

# East Nashville Magnet School

## Assessment Policy

### **Why do we assess?**

At East Nashville Magnet School (ENMS), our assessment of students serves multiple functions. First and foremost, assessments are tools that help us to understand the extent to which students have mastered their learning objectives. At the same time assessment serves as a benchmarking tool, informing the students, teachers, and parents as to the progress students are making towards those learning objectives. ENMS teachers consider formative assessments to be anything used to conduct in-process evaluations of student comprehension, learning needs, and academic progress during a lesson or unit. ENMS consider summative assessments to be anything used to evaluate student learning or achievement at the conclusion of a defined instructional period.

Our assessment tools do not, however, simply serve as indicators of understanding; they are also used as learning opportunities through which students can engage material in new ways to further the learning process. Of course assessment is a necessary process for teacher development as well. Through formative and summative assessment, teachers are given the opportunity to self-reflect on their efficacy in conveying material and ideas to students, and on the level of clarity and success they are having in their communication with students. Assessment provides an instrument through which we can have conversations about student engagement, performance, and mastery. Data collected from formative and summative assessments can track students' understanding, inform teachers' instructional planning, and help identify areas for differentiation.

### **How do we assess?**

Assessment is the process of gathering information that allows us to draw conclusions about the extent to which our students are gaining proficiency and/or mastery in their subjects. Diploma Programme courses vary in the situations where there is prescriptive content and the opportunity for case studies or student and teacher choice. To achieve optimum levels of learning, students must understand the aims and objectives of their courses, must feel familiar and comfortable with the assessment styles of each course, and receive feedback (where appropriate) that correlates to the markschemes and language used in the internal and external assessments of their courses. Assessments must support and encourage student learning through differentiation.

The assessments we offer must allow students the opportunity to demonstrate both content knowledge and the skills of application, analysis, and evaluation. Our goal at ENMS is to use assessment as authentically as possible, in ways that allow students to demonstrate what they know and not only what was taught. Where appropriate and as much as possible, students will be given the freedom to help in the construction of assessment opportunities that best serve their learning styles and their ability to demonstrate higher-order skills and promote positive student attitudes toward learning.

The second half of the assessment process is the evaluation of student work. In keeping with the goal of measuring mastery of learning objectives and the requirements of IB course work, ENMS teachers will utilize IB published DP materials, released exams and markschemes, and information from the subject guide and teacher support material to create rubrics for formative and summative assessments. Wherever possible, teachers will work to give feedback that closely mirrors their course assessments.

The following list is a sample of assessment types:

- Open-ended tasks: compositions, reports, presentations (verbal, written or graphic)
- Examinations: selected responses on tests and quizzes
- Process Journals: meaningful and purposeful reflection
- Performances: demonstrate understanding in real-world contexts
- Questionnaires
- Investigations
- Research
- Class Discussion
- Original works

### **One assessment, two systems:**

The IB programmes at East (MYP and DP) have their own assessment systems, instruments, priorities, and sets of marks. In MYP and DP courses, students will encounter two different assessment systems: their IB assessment scheme and that of Metro Nashville Public Schools. As students within the Metro Nashville Public School (MNPS) system, students are measured on a scale of points from 0 to 100 with grade boundaries that result in the awarding of grades A through F for their final grades in those courses. These grade boundaries are unique to the county and not congruent with IB grading practices. ENMS DP Teachers will need to develop and adjust conversion charts for their assessments that can appropriately translate DP markschemes into number percentages. Each course has its own formula and each teacher will work with the IB Coordinator to develop as complete a congruence as possible between the two systems. Students can expect that their performance on summative assessments will be reported in IB terms and as an MNPS number grade. Feedback shall be given using DP markscheme terminology as often as possible.

### **Recording, Reporting, and Communicating IBDP Grades**

Throughout the course teachers will assess each criterion in their subject area at least twice and record the student's achievement level. A copy of the rubrics along with the students' level of achievement identified is given to students to take home to share with parents. The assessment levels recorded on the rubrics will be used to facilitate student reflection and kept in classrooms to be used by students in conferences later in the semester. Student reflections are facilitated by a standard set of reflection questions and recorded through an assignment in their class Schoology page. This provides a second level of recording and can be turned into a backup reporting tool.

