme documentation.
- **Approaches to assessment 3.2:** The school regularly reviews and ensures compliance with all access arrangements.
- **Approaches to assessment 3.3:** The school ensures that external reporting and/or predictions are as accurate as possible, and are appropriately designed for the contexts in which they are required.
- **Approaches to assessment 3.4:** The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews consistent and fair systems and processes for reporting student progress and handling appeals or challenges.
- **Approaches to assessment 3.5:** The school monitors and evaluates the delivery of assessments to ensure that they are as seamless as reasonable.

**Approaches to assessment 4: Students take opportunities to consolidate their learning through assessment.**

- **Approaches to assessment 4.1:** The school provides students with opportunities to consolidate their learning through a variety of assessments.

## Philosophy

We believe assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process, and that student engagement and self-reflection are central components of assessment. We believe learning goals and success criteria should be co-constructed by teachers and students and students should be actively engaged in the assessment process by setting goals, taking steps to reach these goals, and reflecting on their progress. As well, teachers should use assessment information to adjust their teaching to meet the needs of the students. We also believe parents are better able to support their children at home when they have a clear understanding of their child's learning goals and progress.

## Principles of Assessment (from Learning and Teaching, p.67)

We aim to develop and use assessment that is:

- **Authentic:** *It supports making connections to the real world to promote student engagement.*
- **Clear and specific:** *It includes desired learning goals, success criteria and the process students use to learn.*
- **Varied:** *It uses a wider range of tools and strategies that are fit for purpose in order to build a well-rounded picture of student learning.*
- **Developmental:** *It focuses on an individual student's progress rather than their performance in relation to others.*
- **Collaborative:** *It engages both teachers and students in the assessment development and evaluation process.*
- **Interactive:** *Assessment encompasses ongoing and iterative dialogues about learning.*
- **Feedback to feedforward:** *It provides feedback on current learning to inform what is needed to support future learning and raises students' motivation*

## Purpose of Assessment

Assessment is the ongoing process of gathering, analyzing, reflecting and acting on evidence of student learning. The main purpose of assessment is to facilitate student learning and to inform curriculum development and teaching practices. Good assessment provides meaningful, individualized information about student learning throughout the learning process, so teachers can adjust their teaching and students can adjust their learning. Students need to know the purpose, means, and criteria of assessment tasks in order to understand what is being asked of them.

Assessment as learning (formative assessment) is an ongoing, collaborative process between the student and teacher. It is learning engagements designed to help students become independent, self-regulated learners who can set goals, monitor their own progress, and reflect on their own thinking and learning. Students learn how to learn and use metacognitive strategies, asking themselves questions such as What do I want to learn, How will I learn it, How will I know I've learned it, and Do I need to do anything differently?

Assessment for learning (pre-assessment, formative assessment) is usually conducted when students are learning new information, concepts, and skills, and can be used for individual students or for a whole class. It helps teachers and students understand where students are in the learning process and what steps can be taken next. This may include reinforcing learning through additional instruction and practice, diagnosing problems, providing extra support, and extending learning opportunities.

Assessment of learning (summative assessment) occurs after a student has had instruction and practice, and is usually conducted at the end of a unit, term, or school year, to evaluate a student's knowledge, conceptual understanding, and skill development. This type of assessment provides information to determine a student's achievement in relation to a set of criteria or performance levels.

## Areas of Assessment

We assess knowledge, conceptual understandings, and the approaches to learning skills. In the BC Curriculum, this is phrased as **know**, **understand**, and **do**. Teaching and learning at Southlands provides students with the opportunity for guided inquiry and emphasizes the transdisciplinary nature of learning as

well as the connectedness of knowledge, understanding, and skills. As a result, assessment is both disciplinary and transdisciplinary. This means, assessment is sometimes specific to one subject area and sometimes it is viewed through the lens of multiple subject areas. We assess performance and progress in all subject areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Physical and Health Education, Arts Education, Career Education, Applied Design, Skills, and Technologies, and French.

BC Curriculum		IB Primary Years Programme	
Know	content learning standards (topics)	Knowledge	lines of inquiry
Understand	big ideas (generalizations, principles)	Conceptual Understandings	central ideas, key concepts, related concepts
Do	curricular competency learning standards (skills, strategies, processes)	Skills	approaches to learning

The PYP Exhibition is a required summative assessment in Grade 7. The Exhibition is the culminating learning experience for students, teachers, and parents and is both an assessment of student progress and the school's delivery of the PYP from Kindergarten to Grade 7.

### **Rights and Responsibilities of the Southlands School Community Members**

Each member of the Southlands School community has rights and responsibilities.

