



# Oak Grove Middle School

## Assessment Policy

The single most important aim of assessment is to support and encourage student learning. This means that teachers constantly gather and analyze information on student performance and provide feedback to students to help them improve their performance. It also means that students must be involved in evaluation of their own progress using self-assessment and reflection. In doing so, they should develop wider critical thinking and self-assessment skills.

### School philosophy

- At Oak Grove Middle School, we stand for collaborative practices where children learn through inquiry and culturally-proficient teaching. We collaborate to strengthen student engagement and to foster a safe environment which inspires life-long learners and internationally conscious citizens.

**"Student voice, choice, and ownership" motto/philosophy**

### Assessment Philosophy

Assessments are designed to enrich student learning, monitor and evaluate student progress towards meeting course and program standards, provide feedback to students, parents and other stakeholders, gather evidence to support teacher reflection for students and on the effectiveness of teaching, inform curriculum review, evaluate the suitability of courses, and develop short and long-term achievement goals for students.

Students who demonstrate Academic Honesty embody the learner profile traits and we encourage the Oak Grove Students to be: principled, inquirer, communicators, open-minded, thinkers, caring and reflective.

**Responsibilities of Stakeholders:** At Oak Grove Middle School, we believe that all stakeholders must take responsibility for student achievement. In terms of assessment, this means the following:

### TEACHERS WILL:

- Design appropriate, engaging, and rigorous units of study and assessments.
- Align assessments with stated learning objectives/criteria, inquiry questions, significant concepts, and approaches to learning skills.
- Provide students with clear rubrics and task specific clarifications at the beginning of each unit.
- Provide opportunities for students to reflect on their performance on a given assignment or assessment.
- Provide timely and meaningful feedback to students and parents/legal guardians of student progress and areas of growth.
- Collaboratively work together to maintain consistent assessment procedures (develop task-specific descriptors, standardized grading practices, and inquiry questions).
- Use professional judgment when determining levels of achievement.
- Seek advice from peers, the leadership team, and administration, as needed, for support in adhering to this policy. This is just a suggestion.

### STUDENTS WILL:

- Do their best to exemplify the learner profile in their approaches to learning and assessments.

- Familiarize themselves with the criteria rubrics and learning objectives for each of their subject groups.
- Reflect on the conceptual understandings, knowledge and skills that they are developing.
- Work meaningfully with teachers and peers to develop conceptual understandings, knowledge and skills.
- Ask for assistance when needed.
- Actively participate in the inquiry and exploration in their global classrooms.
- Regularly check grades
- Reflect on the feedback that teachers give on summative assessment rubrics, while setting goals that allow for continuous improvement.

#### **ADMINISTRATORS AND LEADERSHIP STAFF WILL:**

- Provide time, resources, and focus to teachers for maintenance of assessment policies.
- Provide time for collaborative planning.
- Provide opportunities for professional development workshops.
- Continually observe teachers and provide feedback.
- Support a spirit of collaboration and collegiality among all stakeholders.
- Arrange parent and student conferences with all teachers.
- Trust the teachers' professional judgment in regard to determining levels of achievement.

#### **PARENTS AND GUARDIANS WILL:**

- Familiarize themselves with the criteria rubrics and learning objectives for each of their children's courses.
- Use those rubrics and objectives as the springboards for discussion about assessment with teachers, administrators, staff, and their children.
- Feel free to contact teachers at any time with questions they might have regarding assessment.
- Support their children's academic and character growth throughout.
- Regularly check teacher websites and Oak Grove MS website for updates.
- Communicate with teachers, students, and administrators/leadership/IB Coordinator/staff about questions or comments they have regarding their student's progress.
- Attend parent nights.

