

# Midland Public Schools Assessment Policy

(Preschool-Fifth Grade)

## INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE/PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME WORLD SCHOOLS

### ***Introduction***

Our Assessment Policy is a constantly evolving document that reflects the assessment needs of the district and its individual schools. Collaborative reflection will continue to be a key component in the development of future assessment practices.

We believe the purpose of an assessment policy is to:

- provide information through its diagnostic, formative and summative components which involves all members of the learning community.
- provide opportunities for continuous growth and improvement in learning and teaching.
- provide teachers with a common language of the assessment process within the Midland Public Schools.

Effective assessment components allow:

- students to be an active part of the learning process through reflection and the demonstration of understanding.
- reflection and assessment of growth of the Learner Profile attributes by both teachers and students.
- teachers to collaboratively assess what the student can do and to what level of proficiency/expertise.
- measurement of the application of targeted knowledge rather than the mere recall of facts.
- measurement of growth over time through the use of a portfolio system.
- active reflection on the part of the student and teacher, including self and peer evaluation.
- goal setting for all members of the learning community.
- students and teachers to utilize and assess understanding of the elements of the PYP.

### **Philosophy**

*“The purpose of assessment is to inform learning and teaching. It involves the gathering and analysis of information about student learning to inform teaching practice. It identifies what students know, understand, and can do at different stages in the learning process.”*  
(Principles into Practice, 2018)

For successful citizenship in the 21st Century, Midland Public Schools’ students must develop broad-based knowledge through conceptual understanding, diverse skills, personal attributes and perspective leading to action. Individually, each is an important element of our instructional program and collectively these elements are essential to the IB-PYP curriculum framework, providing students with both a richness and depth of

learning. Our assessment beliefs are based upon the understanding that we have a responsibility to assess, evaluate, and provide consistent and continual feedback as students develop and apply these elements through learning experiences and in daily life.

Assessment is ongoing, authentic, varied and purposeful. A collaborative and informative process involves all members of the learning community. Instructional and curricular decision-making is driven by our formal and informal assessments.

### **Types of Assessment**

#### **Pre-Assessment:**

- Takes place at the beginning of instruction to discover what students already know in order to plan the next stages of learning

#### **Formative Assessment:**

- Interwoven with the daily learning experiences and provides both teachers and students with useful feedback on how well students are understanding and applying the concepts, skills, and knowledge in order to inform instruction

#### **Summative Assessment:**

- Takes place at the end of the teaching and learning cycle and gives students opportunities to demonstrate and transfer what has been learned

#### **Self-Assessment/Peer-Assessment:**

- Occurs throughout the learning experiences to engage students in reflection and assessment of their own learning and/or that of their peers
- Multiple opportunities and adequate time to reflect on learning that may include reflection of collaborative group work
- Attributes of the Learner Profile assessed formally and informally

#### **The Exhibition:**

- Takes place at the end of Grade 5 and requires students to demonstrate engagement with essential elements of the programme: knowledge, concepts, skills, and action
- A transdisciplinary inquiry as well as a summative assessment that is a celebration of student learning as they complete their Primary Years Programme experience
- Allows students to engage in a collaborative, transdisciplinary inquiry process that involves identifying, investigating, and offering solutions to real-life issues or problems

### **Assessment Strategies**

A variety of assessment strategies are used throughout the learning community. These strategies cover a broad range of approaches from subjective and intuitive to objective and scientific. These strategies are viewed as complimentary since they have been selected in order to provide a range of approaches and a holistic view of the student.

#### **Observations:**

- are made often and at regular intervals.
- are conducted for individuals, groups and the whole class depending upon the purpose.

- are conducted in a variety of contexts to increase validity.

### Performance Assessments:

- are goal-directed tasks with established criteria and provide opportunities for problem solving.
- utilize multiple transdisciplinary skills.
- have more than one correct response.

### Selected Responses:

#### Closed:

- used to determine student knowledge or skill level on a particular task (tests, quizzes, dictation, etc.).

#### Open:

- used to stimulate an original response by students and to demonstrate learning and provide information that can inform instruction.

## ***Assessment Tools***

These assessment tools may be used in conjunction with other forms of assessment, such as standardized tests, in order to assess both student performance and the efficacy of the programme.

### Open-Ended Tasks

### Written/Oral Assessment

### Portfolio

### Rubrics:

- are descriptors that students and assessors use to determine what criteria or characteristics will be used in classroom work/assignments/projects and how to rate that work on a predetermined scale.
- can be developed by students and/or teachers.

### Checklists:

- are lists of information, data, and/or attributes that are evident and marked as learning takes place or skills are acquired.

### Anecdotal Records:

- are brief written notes based on observations of students.

### Exemplars:

- are samples of students' work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged.

### Continuums:

- are visual representations of developmental stages of learning, showing a progression of achievement or identify where a student is in a process.

