



Bob Lanier Middle School

A Vanguard Magnet and International Baccalaureate World School

Assessments Policy

Philosophy

At Lanier Middle School, we believe that learners are active participants in the learning process. Students are expected to assume greater roles of responsibility as they take ownership of their own learning and become more effective communicators. The assessment policy will facilitate students becoming lifelong learners.

Assessments are fundamental to teaching and learning. Through both formal and informal assessments students and educators are able to gain insight into the depth of learning that has occurred. Assessments provide feedback on achievement and progress, while also demonstrating strengths and opportunities for growth. Data gained from assessments allow for deeper learning paths, moving from basic understanding to application.

Educators at Lanier Middle School engage in backwards design when planning their units. They begin with what skills need to be mastered, determine how the scholars will demonstrate mastery and then find the avenue to teach scholars the desired concepts and skills. Reflection is key for both learning coaches and scholars. Learning coaches must reflect on how to best facilitate learning, how scholars are progressing on informal assessments and how to determine if the scholars are prepared for a formal assessment.

Assessment Purpose

Lanier Middle School is an IB world school. We are introducing our students and teachers to a world standard for assessment. To give our students the best education possible, Lanier's school-wide instructional focus is based on highly effective pedagogical practices and authentic means of assessment that are at the core of the prestigious IB program. Students must be assessed with a systematic grading policy which levels the playing field for all students and allows students the pursuit of mastery and gives feedback in a timely process in all subjects.

Each subject area team develops assessment tasks that align with the MYP objectives related to the subject. The IB gives MYP schools the flexibility of modifying descriptors (rubrics) in years 1-3 (grades 6-8) to meet the needs of students and tasks being assessed. Using the criteria means that we will have to convert this point system to the numerical grading system required by Houston ISD.

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General Assessment and Reporting Guidelines for All Course

The District Grading Policy, HISD Board Policy EIA (LOCAL) includes the following provisions (Houston ISD Student Code Code of Conduct):

- A classroom teacher shall be required to assign a grade that reflects the student's relative mastery of an assignment.
- A classroom teacher shall not be required to assign a minimum grade for an assignment without regard to the student's quality of work.
- A student shall be allowed a reasonable opportunity to make up or redo a class assignment or examination for which the student received a failing grade.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear understanding of what is being assessed and criteria for success. All assessments will be criterion-related and graded utilizing a "best-fit" approach on subject-specific rubrics.

In addition:

- Provide clear expectations through rubrics that cover higher-order cognitive skills in multiple learning styles.
- Develop global thinkers by creating holistic assessments and authentic tasks.
- Rubrics MUST be provided to students before the assessment is given.
- Determine the level of understanding using both summative and formative assessment.
- Timely, specific, and supportive feedback is central to all learning and teaching.
- Assessment opportunities may include written tasks, oral presentations, fieldwork, practical work, exhibitions, lab reports, performances, examinations, research papers, etc.
- Use data from formative and summative assessments to inform, enhance, and improve the teaching and learning process.
- Students should have an active role in peer and self-assessment.
- Encourage students to reflect on their own learning.

Every criterion MUST be assessed at least twice per academic school year. Educators will determine how many times each criterion is assessed and recorded in the gradebook. The expectation is to achieve a balance of criteria throughout the grading period.

Rubrics should be chosen based on the nature of the assignment. Careful attention should be paid to which criteria are assessed for each assignment so that assignments are not disproportionately weighted in the gradebook. The expectation is to achieve an appropriate balance of criteria throughout each grading cycle.

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Any and all criteria used on an assessment task **MUST** be connected to the task in a meaningful way (i.e. the “Knowing and Understanding” criteria would not be used on a vocabulary quiz unless it can justifiably be assessed using the associated grading rubric).

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the role of **the student** to:

- Be fully prepared for classwork and assignments.
- Submit any required work (homework, classwork, assignments, projects, assessments) on time.
- Reflect on both formative and summative assessments for academic growth.
- Submit authentic work that reflects the student’s own language, expression, and ideas.
- Present work neatly and appropriately, meeting all requirements as identified by the teacher.
- Take responsibility for personal learning (ownership).
- Demonstrate a positive attitude while focused and staying on task in class.
- Be willing to grow according to the IB Learner Profile.

