

2019-2020 School Year

This assessment policy is a draft created during the 2018-2019 school year by way of assessment steering committees in all divisions, in conjunction with the pedagogical leadership teams. ASF will implement the policy over the course of the 2019-2020 school year to fine-tune it in order to build cohesion and alignment between divisions. We will make adjustments and solidify the policy by May 2020.



**The American
School Foundation®**

**Middle School
Assessment Policy (2018-2019 Draft)**

ASF Mission Statement

The American School Foundation, A.C. is an academically rigorous, international, university-preparatory school, which offers students from diverse backgrounds the best of American independent education. In all aspects of school life students are encouraged to love learning, live purposefully and to become responsible, contributing citizens of the world.

Purpose

At The American School Foundation, A.C., we believe that assessment is essential in learning and teaching as it fosters and expands understanding, informs and guides instruction and leads to student agency. To this end, assessments should be developed collaboratively by teachers and both teacher and student should be actively engaged in assessing the learning. Feedback to students should be obtained from valid and reliable assessments and must be timely, appropriate in its purpose, delivered in a constructive way and taking the developmental stage of the student into account. We believe that assessment identifies what students know, understand and can do at different stages in the learning process at all ages and provides them with the necessary support and appropriate level of rigor. In order to reach higher order thinking skills, we must develop a range of assessments designed to scaffold learning and teaching. It is continuous, balanced by taking on a variety of forms, provides information to families about their child's progress and allows for the evaluation of current resources and practices.

Principles of assessment K-12

The assessment policy applies to all members of the ASF community, which includes students, teachers, administrators and parents. Being aware of the policies and understanding them is the responsibility of all members of the ASF community. Within the community, there are more detailed expectations for students, teachers, administrators and parents that apply:

Students:

- Demonstrate knowledge, skills, and conceptual understanding through a range of strategies where students can show their learning
- Show and share their learning with others through a myriad of contexts from personal to real-life application
- Reflect and make sense of their learning
- Be familiar with the success criteria of their assessments and to fully understand what they need to do to be successful in partnership with the teachers.
- Use assessments to reflect upon their progress and take the necessary steps to improve
- Complete all assessments to the best of their ability and in a timely manner
- Respect deadlines set by their teachers
- Be familiar with what they are being assessed on and to ask questions when in doubt
- Share the results of their progress with their parents
- Take ownership of their achievements and the learning process to build agency and take action, promote service, employ solutions
- Be prepared for every assessment

Teachers:

- Obtain a clear picture of each students' learning and application of conceptual understanding and ability level
- Consistently identify student's areas of strength and areas for growth, avoid misconceptions and make sound conclusions
- Inform each stage of the teaching and learning process and plan in response to the needs of the students
- Collaborate to build common assessments where necessary
- Communicate the success criteria/rubrics clearly and through Powerschool when appropriate
- Provide timely and effective feedback to the students
- Administer pre-tests or diagnostics to assess student prior knowledge
- Evaluate and grade student work in a timely matter and provide feedback
- Communicate student progress to parents on a consistent basis
- Set clear assessment and deadline dates to students
- Collaboratively design internal assessments with grade level teams
- Create summative assessments that include standards and approaches to learning
- Design formative assessments that set students up for success on the summative assessment
- Create rubrics for all anchor standards
- Create assessments that respond to the needs of all students

Pedagogical Leadership:

- Ensure teachers and parents understand the principles of assessment at ASF
- Inform teachers and parents of any changes to assessment practices
- Provide teachers and students with the appropriate resources for success
- Use the information gathered through assessment to inform curriculum decisions
- In unison with the teacher, communicate any concern to parents regarding academic achievements
- Assess student achievement in the context of every classroom
- Ensure that the assessments used in the school are academically rigorous
- Use internal and external assessments to guide curriculum decisions

Parents:

- Be familiar with ASF's assessment policy
- See and understand evidence of their child's learning and development to be informed about what their child is learning
- Provide support and celebrate their child's learning
- Check Power School Learning on a frequent basis
- Attend Parent meetings scheduled by the pedagogical leadership teams
- Review and understand the assessment tools being
- Communicate with the teacher when assessment concerns arise
- Be aware of assessment dates and times
- Ensure attendance of the child in order to be successful in assessments

ASF Greater Community:

- Connect our mission statement to the students we are educating
- Understand data points that represent our community and the connection to our mission statement
- Assess our curriculum and school needs to allocate resources that will strengthen all learning environments to reach optimal student performance, teacher performance and community building.

