

I. Purpose & Philosophy of Assessment

Assessments, both formative and summative, must be integral components of each class taught at High Point Central High School. Teachers should strive to hold all students to a high level of expectation and monitor progress through a variety of assessment strategies. These strategies should help cultivate a beneficial learning environment that emphasizes improvement as well as performance. Teachers are free to structure formative assessments to best match their teaching style and students' needs. Summative assessments are given throughout each course to monitor cumulative progress. These assessments should be created to model final examinations appropriate to the level of course (college preparatory, honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate). Teachers should use feedback from all assessments to drive instruction and tutoring sessions.

Teachers at High Point Central put extensive time and effort into creating a variety of high-quality assessments because we believe that “[high-quality assessments] will lead to better information and decision making about students” (McMillan, p73). Professional Learning Communities provide a forum for teacher to meet regularly in order to ensure that our assessments stimulate and encourage the desired teaching and thus lead to better information and decision making about students. High Point Central also understands that “the quality of your assessments will follow from the depth of your understanding of what you teach. The more you understand, the better the assessments” (McMillan, p43). Therefore, professional development is provided and professional learning communities work together regularly to enhance the depth of each teacher's understanding and ability to communicate topic and facilitate student learning.

We recognize that both summative and formative assessments are fundamental components and are necessary to inform instruction and draw conclusions regarding student understanding. Formative assessments, which allow us to monitor student learning and adjust our teaching as needed, take many forms. For example, by asking meta cognitive extension questions, such as in a science class “during the heat of fusion lab, how did you decide on any extensions or other hypotheses that you wanted to test?” or “How have you integrated this information into decisions made in your daily life?” a teacher can investigate the student's thought process such that learning can continually be monitored.

Not only is the professional development at HPC aimed at helping teachers enhance their content knowledge, but as a faculty we have undergone a book study regarding formative assessment. The text *Embedded Formative Assessment* by Dylan William challenges each teacher to implement and integrate formative assessment into each class in order to increase teacher quality and consequently student learning. Through formative assessments feedback is provided to students such that they can grow from novice to mastery of the subject.

The teachers at High Point Central also work with some of the grading philosophies presented in *Formative Assessment and Standards-Based Grading* by Robert Marzano. This text presents the ideas of self-referenced and standards-based grading which allows

students to see their growth in relation to their own past performance as well as within each subject area (Marzano, p17-18). Through these practices, students are given the opportunity to see themselves become successful as well as master content.

II. Assessment & Teaching Standards

a. General High Point Central Grading Policies and Procedures

Students during their ninth, tenth and eleventh grade years participate in North Carolina state-mandated summative assessments upon completion of most core classes (English, History, Math, and Science). These assessments measure a student's knowledge on each subject as it relates to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Courses that do not have state written exams are assessed through teacher created examinations or projects that align with the given state curriculum.

In order to fully prepare students for students for both state assessments and IB assessments, all teachers are required to adhere to the appropriate standards. All non-IB courses must adhere to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, dependent on the nature of the course. All IB specific courses follow the curriculum laid out by the IB program, including scoring rubrics and any supplemental text. Teachers may also utilize the MyIB in order to collaborate with teachers around the world from within their specific content on both standards and grading concepts. Teachers also attend professional development opportunities to educate themselves on teaching and grading effectively on all class levels (CP, Honors, AP, IB) and through all relevant standards. By following these criteria, students are able to develop cross-curricular thinking skills which benefit students in both state given and IB summative assessments as well as in all teacher given assignments.

Grading Schedules & Communication:

Students will receive report cards at the end of each 9 week grading period. All teachers will also send out interim progress reports between the 4-5 week period.

Teachers regularly update grades and can be viewed by parents and students on the virtual Powerschool Portal: <https://gcsnc.powerschool.com/public/home.html> . Students and parents can view grades on assignments as well as break downs of performance by category in each class. Through the use of both paper reports and the online portal, students and parents may communicate with the teacher any points of concern they may have.

