

# Assessment Policy

## **1. Philosophy**

At The French American School of Tampa Bay, we believe that assessment is a collaborative process which includes teachers, students and their learning support team who work together to assess and analyze the learning journey of the student. Teachers and students collaborate to monitor, document, measure, report and adjust learning in order to ensure that each student's needs are met. Students have agency over their learning as they actively engage in accessing and reflecting upon their knowledge and skills and learn to use feedback from peers, teachers and mentors outside of the classroom to lead them forward in their educational journey.

The French American School of Tampa Bay endeavors to establish an assessment culture which fosters the development of assessment capability among all members of the learning community from students and teachers to parents and others who support a students' educational success. Success is measured by learning goals and success criteria which are co-constructed in a clear fashion which is designed to see growth in both backward (reflective) and forward (action) perspectives.

Assessment is designed around the well-being of our students and is an essential part of their ability to adapt to new challenges and build new strengths. Assessment celebrates the efforts of students to meet learning goals and criteria along with the inquiry based process of PYP learning. The ability to use and reflect upon assessment is essential to building the self-management skills which students carry with them as lifelong learners.

## **2. Objectives of the Assessment Policy**

As an IB World Candidate School, this document strives to ensure that the IB PYP Standards and Practices are in alignment with those of our school. We are committed to the following standards, practices and cultures. This Assessment Policy is in accordance with the Culture 5 of IB Standards and Practices.

Culture 5: The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews an assessment policy or policies to help create a culture of continuous learning and growth. (0301-05)

Culture 5.1: The school implements and reviews an assessment policy that makes the school's philosophy clear and is aligned with the IB philosophy concerning learning and assessment. (0301-05-0100)

Culture 5.2: The school identifies in its assessment policy all necessary local and IB requirements, and outlines how the school is adhering to these requirements. (0301-05-0200)

Culture 5.3: The school describes in its assessment policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and clearly states what constitutes good assessment practice. (0301-05-0300)

Culture 5.4: The school ensures relevant support materials, resources and processes are implemented for fair and valid assessment. (0301-05-0400)

Culture 5.5: The school describes in its assessment policy the value of assessment for continuous learning and growth. (0301-05-0500)

### **3. Purpose of Assessment**

At FASTB, integrated assessment and personal learning goals support the learning journey of each and every student through effective assessment which is authentic, clear, specific, varied, collaborative, interactive and includes feedback to feedforward.

Through assessment, our students are thoughtfully and effectively supported through their acquisition of subject-specific knowledge and skills, the understanding of concepts, the learner profile, and the different approaches to learning.

Assessment is used to make learning transparent between students and their teachers and families. It exists to create a shared understanding of the outcomes of learning and encourages both reflection and feedback. At our school, assessment motivates students to take ownership of their education by providing agency in the ways they can assess themselves and their learning.

### **4. Assessment Principles & Definitions**

Assessment at our school responds to the needs of the learner but also the learning and teaching community at large. It helps families better understand the academic journey of their students, and helps encourage their acquiescence of key skills and concepts which build them into a more self-reliant, responsible and reflective learner.

Assessment can be broken down into three parts which work together to better inform the learner and their entire learning support community.

**What:** Assessment of knowledge, skills and conceptual understandings.

**How :** Learning is measured and documented through various assessment tools and strategies

**Why:** To measure the learning process and reflect on the pedagogical approach

There are also three ways in which assessment is conducted:

**Assessing** – How new skills and knowledge are acquired

**Recording** – How data is collected and analyzed

**Reporting** – How assessment data is communicated and shared with students and family

## 5. Implementation of Assessment Practices

At our school, teachers use careful observation of the inquiry process to monitor student's ability to make connections across subjects and find new ways to apply and build upon their knowledge. We believe that assessment is used to inform and support the inquiry and self-regulated based learning. Self-regulated learning powered by self assessment and self monitoring provides students with the tools needed to internalize their learning and develop strategies to adjust to new challenges. Acquiring the skills needed to assess themselves allows students to grow not only in autonomy but also in awareness of their strengths and academic abilities.