#### **Learner Profile Attributes Within the Assessment Policy:**

- **Principled** - Students act with integrity and honesty; they take responsibility for their own actions.
- **Inquirers** – Students are encouraged to be self-advocates who ask questions and seek answers regarding assessment policies. By providing students with assessment tasks that encourage continued learning, we promote inquiry.
- **Knowledgeable** – Students explore concepts, ideas and issues. We aim to develop knowledgeable students who care about their education by involving them in the assessment process.
- **Open-minded** – Students are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view.
- **Risk-takers** – Students are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.
- **Reflective** - By offering specific feedback that highlights students' strengths and addresses areas of improvement, we can help students reflect and set goals so they can advance to the next level of achievement.
- **Thinkers** – By providing students with assessment tasks that encourage them to exercise initiative in thinking critically and creatively, we are developing students who recognize and approach complex problems and make reasoned ethical decisions.

These qualities, when applied to learning and student work, will establish skills and behavior which support solid practices in the classroom that continue to the assessment level. These positive practices are expected to be introduced, modeled and used throughout the school. In addition, through the creation of assessments with real-world contexts, we encourage students to broaden their perspectives, thus promoting international mindedness. At Oak Grove MS, we see

the diversity of our learning community, as well as that of our global community, as positive resources. Utilizing this diversity can enrich learning and provide opportunities for students and staff to heighten their awareness and expand their thinking.

### **Assessment Types:**

**FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS** - Formative assessments take place throughout the course of study. Formative tasks are made to guide a student toward the culminating summative assessment. Formative assessments are used to guide instruction and evaluate the process of students' preparedness for the summative assessment. These assessments are rooted in both the subject area objectives as well as the California State Standards. Due to the focus on standards, formative assessments allow instructors to differentiate based on abilities, learning styles, and student interests.

### **EXAMPLES OF FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS**

a. **Observation:** This tool is used to assess the engagement of students and understanding of skills. Instructors can observe in whole group, small group or individually. Students can be observed while working with the teacher or by the instructor taking the role of an outsider looking in.

b. **Selected response:** Selected response can be either a test or a quiz given before, during, or at the end of a unit to assess student understanding and achievement levels. Instructors can gain immediate feedback regarding the students' understanding.

c. **Process journals:** These are used to facilitate student reflection, which is a critical component of the learning process. They track students' personal achievement and enable them to reflect upon their own learning experiences. It can be utilized by all subject areas.

d. **Portfolios:** These provide a method for students to compile a collection of work throughout the course of the study. Students can use portfolios as a means of reflection as well as a display of their gains in both knowledge and skills. Portfolios can be used during student-lead conferences.

e. **External tests:** The California State Assessment will be used as a measure giving insight to students, parents and educators of each student's personal growth and achievement of the California State Standards.

### **FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT TOOLS**

- a. Warm-up activities
- b. Exit slips
- c. Daily work checks
- d. Regularly scheduled quizzes
- e. Qualitative observation
- f. Formative rubrics
- g. Checklists
- h. Collection of work samples
- i. Student self-reflection form:
  - 1. Journal entries
  - 2. Short essays
  - 3. Charts or graphs of personal achievement
- j. Peer assessment

**SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS** - A summative assessment is an open-ended task created by teachers. It allows for differentiation so students can demonstrate their knowledge and comprehension in a variety of ways using both the subject area objectives and the California State Standards. Summative assessment is one that is authentic, learner centered and inquiry based. It is created for the end of a specific unit of study and allows students to apply their

understanding and skills. Summative assessments are used as an evaluation of the individual student's achievement of objectives/ criteria and standards through an end-of-unit culminating project.

#### **EXAMPLES OF SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:**

a. **Open-ended tasks** - Students are presented with prompts that allow them to communicate through their own original responses. It can be in the form of a discussion, written, or oral presentation.

b. **Performance tasks** - Students are given an opportunity to display their skills, knowledge and understanding through the objectives they have learned and relationships they have developed.

c. **Assessment tasks** - Summative assessments that are created for a particular unit and may appear in the form of either an open-ended task or performance task. Students will be assessed on the objectives for a specific subject area, but are aligned with the California State Standards as well.

