**Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Elementary Candidate School**

**Assessment Policy (2020-2021)**

The purpose of this document is to clarify teachers’ understanding of the assessment process within our school setting and to define the assessment process that will be practiced at Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School. It is a constantly evolving document that reflects our school’s unique assessment needs. Our assessment philosophy applies to the whole school and is to be communicated to and understood by all continuing and new teachers, students, parents, and administrators. It is directly linked to our Mission Statement is: Joseph A. McNeil Elementary School provides a positive and nurturing environment committed to achieving excellence and success. All students are prepared to thrive in an evolving global society by learning to be critical thinkers, collaborative problem solvers, and effective communicators. Our school community embraces diversity, promotes cultural awareness, and welcomes families and community as an important part of the learning process.

Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School aims to prepare children to function successfully in a global and changing world by helping every student:

* develop a love of learning
* become caring for others and the world we live in
* practice and demonstrate critical thinking skills through inquiry
* strive for maximum academic growth and knowledge
* recognize and enhance strengths and talents
* value and respect one-self and other’s backgrounds, beliefs and cultures
* develop a sense of international mindedness

The teachers, staff, administrators, and parents working in partnership, will promote communication and pursue growth to maximize the educational environment.

**Philosophy**

The Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Elementary Candidate School community supports the IB philosophy of backward design. This philosophy includes understanding and communicating to teachers, students, parents, staff, and administrators what will be assessed, the methods used to assess, the purpose of the assessment and the criteria of success for each type of assessment.

Assessment is ongoing throughout the learning process and is used to guide teaching and learning. This assessment process includes assessment of prior knowledge, formative assessments to drive instruction and summative assessments to demonstrate conceptual understanding.

Student and teacher self-assessment and reflection serve as valuable steps in the learning

process. It enhances student learning throughout the Program of Inquiry and guides them

through the PYP elements of Teaching and learning:

* the acquisition of knowledge
* the understanding of concepts
* the approaches to learning
* the decision to take action.

Teachers are mindful that students are unique and at different stages in the learning process. They also understand that there are various types of learners, with various interests. Assessments should accommodate for these variations.

**Written Curriculum**

Standard-based Units of Inquiry are created to engage students in learning that causes them to be responsible individuals in their community. They are guided to understand fundamental principles in the following content areas: language, mathematics, science, social studies, arts, personal, social and physical education. Reading comprehension and text analysis are skills that will be employed for exploratory learning and research. The pedagogical practices for instruction will require students to inquire, explore, question, create solutions, and present findings. These are the intended content and conceptual understandings that the students are expected to learn through Inquiry-based learning.

The cycles of Inquiry learning include:

* **I Wonder-**notice, ask a question, state problems
* **I Investigate-** plan, read, research, field, interview
* **I Record-** data, organize, describe, classify, graph, draw
* **I Discover-**observe, examine, measure, interpret
* **I Think-**relate, discuss, analyze, alternative explanations
* **I Try-**experiments, model, ideas, repeat
* **I Reflect-**revise, rethink, improvise, conclude

**Taught Curriculum**

The content and concepts that are presented during instructional periods. This includes the lesson and the tasks that are intentionally created to sharpen skills and increase knowledge of grade-level conceptual understanding.

**Assessed Curriculum**

The Assessed Curriculum is what is evaluated in teacher-made tests, District provided tests, and State Assessments. In these examinations, knowledge and skill level of the students is determined. This is a measure to ensure that Standard Based Instruction is provided and that student expectations reflect rigor.

**Principles of Effective Assessments**

Assessment is an ongoing process of gathering, analyzing, reflecting and acting on evidence of student learning to inform teaching. Assessment involves teachers and students collaborating to monitor, document, measure, report and adjusts learning. Students actively engage in assessing and reflecting on their learning, acting on feedback from peers and teachers to feed-forward to the next steps in learning. Fostering an assessment culture involves the development of assessment capability among all members of the learning community.

A variety of approaches to learning is used to assess the students’ understanding of the

elements (focus on monitoring, documenting, measuring and reporting) on knowledge, concepts, approaches to learning, and action. The following characteristics describe some of the principles of effective assessments administered at Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School:

* ongoing student, teacher, parent, peer and self-assessments and reflections
* inquiry-based
* builds on previous knowledge
* connected to the IB Learner Profile Attributes
* connected to the Central Idea of the unit of inquiry
* connected to the concepts and the lines of inquiry of the unit
* meaningful and relevant to the learner
* age and grade-appropriate
* diverse and varied to meet a variety of learning styles and interests including, but not

limited to:

* students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP)
* students with Response to Intervention (RtI) Plan
* English Language Learner (ELL)
* clear and concise
* supports the understanding of concepts without cultural, racial, gender, ethnic or religious bias
* provides timely and relevant feedback
* supports the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measure of Academic Progress (MAP)
* supports the iReady Assessments of essential knowledge and skills data-driven

**Assessment Practices**

The ways in which we practice assessments will lead to effective assessments for our students.

