



Assessment Policy

I. PHILOSOPHY

- A. At Providence Hall Charter School (PHCS) we believe that assessment is vital to all teaching and learning. We use assessment to drive our instruction and the feedback provided by assessment allows for improvement and accountability. Our school mission statement declares that PHCS encourages students to
 1. **“Think Critically, Communicate Effectively and Act Responsibly in an ever-changing Global Community.”**
- B. Ongoing assessment, both formal and informal, will give us the ability to teach critical thinking skills and encourage student academic achievement and success.
- C. As all students at PHCS participate in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program appropriate to their age and ability level (see Admissions Policy) this Assessment Policy applies to all students at PHCS.

II. PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

- A. Assessment in its various forms is a critical component of the educational journey.
- B. Assessment provides students with opportunities to determine the degree to which they have mastered content knowledge and skills and to reflect on their progress, allowing for self-evaluation of strengths and areas for improvement in each subject area.
- C. Assessment also provides teachers the ability to determine the degree to which students have attained mastery of content knowledge and skills, revise their curriculum and instruction to meet student needs and reflect on their own knowledge and skills, strengthening one’s professional practice.

III. TYPES OF ASSESSMENT

A. **Formative Assessment**

The purpose of formative assessment is to drive teacher instruction and provide students with feedback so that students can improve. The students come to the classroom with prior knowledge of different subjects and with different life experiences, and teachers must access this prior knowledge to determine what the students know and what they need to work on.

1. Formative assessment can be used to determine the baseline of the class to inform the instructional needs.
2. Formative assessments can be used throughout the unit to allow teachers to see what the students have learned and to see if the instructional methods have been effective.
3. Formative assessments can take the form of student-teacher interviews, peer and self-feedback, dialogue journals, and other formal or informal means. Feedback needs to be given to students quickly and directly so students know where they stand in their knowledge and skills.

B. **Summative Assessment**

The purpose of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning skills and knowledge within a particular period of time, and shows the level of skills that students have acquired throughout a unit of work. It is a summary of student’s knowledge and skills based on the desired objectives of the particular unit of work, which are based on Utah State Standards and the aims and objectives of the IB Program in which they are enrolled. Criterion based assessments are used with summative tasks at the junior high in the Middle Years Program (MYP) and at the high school in the Diploma Program (DP), so students know exactly what they will be assessed on.



1. **Common Summative Assessment**

When there is more than one teacher for the same subject in the same grade level teachers plan, administer, and grade their summative assessments together to ensure standardization of criteria and grading across the classes. If a student contests their grade on a particular assignment or assessment an administrator will take a random sampling of three students in addition to the student in question and grade the assignment against published criteria to ensure unbiased grading. Periodically as part of our professional development, assessments will be graded by a teacher in another grade level or subject area to help improve grading practices across the school.

C. **Portfolio in Primary Years Program (PYP) at the Elementary**

A portfolio is a record of students' involvement in learning which is designed to demonstrate success, growth, high-order thinking, creativity, assessment strategies and reflection. A portfolio is a celebration of an active mind at work," (Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2007).

1. **Purpose of Portfolios**

- a. Empower students to be active participants in their own learning
- b. Encourage reflection on the learning process and achievements
- c. Encourage students and parents to see learning as a continuous process
- d. Encouraging a sense of pride in one's work and thereby building self-esteem

D. **Diagnostic Assessment in the PYP at the Elementary & MYP at the Junior High**

The purpose of a diagnostic assessment is to measure a students' growth against a set of standards or objectives. PHCS administers common diagnostic testing to its students three times a year (Fall, Winter, Spring) in math and language arts to assess students' understanding against the standards and objectives outlined in the scope and sequence of the course.

