Changchun American International School

Assessment Policy

ASSESSMENT PHILOSOPHY

In CAIS, we use assessment as a tool to inform and support student learning. By understanding our learners we can adapt and change our instruction and engagements to help students and teachers reach expectations set forth by our programme. Our students are made aware of the purpose and criteria for assessment and our teachers facilitate learning experiences designed to enable the students to meet the assessment requirements. Assessment tasks are differentiated to meet the diverse linguistic, cultural, and learning needs of our students while at the same time maintaining consistent standards of excellence.

PURPOSES OF ASSESSMENT

The prime purpose of any assessment is to provide particular or all members of the school community with communicative and legible feedback that would structure planning for future learning and teaching. Effective assessment empowers school community and contributes to the transparency of the programme within the school.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT

Approaches to learning and assessment

All learners will be expected to demonstrate that they are inquirers,

knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced and reflective and they should reflect on their development of these characteristics. Attitudes are explicitly taught and emphasized.

Authentic

Real world tasks will be engaged in, which demonstrate the meaningful, effective and creative application of essential knowledge and skills.

Collaborative

Meaningful dialogues between teachers, students and parents concerning planning, reflecting upon, supporting and reporting on assessment procedures will take place. They will take place at any point in the teaching and learning cycle and involve a variety of exchanges between a variety of participants.

Personalised

Tasks and assessment can and will be negotiated, differentiated. A personalised approach to assessment will provide a range of learning opportunities which are matched to students' needs, interests and aspirations. It will capitalise on their strengths and meet their needs by providing positive learning experiences to secure their success.

ASSESSMENT FOR STUDENTS
Roles and Responsibilities

- Encourages analyzing learning, understanding what needs to be improved, planning and take action in order to evince visible progress in their learning and development of skills

- Revises knowledge and applies previously gained skills in current learning.
- Highlights strengths and takes/applies constructive criticism in peer- and self evaluation.
- Provides motivation and purpose for learning.
- Identifies students' personal strengths and learning styles.
- Clarifies targeted standards for skills, knowledge, understandings and dispositions.
- Provides evidence of students' learning and application of skills, knowledge, understanding and dispositions.
- Provides evidence that students can apply learning in a variety of situations.
- Provides evidence of individual student performance.
- Provides opportunities to reflect on learning through evaluation of results and feedback.
- Allows students to demonstrate critical and creative thinking.
- Demands the setting and appraisal of individual goals.
- Allows students to share their learning and understanding with others.
- Permits the use of a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities to express understanding.
- Encourages expression of different points of view and interpretations.
- Appreciates and celebrates achievement.

ASSESSMENT FOR TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Roles and responsibilities

- Offers feedback not only to the students but also parents and other teaching staff and members of school community concerned with that specific learner(when appropriate).
- Should be analyzed and undergo peer- and self-evaluation just as students do.

- Should take into account multiple learning styles, intelligences and personalities when compiling valid assessment task for their students.
- Should aim at choosing and applying most authentic and context bound forms of assessment available.
- Provides evidence for differentiation requirements and individual student needs.
- Build up a clear picture of the student and his or her interests
- Identify what and how the student is thinking and learning
- Maintains curriculum and teaching standards
- Clarifies targeted learning objectives, standards and benchmarks for skills, knowledge, understandings and dispositions
- Provides information to modify and improve teaching objectives and practice through individual and collaborative study and evaluation of results
- Allows for accurate recording and reporting of student progress
- Provides evidence for useful feedback to students, parents and administrators
- Permits evaluation of courses and instructional methodology.
- Provides data from which to evaluate and revise curriculum and methodology on a continuing basis.

ASSESSMENT FOR PARENTS
Roles and responsibilities

- Encourages to support and enhance student learning by providing both children and teachers with personal feedback and the latter with background information on their children and their unique identity.
- Engages them in supporting their child's education
- Provides evidence of their child's learning and development
- Develops an understanding of their child's progress.

- Enables them to gauge success of the school in meeting the needs of their children in the context of its stated philosophy and mission.

