

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®**

**Early Childhood Center
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

Early Childhood Center

Assessment identifies what students know, understand and can do at different stages in the learning process and provides them with the necessary support and appropriate level of rigor. The assessment of the development and learning of young students is essential. As such, assessment in the ECC is integral in all aspects of teaching and learning. We believe that assessment is used to inform student growth and achievement in both the areas of academics and well-being.

Assessment in the ECC is used to illustrate where students are in their social, emotional, physical and learning process. It uncovers their strengths and areas for growth and indicates their acquisition of grade level concepts and skills as well. Assessment in the ECC is used to indicate the next steps in teaching and as an opportunity for teachers, students and families to work as a team and reflect on the student's learning journey. It is the means by which we measure student learning and development as well as the effectiveness of teaching. We believe that assessment has personal and real life application. When assessment is meaningful and the reason for it is clear to students, they can then apply it to their own work and learning, which leads to agency.

With young learners, it is important to identify the needs of each student and view learning as a continuum - with each student achieving developmental milestones in different but relevant ways. To this end, it is important that ECC students, teachers and families have a clear understanding of what is being assessed, the criteria, and the method of assessment. Prior to selecting or designing the approach, teachers need to be aware of the specific learning outcomes to which they intend to report. The PYP Mathematics and Language learning outcomes are used in Kinder 1 to guide instruction. In Kinder 2 the standards from the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core are used to guide instruction in mathematics and language arts, and the Common Core State Standards are used in Kinder 3. In Science, the PYP Science skills and expectations guide the learning in Kinder 1 and Kinder 2, and, the Next Generation Science Standards are used to drive science instruction beginning in K3.

The PYP Personal, Social and Physical Education learning outcomes provide one of the lenses in the ECC, in which, we gather information on student's social, emotional and physical development in all grade levels. In addition, in Kinder 1 and 2 the Approaches to Learning, the Physical Development and Health standards from the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core are used to inform students' in Kinder 1 and 2 and the California Physical Education Standards are used to inform student's development in Kinder 3.

Play-Based Learning

In the early years play is the primary driver for inquiry and through it young learners develop approaches to learning, connect and develop their social, emotional, physical and cognitive abilities. They construct, test, confirm or revise ideas by themselves or with their peers, and as a result adjust their understanding of how the world works. In the ECC we believe it is essential to establish authentic play-based opportunities in which to assess our students' learning process and collect data on their development. Play involves choice, promotes agency and provides rigorous opportunities for students to inquire and teachers to assess. As grade level teams and specialists create assessments they understand that through a play-based approach, they will have the opportunity to observe as students demonstrate their process, areas of strength, areas for growth and their abilities as they actively construct meaning, revisit and revise their learning.

Assessment Tools and Strategies

Through assessment we are able to guide students along the process of understanding concepts, acquiring knowledge, mastering skills, developing attitudes and taking action. It helps to inform continued development, learning and teaching. In the ECC we believe that the assessment of young children is continuous, built into learning activities and takes a variety of forms. Teachers employ techniques for assessing that take into account the diverse, complex and sophisticated ways individual students use to understand and approach learning experiences. We believe that students should be observed in a variety of situations. Therefore, different strategies and tools are used to assess and record students' learning as well as their social, emotional and physical development. The ECC uses two types of assessments to obtain a complete picture of students: internal and external.

Internal Assessments

The goal of our internal assessments is to provide feedback on the development of students' conceptual understandings, knowledge and skills. Assessing student's prior knowledge and experience as well as monitoring their achievement throughout the learning cycle will enable ECC teachers to plan and refine their teaching accordingly and allow students the opportunity to evaluate, synthesize and apply their thinking.

Internal assessments are created or selected for different purposes and are administered at different times during a school year. These assessments are known as pre-assessments or diagnostics, formative assessments and summative assessments.

Pre-assessments or Diagnostic

In the ECC pre-assessments or diagnostics are used to gain a picture of students' ability in specific physical, social, emotional and cognitive areas before introducing a new approach or teaching a new concept or skill. It also underlines other areas of opportunity or strength that students possess. They are selected or designed prior to the start of the school year or trimester, before the beginning of a unit of inquiry or the introduction of a new concept. As a grade level or specialist, teachers design an assessment activity that will give insight into students understanding or approach to a concept or skill they will need in order to access the learning that will take place. The pre-assessment or diagnostic guides the beginning point for inquiry.