#### **SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT TOOLS:**

- a. rubrics
- b. California State Assessment
- c. End of Course Exams
- d. Projects
- e. Interdisciplinary units
- f. 8th Grade Community Project

#### **TYPES OF FEEDBACK**

1. Correction of daily work
2. Check-ins with students
3. Formative assessment checklist of skills to inform students about areas of achievement and opportunities for growth
4. Proficiency scales
5. Rubrics highlighted with achievement and growth
6. Written feedback on all summative assessment rubrics
7. Written questions
8. Verbal feedback
9. Peer-critiques and evaluations
10. In class corrections
11. Parent/student/teacher conferences

#### **Special Program**

Students with disabilities are served in the least restrictive environment, based upon individual needs. In an effort to meet the needs of students identified as having disabilities, Oak Grove Middle School has a full continuum of special education programs. Federal and state guidelines require that each student with disabilities participate with nondisabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to meet the needs of each student. "Continuum of services" refers to a range of placement options. Students with special needs are provided access to the curriculum in the least restrictive environment, by utilizing the inclusion models of co-teaching and individual support. Most students are in a regular classroom where classroom teachers and specialists collaborate following an inclusive approach. Ongoing assessments determine each student's individual needs and provide any special services and/or materials required. Through various types of formative assessment teachers collect and analyze data, monitor progress, set and update goals with the students and parents. Additionally, our district uses a Multi-Tiered System of Support - MTSS model, a framework for providing intervention and educational support for all students at increasing levels of intensity based on their individual need.

## ELL

The families of students who are in the English Language Learner (ELL) Program receive annual score reports from English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC), the state assessment for ELLs.

### Reporting to Parents

- Parents, teachers, and students are partners in education. Teaching and Learning benefits greatly when there is open and consistent communication among the three entities. Students and parents are kept informed in the following ways:
  - Parent Night Conferences
  - Teacher and/or Counselor emails, phone calls, and meetings
  - Teacher Progress Reports
  - Course Progress Reports

### Communication Plan

- ❖ The Assessment Policy will be made available on our schools' websites and will be shared with parents and students at the beginning of each school year.
- ❖ Each subject area teacher's grading policy and curriculum materials will be communicated to parents at the beginning of the school year via course requirements forms.

### End- of -Course Reporting

- ❖ Grades are used as a tool to communicate to students, parents/guardians, and teachers both how a student has engaged in and managed the learning process (e.g. effort, participation, attitude, work completion) and what a student knows and can demonstrate based on clearly stated standards, objectives, and criteria (i.e. the learning products).

Figure 1

SUBJECT AREA	A	B	C	D
Arts	Knowing & understanding	Developing skills	Thinking creatively	Responding
Design	Inquiring & analysing	Developing ideas	Creating the solution	Evaluating
Individuals & Societies	Knowing & understanding	Investigating	Communicating	Thinking critically
Language Acquisition	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
Language & Literature	Analysing	Organising	Producing text	Using language
Mathematics	Knowing & understanding	Investigating patterns	Communicating	Applying mathematics in real-life contexts
Physical Health & Education	Knowing & understanding	Planning for performance	Applying and performing	Reflecting and improving performance
Sciences	Knowing & understanding	Inquiring and designing	Processing and evaluating	Reflecting on the impacts of science

❖ Final Grades

- The learning process and learning products are assessed and reported separately so that students, parents/guardians, and teachers can clearly distinguish the student’s mastery of each.
- Each subject’s criteria are based on achievement levels of 1-8, and the teacher uses the combined score of the four criteria to determine an overall number out of 32 for each subject. This total is then translated into a single overall performance level between 1 and 7, where 7 represents the highest level and 1 the lowest level.
- When determining final grades, whether for the learning process or learning products, the teacher should consider the most consistent level of achievement, with emphasis on more recent performance when applicable.
- **Best Fit:** according to the MYP: *From Principles into Practice*, “At the end of a period of learning, teachers must make [professional] judgements on their students’ achievement levels, teachers must gather sufficient evidence of achievement from a range of learning experiences and assessments. Teachers need to ensure that this evidence comes from the performance of the student over the duration of the units taught. A carefully constructed assessment task on an individual unit may provide evidence of achievement in all strands of a criterion or criteria”.