#### **Students**

Students have the right to:

- assessment that is clear, specific, and developmentally appropriate
- be involved in the assessment process
- be taught metacognitive skills that allow them to reflect on their learning and set goals

Students have the responsibility to:

- work collaboratively with teachers to develop learning goals and success criteria
- self-assess their progress towards their learning goals

#### **Teachers**

Teachers have the right to:

- participate in ongoing professional development related to assessment

Teachers have the responsibility to become assessment capable teachers: (from Learning and Teaching, p.69)

- understand the purpose of assessment and select appropriate tools and strategies
- collaborate to design and moderate assessments, analyze results and plan next steps
- give effective feedback and communicates learning progress
- share evidence and data with students and the learning community
- reflect on evidence and data to improve own practice
- plan multiple opportunities for success
- support student reflection through modelling
- support students to become assessment capable
- use assessment data and evidence to inform planning and teaching strategies
- differentiate assessment to meet the needs of individual students
- plan and conduct assessment collaboratively with students

## **Administrator**

Administrators have the responsibility to:

- create an assessment capable school culture, where there is a shared understanding of what effective assessment requires

## **Parents**

Parents have both the right and responsibility to:

- engage in regular communication with teachers about the progress of their child
- participate in goal setting conferences and co-construct goals for their child and support their child's learning by implementing related strategies
- participate in IEP meetings

## **Assessment Tools and Strategies:**

At Southlands we are committed to using a wide variety of tools and strategies to assess students' knowledge, conceptual understanding, and skill development. We recognize that, in order to truly understand a student's learning, assessment needs to be conducted in a variety of situations over time.

Different assessments are often used together and teachers include a range of approaches to provide a balanced view of the child. Whenever appropriate, assessments are differentiated to accommodate the learning styles of all students. Some students have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) that specify adaptations or modifications to assessments, and these must be accommodated in accordance with the School Act. With the exception of diagnostic tools used to assist with specific programming decisions for individual students, norm-referenced assessments are seldom used.

We ensure that there is a clear delineation between formative and summative assessment and that students have many opportunities to set goals, practice, receive feedback, and self-adjust prior to summative assessments. Exemplars are provided whenever possible and criteria for each assessment task is either co-constructed with or clearly explained to students in advance.

We use the four dimensions of assessment described in Teaching and Learning (PYP, 2018), all of which inform teaching and learning. In order of emphasis, from largest to smallest, the four dimensions are: monitoring learning, documenting learning, measuring learning, and reporting learning.

Monitoring Learning is when teachers and students check the progress of learning against personal learning goals and success criteria.

**Sample tools and strategies:** observation, anecdotal records, questioning, reflection, discussions, open-ended tasks, written assessments, oral assessment, portfolios, electronic portfolios, learning journals, conferencing, brainstorming, exit tickets, jigsaw activities, mind maps, checklists, blog posts, self-assessment, visible thinking routines, open-ended performance tasks, written reflections, oral reflections, goal setting

Documenting Learning is the recording of learning in order to make learning visible. It provides opportunities to reconnect with learning goals and success criteria.

**Sample tools and strategies:** focussed observations, self-reflection, self-assessment, peer feedback, conferencing, questioning, portfolios, electronic portfolios, learning journals, visible thinking routines, KWL charts, videos, wonder walls, assemblies, presentations, blog posts, mind maps, venn diagrams, exit tickets, written reflections, oral reflections

Measuring Learning is the recording of a student's learning at a particular point in time and provides data to support the bigger picture of student learning.

**Sample tools and strategies:** BC Performance Standards, Developmental Reading Assessment (primary), Reading Assessment District 39 (intermediate), IEP reviews, school-wide 3 Step Write

impromptu writing, spelling inventories, running records, rubrics, single point rubrics, checklists, rating scales, teacher-developed quizzes and tests

Reporting on Learning is the description of student learning strengths, areas for growth, and ways to support learning.

**Sample tools and strategies:** written anecdotal report cards, parent-teacher conferences, student-led conferences, emails, phone calls

### **Standardization of Assessment**

When two or more teachers are teaching the same grade level, they plan units collaboratively. Learning goals and success criteria are determined collaboratively, based on the Learning Standards outlined in the BC Curriculum as well as the elements outlined in the school's PYP Programme of Inquiry. Students may engage in different formative and summative assessments in order to accommodate different teaching and learning styles.

### **Homework**

In accordance with the BC Ministry of Education policy, students from kindergarten to grade 3 do not receive any homework. Students in grades 4-7 may be asked to do up to half an hour per night. If students are learning English, this homework may take longer to complete. We appreciate that every student has different home-life circumstances and therefore students are not penalized for incomplete homework.