The documentation of assessment allows students and teachers to reflect upon a student's inquiry over time, taking in changes of depth and breadth. Assessment allows students to discover that challenges require solutions based on the integration of knowledge which can be pulled across subjects and languages. Assessment allows students to demonstrate and develop the research skills they have acquired in a subject while deepening conceptual understanding. By reviewing assessments, students are able to further their inquiries successfully in both independent and collaborative research settings.

Assessment is a collaborative journey where learning goals and success criteria are co-constructed by students and teachers, and are set and reset depending on specific needs. These goals are personalized for each student and revised throughout the learning and monitoring process. The implementation of assessment extends beyond the walls of the school as families and student's educational support systems encourage and uphold the learning goals and challenges created from the information provided by the assessments.

### *Implementation of Assessment by Students*

- Being able to self-assess and discuss progress and path towards the acquisition of new skills and learning goals.

- Developing the metacognitive skill of reflecting on learning and laying out future steps.
- Drawing on feedback and reflection strategies to identify how, where and when to adjust learning in order to make improvements and meet learning goals.
- Being a curator of their learning by selecting evidence or samples of learning which best showcase the intended learning goals.

*Implementation of Assessment by Teachers:*

- Promoting self-assessment by encouraging students to challenge misconceptions or misunderstandings they are able to self-correct.
- Supporting students in viewing mistakes as learning opportunities.
- Challenging students to take risks and continue to grow learning skills and abilities.
- Highlight moments when students achieve their goals and appreciate the outcome of their efforts in learning.
- Providing timely, specific, well-considered feedback which allows students to reflect upon their work and grow as lifelong learners.
- Creating an assessment environment which is beneficial to the well-being of students and promotes a positive sense of agency and self-efficacy through self-assessment and reflection.

*Implementation of Assessment by Families:*

- Understanding what, how and why we assess.
- Encouraging and recognizing quality in work, personal and social ethics and behaviors.
- Becoming familiar with the terminology and criteria used for discussing assessment.
- Understanding the collaborative nature of assessment and encouraging the inclusivity of all its members.

## **6. The Four Dimensions of Assessment**

The PYP divides assessment into four different categories: monitoring, documenting, measuring and reporting on learning. Each of these is key in providing information which allows us to best serve our students educational needs and learning goals. These four principles are not equal but all essential to the creation of the wider picture of a students education and the PYP especially values the documentation and monitoring of learning as these are the most crucial in providing actionable feedback to learners.

## Monitoring Learning

Monitoring learning serves as a sign post system which allows students to progress in their learning against learning goals and success criteria. This occurs through a great variety of forms and activities such as:

- Observation
- Questioning
- Reflection
- Discussing Learning with peers and teachers
- Thoughtful feedback which influences next steps in learning (feed forward)
- Open-ended tasks,
- Written or oral assessment
- Learning portfolio

## Measuring Learning

We measure learning in order to better understand what skills and knowledge a student has acquired at a specific benchmark in time. Not all learning can or should be measured and measurement tools are designed to provide further information which supports the larger educational portfolio of each student. At our school we measure learning through a wide range of means including State standards and French Ministry educational guidelines implemented in all accredited French schools worldwide.

## Documenting learning

Documentation of learning is the collection of evidence which supports the journey of learning. It is shared with others to make the learning process visible and open to everyone in the support system of the learner. It provides insight into ways to continue to grow, to reconnect with learning goals and success criteria. This information is documented in a variety of ways to reflect the learning goals, questions, reflections and evidence of learning such as:

- Learning Progress Reports (*carnet de suivi des apprentissages*) - used in Pre-K and Kindergarten, they provide feedback and reflection for ongoing learning.
- Report cards: used from 1st to 5th grade, they include periodic assessments of the student's academic achievements and end-of-cycle assessments for each cycle.
- Portfolios: a physical collection of documents and creations that showcase the student's work.

Documentation tools used in the classroom may resemble:

- Exemplars
- Checklists
- Rubrics

- Anecdotal records
- Portfolios

## Reporting on Learning

Reporting on learning informs the learning community and allows us to better understand the efficacy of our programme. Reporting the progress and achievement of students' learning allows us to find the places where there is room for growth and expand upon the ways we can improve as learners and as part of a learning community. As this is the most visible form of assessment, information is always presented clearly and with careful consideration of both students and families. We ensure this process is conducted in an open and transparent manner understood by learners and their families.