It is the role of **the teacher** to:

- Use formative and summative assessments to evaluate progress.
- Rubrics for assessments are made available to students to better understand expectations.
- Maintain open lines of communication with students and parents.
- Analyze assessment data to identify patterns of individual student performance and needs.
- Work in collaborative teams to share best practices.
- Recognize diverse learning styles.
- Provide student feedback in a timely manner.

It is the role of **the parent/guardian** to:

- Be willing to work in collaboration with students, educators, and other members of the education community.
- Be aware of the student’s needs in learning while monitoring progress.
- Provide an appropriate learning environment and tools at home.
- Openly communicate with their students and educators regarding learning concerns.

Assessment Practices

Approaches to Assessment 4:1 The school provides students with opportunities to consolidate their learning through a variety of assessments.

Approaches to Assessment 2:1 Teachers use a variety of assessment methods that are connected to stated learning objectives and outcomes.

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Approaches to Assessment 2:2 The school demonstrates that assessment practices are formed around conceptual learning.

Students will be assessed using formative and summative assessments to develop mastery of MYP subject specific objectives and approaches to learning skills. Only summative assessments can be assessed with the MYP criteria rubrics.

Formative Assessments:

Ongoing assessment aimed at providing information to guide teaching and improve student performance. Examples include natural class dialogue, exit tickets, checking for understanding, quizzes, anchor charts, in-class content review, student-lead questionings, etc. (May or may not be for a total point grade).

Summative Assessments:

Assessment aimed at determining the competency or level of achievement of a student generally at the end of a course of study or a unit of work. Examples include research-based essays, investigative labs, creation of products, objective-based tests, performances, etc. (Will receive a total point grade as well as a report of IB criterion results - if applicable)

MYP Criterion Across Subjects

Approaches to Assessment 1:2 The school uses specific and constructive school-based reporting to provide students and teachers with information that can be used to improve learning, teaching and assessment.

MYP assessment requires teachers to assess the prescribed subject-group objectives using the assessment criteria for each subject group in each year of the programme. Across a variety of assessment tasks (authentic performance of understanding), teachers use descriptors to identify students' achievement levels against established assessment criteria below.

Educators prepare unit summative assessments to determine the progress of students on IB objectives and strands. Subject group objectives are mapped for each content for the entire school year to ensure each strand is assessed twice. All assessments are aligned with the Statement of Inquiry, TEKS, IB policies, as well as unit objectives.

Student's authentic assessments (in the form of projects, products, or presentations) are assessed using rubrics built using IB assessment criteria for MYP years 1 or 3 and aligned with specific grade level TEKS.

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Students' assessment results are recorded in an IB Gradebook. At the end of each semester, students and parents receive an MYP Report detailing their progress on each objective for each of the 8 subject groups.

	Criterion A	Criterion B	Criterion C	Criterion D
Language and Literature	Analyzing	Organizing	Producing text	Using language
Mathematics	Knowing and understanding	Investigating patterns	Communicating	Applying mathematics in real-world contexts
Sciences	Knowing and understanding	Inquiring and designing	Processing and evaluating	Reflecting on the impacts of science
Individuals and Societies	Knowing and understanding	Investigating	Communicating	Thinking critically
Language Acquisition	Comprehending spoken and visual text	Comprehending written and visual text	Communicating in response to spoken and/or written text	Using language in spoken and/or written form
Arts	Knowing and understanding	Developing skills	Thinking creatively	Responding
Physical and Health Education	Knowing and understanding	Planning for performance	Applying and performing	Reflecting and improving performance
Design	Inquiring and analyzing	Developing ideas	Creating the solution	Evaluating
MYP Service as Action Project	Investigating	Planning	Taking Action	Reflecting
Interdisciplinary	Disciplinary grounding	Synthesizing	Communicating	Reflecting

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Assessment Strategies

- **Constructed Response Items** - Both short and extended written responses.
- **Lab Assignment** - Present hypothesis and supporting data, discuss results, and provide conclusions in an investigation format (not confined to sciences).
- **Oral Assessment** - Work that is presented as a speech, radio broadcast, dialogue, or other verbal formats.
- **Performance Assessment** - Requires students to perform a task rather than select an answer from a readymade list such as recitals, concerts, exhibitions, real-time problem solving, etc.
- **Self-Assessment and/or Reflection** - Work that requires student-directed reflection.
- **Technology Project** - Work provided through a technology application (digital media, computer applications, design processes).