### **Language of Assessment**

*Please refer to Southlands Language Policy and Inclusion Policy for more information.*

As outlined in our Language Policy, English is the working language of the school. With the exception of assessments connected to Additional Language instruction, assessment is usually conducted in English. English Language Learners are given support to acquire the language, knowledge, and cultural understanding that will enable them to access the curriculum, which will take time. Some knowledge, understanding, and skills can be assessed without English Language proficiency, but if a student's English Language proficiency is not sufficient for them to demonstrate their knowledge, conceptual understanding, or skill development, that area will not be reported on.

### **Reporting on Learning**

*Please refer to Southlands Inclusion Policy for more information.*

Appendix 6: BC Public School Policy: Special Education: Evaluation and Reporting:

Appendix 7: BC Public School Policy: English Language Learning Students: Progress Reporting

Reporting is the most public aspect of assessment, and our reporting practices are directed by the Vancouver School Board, as mandated by the BC Ministry of Education. Reporting is intended to give information that advances learning, rather than focusing on measuring learning. We want to give parents a complete picture of how students are doing at school and how their learning is developing.

### **Reporting Schedule**

We provide a variety of methods for reporting and parents are encouraged to participate in the development of their child's learning. Parents receive a minimum of five formal communications throughout the school year:

#### Three-way Goal Setting Conferences (Oct/Nov)

These conferences are an opportunity for the student, teacher, and parent(s) to discuss the student's learning strengths and challenges and set goals for the year. The goals include those chosen by the teacher, the student, and the parent(s).

#### Student-Led Conferences (March/April):

Students share their learning experiences and examples of their learning in a conference with their parents and teacher. Students are in charge of guiding parents through a set of activities so parents get a glimpse



of life inside their classroom. This is also an opportunity for the student to discuss their progress towards their learning goals.

### Written Reports

Parents receive formal written reports about their child's progress twice a year.

Written report cards include

- Descriptive written comments addressing student learning strengths, areas for growth, and ways to support learning
- A student proficiency scale for each subject area (in relation to grade level expectations):
  - BEGINNING to acquire knowledge, skills, strategies and processes
  - DEVELOPING the ability to apply knowledge, skills, strategies and processes
  - APPLYING knowledge, skills, strategies and processes consistently
  - EXTENDING knowledge, skills, strategies and processes creatively and strategically.

### Mid-year Progress Report (January)

- indicates where the child is in relation to the age/grade expectations using written comments and a proficiency scale
- includes a summary of the progress toward the goals in the child's Individual Education Plan (IEP), where applicable

### Summative Report (June)

- indicates where the child is in relation to the age/grade expectations using written comments and a proficiency scale
- includes the student's self-assessment of the Core Competencies (Communication, Thinking, and Personal and Social)
- include a summary of the progress toward the goals in the child's Individual Education Plan (IEP), where applicable

### PYP Portfolios (All Year):

*Please refer to Southlands Essential Agreement for Portfolios for more information.*

The PYP Portfolio contains evidence of student learning and growth over time, and portfolios provide a means of three-way communication between parents, students, and teachers.

With guidance from their classroom teachers, each student in grades K-7 will compile a portfolio that includes samples of their conceptual learning, skill development, and Learner Profile attribute development, as well as student reflections or self-evaluations. Students are asked to choose examples of their learning from a variety of learning engagements, and are given the opportunity to reflect on why they chose the items and what the items demonstrate about their learning. Students have agency over the items they place in their portfolio, but teachers may provide guidance. The portfolio is used as part of the Student-Led Conferences.

### The PYP Exhibition (Grade 7)

The Exhibition is the culmination of the IB Primary Years Programme. This extended inquiry process provides students with the opportunity to synthesize all the elements of the PYP. The entire school community is invited to the Exhibition celebration, which showcases the students' growth as learners and global citizens.

### Other Reporting

A minimum of one other reporting communication with families, for which the format and timing is at the teacher's discretion. Examples include: three-way (student, parent, teacher) conference, an electronic portfolio review, a parent/teacher meeting, reflections on student work, an online platform, a telephone conversation, interim written reports, or demonstrations of learning.

## **Professional Responsibility**

It is the professional responsibility of all staff members to be fully aware of the content of this document, to accurately communicate the information to the school community, and to adhere to this document at all times.

## **Policy Review**

The PYP Coordinator is responsible for developing and maintaining a policy review cycle, updating this document as necessary, and informing the school community of changes to the document. This policy will be submitted to Staff Committee each Fall for approval, and will be reviewed in-depth by a representative committee at least every five years. If significant changes are made to school practices, the policy will be reviewed, so that it reflects the most current state of practice.

## **Communication of this Policy**

The PYP Coordinator is responsible for providing copies of this policy to the school community. This is done through staff meetings, emails to staff and the PAC, MS Teams postings, and the school website.

## **References**

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