The pre-assessment or diagnostic is used to inform students of the current stage of the learning process they are in and to create awareness around their strengths and areas for growth. As a result it will tune them into the next phase in their inquiry cycle or phase of development. Pre-assessments or diagnostics are used to inform families of their child's entry stage in the process and the growth that will need to take place.

Formative Assessments

Formative assessments and teaching are directly linked. In the ECC they are used throughout the learning cycle to reveal what students already know, can do and how they approach learning experiences. They provide information that is used to plan the next stage in learning. They give ECC teachers the guidance needed to know what to teach, how to improve, and at what point and where to differentiate instruction. Formative assessments are developed or selected prior to the start of a unit of inquiry or the teaching of a concept or skill by the grade level team or specialist. The creation or selection of the formative assessments are driven by the standards, skills and attributes previously chosen for the concept within the unit of inquiry or the skill that will be taught.

The formative assessment in the ECC is used to inform students of the connections they are making, how knowledge builds, how best they learn and areas of opportunity in their process. As a result it will allow for the students, with the support of the teacher, to plan their next steps in their learning and

development. Formative assessments are used to inform families of student's learning progress and process and indicate natural ways they can support their child's learning.

Summative Assessments

The summative assessment provides varied opportunities for students to show their conceptual understanding. It is the culmination of the teaching and learning process and gives students an opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned. Summative assessments provide ECC teachers with clear evidence of how students apply and transfer the skills and knowledge, to other areas, connecting new and prior knowledge. They are used as an indicator of the effectiveness of teaching and areas in which teachers can make modifications to their practice. They are created as one of the first steps in developing a unit of inquiry or a learning cycle and are driven by the central idea, concepts, skills and behaviors students will acquire and put into practice. Summative assessments in the ECC are developed collaboratively by the grade level teams or specialist and assess several elements at a time (i.e. pre-selected standards for the unit or learning cycle, approaches to learning, skills, concepts and Learner Profile attributes).

In the ECC the summative assessment is used as an opportunity for students to reflect on what was learned, the connections that were made, their ability to evidence their learning by demonstrating the skills acquired, and how they built upon their knowledge to create something new. Summative assessments are used to inform families of students learning and development over a period of time and where their child is in the learning process and in terms of the benchmarks for the grade level.

Assessment Strategies

Assessment strategies in the ECC cover a broad range of approaches from observations, performance assessments, open-ended tasks to self assessments.

Our young learners are observed often and regularly throughout the learning and assessment process. They are observed individually or as a member of the class or group. Teachers focus on students to gather information for a wide range of data points. As they examine students for assessment purposes they watch to identify what and how the student is thinking and learning, build a clear picture of how the student approaches experiences, and to assess the effectiveness of the environment on the student's learning. Teachers take anecdotal notes on each student that is used to identify their needs, benchmark their development and ways to extend their learning further.

Performance assessments provide authentic and significant challenges for students. In these assessments teachers provide students with an age and ability level appropriate task and students use various techniques to complete the challenge successfully. Performance assessments are complex and intricate, which means that they involve the use of many skills to work through them.

Open-ended tasks are used in the ECC to take a snapshot of students process and development. Teachers provide students with an age and ability level appropriate prompt and they are asked to create an original response to it. Their responses could take the form of a block structure, role-play, verbal response, drawing or written response.

Students are introduced to the process of self assessment in the ECC, as a way to evaluate and reflect on their social, emotional and physical development, their progress and process in terms of understanding where they are on the development and inquiry cycle, where they need to go, how they will get there and what they need to be successful. Together with the teacher, ECC students create the criteria for their self assessments. They use the results from the assessment to create personal goals and next steps in their learning and development.

Assessment Tools

When choosing appropriate strategies, ECC teachers take into consideration which tools are most suitable to that strategy. This ensures that an effective assessment of the learning takes place. Assessment tools to record and collect data on our young learners are varied such as checklists, anecdotal records, rubrics, benchmark, student reflections, and continuums.

Checklists are two-fold in the ECC. They provide an efficient method for ECC teachers to check in on elements of students learning or development that should be present. Checklists are used to collect windows of data and make adjustments in teaching. Students use checklists as a way to organize their learning throughout engagements and maintain their focus on the objectives.

Anecdotal records are brief written notes based on observations of students. They contain descriptions of behavior, direct quotes from and dialogue between students. ECC teachers create *short stories* that are used to record significant moments they have observed that relate to the outcomes, skills, concepts and attributes that are being assessed. These records are systematically compiled and organized by ECC teachers. Anecdotal records provide cumulative information on student learning and direction for further instruction.