These practices lead to significant feedback for students, teachers, parents, administrators and

all other stakeholders, for the purpose of improving the performance and the understanding of

concepts and content. Effective assessment practices include:

* collaborative planning to develop assessment tools, analyze data and reflect on strategies
* assessment of students’ prior knowledge
* formative assessments for each line of inquiry
* summative assessments that assess the central idea
* gathering evidence to draw sound conclusions for planning instruction
* criteria for the learning tasks are clear and known in advance by students, teachers and

parents

* monitoring and assessing progress in the development of the focus on monitoring, documenting, measuring and reporting C4.1.b on knowledge, concepts, approaches to learning, and student-initiated action
* creating opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding of the Central

Idea in a variety of ways that are interest-based, as well as appropriate for various

learning styles and abilities

* a variety of assessment tools are used and selected according to the task to be assessed
* assessments allow for different perspectives
* student progress is assessed in the unit of inquiry, as well as the individual subjects
* grade level grading policies are established for the purpose of consistency
* student-led conferences are practiced to best prepare students for success
* celebrate and support student learning

**Types of Assessments**

* **Philosophy:**

We believe that the teaching/learning cycle starts with assessment, rather than teaching, because if you don’t know what students already know and can do, you don’t know where to start that teaching. (This is the student’s **ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT**). We assess frequently to find out what the student ALREADY KNOWS AND CAN DO, in order to discover what the **next best teaching/learning steps would be.**

**Pre-assessment**

Before teachers begin a unit of inquiry or any new learning experience, they will assess the

student’s prior knowledge to determine what and how to teach. Pre-assessments include:

* prior knowledge of the Central Idea for each unit of inquiry
* Anecdotal records to individualize instruction
* Beginning of the Year (BOY) assessments, district or assessor approved for each subject

Area

* The Zone of Proximal Development is **different for every child in every area of learning**. Each student is a complex individual with a wide range of existing abilities, skills, and knowledge.

Because the Zone of Proximal Development differs for every child in every area, we assess in many different areas in many ways. We do not rely on any one test to plan our instruction but consider a wide range of **relevant and authentic performance data, formal and informal, standardized and non-standardized.**

* We believe that teachers are professionals with the ability to make valid and” weighty” informal assessments, and that parents also can and do contribute valuable assessment data, which should be actively sought.

We collaborate regularly with other teachers, to design, discuss, and reflect on student learning. At the beginning of units, we solicit **student support, and involvement.** At the end, we ask for students to reflect and give feedback as to how students were demonstrating new learning from the units.

* In order to become someone who will change the world as our mission statement asserts, students must be able to self-assess competently to reflect on learning and subsequently grow and change as a life-long learner.

We actively teach our students to be competent at self-assessment in both academic and behavioral areas. We constantly solicit fresh assessment data from students throughout the year and use this valuable data to help guide our planning and instruction. At the end of each unit, students are asked to **reflect on experiences and make contributions to their portfolios.**

* We believe that the best assessments are those that are most **AUTHENTIC,** or most like the task as it exists in the real world.

We assess, for instance, reading by reading, and writing by writing, rather than assessing these complex tasks by doing an artificially contrived task that does not exist in the real world.

**We seek assessments that affect the real world…for instance, by writing a letter to someone or some publication. We seek assessments that do what our motto states: CHANGE THE WORLD.**

* We understand that whatever knowledge, skill, or ability is being assessed, there are many possible and valid ways for an individual student to show that understanding to us.

We do not require all students to have their knowledge and abilities assessed in the same way every time, understanding that the important thing is to know if a student “got it”, not that every student has to show understanding in the exact same way. We honor and validate multiple and often creative forms of assessment. Every **summative assessment in every unit offers choice** in how a student can demonstrate his or her acquisition of the central idea of that unit.

* Assessment data is not just important for teachers, but for everyone involved.

**We regularly communicate assessment data to students, teachers, parents, administration, and the community.** We do not wait only for parent conferences and/or official report cards to share assessment data and/or concerns with parents.