The Grading Scale, as set by Guilford County Schools, is as follows:

A = 90 -100 B = 80 – 89 C = 70 – 79 D = 60 – 69 F = 59 and BELOW

Guilford County Schools Grade Point Average Policy:

Letter Grade / Quality Points	Standard Course	Honors Course	AP/IB Course
A	4	4.5	5
B	3	3.5	4
C	2	2.5	3
D	1	1.5	2
F	0	0	0

b. High Point Central International Baccalaureate Grading Policies and Procedures

1. Teaching Standards

The IB program's philosophy is infused throughout all subject areas using the following school wide objectives in order to adhere to the IB Learner Profile:

1. Teachers will present curriculum to students through experimental, inquiry-based, interdisciplinary lessons.
2. Students will be required to think and reason at high levels and to ask and answer analytical questions.
3. Students will develop advanced research skills.
4. Students will master written and verbal communication of ideas.
5. Faculty and staff will stress the social, physical and cognitive well-being of each student to prepare them for involvement in community and extra-curricular activities.
6. Students will recognize the roles and responsibilities of being members of the international community.
7. Students and teachers will integrate cutting-edge technology into their work products.
8. Teachers will use various methods to provide students with accurate and prompt feedback about their current levels of achievement and ways they can improve

In order to prepare students for the IB courses requirements (Internal assessments, external assessments, and subject exams) High Point Central refers to the Diploma Programme Assessment: Principles and Practice handbook qualifications below:

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Assessments:

According to the IB Diploma Programme Assessment: Principles and practice, assessment for the DP is high stakes, criterion-related performance assessment . . . based on the following aims:

- 1. DP assessment should support the curricular and philosophical goals of the programme, through the encouragement of good classroom practice and appropriate students learning.*
- 2. The published results of DP assessment must have sufficiently high level of reliability, appropriate to a high stakes university entrance qualification.*
- 3. DP assessment must reflect the international-mindedness of the programme wherever possible, must avoid cultural bias, and must make appropriate allowances for students working in their second language.*
- 4. DP assessment must pay attention to the higher order cognitive-skills (synthesis, reflection, evaluation, critical thinking) as well as the more fundamental cognitive skills (knowledge, understanding, and application).*
- 5. Assessment for each subject must include a suitable range of tasks and instruments/components that ensure all objectives for the subject assessed.*
- 6. The principal means for assessing student achievement and determining subject grades should be the professional judgment of experienced senior examiners, supported by statistical information.*

Teachers will utilize rubrics and mark schemes that reflect those used by both the state of North Carolina and the IB program in order to best prepare students for said assessments. Teachers at High Point Central are, however, given the flexibility to utilize particular portions of mark schemes and rubrics throughout the year in order to foster skills in students over time. Teachers may also utilize a graduated grading percentage in order to replicate mastery of skills over the course of the school year. In order to best show growth and equity to students all teachers within the High Point Central IB Programme will tell students what skills and content that they will be marking from and then use those criteria in grading. However the student scores on the rubric will then be converted to the 100 point scale based off of the weight assigned to each skill or content area.

For example, a student in IB Biology may be asked to present the specific ideas of evolution in a free response format with a total of 5 available points on the rubric. The teacher should then grade the response based off of both the information and the format of the response. In using the graduated grade scale, if the student receives all 5 point laid out in the first quarter, the points received may be converted to 20% of the assessment points. However, by third quarter, the student should be building on other content and refining response skills so the the 5 points received may be converted to 35% of the

assessment points. The teacher will communicate any shifts in the grade conversion and application to the 100 point scale to the students and parents regularly.

By utilizing these alternative assessment methods High Point Central teachers are able to grow students potential as well as provide for an equitable learning environment for students as they are introduced to new materials and criteria.