Assessment practices (How do we assess?)

We believe that the teaching and learning process should enable students to learn in the way that best meets their needs and abilities as such three types of assessments are planned for and implemented as part of the process:

- **Assessment for learning:** is the process of deciding where students are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get them there.
- **Assessment as learning:** engages students in thinking about and reflecting on their own learning.
- **Assessment of learning:** gives teachers clear insight into what students know at the end of a learning period.

Types of assessments , Tools and Strategies for assessments

We believe different types of assessments and a diverse range of strategies and tools are fundamental in checking in on students' conceptual understanding, knowledge building, and the recording of their learning and abilities.

Assessment Types

Pre/Diagnostic Assessments	Formative Assessments	Summative Assessments
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Our strategies include:

Observations	Anecdotal records	Checklists
Goal-directed tasks	Student reflections	Continuums
Open-ended tasks	Rubrics	Standardised tests and screeners

Early Childhood Center	Lower School	Middle School	Upper School
Primary Years Programme		Middle Years Programme	Diploma Programme
Pre-IPT IPT DIBELS Literacy and Math BAS	PYP Exhibition MAP Testing BAS IPT DIBELS	MAP Testing MS Advanced Placement Math Exam** IPT	MYP Personal Project DP Extended Essay MAP Testing AP Exams IB Exams PSAT, ACT, SAT

Assessment in the Middle School

One of the major goals of middle school is to help students become independent learners. Independent learners are able to take the initiative to apply Approaches to Learning skills in categories such as communication, social, self management, research, and thinking to find success in the classroom. One characteristic of middle school is that students have subject-specific teachers because we are organized into disciplines or subject groups. This means students learn different ways of thinking through eight different subject groups.

Within each subject group there are four (4) objectives that are evaluated through assessment criteria that represent knowledge usage, skills, procedures, and reflection important for each subject. These objectives and assessment criteria help students to not only learn about a certain subject group but to also think like artists, historians, mathematicians, scientists, authors, designers, and more. Finally, all summative assessments are aligned to one or more of these criteria.

Table 1: Assessment criteria for each subject group

Subject Group	Criteria A	Criteria B	Criteria C	Criteria D
Arts	Knowing and understanding	Developing skills	Thinking creatively	Responding
Design	Inquiring and analysing	Developing ideas	Creating the solution	Evaluating
Individuals and Societies	Knowing and understanding	Investigating	Communicating	Thinking critically
Language Acquisition	Comprehending spoken and visual text	Comprehending written and visual text	Communicating	Using language
Language and Literature	Analysing	Organizing	Producing Text	Using Language
Math	Knowing and understanding	Investigating patterns	Communicating	Applying math in real-world contexts
Physical and Health Education	Knowing and understanding	Planning for performance	Applying and performing	Reflecting and improving performance
Sciences	Knowledge and Understanding	Inquiring and Designing	Processing and evaluating	Reflecting on the impacts of science

Grades

As stated earlier in the policy, assessment identifies what students know, understand and can do at different stages of the learning process and as such, grades in the middle school communicate what students know, understand and can do in each of their classes. Although the purpose of assessment is to monitor learning and not to “earn grades,” emphasis is placed on grades because as independent learners we want students to take more ownership in their performance.

Academic grades are calculated using a combination of formative and summative assessments. Grades are determined by student mastery of concepts and skills identified through content standards and objectives.

Grading Periods

It is important for teachers, students, and families to communicate frequently about student achievement so that every student has multiple opportunities to reflect on their performance and make adjustments as needed. In order to address this need, we have built in several points of communication throughout the year.

The academic year is divided into two semesters and each semester is divided into two quarters. Grades from quarter one and two are averaged to calculate a semester one grade and grades from quarter three and four are averaged to calculate a semester two grade. Student grades start over at the beginning of each quarter. There will be at least four (4) summative assessments per quarter in each class (refer to page 4 for more details).

All summative assessments that are due in a grading period will only count toward that grading period. For example, if a project is due in December during Quarter 2, then the scores of that project will be entered for a Quarter 2 grade; the scores cannot be entered in Quarter 3.

There are rare circumstances when grades need to be changed after grading periods close. If this occurs, teachers will communicate with the Head of Middle School and Academic Dean for approval with rationale for why a grade needs to be changed. If the grade change is approved, then the teacher should email the Academic Schedule Programmer in the Student Records Office and copy the student’s counselor and academic dean. The teacher will communicate the grade change to the student and student’s family explaining the situation.

