

**Patterson Elementary School**  
**International Baccalaureate Candidate School**  
**Assessment Policy**

**I. Purpose of Assessment Policy:**

Assessment is a critical component in the teaching and learning cycle. Communication is key in clarifying a common understanding of the assessment process within our school's learning environment. Consistent with the standards and practices of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP), this document provides an overview of Patterson's beliefs and practices regarding the purpose and use of assessment.

**II. Philosophy:**

We believe that formative and summative assessments are paramount to the teaching and learning process. We value ongoing, authentic assessment and believe students need to have multiple opportunities to demonstrate and share their learning in creative ways. We believe assessment should be differentiated to meet the unique needs of each individual.

The Patterson Mission Statement is closely tied to our Assessment Policy.

*"We are nurturing a generation of globally conscious, humans who have the skills to help change the world. "*

We promote inquiry by encouraging continued learning. We aim to develop knowledgeable, reflective students, who care about their education by involving them in the assessment process. By offering specific feedback that highlights students' strengths and addresses areas of improvement, we can help students reflect and set goals so they can move to the next level of achievement.

Nurturing intercultural understanding and respect among students happens when educators understand and respect the needs of all learners, while providing opportunities for exploration in real-world contexts. Being cognizant of the unique learning needs and language development of each student, we recognize that differentiation is the key to helping all students find success. By providing students with a variety of assessment tasks, we honor the identity of our learners.

In addition, through the creation of assessments with real-world contexts, we encourage students to broaden their perspective, promoting international mindedness. We see the diversity of our learning

community, as well as that of our global community, as a positive resource that can enrich learning, providing opportunities for students and staff to heighten their awareness and expand their thinking.

### **III. Purpose of Assessment:**

Assessment is designed to:

- To improve teaching and learning
- To gain information to determine next teaching and learning steps.
- To evaluate our learning processes and practices as educators
- To identify student strengths and needs for differentiating instruction
- To monitor progress and growth
- To communicate progress with students and parents
- To facilitate student understanding of their own growth and needs
- To collect data for school improvement initiatives
- To determine professional development needs for teachers and support staff
- To promote reflection among students and teachers

### **IV. Principles of Assessment:**

Assessment is a key component of teaching and learning and includes a balance of both formative and summative assessments. At Patterson, our assessment practices reflect our philosophy of assessment:

Assessment is authentic, rigorous, and student-centered:

- Assessment is grounded in real-world application and is appropriately challenging.
- Assessment provides multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know, value, understand, and are able to do.
- Assessment is designed to assist students' development of the Approaches to Learning skills, which coordinate with 21st century skills.

Assessment is differentiated:

- Assessment is varied in type and purpose.
- Assessment practices recognize and take into account students with special educational needs.

### Assessment is transparent and shared with teachers, students and parents:

- Assessment criteria are shared with students prior to the assessment, making students aware of the expectations at all stages of their learning.
- Assessment enables ongoing communication between students, teachers and parents.
- Assessment data promotes content-area and interdisciplinary collaboration among teachers.

### Assessment provides meaningful feedback

- Assessment focuses on both the learning process and learning outcomes.
- Assessment provides teachers with data to reflect upon and drive instructional practices.
- Assessment practices provide students with timely and meaningful feedback about their progress and areas of growth.
- Assessment provides multiple opportunities for student success.

## **V. Assessment Practices:**

### Planning for Assessment:

- Assessment is integrated into planning, teaching, and learning in all content areas.
- Assessment is planned using backwards design. (Focusing on the PYP principles, practices, and objectives, as well as the Arizona's College and Career Readiness Standards, teachers create assessments that will allow students to demonstrate an acceptable level of achievement of those goals.)
- Teachers work collaboratively to design PYP Units of Inquiry, assessments, and task-specific rubrics.

## **VI. Assessment Methods:**

### Formative Assessment:

Formative assessment tasks are designed to prepare students for the summative task by assessing students' progress in acquiring skills and concepts needed for the summative assessment. Types of formative assessment include but are not limited to:

- Student Reflection
- Self-Assessment
- Peer Assessment
- Classroom Observation/Discussions
- Questioning
- Conferencing, Teacher & Student Led
- Use of teacher and student created rubrics

- Digital Portfolios
- Process Journal/Notebooks
- Checklists
- Anecdotal Records and other observable notes recorded by teachers showing growth over time

### Summative Assessment:

Summative assessment tasks are created to be open-ended, providing differentiation by allowing students to showcase their knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways and to determine effectiveness of instruction. Assessment tasks are created by teachers for a particular Unit of Inquiry and aligned with the PYP principles and practices. Patterson provides differentiated assessment tasks that include, but are not limited to:

- Unit Tests
- Individual or Group Projects
- Performance of skills
- Student Reflections on the Learning Process
- Written examinations
- Essays
- Oral exams

### **VII. Summative Tools and Feedback:**

Summative Assessments are criteria-related in all Units of Inquiry. Teacher and student created rubrics align with the Units of Inquiry. Feedback is provided on the rubric by highlighting achievement descriptors that were met and offering suggestions for improvement in order to reach the next level of achievement.

### **VIII. Assessment Recording and Reporting:**

#### IB Assessment Recording and Reporting

Students and teachers plan and design assessments. The feedback provides students with information about their growth and progress. Teachers offer timely feedback. Students use this feedback to reflect on their work: highlighting their strengths, noting their areas for growth, and creating a plan for improvement.

Progress reports are sent home with students at each mid-quarter, informing families of students' growth and progress. At the end of each quarter, report cards are provided at conferences or sent home to share progress toward the state standards.

## **IX. Responsibilities of the Patterson Learning Community Concerning Assessment:**

Assessments should provide opportunities for students to:

- Demonstrate and share their learning with others
- Include goal setting for reaching their true potential
- Use their unique learning strategies and build on their individual strengths
- Choose different learning styles to show what they have learned
- Build confidence in what they have learned and understood
- Communicate their personal point of view and understanding of their learning
- Understand their individual needs and how to improve their performance
- Connect their curiosity about the world and create authentic experiences that guide the inquiry process and their personal learning journey
- Advance their understanding of what makes a quality product and performance
- Participate in a self-reflection or peer review process

Assessments should allow teachers to:

- Use quantitative and qualitative data to analyze the teaching and learning process
- Collaboratively reflect on individual student growth and needs in Professional Learning Communities
- Differentiate their instruction to reflect the individual needs of learners
- Intervene on behalf of students who need additional support and resources
- Define expectations for the outcomes on student projects and various assignments
- Adapt learning styles to meet the individual needs of learners
- Collect data to inform students, parents, staff, and district leadership on student progress
- Prepare for the creation of future lessons, Units of Inquiry, and projects

Assessment should provide opportunities for parents to:

- Understand student learning and progress
- Provide support outside of school
- Celebrate and recognize the accomplishments of their student
- Maintain records and documentation of student achievement, growth and progress

Mandatory Assessments:

- Arizona Academic Standards Assessment (AASA) (Grades 3-6)
- Arizona Science Test (AZSci) (Grade 5)
- District Fastbridge/Illuminate Assessments (Grades K-6)