TYPES OF ASSESSMENT

Internal Formative Assessment

Formative assessments occur concurrently with instruction. They provide specific feedback to teachers and students for the purpose of guiding instruction and improving learning. They include formal and informal methods, such as quizzes, oral questioning, teacher observation, drafts, brainstorms, concept maps, learning logs and portfolio reviews. Teachers may grade formative assessment against programme criteria although the results are usually not factored into summative evaluation and grading.

Internal Summative Assessment

Summative assessments summarize what students have learned at the end of an instructional segment. These assessments are evaluative and reported by a score or grade and recorded on a report card against programme criteria. They include tests, exams and culminating projects.

Self Assessment and Peer Assessment

Self assessment allows students to become more independent, creative and critical learners by reflecting on their own work and practice. Peer assessment allows students to better understand and apply criteria as well as to engage in collaborative learning.

FREQUENCY

Pre-assessment

Pre-assessment is one of the ignition points of the inquiry process in the classroom and provides the teacher with vital information on students prior knowledge and experience.

Formative assessment

Formative assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process as it is ongoing in its nature. Formative assessment tasks are essential in the well develop planner and inquiry classroom as they supports student and teacher decisions concerning next stages of learning.

Summative assessment

Summative assessment constitutes a very important part of the inquiry cycle. It offers students a chance to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the unit taught by applying it in new contexts. Summative assessment tasks are already accounted for in the early stages of shaping the planner for the UOI.

The Exhibition

The exhibition may be perceived as the PYP's culminating summative assessment project with students both analyzing and synthesizing their prior knowledge to summarize their PYP experience and celebrate their transition from PYP to MYP learner.

The exhibition requires all students to show proof for applying five essential elements of PYP (knowledge, concepts, sills, attitude and action)in authentic context. It also allows students to display their PYP learner profile attributes.

In preparation for the exhibition main teacher along with PYP coordinator hold a meeting with parents and regular meeting with students to inform them of the project and its characteristic. Both teacher and coordinator assure that children are fully aware of the ‑instructions and guidelines for the exhibition and are assisted in choosing the problems that will undergo investigation.

Strategy/Form

Teachers use a variety of school based assessment strategies that contribute to creating a precise image of learner's progress. These strategies include the following:

- **Observations**

- **Performance assessment**

- **Process focused assessment**

- **Interviews**

- **Project reviews**

- **Essays**

- **Research projects**

- **Field work**

- **Self and peer assessment rubrics**

- **Portfolio**

- **Homework**

RECORDING ASSESSMENT

Results of student assessment are recorded in the teachers' mark book throughout the school year and provide documentation of evidence to track and evaluate student progress and to share with the individual student or parent if necessary.

Teachers apply the following assessment recording tools.

Rubrics can be developed and used both by teachers and students, they present different sets of criteria concerning particular performance levels in delivering projects, written assignments and presentations. They inform students and teachers of the required characteristics of work.

Benchmarks/exemplars are carefully selected samples of students work that can be used together with rubrics or continuums to present desired shape of excellent student work

Check-lists are lists of characteristics that should be present in students work

Continua are visual presentations of students' prospective progress overtime

Anecdotal records are brief notes based on the observation of students in different UOI engagements

Photographing or videoing concerns taking visual account of students performances, activities, pieces of work etc.

ORGANIZIZNG DOCUMENTATION

Portfolios

Portfolios are collections of student work and reflection that identify student growth and provide a continuum for students to track their learning process and define their growth as a learner. The portfolio provides data to parents, teachers, and students on student progress for individual reflection, student-led conferences, parent-teacher interviews, teacher reflection and data collection. Students and teachers select items to go into the portfolio. The work collected should reflect the student's growth as an inquirer and learner. Items selected for the portfolio will be accompanied with a reflection statement that indicates the reason for that choice.

Further details regarding the use and organization of portfolio are described in the Portfolio Standards and Practices document.

COMMUNICATION OF ASSESSMENT PHILOSOPHY, POLICY AND PRACTICES TO THE COMMUNITY

Samples of students work are collected by both students and teachers and analyzed over time. The analysis takes into account various types of written and spoken performances and a wide array of classroom engagements.