Teachers in each subject will also allow students to become, to a degree, self-assessors by providing clear rubrics and teaching students how to mark, grade, and identify their own skills in assessment. Teachers within each subject matter are expected to model expectations not only for individual assignments but as holistic subject experts. For example, History teachers should allow students to investigate and assess historical documents and multiple sources in order to allow students to cultivate critical thinking skills as well as life-long problem solving skills rather than asking students to simply regurgitate facts and statistics. Teachers should utilize formative assessments to scaffold questioning and assignments in order to prepare students for the IB diploma requirements (IA, EA, and Papers).

The following are the outlines for the IB specific assessments:

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Internal Assessments:

Internal assessments may be either written or oral assessments for a specific course. Assessments are then graded by the content specific teacher utilizing the rubrics laid out by the IB. One of the benefits for the IA is that students are able to demonstrate their understanding and have flexibility to present information in a manner that shows personal growth, which is a way of allowing for student-generated assessment (Marzano, p22). Examples of these assessments include, but are not limited to: oral examinations in English and World Language courses, or lab experiments in Science.

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme External Assessments:

Although the format of the external assessments is very similar to that of the internal assessments, these are graded by IB examiners. This being said, these assessments are graded using similar criteria but are written assessments. Examples of these assessments include, but are not limited to Theory of Knowledge essays and World Language/Literature Essays.

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Examinations:

In adherence to the IB conditions of examinations, these exams take place in May of each school year. These examinations include a variety of writings, problem solving, and multiple choice problems. Students may only take these examinations if they have completed the internal and external assessments that were previously mentioned. These examinations are mailed to the IB and graded externally. These examination grades, in

conjunction with the internal and external grades, create the final subject grades for Diploma candidates.

High Point Central utilizes the following grade scale for classes within the Diploma Programme:

7 – Excellent 6 – Very Good 5 – Good 4- Satisfactory 3-Mediocre 2 –Poor 1-Very Poor

The following grade scale is utilized for the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge Course:

A – Excellent B – Good C – Satisfactory D – Mediocre E – Failure N – No Grade

Utilizing such strategies allow students to examine and explore various topics, perspectives, and topics which is key to providing equity in our IB classrooms. In addition to using exploratory methods for research and argument, emphasis is placed on writing in all subjects and levels of class at High Point Central. Teachers work in Professional Teams in order to ensure that standards and assessments not only adhere to state curricular requirements but also to enhance cognitive thinking and scaffolding.

2. Grading Schedules and Communication

The High Point Central IB Staff recognize the demands of the IB Programme and thus, in addition to adhering to all of the standard High Point Central and Guilford County grading criteria, additional policies have been implemented in order to meet these needs. All teachers within the IB programme utilize an assessment calendar in order to help balance student workload. There may only be major 2 assessments a day from shared teachers within the IB programme. Students and parents are made aware of the assessments at least 2 weeks in advance via email from the IB coordinator.

III. Homework Policy

Homework should be an integral part of the IB process and should incorporate/mirror many of the skills required for the IB curriculum of each standard of study. Document and source inquiries should be incorporated with gradual guidance provided on each aspect of the writing rubric to ensure a natural progression to meet the standards for the internal assessment.

Homework that mirrors each phase of the documents to ensure a better understanding of the material should be assigned on a weekly basis with emphasis geared toward the students needing additional assistance. Classroom assignments where students could work as a group incorporating strategies and methods to ensure an understanding of all aspects of the curriculum will be utilized. Students can work together then present their conclusions to the class and work toward achieving a standard method to ensure success. Homework is a vital link to classroom instruction in preparation for the assessment exams at the end of the year.

References:

Guilford County Schools. Student Handbook 2018-2019. Greensboro, North Carolina: Guilford County Schools, 2018.

Marzano, Robert. Formative Assessment & Standards-Based Grading. Bloomington, IN : Marzano Research Laboratory, 2010. Print.

McMillan, James. Classroom Assessment: Principles and Practice for Effective Instruction. 2nd. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2001. Print.

William, D. Embedded Formative Assessment. Bloomington: Solution Tree, 2011. Print.

*** This policy is to be considered a working document that will be reviewed and implemented annually by IB teachers and the IB Coordinator**