Forms of reporting may include:

- Parent/teacher/student conferences
- Student-led conferences
- Reports
- Learning Progressions
- Assessments mandated through the French Ministry of Education
- DELF/DALF Language Proficiency Exams
- Independent school assessments

### **7. Types of Assessment:**

An array of both formal and informal assessments are used at The French American School of Tampa Bay to build a complete vision of our students progress, abilities and knowledge. It is a collaborative process that not only involves the students and the larger learning community but is also a key component for teachers to measure the effectiveness of what is being taught.

Assessment allows us to assess and analyze but also to reflect upon teaching and learning which encourages our students to have greater agency over their education.

The following assessments are used at FASTB:

#### **Diagnostic/Pre-Assessment**

Diagnostic assessment is used to determine specific instructional needs. It occurs before the teaching of new concepts and is a vital tool to help teachers collect information regarding the learners' prior knowledge and abilities. Diagnostic assessment notably takes place at the start of a new Unit of Inquiry.

## **Formative Assessment**

Formative assessment occurs during daily learning experiences and serves as a guide throughout the learning process by providing regular and frequent feedback to both the teacher and the student. This type of assessment also promotes student agency as it gives the learner the opportunity to assess and improve their current understanding, which in turn fosters their enthusiasm for learning.

## **Summative Assessment**

Summative assessment occurs at the conclusion of a defined learning cycle and is used to gain a clear insight of how effectively learners assimilate the taught material. It gives students the opportunity to demonstrate their new knowledge, skill acquisition and academic achievement, while prompting them toward (taking) action. FASTB uses school developed summative assessments in line with the French Ministry of Education as well as district and state-mandated assessments.

## **Self-Assessment**

Self-assessment allows students to take an active role in their learning. It is an ongoing process during which they develop (their) metacognition and reflection skills. FASTB includes several self-assessment opportunities during our Unit of Inquiry where students reflect upon their goals and the progress made towards meeting them.

## **Assessment of the Essential Elements of the PYP**

Concepts, Knowledge, Skills and Action are at the essence of the Primary Years Programme. These elements are a core part of each Unit of Inquiry and allow teachers and students to monitor and assess the progress of their learning. By acquiring these elements of the PYP education, students are able to reflect on their learning goals and better self-assess their educational journey.

Each Unit of Inquiry focuses on different concepts and skills. The Unit Planner records the learners' progress towards these conceptual understandings, mastery of new skills and provides opportunities for self-reflection.

Assessing new acquired knowledge in each unit can be done through summative assessment, which reflects one's understanding of the central idea of the unit.

Student-initiated actions, inside and outside the classroom are a clear indicator of their understanding, application and assimilation of a unit. The success of a Unit of Inquiry is amplified by the actions taken by students, during and after the completion of a unit. This agency over their own learning is evidence of their growth as researchers as they delve deeper into the skills of lifelong learning.

### **Fifth Grade Exhibition**

The Fifth Grade Exhibition is the culminating experience undertaken by students in their final year of the Primary Years Programme. This collaborative project allows students to put into application all transdisciplinary skills, key and related concepts, in order to construct and carry out an action plan. Students explore, inquire, research, document and finally share their understandings of an inquiry into a topic of their choice through a project of their own creation. This exhibition provides students with an opportunity to exhibit the learner profile attributes they have developed throughout the programme along with the approaches to learning skills they have acquired along their educational journey.

### **Independent School Assessments**

The French American School of Tampa Bay's curriculum follows the standards required by Florida's Department of Education.

We are currently in the process of choosing the best fitting American Assessment in ELA and Maths in English, such as the MAP Growth program or the ERBs. This assessment will be taken in Fifth grade, for students who have spent a minimum of two years at our school.

Our goal is to make the transition to Middle School easy and smooth to either an American school or a French or francophone institution.

### **French Ministry of Education assessment**

Our school is accredited by the French Ministry of Education, which means that it certifies and recognizes that our school provides instruction in accordance with the principles, programs and pedagogical organization of the French educational system.

As such, we adhere to the following standards and evaluation requirements:

- National assessments at the beginning of CP, mid-CP, beginning of CE1.