***Teachers, students, will assess, record and report learning through:***

***Units of Inquiry***

***Learner Profile Attributes***

***Student Portfolios***

***Conferencing***

***District/State Assessments***

**Units of Inquiry**

**Purpose:**

Each unit of inquiry will include both formative and summative assessment and will be deliberately planned (in the planners) to be fair, consistent and developmentally appropriate. Joseph a. McNeil teachers are cognizant to make sure that the elements are assessed: knowledge, concepts, approaches to learning, and action. The purpose and means of assessment should be clearly explained to the students.

**Formative Assessments**

Formative assessments are interwoven within each unit of inquiry. Pre-assessment is considered a form of formative assessment and will determine a students’ prior knowledge to plan the next stage of learning within the context of the lines of inquiry. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked; neither can function effectively or purposefully without the other. The tools and strategies of formative assessment can be but are not limited to

strategies to gather information about student learning

* Observations – These observations should be done daily, with the teacher taking

notes on how students work independently and in groups.

* Performance (open-ended tasks) The students respond with an original response that

demonstrates an understanding of what is being assessed.

* Process-focused assessments – The students are observed and are recorded on their

Approaches to learning (AtL) skills.

* Selected responses –multiple-choice, fill-in the items, true-false, matching, short

answers (quizzes and test)

* District benchmarks – measure the students’ progress toward meeting the NYS Common Core and the transition to the NYS Next Gen standards

**Summative Assessments**

Summative Assessment takes place at the end of each unit of inquiry and is an opportunity for students to demonstrate what has been learned highlighting the knowledge, concepts and approaches to learning acquired through the unit of inquiry. Summative assessments may include one or any combination of the following: acquisition of data, synthesis of information, application of knowledge and process. Summative assessments take place at the end of each unit of inquiry to measure the understanding of the Central Idea.

* Evaluation methods to measure proficiency may be through performance-based assessments, student-initiated action or through selected response items.
* Those involved in evaluating student responses, products or performances may include any one or combination of the following; teacher(s), student(s), parents/community members, expert judges.
* Feedback methods may be in one or any combination of the following; numerical score, letter grade, developmental proficiency scale, narrative report, checklist, verbal report/conference.

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**Assessment Tools**

* Rubrics – an established set of criteria for rating students in all areas
* Checklists – lists the information that should be present in students’ work or performance
* Performance task – Students can apply what they have learned to an authentic task
* Exemplars – samples of students’ work that exemplifies the standard of expected work products
* Anecdotal records/notes – written notes on the observations of student work

**Student generated reflections** – Students reflects on what they have learned at the end of a unit. Will take place at the end of each unit. They may be any of the following:

* A general reflection on the unit of inquiry, including knowledge and understanding gained about the central idea and possible future investigations
* A response to a piece of work from the unit of inquiry
* Each student will maintain a running record of “big ideas” taken from each unit so students/parents/guardians will have cumulative student generated assessment from their PYP experience.

**Teacher assessment/reflection of each unit** will occur after a unit of inquiry is taught. As a grade level team, teachers will rewrite/revise numbers 6, 7 and 8 in their planners. Teachers will also make notes in section 9 and change the footer in the planner to annotate any revision dates.

**Learner Profile Attributes**

**Purpose:**

While at Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School, all participants in the learning process are expected to model the attributes of the Learner Profile. The assessment of the policy will be for students to self-reflect and set goals on their development of the attributes.

**Tools / Strategies**:

* 1st grade will introduce the Learner Profile Attribute focusing on one profile a month.
* 2nd through 5th grade students will use the ---------- Learner Profile Reflection to self-assess their growth and understanding of the Learner profile. Teachers agree to give students time at least twice a year to complete the document. This will be housed in the student’s portfolio.
* All units of inquiry have focus learner profile attributes that will be revisited during the duration of unit
* 6th grade will reflect their personal growth/journey through demonstration in the exhibition using electronic data and portfolio pieces.

**Essential Agreements:**

* Assessment of the Learner Profile will be student driven. Parents are encouraged to facilitate student goal setting and reflection with regards to modeling the learner profile attributes of the PYP.
* Students, parents, teachers and school administration are expected to model the Learner Profile Attributes while at Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School.
* Students are held accountable to show evidence of modeling and understanding the characteristics of all profile attributes through behavior, writing reflections and unit of inquiry.