Grade Updates

We provide many points of communication for students and families so students have the opportunity to reflect on their actions and make adjustments as needed. Along with final quarter and semester grades, there are three grade updates per quarter. These are dates in which teachers make sure grades are up-to-date in the online gradebook and accurately represent current student performance in class. During the second grade update of each quarter teachers will also send out communications to the families of any students that are earning less than a 70%. Additionally, teachers must contact families if a summative assessment is missing or if the child performs below 70%. Email is the preferred way to document this communication.

Should a child not meet standards and expectations, families should refer to the Family Handbook on Academics to understand next steps for the the student and family. The school's pedagogical leadership team will communicate to collaborate with the family.

Grading Scale

As mentioned above, summative assignments are evaluated using MYP Criteria. These rubrics are on a scale of 1-8 that describe levels of achievement; these levels do not indicate a percentage. For example, earning a 4 out of 8 on an MYP rubric does mean a student earned a 50%, the 4 has a specific meaning depending on the subject and criterion and would be described in the rubric. However, grades are entered in the gradebook on a scale of 0-100 in the grade book using the following conversion chart:

(Note: proficiency is set at 75 and mastery is 80.):

Descriptor	IB MYP Grade	ASF Grade
Consistently exceeds standards	8	100
	7	94
Consistently at (5) or above standards (6)	6	87
	5	80
Approaching standards <i>Needs support to move to the next level</i>	4	75
	3	67
Consistently below standards <i>Not prepared to move on to the next level</i>	2	60
	1	50
No evidence <i>Parents & the counselor must be contacted to support student learning when summatives are missing</i>	0	0

Grade Reporting

Final Quarter grades are calculated using the following weighing scale:

Note: extra credit is not assigned or awarded

- Formative learning activities and assessments: 20%

- Summative assessments: 80%

In compliance with the Mexican Ministry of Education (SEP) grading requirements, semester grades are calculated by averaging the two quarters within that marking period. Starting in January 2020, interested departments may request to use MYP Criterion to score summative assessments within PowerSchool to communicate grades based on a best fit model where scores of 1-8 will be used to communicate skill proficiency.

The weighting of this grading scale was chosen to give more significance to final learning outcomes as measured on a summative assessments, but to still hold students accountable for the formative work that goes into preparing for a summative. The objective is to show the development of these skills, such as meeting deadlines, adjusting to teacher and peer feedback throughout the unit, and relearning concepts has weight in their performance. We feel this weighting system allows students to take risks and “fail forward” during the formative learning activities without diminishing their opportunity to be successful by the end of the grading period.

Formative Assessments

Formative assessments occur throughout the learning process to help students develop that knowledge and skills required to successfully complete the summative assessment. They are sometimes called *assessments for learning* because they are used to provide teachers and students feedback in real time about how well they understand the learning objectives and for students to reflect on what they need to do to continue to develop in a certain class. Formative assessments can take many forms such as teacher questioning during class, quizzes, writing prompts, rough drafts, exit tickets, homework assignments, etc.

Since formative assessments are *assessments for learning*, students will receive feedback. This can be provided individually, in small groups, or to an entire class, but in each case students will have the opportunity to reflect on their learning and ask clarifying questions.

In order to hold students accountable for approaches to learning skills such as organization, formative assessments submitted late will receive no credit unless due to excused absences as outlined in the Family Handbook.

Summative Assessments

As mentioned previously, Summative Assessments are 80% of students' grades. These are assessments given at the end of a period of learning after students have had ample opportunity to learn, receive feedback from their teachers, and reflect on their learning. This type of assessment can be thought of as *assessment of learning* because it is an evaluation of what a student knows and can do. Summative assessments can take many forms including essays, lab reports, presentations, tests, performances, projects, etc. Teachers of the same grade and subject give the same summative assessments to provide consistency in the curriculum.

Summative assessments are grounded in content standards to guide teachers and students in what to teach and learn and aligned to one or more of the MYP Assessment criteria to guide teachers and students in how to demonstrate understanding. For example, a math test could

assess a Common Core standard about statistics (what the students need to know) and be assessed using MYP Criterion A- *Knowledge and Understanding* (how students demonstrate their understanding). See appendix 2 for an example.

Since summative assessments are a large percentage of a student's grade, it is important to evenly distribute the weight of summative assessments as to reduce student stress levels and provide students with more opportunities to demonstrate their learning so one or two assessments do not "make or break" a student's grade. Therefore, each subject has at least four (4) summative assessment opportunities per quarter.

