

# Discovery Assessment Policy

## Assessment of student learning

The Vancouver School District states that sound assessment is an essential ingredient in high quality instruction. It is paramount that assessment and instruction be integrated.

In the Discovery Middle Years Programme community, we will use all available resources to:

1. **Engage** students in their learning
2. **Empower** all students to reach their highest levels of learning
3. **Encourage** the development of positive relationships within a learning community that fosters international understanding, compassion and respect.

## Our community operates with a shared commitment to STAR Standards:

Strive for **Excellence**  
Take Pride in **Place**  
Accept **Responsibility**  
Respect **Everyone**

## Clear learning targets for students

Students are provided daily with clear and objective learning targets that are aligned with the unit question in order to take the mystery out of assessment for them.

## Assessments linked to learning targets

Teachers are asked to examine how their classroom assessments measure student learning on both state standards and MYP aims and objectives. Our master schedule provides teachers with a time within the school day to reflect on assessment use in their subject area. Among other things, this time is used for creating and refining assessments, as well as examining and moderating student work. Teachers also meet within subject area PLC's weekly to work across grade levels in both curriculum and assessment planning.

## Multiple opportunities and methods to demonstrate proficiency

The MYP assessment model asks for multiple assessments for each criterion within a collection of evidence to award a holistic evaluation. This can look differently from student to student, which addresses the need for equity through diversity. Because this assessment model is used to measure student growth, learners can meet and exceed proficiencies at their own pace.

## **Balance between formative and summative assessment**

The use of formative assessment to inform instruction and monitor student learning is critical. These assessments, which are part of a collection of evidence, are the primary guides to classroom instruction and planning.

## **Student involved assessment**

Students have clear targets and objectives, and they understand how these are linked to the assessment criteria on MYP rubrics. Students are taught that the descriptors on MYP rubrics provide the very specific feedback they need in order to identify their own strengths and weaknesses.

This is done through providing examples of strong and weak student work, reflection, descriptive feedback, and empowering students to assume responsibility of tracking their own improvement. Students learn to ask questions about what they need in order to be successful.

## **Equity and consistency**

Teachers use PLC time to moderate their individual scoring with other teachers within their department to ensure equivalent and/or equitable instruction and evaluation across classrooms. Discovery also takes the opportunity offered by MYP to send in assessments to be externally monitored by IB examiners.

## **Types of assessment**

Multiple and varied assessments, both collaboratively developed by teacher teams as well as state and district mandated assessments will be used to evaluate student achievement. Examples of various assessments include:

- Rubric scored assessment tasks developed and implemented by MYP teachers, with reference to MYP objectives and state standards.
- Tasks with opportunities for both peer and self-assessment
- MYP developmental workbooks/design folders for arts and technology
- Performances, demonstrations, and practical work
- "Real-life" problems and experiments
- Collaborative or individual projects or problems
- Written assignments
- Unit exams
- Verbal discussion
- Open-ended tasks
- Labs
- Process journals

- Presentations, using a variety of media
- District and state tests including End of Course Assessments (EOC's) and Classroom Based Assessments (CBA's)
- **Summative assessment tasks** – Designing a summative assessment task is one of the first stages in planning a unit of work. The summative assessment is linked to the MYP question and should provide varied opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes.
- **Formative assessment tasks** – These too should be part of each unit of work. Formative assessment tasks provide valuable insights into the extent of learning as the unit of work progresses.

The complexity of the above tasks may be modified to suit students' ages, prior knowledge and developmental stages.

### **Recording of assessment**

Discovery Middle School worked with our district to enable our Skyward grading system to accommodate the recording of MYP criterion referenced grades. As of January, 2013 all MYP criterion have been added to the drop down category selection. In this way, parents will be able to easily track progress of each MYP criterion throughout the year.

All departments work together to decide which MYP criterion numbers match the proficiency levels: highly proficient, proficient, nearly proficient, working toward proficiency, not enough evidence and the grade associated with each of those levels. These are reported in content area syllabi, sent home at the beginning of each academic school year and also referenced at both the fall and spring parent conferences.

Summative assessments are recorded in Skyward using the MYP scoring rubrics for the specific criterion being assessed. The MYP grade can then be converted to the teacher's external grading system model so as to satisfy the district requirements. Each criterion within each subject area should be assessed and recorded at least two times per calendar year.

Adapting the Skyward grading system to incorporate both the traditional letter grades along with the MYP criterion scores will make a smooth transition for parents to embrace the MYP vision. Discovery Middle School is aware that further parent communication and even parent nights might be needed to continue to educate our parents on the MYP criterion within each of the eight subject areas.