**Purpose of student portfolios**

**Student Portfolios at Joseph A. McNeil:**

* provide samples of student learning and growth
* student voice, choice, and agency
* encourage student self-reflection and assessment of students
* demonstrate IB Learner Profile Attributes
* Development of conceptual understanding
* Applying the Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills
* Decision to take action (agency)
* manageable for the students
* frequently accessed by students throughout the school year
* provide flexibility for teachers/teams to customize portfolios based on student needs

**Management Guidelines of student portfolios: Suggested**

* Students in grades 1-6 will have grade level portfolios. At the end of each school year, students’ portfolios will be sent home with them.
* Grade level teams will determine the format (paper, electronic, blended, folders, binders, etc.)
* Grade level teams will determine how their students’ portfolios will be organized (by Units of Inquiry, Quarters, PYP elements, etc.).
* Grade level teams may determine additional content to be included in students’ portfolios
* Grade level teams will ensure that their students portfolios include the essential content listed below, that we have agreed upon as a whole school.
* A balance of teacher-selected and student-selected work depending upon developmental stage of child

**Required contents of Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School Student Portfolios (Suggested)**

* Student goals and reflections related to Learner Profile attributes and ATL skills
* Student reflections from Unit of Inquiry (UOI) for the grade level
* Documentation of actions the student has chosen to take
* Writing: Monthly or beginning/middle/end of year writing samples
* specialists assessed by rubrics in Music, Art and PE They can create their own

**This essential agreement will be reviewed and updated by the PYP leadership team and staff as needed**.

**Reports (Written)**

All written reports should be clear and readily understood by parents and other stakeholders. They should include the development of academic as well as non-academic learning. Each report is followed by opportunities for discussion between student, parents, and teacher.

* report cards every ten weeks
* standardized test results

**Sixth Grade Exhibition**

Under the guidance of their teachers, the sixth-grade students carry out an extended, collaborative inquiry, called “The Exhibition”. The students demonstrate the essential elements of the PYP (knowledge, concepts, skills, and action.) They also exhibit and demonstrate the attributes of the IB learner profile in this extended unit of inquiry. All exhibitions are student-initiated, designed and collaborative.

* **Student-initiated:** Students have a role in choosing the issue or opportunity to be explored; the transdisciplinary theme(s); the development of the central idea; the lines of inquiry; and identification of the key and related concepts that will drive their inquiries. They identify what knowledge they will need to acquire, and what skills they will need to develop.
* **Student-designed:** Students design their learning goals and establish the criteria of what success will look like for them. They co-design strategies and tools with teachers, mentors and peers to document and self-assess their learning, and evaluate the success of the exhibition.
* **Collaborative:** Students collaborate with their peers, teachers and mentors throughout the exhibition process. There is a genuine sense of participation and engagement through regular sharing of progress and feedback. As students are diverse, some will engage with the exhibition in groups while others will engage individually, supported by mentors.

All students take an active role in all aspects of planning, inquiring, investigating, communicating and assessing their learning in the exhibition. All students will benefit from guidance and collaboration with teachers, peers and mentors to facilitate, direct and adjust their learning.

* **District Required Assessments (**district required standardized tests)
* New York State English Language Arts Assessment (NYSELA) – grades 3-5
* New York State Mathematics Assessment (NYS Mathematics) – grades 3-5
* New York State Science Assessment – grade 4
* New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT)

**DISTRICT/STATE ASSESSMENTS SCHEDULE**

**Grade 1 to Grade 6**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| MONTH | TESTING | GRADE IMPACTED |
| Sept/Oct-May | NWEA (MAP) Math/Reading  Measures if Academic Progress | Grades 1-6 |
| September | iReady **ongoing** | Grades 1-6 |
| March | NYS English Language Arts Assessment | Grades 3-6 |
|  | NYS Mathematics Assessment | Grades 3-6 |
| April/June 2021 | NYSESLAT/Speaking | All Grades |
| May  June 2021  May/June | NYSESLAT/Listening, Reading, and Writing  Make-Ups  NYS 4th Grade Science Assessment  NWEA & iReady | All Grades  Grade 4  All Grades |

**District Grading Policy (Ref-4710)**

Grading System

The classroom teachers shall be guided by the criteria set forth for grading students.  They will use the following factors to calculate the achievement and performance of the students in assigning quarterly grades:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| District-Wide-Per-Quarter |  |
| Test Grades | 60% |
| Projects | 20% |
| Class Work | 10% |
| Homework | 10% |
| Final Exam/Regents | 10% of the final grade |

**Grades 1-6**

For grades 1-6, the Grading System for Achievement will be used as the marking key to indicate the student's performance in relation to the standards.