Rubrics are developed by grade level teams and specialists with an established set of criteria for assessing student work or performance for the summative assessment for the units of inquiry. The rubrics in the ECC are designed using the descriptors from the inquiry cycle as the framework. The criteria for the rubric describes what students should be able to say or do in each phase of the cycle. The criteria for success is shared with the students and families at the beginning of each unit.

Benchmarks are used as a point of reference for ECC teachers to measure student development and achievement in academics as well as well-being. These measures allow teachers to design and assess students with a specific end goal in mind. Benchmarks are chosen by grade level teams and specialists using the standards or learning outcomes

Student reflections play a large role in the assessment of our young learners. They give students the opportunity to express, and demonstrate their thinking and the process by which they acquired their current understandings. With the support and guidance of their teacher, through the reflection process students can identify areas of clarity or areas in which they are unsure of and need more support. This process allows them to revisit, refine and adjust their knowledge.

Continuums are visual representations of stages of learning and development. They show a progression of achievement or identify where a student is on the development or inquiry cycle. ECC teachers use continuums to track student growth over longer periods of time. They are created as a division to identify student development and learning in academics, social, emotional, and physical development.

External Assessments

The ECC chooses to measure student growth in reading, numeracy and the acquisition of English language through standardized assessments and screeners to obtain a holistic view of our young learners.

- The Pre-Idea Proficiency Test (Pre-IPT) and Idea Proficiency Test (IPT) are used to evaluate K2 and K3 students' proficiency in English, respectively.
- The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS Literacy) is used to monitor and assess K3 students' pre-reading skills and DIBELS Math is used to monitor and assess their basic math skills.

- The Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) is used in K3 and provides teachers with precise tools and texts to observe and quantify specific reading behaviors. They use that data to plan assessment-informed instruction.

Reporting

Progress Reports

Progress Reports are a summative record of a student's development in their learning journey. These written reports are for families and students and clearly indicate areas of strength, areas for improvement and areas in which families can support the child's learning at home. Through narratives, ECC teachers report on each student's growth and area of opportunity within the strands of:

Self-Concept	Organization for Learning	Mathematical Expression	Phonics
Interaction with Others	PYP Units of Inquiry for Science & Social Studies	Oral Language,	Reading & Writing Readiness

Specialists comment on student achievement in the strands of: Music & Drama, Art and Health & Physical Development. Grading begins in K3, and is based on learning goals in the areas of :

Listening	Speaking	Vocabulary Acquisition and Development	Phonemic Awareness
Phonics	Emergent Reading	Emergent Writing for Language Arts	Counting and Cardinality
Numbers and Operations Base Ten	Operations and Algebraic Thinking	Measurement and Data	Geometry

Progress Reports are sent home three times a year in the months of November, March and June.

Portfolios

Portfolios in the ECC are a collection of selected artifacts that celebrate each students' achievement and learning as well as evidences their growth that takes place throughout the learning process. The portfolios will be presented on paper in a binder during the student-led conferences at the closing of the school year. The work selected is representative of and reflects where students are in their learning development. They showcase student work, the artifacts are selected by the teacher and reviewed by the students to include in their portfolio for each of the four transdisciplinary units of inquiry in K1 and K2 and the five units of inquiry in K3.

Teacher and Family Conferences

Teacher and Family conferences are held twice a year after progress reports are sent home in November and March. These conferences are designed to give families information about their child's progress, development, and needs. During these meetings, time is given to families to ask clarifying questions, share concerns and along with the teacher-define the family's role in their child's learning process. Family attendance at these conferences are expected. Additional conferences to have a more in-depth

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discussion can be arranged with the teacher, grade-level counselor, Academic Dean or Head of School if needed.

Student-Led Conferences

Student-Led Conferences are held at the closing of the school year, over a period of three days with separate meeting times for each of the students and their family. During this time each student is responsible for leading the meeting with the goal of building confidence, independence and the critical thinking skills to utilize language to express their learning. The teacher is present at each student conference and serves as a support if students are in need of guidance. Students share their learning process with their family through selected pieces of work from their portfolio. This conference enables families to gain a clear insight into their child's learning journey in various curriculum areas and offers them an opportunity to discuss and reflect on the process with their child. Family and child attendance at this conference is expected with the goal of strengthening family-school partnership.