Grading in the Middle Years Programme

Students at Lanier Middle School take all state and locally mandated tests. This includes common unit assessments in core subjects as provided by the local school district. These assessments are not graded with the MYP criteria because they do not meet the requirements of an MYP assessment.

A minimum of twelve (12) grades on daily work (formatives) shall be recorded in the grade book for each subject. A minimum of two (2) major grades (summative) such as tests, major projects, formal assessments, etc., shall be recorded in the grade book per grading period. Parents are notified in writing of their student's progress through progress reports and report cards.

Definition of Categories

- **Preparative Assignments** (Homework, Do Now activities, etc.): These are brief learning checks tied to daily TEKS instruction and may be completed in or out of class.
- **Formative Assessments** (Classwork & Quizzes): These are larger learning activities completed during the learning process to give feedback and guide instruction.
- **Summative Assessments** (Tests & Projects): These are demonstrations of mastery of the comprehension unit after the unit has been taught.
- **IB Grade** (Scale of 0-8 and weighted at 0): As an IB MYP campus, teachers are required to report a student's achievement level for each subject's four assessment criterion. Each subject area will report a student's achievement level using the MYP achievement rubric scale of 0 to 8.
- **Objective Testing** (0-100 points and weighted at 0): Assessments based on the district's scope and sequence. These assessments are used as benchmarks to determine which objectives have been mastered and which objectives need more support.

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District/Campus requirements for grade reporting:

As a campus, Lanier's goal is to have a common grading policy to ensure success for all students. Grades shall be based solely on mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and achievement levels from IB criterion-related rubrics. Student's attendance, conduct, attitude, and other behaviors shall be reported separately from achievement.

Parents/guardians are recommended to stay aware of their student's grades by utilizing the HISD Connect portal. The Houston ISD grading system is listed below (Houston ISD, Grading & Report Cards):

Academic Subject		Conduct	
90-100	Excellent	E	Excellent
80-89	Good; above average	S	Satisfactory
75-79	Satisfactory; average	P	Poor; below average
70-74	Passing; below average	U	Unsatisfactory
Below 70	Unsatisfactory; failing		

Note: Parents will be notified of the possibility of receiving a 70 and below or a P/U in conduct prior to the report card. Progress reports will serve as parent notification when signed and returned.

Additional Lanier assessment requirements:

- Subject-areas must establish a common grading philosophy that is consistent and fair.
- We assess for learning/meaning, not "activities" or completion.
- We utilize a criterion-related approach in our assessments through rubrics and the incorporation of IBMYP assessment criteria.
- Homework requires prior understanding and must reflect the TEKS.
- Projects must be assessed for both individual and group accountability.
- Power School is the system for tracking grades and must be updated weekly. There should be a minimum of two grades (not including homework) recorded per week per student.
- Progress reports will be issued every three weeks in alignment with Houston ISD policies
- Every student will receive a report card at the end of each 6-week grading cycle.
- If the child's overall average represents a D or F, the teacher/cluster must contact the parent. Proper contact includes an email and/or phone call. Parents should be contacted within a week. Students who have a D or an F must be put on an intervention plan (or growth plan for Vanguard students). Failure is not an option.

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- Once progress reports are submitted, if a student's average falls from A to C, D, F; B to D, F; C to D, D to F, contact the guardian (email or phone call).

The MYP scores assessments using an 8-point rubric. Each objective (criterion) needs its own score. Use the following conversion charts to enter MYP scores into a score for the gradebook.