Summative assessments can take many different forms including, but not limited to, a chapter or unit test, an essay, a presentation, a lab report, a video, an in-class writing prompt, etc.

In some cases summative assessments will address multiple MYP criteria and/or content standards. This is useful in the reporting of grades because it provides teachers, students, and families with specific information about student strengths and areas of growth. For example, an essay within a Language & Literature course could be assessed using Criterion B- *Organization* and Criterion C- *Producing Text*. This allows teachers to provide feedback to students about two separate skills (1) how well their work is organized and (2) the stylistic choices within the text. This helps students to identify their strengths and areas of growth with more specificity. Another example could be a math test that addresses multiple Common Core standards. Teachers may choose to report on each standard individually within Criterion A- *Knowledge and Understanding* to provide students with specific feedback about how well they understand each standard so that they are able to reflect on their mastery within math.

When a summative that addresses multiple MYP Objectives and/or Content Standards is turned in or completed at the same time, it counts as one summative toward the four summative requirement even if the criteria are reported separately in the gradebook. This is because it constitutes one "chunk" of learning.

However, one piece of work could address multiple MYP Criteria and count as multiple summative assessments if the assignment is submitted in multiple parts, at different times, and feedback is provided on one part before the next part of the summative is submitted.

For example, lab reports in science can be assessed using two MYP Criteria: B-*Inquiring and Designing* and C-*Processing and Evaluating*. If the entire lab report were turned in at one time, then this would count as one summative assessment. However, this could count as two summative assessments if one chunk of learning focused on how to design an experiment (Criterion B) and culminated in students submitting the first half a lab report while a second chunk of learning focused on how to analyze and evaluate data (Criterion C) and then students submitted the second half of the lab report to demonstrate this second set of skills. There is a fundamental difference between the two methods because the learning had been chunked into two parts so students had time to learn, practice, and receive feedback on specific skills before moving on to the next portion of the unit.

Logistics about Summatives

Middle school is a complex system because students have multiple teachers, there are A days and B days, multiple teachers for the same subject, and there are many special events throughout the year. In order to provide some stability to the students and help them organize their agenda, the school has some common agreements regarding the logistics of summative assessments:

1. In order to help support students' workload, no more than 3 in-class summative assessments (such as traditional tests) may be given to students in any given school week. However, long-term projects (with due dates of two weeks or more after being assigned) do not apply because we help teach students approaches to learning skills such as long term planning, time management, and breaking large tasks into smaller pieces.
2. All summative assessment dates and deadlines will be posted on Power Learning, the grade level google calendar, and any other pertinent calendar at least a week in advance.
3. Grading students using 0's on a 100-point scale is unrecoverable and does not assess understanding of standards and learning. If a student *attempts* a summative assignment, the lowest score he/she may receive is a 50 because it does not really matter if a student earns a 20, 30, 40, or 50 since all of those grades are lower than the minimum requirements and it is very difficult for a student to recover from a low grade. Teachers are encouraged to use professional judgement to determine if an honest *attempt* has been made.
4. In cases in which there is not enough student work submitted for a teacher to grade, a teacher will post a zero (0) with a "missing" comment until the summative is submitted. See the MISSING/INCOMPLETE work section of the policy for more information.
5. Rubrics for assessments are *taught, published and distributed* to students at the time the assessment is assigned and returned to students with a grade and feedback in a timely manner. Each MYP criteria (see Table 1) has a general rubric associated with it and teachers use them as a template to create task-specific rubrics that are unique for each assessment. The rubrics from the MYP are written to describe general levels of achievement as to fit any content within a subject group and teachers rewrite them to become task-specific so students know what is expected of them on any given assignment. In addition to MYP Criteria, teachers may add requirements to rubrics regarding other categories such as language usage and professionalism.
6. In order to provide valid feedback to students, teachers norm student work to ensure that students earn the appropriate grades as defined by the rubrics and that an assignment for one teacher would earn the same grade for another teacher.
7. Since all assessments are ultimately tools for learning, all summative assessments are returned to students so they may be reviewed by both the student and their families after they are graded.
8. Students often work in collaborative groups to complete assignments because working

with others is an essential skill. However, grades should represent an individual's contribution to the group and/or final product so at least 80% of a student's grade on a group assignment reflects the skills and/or knowledge demonstrated by the individual.