E. **End of Level Testing at the Elementary & at the Junior High**

1. In accordance with Utah State Board of Education regulations and the PHCS' Charter, all students also participate in statewide end of level testing. Our state and federal government, to show growth and compare knowledge across the country, mandate these tests.
2. Grades 3-8 participate in these testing procedures and are questioned on items under language arts and math, and grades 4-8 are also tested on their science skills.
3. These assessments are once per year and generally take two hours to complete each.
4. The data gathered from these tests are used to help our teachers analyze their own teaching practice and refine it for the next year.
5. These tests are comprehensive and evaluate the knowledge gained from teaching the state's core curriculum guide.
6. The teachers use the core curriculum to help students reach standards at each age level.
7. The state core guides the curriculum of the school.
8. When framing our IB units of inquiry we have combined the state core requirements with IB requirements, where applicable, to form our content.

IV. **ASSESSMENT WITH THE PYP AT THE ELEMENTARY**

- A. In keeping with PHCS' assessment principles and the spirit of the IB PYP, assessment at PHCS Elementary is geared toward improving, rather than simply documenting, student performance.
 1. The use of assessment to judge the effectiveness of both teaching and learning processes is essential to allow teachers and students to identify their strengths and weaknesses and the effectiveness of the program.



2. The objective and process of any assessment should be clearly explained to the students.
- B. The Exhibition takes place at the end of Grade 5 and requires students to demonstrate their learning through the PYP, and how they can apply their understanding to an independent situation. It provides a good summative assessment of student learning throughout our program.

V. ASSESSMENT WITH THE MYP AT THE JUNIOR HIGH

- A. Assessment Criteria Rubrics, modified for age, subject and task are used to grade and provide feedback on summative assessments. Teachers can then see where students are with relation to the objective, and in comparison, to other students at the same grade level. In Year 3 of the MYP published Assessment Criteria are used to ensure that assessment is standardized across the program.
- B. In the MYP, each teacher gives students the opportunity to earn a MYP grade in each criterion at least one time every semester (two reporting periods). Teachers record the MYP grades as they are covered within their curriculum. A summative score for each criterion is also recorded at the end of each school year to show progress with each Assessment Criteria. All grades are recorded in Skyward, our school administrative software, which allows both students and parents/guardians the opportunity to keep track of their grades and progress throughout the school year and at all levels of the program.
- C. In all MYP courses, students will receive an IB grade as well as an averaged percentage. Final Marks for the IB MYP Criterion for each subject level will be reported as an attachment to the regular report card based on the grade conversion charts that are attached at the end of this policy.
- D. The Community Project is completed during Year 3 (8th Grade) of the MYP and requires students to demonstrate their learning throughout the MYP in a personal and creative way. The topic should be based around a topic that interests and motivates the students and offers an opportunity for differentiation of learning and expression according to individual needs.

VI. ASSESSMENT WITH THE DP AT THE HIGH SCHOOL

IB uses internationally benchmarked criterion-referenced assessments and awards points leading to an IB Diploma. The grading guidelines and rubrics used are identical for all IB schools across the world.

A. Internal Assessment

Internal assessments are pieces of student work that are evaluated by their content teacher who gives the assessment a score which may then be moderated by external examiners to ensure international parity aligned to the IB assessment criteria in that subject area. Internal assessments often allow for greater student flexibility in exhibiting their acquired knowledge and skills according to IB criterion-referenced rubrics as well as the opportunity for students to show their work over time and outside of the restrictions of the examination environment.

1. The calendar dates for the completion of internal assessments is governed by the PHCS Internal Calendar. This document is agreed to by all teachers and published to students, parents/guardians, and the PHCS website. It is designed to spread out the workload of the IB Diploma program over two years and provide a timeline for students to follow.
2. Assessment benchmarks and deadlines are communicated through course syllabi and the online IB calendar found on the PHCS website.



B. Written Task, TOK Paper & Presentation, and the Extended Essay External Assessment
External assessments also enable students to show their work over time and outside of the restrictions of the examination environment.

1. Similar to internal assessments, these external assessments are evaluated according to the established subject area criteria.
2. External assessments are not evaluated by the subject area teacher, however, but are marked externally by IB examiners.

C. Final Examinations

The final category of summative assessment is the subject area examinations, administered in May each year.