### Documentation

The documentation of evidence of student learning is an assessment strategy relevant to all students throughout the PYP. Teachers use a range of methods to document student learning as a means of assessing student understanding. Documenting is a means of giving feedback.

- In Grades K-3, students are assessed using a standards-based performance system.
- In Grades 4-5, students are assessed using a standards-based performance system in addition to traditional letter grade system.

### Student-Teacher Conferences:

- are usually informal and are incorporated into regular classroom routines.
- are designed to provide students with feedback on progress in any given area and also allow students to reflect upon their learning.

### Parent-Teacher Conferences:

- are an opportunity for classroom teachers and parents to share feedback regarding the students' progress and needs.
- answer parent questions, address concerns and help define roles in the learning process.
- may be scheduled with specialist teachers.
- are formally offered one time per year.
- are available throughout the year and can be requested by either teacher or parent.

### End of Unit Reporting:

- occurs at the end of each Unit of Inquiry.
- allows students and teachers to select work for portfolios. The creation of a portfolio is another opportunity for students to share their work/knowledge with their parents and to reflect upon this work in order to create a plan to address any areas that may need improvement.

### Progress Reports (Preschool-5):

- are used to document students' progress.
- are completed by the classroom teacher four times/year.
- provide input from specialist teachers twice yearly with regard to their specific subject learning.
- in Grades K-3, provides feedback using the following scale: Not Assessed, In Progress, Limited Development, Developing, Achieving, Extending. (Handbooks for each grade level contain rubrics and expectations for progress reporting.)
- in Grades 4-5, provides feedback using traditional letter grades and scale: Not Assessed, In Progress, Limited Development, Developing, Achieving, Extending. (Handbooks for each grade level contain rubrics and expectations for progress reporting.)
- Provide individualized narrative comments regarding students' progress throughout the year.

## **Portfolios**

*"A portfolio is a record of students' involvement in learning which is designed to demonstrate success, growth, high-order thinking, creativity, assessment strategies and reflection. A portfolio is a celebration of an active mind at work." (Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2009)*

### **Purpose of Portfolios:**

- Show to growth over time
- empowers students to be active participants in their own learning.
- Provides an opportunity for reflection of the learning and teaching.
- Allows the learning community to see learning as a continuous process.
- encourages a sense of pride in one's work

## **Formal Internal Assessments Used by the Midland Public Schools (Preschool-5)**

### **Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA2):**

- Measures students' reading fluency and comprehension in Grades K-3 (can be used in Grades 3-5 as needed)
- uses rubrics to inform and guide instruction
- DRA results are entered into Illuminate

### **Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI):**

- measures students' fluency and comprehension of both narrative and expository reading in Grades 3-5.
- provides information for instructional strategies as well as possible intervention instruction

## **NWEA**

- NWEA MAP Growth - MAP tests are based on a continuum of skills in Mathematics and Reading from low skill levels to high skill levels. MAP assessments help teachers identify the instructional level of the student and also provide context for determining where each student is performing in relation to local or state standards and national norms
- NWEA MAP Growth is utilized grades 1-8 for Reading and Math
- NWEA MAP Reading Fluency is used in Developmental Kindergarten and Kindergarten
- NWEA tests are given three times a year (Fall, Winter and Spring)

## **SRSS - Student Risk Screening Scale (SRSS) Universal Screening**

- The SRSS-Internalizing and Externalizing is a tool for identifying students with externalizing and internalizing behaviors who may require additional support
- The SRSS is a social emotional/behavior screening tool for all K-12 students
- This screening measure is a component of a balanced assessment system as part of a comprehensive Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

- The SRSS is conducted three times a year (Fall, Winter & Spring)

### Writing Assessments:

#### K-2

- are created in Writing Workshop or other authentic situations and are selected twice yearly (Winter/Spring)
- are measured using a prompt and/or free choice response
- are scored using the MPS Six-Point Writing Rubric
- results are entered into the district's database system housed within Illuminate, where results are shared with students and parents and used to inform instruction.

#### 3-5

- include two essays assessed each year (Winter/Spring).
- are measured using a prompt and/or free choice response
- are scored using the MPS Six-Point Writing Rubric
- results are entered into the district's database system housed within Illuminate, where results are shared with students and parents and used to inform instruction.

### Science/Social Studies Assessments (DK-5):

- measure students' knowledge of unit concepts that align with Michigan Academic State Standards
- use a variety of assessment tools which may include district-created assessments, unit tests, projects, journals, learning logs, presentations, extended responses, etc.

### Language B - World Language(s) Assessments:

- In Grade 2, all students take a district-wide pre and post common assessment to measure interpretive communication skills. When provided with a variety of topics, students listen/read and respond to questions or identify correct answers. A Pass/Fail system is used with 75% being the cut score for passing.
- In Grade 5, all students take a district-wide pre and post common assessment. This assessment includes 15 personal questions in which students are required to give a written response. They are assessed based on a district-created Interpersonal Four Point Rubric.
- All staff utilize both formative and summative assessments throughout the year to inform instruction.