The aim is to provide teachers with benchmarks that will enable them to assess the learning acquired in First and Second Grade from the very beginning of the year. The main objective of this approach is for teachers to be able to identify the individual needs of each student as quickly as possible and thus provide the most appropriate and earliest possible assistance.



## - End of Cycle 1 Learning Summary

The summary of the student's learning achievements is based on the monitoring of learning carried out in ordinary situations throughout the cycle by the teaching team. It mentions what the student knows how to do and indicates any needs to be taken into account in order to help him/her in the next stage of his/her school career. The establishment of this summary is the responsibility of the educational team of the cycle, it does not give rise to the prior taking of specific evaluation tests.

The document summarizing the student's academic achievements, filled out by the Cycle 1 teaching team, is sent to the elementary school when the student is admitted to the first year of Cycle 2, and communicated to the student's parents or legal guardians.

Additionally, we frequently participate in competitions and additional assessments alongside member schools of the AEFÉ (Agence pour l'Enseignement Français à l'Étranger) and MLF (Mission Laïque Française) networks.

### **DELF/DALF Diploma Assessments**

The DELF (Diplôme d'Études en Langue Française) exam designed by FEI (France Éducation International) is an official certificate awarded by the French Ministry of Education certifying a level of fluency in French. At FASTB, all non-native francophone fifth grade students take the A2 level of this exam prior to graduation. With a 100% success rate, this official assessment celebrates and rewards students for the skills they have acquired in French throughout their education.

To further and maintain their abilities, FASTB offers advanced French classes for students who wish to maintain their French speaking, writing and comprehension abilities after completing their immersion education at school. We offer this class primarily to meet our former students' needs, to keep challenging them, and to help them reach a higher level of fluency in French. The goal of this after-school program is to provide an opportunity for our graduates and other members of the school community to converse in French on a regular basis and to keep up with written skills in a fun and challenging atmosphere.

These classes prepare our alumni for the DELF and DALF (Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française) exams. Such certifications are paramount for school records, as well as college and job applications, as most francophone universities and career opportunities require a DELF B2 level.

## 8. Assessment Tools and Strategies

Authentic assessment of student learning is conducted through classroom observation, Unit of Inquiry assessments, performance assessments, unit reflections and exhibitions. We also adhere to US State and National Standards along with French Ministry of Education benchmarks.

### Reporting

As students, teachers and parents are all part of the assessment of student academic success, we strive to communicate and report the assessments conducted all along our transdisciplinary Units of Inquiry through a variety of reporting methods. These findings are communicated regularly in an effective and clear manner in order to ensure full transparency and understanding.

Classroom Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Anecdotal notes are taken to provide feedback throughout daily classroom activities. (This is especially important during Early Childhood Learning.)</li><li>- Teachers provide self-assessment opportunities by allowing students to do a “Quick Check” of their skills and understandings.</li></ul>
Unit of Inquiry Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Formative assessments to evaluate each line of inquiry.</li><li>- A summative assessment which evaluates the central idea and key concepts.</li></ul>
Independent School Assessments and Benchmarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- We monitor progress in ELA in accordance with Florida B.E.S.T. State standards through regular assessments.</li><li>- By Fall 2023, we will have chosen an Assessment Program (such as MAP) which will be administered in Fifth grade level.</li></ul>
French Ministry of Education Assessments and Benchmarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- In Early Childhood (<i>Maternelle</i>): Students' educational journey is documented in a <i>Carnet de Suivre des Apprentissages</i> (Learning Progress Reports). This document serves to document skill acquisition and development in key areas such as fine motor skills, writing,</li></ul>

	<p>phonics/pre-reading and math.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In First Grade (CP), 2 benchmark assessments are administered twice a year (start of the school year + halfway through the year = Sept. + Jan.) to monitor student standards progress in math and reading (listening comprehension, phonics and letter identification).</li> <li>- In Second Grade (CE1): Once per year students are given benchmark assessments in math, reading and writing.</li> </ul>
Project Performance Assessments - Rubrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Success criteria rubrics of projects are either co-created in class by students and teachers, or reviewed by the class before the start of the assignment.</li> <li>- They allow self-assessment throughout the project and are used as a performance reflection tool afterwards.</li> </ul>
Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student reflections prior, during and post each Unit of Inquiry.</li> <li>- Teachers reflections prior, during and post each Unit of Inquiry.</li> </ul>
Exhibition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Observation of actions taken during and after each unit</li> <li>- Observation of the demonstration of attributes of the learner profile, key and related concepts, along with Approaches to Learning Skills (Social Skills, Research Skills, Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Self-Management Skills) inside and outside the classroom</li> </ul>