To communicate the results of the analysis CAIS makes use of the following forms of reporting

One to ones with students provide students with ongoing feedback that allows for their growth as a learner, there usually informal in their character/nature and by use of discussion and modeling provide a friendly setting for student self-reflection. These occur whenever needed.

Parent-teacher conferences are an opportunity to establish positive rapport with parents and learn about the student's background. It gives teachers a great chance to share their reflections and evidence of student's progress as well as to delicately voice some concerns. These occur 3 times a year.

Student-led conferences have students' reflect on their own growth and learning and foster a closer educational relationship with the parents as well as challenge students to present organization of work and set goals that would ensure continued progress. These occur once/twice per year.

Progress reports are a collection of data concerning student UOI work with reference to transdisciplinary and disciplinary skills. These are sent out to the parents 4-6 times per year.

Parent-teacher email communication occurs circa twice a month and includes general information about the unit development.

Teachers communicate assessment expectations, processes and criteria to students at the start of a unit of work or when presenting a task.

The school communicates assessment philosophy, policy and practices to the community through a variety of channels, orientation programs, parent information evenings, parent conferences and school publications.

This document will be available for access by community members both on the school's website and on the schools intranet.

ACCESS TO ASSESSED STUDENT WORK

Student portfolios will be available to any student, teacher, staff member, authorized school visitor, or parent. Formative assessments, and other assessment records, will only be accessible to the student, Homeroom Teachers, parent, any staff member that works with that student, and the administration.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

All teachers at CAIS will receive the Assessment Policy document. The document will also be available on intranet.

During Orientation, new teachers to the school will meet with the Programme Coordinators to ensure a common understanding of the assessment policy and practices.

Adherence to the assessment policy will be incorporated into teacher appraisal.

Teachers are encouraged to work collaboratively to develop assessment tasks, both for formative and summative assessments. Peer observation and dialogue is also encouraged, particularly with the management of assessment tasks.

STUDENTS EXPERIENCING ACADEMIC DIFFICULTY

If a student is having extreme difficulty in a subject, and is not reaching the expected class standard, teachers must notify the PYP coordinator as well as the Special Educational Needs Specialist. The Coordinator, teachers and special needs specialist will conference to discuss issues that may be contributing to the

student's difficulties, arrange for further observation and develop an action plan for implementation.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

Students at CAIS are normally promoted from one grade to the next at the end of the school year. Retention of students is not a common practice at CAIS, but there are times when it may be beneficial for the student. The Pedagogical leadership and teachers will consult with the parent (s) or guardian(s) of any child considered for retention. In the event of lack of agreement between the leadership, teachers and parents, the final decision regarding the retention of a student resides with the Principal.

TRANSITION OF ASSESSMENT DATA FROM PYP TO MYP

Primary records of achievement and assessment for each student in Grade 5 will be transferred from Grade 5 homeroom teachers to the MYP Coordinator and Grade 6 homeroom teachers at the end of the school year. This data will be kept in the individual student's file in the Principal's Office. Grade 5 homeroom teachers will meet with the MYP Coordinator and Grade 6 homeroom teachers during the fourth quarter of the student's Grade 6 year in order to share essential information.

REVIEW OF ASSESMENT PRACTICES

Assessment practices will be reviewed as part of the curriculum review cycle and by the teachers throughout the teaching of the unit.

REVIEW CYCLE

CAIS Assessment Policy is a working document and as such will be reviewed on annual basis.

In the next review, particular attention will be given to the development of a school-wide data management system that will track assessment data. Systems to ensure that administrators and teachers utilize data more effectively to inform teaching and learning will be developed and implemented. Professional Development for the use of assessment data will be investigated and offered.

IB Guidelines

Assessment of student work in the CAIS follows the guidelines of the IB for the Primary Years Programme

Guidelines are found in the IB Documents

- Making PYP Happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education Cardiff: IB, 2009
- PYP a Basis of Practice Cardiff

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