### High Scope Preschool Assessment (Preschool):

- High Scope's research-validated authentic assessment tools serve multiple purposes. It provides teachers with valuable and practical information to understand and plan for the developmental needs of our youngest learners. Information on progress is gathered in the course of everyday classroom activities; therefore, the results can be utilized to strengthen the classroom programme.

- It is designed to look at meaningful educational outcomes, gather information in ways that are natural and comfortable for children and adults, and provide accurate data that can be used for planning and policy-level decision making. This assessment aligns with State and National Early Learning Standards.

### **External Assessments Used by the Midland Public Schools (K-5)**

#### **M-STEP (“Point in Time” Assessments)**

- Michigan’s assessment system includes scenario-based assessments designed to measure student growth effectively. The areas of assessment include English Language Arts and Mathematics (Grades 3, 4, and 5), Science (Grade 5), and Social Studies (Grade 5).

#### **KRA: Kindergarten Readiness Assessment**

- The KRA is a developmentally appropriate assessment tool designed to measure school readiness of incoming kindergartners across four domains. It provides school leaders and early childhood specialists with information to target professional development and transition practices.
- The KRA is given every Fall to DK-K students

#### **W-APT**

- WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT) is an English language proficiency screener given to incoming students who may be designated as English language learners. The W-APT is one component of WIDA’s assessment system.
- W-APT test items are written from the model performance indicators of WIDA’s five English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards. Each test assesses the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- If the student does not score proficient on the W-APT, he/she will be flagged as LEP (Limited English Proficient) for state reporting and the student will be assigned an MPS English Language tutor for one- two hours per week.

#### **ACCESS for ELLs**

- ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners) is a secure large-scale English language proficiency assessment given to kindergarten through twelfth graders who have been identified as English Language Learners (ELLs). It is administered annually in WIDA Consortium member states to monitor students’ progress in acquiring academic English.
- ACCESS for ELLs test items are written from the model performance indicators of WIDA’s five English language proficiency standards.

### **Assessment Review/Future Steps:**

The assessment policy will be reviewed annually at both the district and building level.

As we continue to move forward in our PYP journey and gain a deeper understanding of the teaching and learning within the PYP, our thinking and practices in terms of assessment will be documented and new goals created collectively. We also wish to acknowledge that tremendous shifts have occurred that have affected our teaching, learning, and assessment in the following ways: updated social studies standards aligned and incorporated into units, alignment of new science standards, and the adoption of new science/social studies curriculum resources. These changes have impacted the pace of our journey.

**Writing Prompts:**

- Developed from Transdisciplinary themes, concepts and/ or Units of Inquiry
- Connected to Learner Profile attributes

**Reading:**

- Text-related to Transdisciplinary Themes or Learner Profile attributes (narrative) or concepts (culture, diversity, etc.)

**Social Studies/Science:**

- Extended responses can be added to connect to concepts taught within the unit rather than topics
- Align learning experiences with concepts and “big ideas” rather than isolated facts
- Continue to build upon learning engagements and summative assessments to align with M-STEP performance tasks; look for application of concepts and transfer of knowledge gained

**Other:**

- Progress reports were previously aligned with the Learner Profile attributes and have shifted to using the Approaches to Learning (2018)
- Approaches to Learning on Progress Reports were edited and condensed after the release of new Standards and Practices (2019).

**Resources:**

- Making The PYP Happen: A Curriculum Framework for International Primary Education (IBO, 2009)
- The Primary Years Programme as a Model of Transdisciplinary Learning (IBO, 2010)
- Guidelines for developing a school assessment policy (IBO, 2008)
- IB/PYP Scope and Sequence
- Midland Public Schools’ Handbooks/Curriculum Guides
- How Midland Schools Works (sections on Assessment, etc.)

The following people formed the initial Assessment Policy Committee (2014-2015):



- **Lou Ann Bensinger, Elementary Curriculum and Instructional Specialist/IB Primary Years Programme**
- **Robin Harshman-Rogers and Ellen Flegenheimer-Riggle, PYP Coordinators**
  
- **Staff at the following Phase I PYP schools provided input for the original document in Spring 2015: Adams, Chestnut Hill, Plymouth, and Woodcrest.**
- **Staff at Phase II PYP schools provided additional feedback in Winter 2016: Carpenter, Eastlawn, and Siebert.**
- **The Midland Public Schools Assessment Policy will be continually reflected upon and revised as described in our Essential Agreements regarding policies and practices. All schools and staff members will have input moving forward.**

**Revised Spring 2016**

**Revised Spring 2017**

**Revised Fall 2019**

**Revised Fall 2020**