



Assessment & Reporting Policy

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I. SCHOOL VISION, MISSION, AND PHILOSOPHY

A. VISION AND MISSION OF THE ATLANTA NEIGHBORHOOD CHARTER SCHOOL

Our vision is to be a dynamic learning community where students become life-long learners, develop self-knowledge, and are challenged to excel.

The mission of the Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School (ANCS) is to use the principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools (Appendix B) to:

- BUILD an empowered and inclusive community of students, parents, and educators
- CHALLENGE each student to take an active role as an informed citizen in a global society
- ENGAGE the whole child - intellectually, social-emotionally, and physically
- HELP all students to know themselves and to be known well by their community
- COLLABORATE with the larger community to advocate for student-centered schools.

In carrying out our mission, we are guided by the following values and principles.

ANCS is affiliated with the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES), a national network of schools focused on creating schools that are intellectually challenging, personalized, and democratic. CES schools are simply united by a shared commitment to ten Common Principles (Appendix A) that guide teaching, learning, and decision-making at each school. They are:

- Learning to use one's mind well
- Less is more: depth over coverage
- Goals apply to all students
- Personalization
- Student-as-worker/Teacher-as-coach
- Demonstration of mastery
- A tone of decency and trust
- Commitment to the entire school
- Resources dedicated to teaching and learning
- Democracy and equity

At ANCS, our Guiding Principles describe how we are to behave as members of the ANCS school family. We have an individual and collective responsibility to:

- Come to school and every class prepared to learn and do our best
- Respect each other, our surroundings, and ourselves
- Take responsibility for our actions and learning
- Resolve conflicts in a peaceful, thoughtful, and meaningful way
- Celebrate our individual and collective successes.

Additionally, the learners within our school community seek to embody the attributes of the IB MYP Learner Profile.

- Inquirers
- Knowledgeable
- Thinkers
- Communicators
- Principled
- Open-Minded
- Caring
- Risk-Takers/Courageous
- Balanced
- Reflective

II. PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY OF ASSESSMENT POLICY

A. PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT POLICY

This Assessment Policy is designed to ensure transparency, fairness, and equity in our practice and within our school community. This policy is a working document that provides an overview of the beliefs and practices of the members of our school family as they relate to the educational achievement of our students as they work to fulfill the mission of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme and that of the Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School.

B. PHILOSOPHY OF ASSESSMENT

We believe assessment is an integral part of the learning and growth required to become an informed citizen in a global society. Assessment is used to shape instruction, promote communication, and foster collaboration throughout the community, so that students find value in their learning and make connections to the larger world. As part of an ongoing assessment cycle, feedback and reflection are used to inform student action toward personal growth and achievement.

III. PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment is meant to guide practice. It serves as a coaching tool that shapes instructional decisions and informs students of their progress toward learning goals. Assessment, in its different forms, should occur frequently, prior to, during, and at the end of a unit to provide students and teachers with necessary information for the continued growth and progress of each student as well as each entire class.

IV. PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

- Assessment shapes instruction
- Assessment is communicated clearly to stakeholders
- Assessment fosters collaboration throughout the community
- Feedback and reflection are essential components of the assessment cycle
- Assessment focuses on learning and growth
- Assessment reflects citizenship with a global society

V. ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

A. TYPES OF ASSESSMENT

Formative

Formative assessments happen up to several times daily and are an assessment “for” students’ learning. Teachers utilize information gathered from formative assessment to change teaching strategies and provide remediation and enrichment as necessary. Because formative assessments are meant to be in the moment, they are not always announced to students or parents ahead of time and are also not graded on rubrics. This type of assessment can be very informal, occurring through conversation or quick check-ins during the learning process, but can also be more formal with written feedback, such as successive rough drafts of an essay

Summative

Summative assessments occur, generally, at the end of a unit and are an assessment “of” a student’s learning. Summative assessment handouts, including rubrics, will be provided to students and families on (or near) the first day of a unit.

B. ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Teachers utilize various forms of assessment strategies throughout the unit of study to inform themselves and their students of areas of strength and those for growth. In keeping with the principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools, assessments are real world performance tasks, hands-on in nature, and ones that allow students to extend their learning.

C. ASSESSMENT TOOLS

There are a variety of assessment tools utilized to gather information about the achievement and progress of students. In addition to using student achievement levels, state standardized assessments, and the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), ANCS also utilizes a portfolio and exhibition process to gather a broader look at students’ overall learning and growth.

NWEA MAP

In the Fall, Winter, and Spring students take the NWEA MAP test. This test aims to measure what students know and are ready to learn in the areas of math and reading. This assessment is nationally-normed, so it allows us to compare our student achievement with those across the United States. Additionally, it allows us to see student growth and progress over the course of the year and to track trends for intervention and enrichment.

Georgia Milestones Assessment

Each year, during the Spring, students take the state standardized assessment, the Georgia Milestones Assessment. It is designed to provide information about student proficiency with the Georgia Standards of Excellence in the core content areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. Students in Years 1 and 2 take the English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments only. In Year 3, students take the English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments along with the Science and Social Studies assessments. Student performance on this assessment is designed to provide critical information about their own achievement and their readiness for their next level of learning - be it the next grade, the next course, or endeavor (college or career).

Portfolio

In order to gain a full picture of student growth and achievement over the course of a year and throughout middle school, students collect artifacts and work samples to compile into a digital portfolio that is cumulative across Years 1 through 3 and is assessed at the end of each academic year. In this portfolio, there are three sections:

- Service as Action
- Who I Am
- Learner Growth

Exhibition

At the end of the academic year, students are given the opportunity to summarize and reflect on their learning through a public exhibition to members of their advisory as well family and community members. As a part of the exhibition, students are assessed on the skills of interpreting their learning and growth to make a claim and justify it with evidence from coursework, extracurricular and other school-related experiences, organizing opinions and ideas in a logical manner, and demonstrating understanding of learning and growth through response to questions posed by an audience.

D. FACILITATING ASSESSMENT

We adhere to the Inclusion Policy when facilitating assessment in order to ensure that student needs are met. This includes review and implementation of all student accommodations for assessment related to IEPs, 504 plans, and MTSS guidelines.

VI. ASSESSMENT RECORDING AND REPORTING

A. FEEDBACK

Students are provided feedback in many ways throughout the course of a unit in both verbal and written form.

B. PROCESS FOR STANDARDIZATION OF ASSESSMENT

At the beginning of a unit of study:

- Teachers of the same subject area and grade level will agree on assessment criteria for the unit of study.
- Teachers will connect the assessment criteria to the Statement of Inquiry.
- Teachers will brainstorm, design, and develop an agreed upon assessment.
- Teachers will discuss and decide on task specific clarifications for the chosen assessment criteria based on the specific content/skills being instructed during the unit.

During a unit of study:

- Teachers will assign a formative task during each unit of study to assess content and/or ATL skills that are critical to success in the unit and on the summative assessment. All of these formative assessments receive an evaluation (limited, adequate or substantial) indicating the progress a student has made towards proficiency with the selected skills and understanding of the formative assessment. Teachers also receive written feedback indicating areas of proficiency and those requiring further improvement. The evaluation and the written feedback are reported to parents and students on Managebac.