(4) Independent- At this time, the child understands and meets expectations for task or behavior.

(3) Developing-At this time, the child's progress toward tasks or behavior is steady and consistent.

(2) Beginning- At this time, the child is making attempts to accomplish the task.

(1) Experiencing Difficulty- At this time, the child is unable to complete tasks or exhibit appropriate behavior without assistance.

Grading will not be used for disciplinary purposes, i.e., reducing grades for an unexcused absence, although a lower grade can be given for failure to complete assigned work or for a lack of class participation.

**Recording and Recording Practices**

**Student Progress Reports to Parents (Ref -4712)**

Progress reports of each individual student's academic achievement will be issued periodically following an evaluation by the appropriate teacher(s) or other professional personnel. This report shall be based upon full information, accurately and honestly reported with proper maintenance of confidentiality. Copies of letters sent to parents/guardians relating to a particular situation or problem should be kept in student folders.

In addition to these periodic reports, parents shall be notified when a student’s performance requires special attention. Parents are urged to visit the school and confer with guidance counselors and teachers. They are requested to arrange appointments in advance and through the school office.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Grade Reporting Period** | **Time Period** |
| Week 1-10 | First Quarter Report |
| Week 11-20 | Second Quarter Report |
| Week 21-30 | Third Quarter Report |
| Week 31-40 | Fourth Quarter Final Reporting |

**Conferences**

**Philosophy:**

The primary function of reporting student progress is to establish, encourage and maintain communication between the home and school, the child and parent/guardian, and the learner and teacher.

**Purpose:**

Parent/Teacher conferences is an opportunity to establish a relationship with a parent/guardian (s). One goal is for the teacher to learn about the student from the parent/guardian to guide instruction. Another goal is for the teacher to share evidence of student learning growth (compared to themselves and grade level expectations or standards) with parents/guardians. Goals and concerns for the year to come are developed and addressed.

**Parent/Guardian-Teacher Conference** **(Ref-4714)**

Teachers have a responsibility to meet with parents to discuss student problems and progress. When a parent requests a conference with a teacher, the teacher shall make every effort to arrange a mutually convenient time. Such conferences should be scheduled around the school day so as not to interfere with the instructional process. Teachers should notify the appropriate Building Principal in advance of such conferences.

**Scheduled Conference**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Conference Setting** | **Time Period** |
| Open House/Meet the Teacher Night | September |
| Conference | November – Report Card Distribution |
| Conference Parent/Teacher | February – Report Card Distribution |
| Conference | April – End of Fourth Quarter |

Conference include the following:

* Communicating student achievement to parents
* Goal Setting
* Review of Student Learning Goals and Tasks
* Review of data and artifacts/evidence collected
* Presentation Growth
* Review of Supports and Effective Tools for Communication
* Discussion of Solutions and Actions
* Student-teacher– can take place as needed during the day or after school

**Student-Led** **Conferences: (student portfolio)**

scheduled at least once a year, with students prepared to discuss their learning with parents and/or staff members.

**Purpose:**

* To report to parents, their student’s growth from the beginning of the year September -November. (This means we need baseline data from September, and it would be great if we had something consistent that we agreed on across grades).
* To have students reflect on their own growth and take ownership for their own learning.
* To set goals with the student and parent to insure the student’s continued success.

**Teacher/Student Conferences: On-going**

**Purpose:**

* Student feedback is critical for differentiation and individual growth.
* On-going informal conferencing can guide instruction, goal setting growth plans – designed with a plan to improve student performance.
* To help students with self-reflection by modeling and discussion.

**Plan for Implementation and Review**

The Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School Committee members include the PYP IB Committee Team members, one representative from each of the grade level and specialist teams. The assessment policy will be communicated with parents by the teachers and administrators. The school technology specialist will post the policy on the school website. The implementation of this policy will be evaluated by the PYP Leadership team.

The Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidacy Elementary School Assessment Policy will be effective on September 2020. It will be reviewed and updated by the PYP leadership team and staff as needed.

**Resources**

* Making the PYP Happen, A curriculum framework for international education, IBO
* Hempstead Public School District School Board E-Policy
* Category 2 Assessment Workshop, Texas IB Schools (TIBS)
* Common Elements for PYP Assessment Policy, Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School Committee

<https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/international-baccalaureate/PYP+Playlist/index.html#/page/5c5d69f2ec43cb21c9233814>

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