❖ Over the course of the year, teachers assess each of the four criterion rubrics twice on a scale of 1-8 (see figure 1), then determine the two scores for each rubric which is most indicative of the students’ skill sets. Teachers will add up the four “best fit” scores to determine a final reporting score (See figure 2). The final skill indicator is out of 7 (and not 8).

Figure 2

MYP Grade	Letter Grade	Percentage	Quality Points (GPA)	MYP Descriptors
7	A+	98-100%	4.0	Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated, critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situation.
	A	95-97%		
6	A	92-94%	4.0	Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situation, often with independence.
	A-	90-91%		
5	B+	88-89%	3.0	Produces generally high-quality work. Communicates secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situation and with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations
	B	85-87%		
4	B	82-84%	3.0	Produces good-quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situation, but requires support in unfamiliar situations.
	B-	80-81%		
3	C+	78-79%	2.0	Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations.
	C	75-77%		
	C-	70-74%		
2	D+	68-69%	1.0	Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills.
	D	65-67%		
	D-	60-61%		
1	F	50-59%	0	Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills.
0	F	50%	0	Does not meet descriptors.

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

The assessment policy will be reviewed and updated annually by Oak Grove Middle school, and the community.

**Note:** Community informational nights will be hosted periodically over the year to familiarize parents, students, and the community about the assessment and reporting practices utilized at Oak Grove Middle School.

## **Local Requirements:**

**CAASPP** - California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress System includes the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for students in the general education population and the California Alternate Assessments [CAAs] for English language arts/literacy [ELA] and mathematics given in grades three through eight and grade eleven.

Only eligible students may participate in the administration of the CAAs. CAAs items are aligned with alternate achievement standards, which are linked with the Common Core State Standards [CCSS] for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The CAASPP System encompasses the following assessments and student participation requirements:

1. Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments and CAAs for ELA in grades three through eight and grade eleven.
2. Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments and CAAs for mathematics in grades three through eight and grade eleven.
3. California Science Test (CAST) and CAAs for Science in grades five, eight, and once in high school (i.e., grade ten, eleven, or twelve).

**i-Ready** - i-Ready is an online program for reading and/or mathematics that will help student's teacher(s) determine the student's needs, personalize their learning, and monitor progress throughout the school year. i-Ready allows the teacher(s) to meet the student exactly where they are and provide data to increase the student's learning gains. i-Ready consists of two parts: Diagnostic and Personalized Instruction.

## **CONCLUSION**

The content of courses is directed by the curriculum standards of the Oak Grove Middle School. The design of the units of study, including the formative tasks and the summative projects, is the responsibility of the teachers in collaboration with the IB Coordinator. Teachers will meet regularly to share assessment strategies so as to achieve consistency of expectations across disciplines. To be successful, students must be able to "recall, adapt, and apply knowledge and skills to new questions and contexts" (From Principles to Practice, 2014). Hence, according to program expectations, assessment aims to:

- ❖ Support/encourage student learning by providing feedback on the learning process.
- ❖ Inform, enhance, and improve the teaching process
- ❖ Provide opportunities for students to exhibit transfer of skills across disciplines, such as in the community project and interdisciplinary unit assessments
- ❖ Promote positive student attitudes towards learning
- ❖ Promote a deep understanding of subject content by supporting students in their inquiries set in real-world contexts
- ❖ Promote the development of critical and creative thinking skills
- ❖ Reflect the international-mindedness of the program by allowing for assessments to be set in a variety of cultural and linguistic contexts
- ❖ Support the holistic nature of the program by including in its model principles that take account of the development of the whole student. (From Principles to Practice, 2014)