At the end of a unit of study:

- When assessments have been submitted:
 - Teachers will choose a random selection (or strategic diverse set) of assessments and utilize “blind grading”. Teachers will each grade a small group of students’ work assigning achievement levels without seeing the achievement levels assigned by the other teachers.
 - Once this process is complete, teachers will compare assigned achievement levels and discuss any noted discrepancies, further clarifying the approach when grading the assessments.
 - Once clarification and single achievement levels have been agreed upon for this first sample of assessments, teachers will grade the assessments for their assigned children.
 - A score of zero is assigned when, after attempting to complete the summative, students demonstrate a lack of understanding and skills taught in the unit; students who did not attempt the summative must follow through and complete the work. A score of N/A is only assigned when a student is officially exempt from assessment for reasons determined by their enrollment date or other documented excusals.
 - Once all assessments have been graded, teachers will bring the assessments back together, organizing by achievement levels earned. Teachers will then review several assessments at each achievement level to ensure consistency among grading practices, making changes where necessary.

C. COMMUNICATION PLAN

We make a concerted effort to collaborate with families in support of students through reporting and requests for support.

- Teachers keep families updated about unit progression and any necessary support requirements through bi-weekly messages on Managebac
- Families have access to Managebac to review current unit details, summative assessment overview, achievement levels, standardized test scores, etc...
- Formative assessment feedback is provided via ManageBac at least once per unit to facilitate student learning and growth in applicable skills.
- Summative assessment achievement levels are posted in ManageBac so that students and families can review students have the opportunity to view scores and feedback prior to parent notification of scores posting for both mid-unit formative and end of unit summative assessments
- Assessment achievement levels are typically posted within 7 school days of the assessment being submitted.
- For students whose achievement levels are below passing, teachers are expected to contact home to alert families and to develop a plan for support.

VII. FAMILY AND STUDENT ACCESS

A. STUDENTS

During the first month of attendance at ANCS, students will be provided a ManageBac account login and password. Students will utilize ManageBac to access upcoming summative assessment tasks, assessment achievement levels and comments, and assessment reports.

B. PARENTS AND FAMILIES

During the first month at ANCS, parents will be provided a ManageBac account login and password. Parents utilize ManageBac to view upcoming summative assessment tasks, assessment achievement levels and comments, bi-weekly classroom updates, and assessment reports.

VIII. RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE ANCS LEARNING COMMUNITY

A. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students will:

- actively participate in units of study during curricular, extracurricular and interdisciplinary studies
- complete assessments as instructed according to the principles of academic integrity
- seek to make use of feedback from teachers by reading, applying and following up regularly during units of study
- regularly access Managebac and other modes of communication from the school

B. TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Teachers will:

- provide a version of the summative assessment on day 1 of a unit of study.
- explicitly teach the rubric strands being assessed at the end of the unit of study, during the unit.
- formatively assess students on the skills being assessed in the unit
- provide formative feedback to students within each unit of study via Managebac as well as other modes of communication
- ensure that all students are scored 0-8 on completed summative tasks

C. ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Administration and staff will:

- facilitate annual review of assessment and reporting policy
- support students and teachers according to Inclusion and Special Educational Needs Policy
- provide or support professional development in relevant areas of need
- collaborate, coach and consult with relevant stakeholders to ensure compliance and understanding

D. PARENT AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents and families will:

- attend parents sessions, conferences and other community gatherings to learn about the ANCS MYP
- use Managebac and other modes of communication to access information and engage regarding student progress and growth
- ask questions, participate in policy review and other avenues for community input
- celebrate student growth and development through active engagement and participation in school-wide events

IX. CONTINUED EDUCATION FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

The faculty and staff of ANCS will continue to develop our understanding and implementation of the philosophy and practices of this policy. We utilize:

- planning and faculty meeting times to continue developing and improving our practices as it relates to assessment.
- IBO approved workshops both in person and virtual to build knowledge and strategies for practical application
- MyIB - tools, resources and documentation to support planning and assessment
- Content and skill-based workshops and conferences to support relevant instructional programs and school/grade wide instructional goals.
- Embedded professional learning sessions and initiatives related to individual and school-wide goals
- Summer Reading and Book Study of professional literature, including differentiated instruction and assessment and Culturally Responsive Teaching practices for instruction as well as assessment.