0 - 8 Scale Conversion to Houston ISD Grading		
8	100	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 situations.
7	93	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 situations, often with independence.
6	88	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 situations, and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations.
5	82	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 situations but requires support in unfamiliar situations.
4	77	Produces work of acceptable quality. Communicates a 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.
3	71	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.
2	65	Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and skills. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills.
1	60	Unsatisfactory work
0	50 - 0	No work or assignment turned in

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MYP Year 3: Service as Action Project

MYP: All students in MYP Year 5 complete the personal project, and all students finishing the programme in Year 3 or 4 complete the Service as Action Community Project.

Purpose and Philosophy for a Community Project:

1. Encourages students to exercise their right and responsibility for acts of service
2. Brings awareness of local and/or global needs
3. Promotes:
 - a. Inquiry
 - b. Global Citizenship
 - c. Synthesis of Subject Knowledge
 - d. Practice of Approaches to Learning Skills
 - e. Learner Profile Traits

IB and LMS Service as Action Project Requirements:

1. All Year 3 students will complete a Service as Action Project
2. Work individually or in a group with no more than three (3) students
3. Meet about twice a month with a teacher supervisor
4. Identify a need in the community connected to a Global Context
5. Service as Action Project Showcase Presentation
6. Submit:
 - a. Proposal for Action
 - b. Project Process Journal
 - c. Academic Honest Commitment
 - d. Bibliography

Common Practices

Preparing for Assessments:

- Assessment criteria is pre-determined based on IB subject objectives and strands as well as the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).
- Educators practice backward design when creating IB unit planners and planning for activities and assessments.
- The campus, grade level teams and individual learning coaches use various forms of data to drive instruction.

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Recording Assessments:

- Unit tests, benchmarks, MAP screeners and STAAR assessments are stored and disaggregated in OnTrack (an academic data management software).
- Campus and teacher data trackers are utilized to monitor student progress.
- Students track their own progress on specific objectives/ TEKS in core subject areas.
- Students understand that assessments are meant to provide a snapshot of their growth. Educators then use that snapshot to highlight areas for growth, as well as areas of mastery.
- Informal teacher assessments are tracked through anecdotal records while aggressively monitoring specific “look-fors”.

Reporting Assessments:

- Students and parents receive an IB Progress Report twice a year showing student progress through the learning objectives.
- State assessments are reported yearly to the community by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) on the district and campus report card.
- Campus assessment reports are sent to the district following each end-of-unit assessment.
- Educators communicate student progress to parents through parent-teacher conferences.
- Parents have complete access to all student grades through HISD Connect (Parent Portal) and receive progress/report cards every three weeks. • Educators and students hold conferences to discuss progress

Timelines

Lanier Middle School follows a timeline for assessments based on Unit Plans scope and sequence for all core subject groups. District summative assessments are included on the campus calendar to ensure scholars are not overburdened with tests for several subject areas at one time.

Assessment Policy Review Process

This policy has been created using IB support materials, district data, and input from all stakeholders and shall be reviewed by all stakeholders each year to ensure continued alignment with IB and local district expectations. Newly hired teachers will be trained on assessment practices throughout the first semester of their teaching contract. Parents and students shall be made aware of this policy through normal communication channels at the beginning of each semester. This policy is communicated to staff and faculty in regular PLC meetings and team meetings.

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Resources

Houston ISD Grading Policies. Accessed May 12, 2026

<https://www.houstonisd.org/families-students/student-requirements-expectations/grading-report-cards>

Houston ISD Student Code of Conduct 25-26. Accessed May 12, 2026

<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1754332774/houstonisdorg/dv0q0osmrwlz2xny1hnl/HISD-Student-Handbook-Unified-2025-2026.pdf>

Springwoods Village Middle School MYP Assessment Policy. Accessed May 11, 2023, from

<https://www.springisd.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=15650&dataid=26894&FileName=SVMS%20Assessment%20Policy%20%202022-2023.pdf>

Travis Science Academy IB Assessment Policy. Accessed May 12, 2023, from

<https://4.files.edl.io/a115/01/08/21/193242-b8aa2335-a3d3-4545-a3e5-e31cb671990e.pdf>

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Assessments policy will be reviewed yearly with staff, leadership, and families.

*Updated May 2026 by Eileen Bell, IB MYP Programme Coordinator

Updated May 2026