**Report cards**

Our Academic Report Cards provide a summative report of the evolution of a student’s academic achievements and serve to liaise between students, teachers and parents. They engulf the student's achievements and progress, the elements of the French Ministry of Education Program

and present the Units of Inquiry covered during the academic year. Report cards also serve to keep records of key concepts, attributes of the learner profile and approaches to learning skills acquired through inquiry based learning. Through report cards, we also document student work and behavior, and may include specific support information or arrangements.

Teachers use report cards to write comments which help facilitate dialogue with families in order to ensure that the students' entire learning support system fully understands their specific learning journey. At FASTB, report cards are discussed during our parent-student-teacher conferences each trimester.

Report cards also serve to provide a clear understanding of a student's educational journey when continuing onto different schools. By providing clear and thorough assessment and comments, outside institutions are best equipped to understand and appreciate a student's abilities and needs.

### **Conferences**

During each trimester, each student meets with their teacher(s) and parent(s) during a student-parent-teacher conference in order to have an open conversation about the student's specific educational journey. It is important that all three parties are included during these meetings in order to ensure that the student remains an active participant of their school experience and continues to have both voice and agency over their education.

All three parties discuss and reflect upon newly acquired skills and needs of the student, and provides a space for setting specific goals and outlining additional steps that can be taken outside of the classroom to support the student's progress.

A copy of each report card is then given to the families for personal records.

### **Portfolios**

In order to account for the Art and Cultural Education program (PEAC in French) implemented at FASTB, portfolios are created jointly by the teacher and the student that reflect the student's growth, commitment, creativity, ingenuity and research over time. This collection celebrates the progress of each student through the PYP and includes snapshots, clippings, examples of work, actions and initiatives taken inside the classroom and during their time in the school community.

Students have agency over their learning by selecting pieces they feel best demonstrate their skills and abilities across transdisciplinary subjects which are complemented by those added by their teachers. This collaboration ensures that the student is at the center of their learning and is able to best assess and reflect their progress and learning.

The portfolio also works to highlight student work by ensuring all families are aware of the experiences, assessments and skills students acquired during their educational journey. This personalized museum of progress includes reflections, written work and artwork along with evidence of action and inquiry.

These sources of information not only communicate a student's learning path to his or her family, but can also serve as proof of the student's hard work and skills. They are a record of a visit, a meeting with a speaker (artistic, scientific, etc.), or an exceptional moment of discovery of a work.

This collection of work and effort is shared with parents each school year and remains an important reference point for the rest of their educational journey.

Student Portfolios May Include:

- DELF Diploma
- Works of Art and Music chosen by the student and teacher
- Examples of Writing Development and Skills in French/English chosen by the student and teacher
- Examples of Mathematical Thinking and Skills chosen by the student and teacher
- Projects, Presentations, Outings, Works and/or Reflections linked to the Unit of Inquiry
- Examples of Class work in transdisciplinary subjects such as Math, Science or History
- Examples of Student Reflections, Self-Assessments
- Examples of Student-Initiated Actions (when applicable)

## **9. Assessment Policy Revision**

In accordance with IB Standards and Practices, this Assessment Policy adheres to IB *Culture 6: The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews its IB- mandated policies to ensure they are cohesive and reflect IB philosophy.*

This policy was adapted and expanded from existing school assessment policies in August 2022. It is reviewed and reflected upon annually by administrative and teaching staff, along with the greater school community.

## **10. Bibliography**

*Learning and Teaching Primary Years Programme*, October 2018

*Programme Standards and Practices*, March 2018

*The Learning Community*, December 2018

Leading the Learning - IB Professional Development Course, Cat. 1

Making the PYP Happen - IB Professional Development Course, Cat. 1

[My IB Programme Resource Center](#)