1. Examinations occur under strictly controlled conditions and often over a two-day period for each subject area (the afternoon and the following morning).
2. The examination papers consist of a variety of assessment vehicles including short-answer, essay, data-analysis, open-ended problem solving, case studies, commentaries and multiple choice.
3. In order to sit for the examinations, students must complete all required internal and external assessments for the subject area.
4. Examinations are mailed within 24 hours following the examination, to external examiners around the world for assessment.
5. Examination marks are then combined with marks earned on the internal and external assessments to create the final subject grade.

D. IB Diploma Passing Regulations

1. Performance in each of the six Diploma subjects is graded on a scale of 1-7, with 7 being the highest.
2. A maximum of 3 bonus points is awarded for combined performance in Theory of Knowledge and on the Extended Essay.
3. The maximum possible score is thus 45 points.
4. The minimum score for a candidate to earn their IB Diploma is 24 points.
5. The IB Diploma will be awarded to a candidate whose total score is 24 points or above, provided all the following requirements have been met:
 - a. CAS is completed
 - b. Both the Theory of Knowledge paper and Extended Essay have been turned in, with a grade of at least D on both of them
 - c. There is no grade 1 or Ns on any subject exam
 - d. There is no more than two grade 2s on any exam
 - e. Overall, there are no more than three grades 3 or below
 - f. At least 12 points have been gained on higher level subjects
 - g. At least 9 points have been gained on standard level subjects
 - h. The final award committee has not judged the candidate to be guilty of any form of malpractice

VII. STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

At PHCS there are students with special learning needs who may be on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or may need ELL services. These students may require accommodations or modifications.

- A. Assessment will be adapted or modified for these students based on their individual needs, with consultation among the teacher(s), case manager and parents as detailed in the Language Policy and Special Needs Policy.



VIII. RECORDING OF ASSESSMENTS

- A. PHCSl has four reporting periods each year.
 - 1. Each quarter is approximately 45 days long.
 - 2. Students are evaluated on each subject area: Language and Literature (English), Language Acquisition (Foreign language), Individuals and Societies (History), Mathematics, Sciences, Arts, Physical Education and Health and Design/Technology (PYP & MYP).
 - 3. DP students will be evaluated in each of the 6 groups and TOK.
- B. As teachers receive assignments, projects, and tests they have one week to grade the assignment and record their grade in our online grade book, Skyward, for students and parents/guardians to view.
 - 1. At the end of every reporting period teachers will finalize their grades for that reporting period and reset their grade books to start fresh for the new period.
 - 2. Teachers will work with each other on interdisciplinary units and will develop common assessment tasks that transfer knowledge and skills across subject areas.

IX. COMMUNICATION OF ASSESSMENTS

There are many different types of ways that assessment data is communicated to parents/guardians at PHCS.

- A. The main source of communication to parents/guardians about assessment scores is currently through Skyward (and Canvas at the secondary level).
- B. We use a variety of other manners to communicate data to students and parents/guardians, including, but not limited to, student-led conferences, emails, parent nights, and teacher blogs/websites.

The timetable for reporting is as follows	
September	Parent Teacher Conferences
October	Term 1 Report Card
January	Term 2 Report Card
March	Term 3 Report Card and Parent Teacher Conferences
June	Term 4 Report Card

Grading Scale and Descriptors within the MYP	
Letter Grade	IB Score
A	8
A-	7
B+	7
B	6
B-	6
C+	5
C	4
C-	4
D+	3
D	3
D-	2
F	1



High School Grading Scale	
Letter Grade	Percentage Grade
A	94-100
A-	90-93.9
B+	87-89.9
B	84-86.9
B-	80-83.9
C+	77-79.9
C	74-76.9
C-	70-73.9
D+	67-69.9
D	64-66.9
D-	60-6.9
F	0-59.9

X. POLICY USE AND REVIEW

PHCS' assessment policy is a working document that guides teacher practice and furthers student development as balanced, whole learners. It will be reviewed and revised yearly, or as necessary, by the school's pedagogical leadership team (administrators, IB Coordinators, department heads and interested teachers).