Summative Assessment Retake Policy

We recognize that learning is an iterative process and sometimes we need more time or opportunities to demonstrate what we have learned. We offer a re-assessment opportunity for students in which students are allowed to retake one summative assessment per class per quarter for a maximum score of 80. In order for students to be eligible for the retakes, a few requirements need to be met:

1. All formative work needs to be completed.
2. Students need to initiate the Action Plan for Reassessment (see Appendix 1) the class period after the summative was returned to the student.
3. Summative assessments that take place during the last week of the quarter will not be eligible for reassessment.

Missing/Incomplete Summatives

Student work can be missing for a variety of reasons including absences from school, failure to submit work, or extenuating circumstances. In order build agency and ownership for learning, It is the student's responsibility to find out what was missed via PS Learning and make arrangements with the teacher upon the day s/he returns to class. Teachers are unable to provide accurate feedback about what a student knows and can do without student work.

If a student is missing a summative assessment for any reason, a score of 0 will be entered *with a "missing" comment*, and the quarter grade will be manually changed to an INC (incomplete) until the work is submitted. The zero and the INC are a way to communicate to students and families that a student is missing a summative assessment and that the student should reach out to a teacher to find out how/when to complete the assessment.

If a student is only absent **the day of the test or assignment due date**, the student should be ready to take the test and/or submit the assignment upon his/her return to school.

If a student is absent **one day prior to the exam or assignment due date**, then it is expected the assignment will be turned in on time and/or the exam taken on the original date.

If a student is absent is **two or more class periods prior to an exam or due date**, then s/he will have an equivalent amount of time once s/he returns to submit the assignment or take the exam. This will not exceed one week after his/her return. Exceptions can be made by school administration for students with protracted absences.

If a student fails to submit a summative assignment on time, then teachers will contact parents to let them know of the situation.

If the summative assignment is not submitted on time, the student has one week to submit it

with a 20% penalty, but the minimum score is still 50%. After one week, students can submit the assignment for a maximum grade of 50% up until one week prior to the end of the grading period. For example, if a student submits a summative assignment late and earns a score of 87%, the score shall be recorded as 67% with a *late* mark denoting that the assignment was submitted late. If a student submits a summative assessment late and earns a score of 60%, the grade will be entered as a 50% with a *late* mark, as grades may not be awarded below 50%. The comment field should also be utilized to communicate the original score, date of submission and any other pertinent information about the quality of the work. If a student fails to make-up any type of summative assessment a week before the end of the grading period that the assessment was given, the student will receive a 0 for the summative assessment.

Appendix 1: Action Plan for Re-Assessment

[Link to Middle School Reassessment Policy](#)

ASF¹ Middle School Student Action Plan for Re-Assessment

Students are eligible to re-submit a summative assessment if the following criteria are met:

- **All work for the unit must be turned in.** This includes homework, study guides, class work, etc. Late formative assessments will receive a zero in the gradebook, but they must be submitted in order to be eligible for re-assessment.
- This application to re-submit a summative assessment **MUST** be signed by a parent.
- The resubmission request must be student initiated by the next class period after receiving the grade.
- The new recorded grade **cannot exceed 80%**, which is the ASF standard for proficiency.
- Applications to resubmit work will not be accepted during the last five (5) days of any semester.
- Re-submission **must be denied** if the criteria of this form are not met.
- **Due to time constraints, summative assessments that take place during the last week of the quarter will not be eligible for reassessment.**
- Maximum resubmission opportunity: One (1) per quarter, per class.

Name: _____ Teacher / Subject: _____

Date the original summative assessment was returned: _____

Original summative assessment score: _____

Personal Reflection:

1) **What factors contributed to the my low academic achievement?**

2) **Which content and/or skills do I need to improve upon for the re-assessment?**

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3) What is my plan of action to prepare for the retest opportunity?

Check all that apply.

- Test Corrections Help Sessions with Teacher Online Resources
 After-School Study Hall Complete missing formative assignments
 Other (Specify) _____

4) Clearly define what you will do to show you have mastered the content and/or skills you identified in Step 2 and how it relates to your choice(s) selected in Step 3.

Student signature: _____ **Parent signature:** _____

Parent comments (optional):

Teacher comments:

What form will the reassessment take?

Retest Oral Exam Re-submit final project Other (specify below)

Date and time for re-assessment: _____

Appendix 2: Content Standards and MYP Objectives

TEACHERS: EXEMPLAR SUMMATIVE EXAMPLES ARE NEEDED!

If you use MYP rubrics linked to content standards and can submit examples of this, our goal is to provide one example per content area. Your help is needed to complete this section.

Thank you!