X. PROCEDURE FOR REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING POLICY

This Assessment policy was created by the MYP Steering Committee with improvements made based on input from the full faculty and staff. This policy will be reviewed annually to make additional improvements and will also be referenced during the planning of each unit of study. Students and families will be provided with this policy at the beginning of the school year so that it can be reviewed as often as necessary to ensure our transparency within our school family.

Standard: Culture through policy implementation(0301)

Schools develop, implement, communicate and review effective policies that help to create a school culture in which IB philosophy can thrive.

Culture Practice 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)

Reviewed and updated September 2022 by full faculty and staff.

Reviewed and updated September 2023 by IB Coordinator and Instructional Coach.

XI. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: COALITION OF ESSENTIAL SCHOOLS 10 COMMON PRINCIPLES

Learning to use one's mind well

The school should focus on helping young people to use their minds well. Schools should not be “comprehensive” if such a claim is made at the expense of the school’s central intellectual purpose.

Less is more: depth over coverage

The school’s goals should be simple: that each student master a limited number of essential skills and areas of knowledge. While these skills and areas will, to varying degrees, reflect the traditional academic disciplines, the program’s design should be shaped by the intellectual and imaginative powers and competencies that the students need, rather than by “subjects” as conventionally defined. The aphorism “less is more” should dominate: curricular decisions should be guided by the aim of thorough student mastery and achievement rather than by an effort to merely cover content.

Goals apply to all students

The school’s goals should apply to all students, while the means to these goals will vary as those students themselves vary. School practice should be tailor-made to meet the needs of every group or class of students.

Personalization

Teaching and learning should be personalized to the maximum feasible extent. Efforts should be directed toward a goal that no teacher has direct responsibility for more than 80 students in the high school and middle school and no more than 20 in the elementary school. To capitalize on this personalization, decisions about the details of the course of study, the use of students’ and teachers’ time and the choice of teaching materials and specific pedagogies must be unreservedly placed in the hands of the principal and staff.

Student-as-worker/Teacher-as-coach

The governing practical of the school should be “student-as-worker”, rather than the more familiar metaphor of “teacher as deliverer of instructional services.” Accordingly, a prominent pedagogy will be coaching students to learn how to learn and thus to teach themselves.

Demonstration of mastery

Teaching and learning should be documented and assessed with tools based on student performance of real tasks. Students not yet at appropriate levels of competence should be provided intensive support and resources to assist them quickly to meet standards. Multiple forms of evidence, ranging from ongoing observation of the learner to completion of specific projects, should be used to better understand the learner’s strengths and needs, and to plan for further assistance. Students should have opportunities to exhibit their expertise before family and community. The diploma should be awarded upon a successful final demonstration of mastery for graduation: an “Exhibition.” As the diploma is awarded when earned, the school’s program proceeds with no strict age grading and with no system of “credits earned” by “time spent” in class.

A tone of decency and trust

The tone of the school should explicitly and self-consciously stress values of unanxious expectation, of trust, and of decency (fairness, generosity, and tolerance). Incentives appropriate to the school’s particular students and teachers should be emphasized. Families should be key collaborators and vital members of the school community.

Commitment to the entire school

The principal and teachers should perceive themselves as generalists first (teachers and scholars in general education) and specialists second (experts in but one particular discipline). Staff should expect multiple obligations (teacher-counselor-manager) and demonstrate a sense of commitment to the entire school.

Resources dedicated to teaching and learning

Ultimate administrative and budget targets should include student loads that promote personalization, substantial time for collective planning by teachers, competitive salaries for staff, and an ultimate per-pupil cost not to exceed that at traditional schools by more than 10 percent. To accomplish this, administrative plans may have to show the phased reduction or elimination of some services now provided to students in many schools.

Democracy and equity

The school should demonstrate non-discriminatory and inclusive policies, practices, and pedagogies. It should model democratic practices that involve all who are directly affected by the school. The school should honor diversity and build on the strength of its communities, deliberately and explicitly challenging all forms of inequity.