ENMS will hold student-led conferences that bring together students, parents, and teachers (and potentially the IB Coordinator, administrators, support staff, etc.) to discuss and assess student progress as shown in the DP assessments and student reflections. Student-led conferences will be held each semester.

Enacting the IB fundamental concept of communication, it will be important to communicate our grading practices with staff, students and parents. We will communicate with our parents through our Infinite Campus grading and support system, periodic principal messages, and other correspondence methods any and all communication regarding assessment and grading in the Diploma Programme.

### **Internal Assessments**

The DP program at East will create an Internal Assessment calendar for each school year that balances the needs of each course with the schedules of our students. We seek to create a calendar that takes into account the whole of a DP student's experience so that at no point there is an overwhelming load of assessment responsibilities. This calendar will be public to all students, parents, and staff.

Each DP teacher will develop an internal assessment process that fits within that calendar agreement that includes appropriate deadlines, dedicated work time, and procedural requirements to complete the assessment. These materials shall be publicly available to students and families.

Submission of internal assessments is essential for meeting the requirements of each course and earning the IB diploma. As such, if students do not submit internal assessments by their respective deadlines, the IB coordinator, teacher, student, and family will meet to discuss the future of the student in the IB program. Academic honesty issues are discussed in the program's Academic honesty policy.

### **External Assessments**

External assessment calendars are published early in the school year and will be made publicly available to all students, teachers, and families upon release. All necessary arrangements for hosting external assessments will be made by the IB coordinator. It is our intention at East to host external assessments in the Alumni building on campus.

### **Persons with responsibilities in the assessment process:**

The practice of assessment is one of shared responsibilities. It is critical that each stakeholder understand his or her role in the process.

#### **IB Coordinator**

- assist in sharing of information/assessment data to teachers across curriculum to assist in student-support efforts
- work with teachers to better understand assessment practices and rubrics

- support grade level teams, content teams, and the Diploma Programme team in the writing and implementation of unit plans that incorporate DP markschemes and practice assessments
- Create and manage resources with which teachers plan and create summative assessments and use DP markschemes where possible
- Arrange and support rubric norming efforts at grade level and content teams when rubric norming

#### Teachers

- Learn their course assessment needs and develop ways to implement practice assessments into course
- engage in collaborative practice of criteria-norming where appropriate
- make clear to students the value and application of using DP markschemes
- construct assessments that demonstrate student achievement of course objectives

#### Students

- demonstrate understanding of the learning value of assessment by respecting and adhering to assessment deadlines, both formative and summative
- actively participate in assessment in order to complement classroom learning activities and demonstrate evidence of mastery of acquired skills
- respect the demand for integrity in assessment and understand the ENMS Academic Honesty policy

#### **Malpractice Policy:**

It is important that ENMS teachers communicate to students the importance of academic honesty and integrity for very positive reasons. As part of their social and ethical development, students need to see academic honesty beyond the context of “not cheating”, but as an integral element of their social and intellectual construct. While academic honesty is broad in scope, we will start with the basic IBO statement:

*Students will exercise academic honesty in all aspects of their work. They will acknowledge the work of others, including material taken from other sources. They will not claim as their own the work of others. They will not give their work to others to pass off as their own. They will observe the integrity of the examination room.*

Ethical Practice Within the Diploma Programme, IBO

It is necessary to understand that students will not always approach assessment in an ethical manner. In cases of student malpractice, the ENMS IB Programme will follow a policy that is congruent with the greater school policy and that of the IBO.

This policy was reviewed, discussed, revised, and accepted by East Nashville IB Steering Committee (Meeting agendas 8/14/2019 and 9/11/2019). It is reviewed, updated, and approved annually. Most recent version was revised and updated with guidance from DP consultant during fall of 2020.

Our program policies are published via the school's IB website (<https://enmsib.weebly.com>) and referenced in communications to families. ENMS ensures that this information is presented to students during orientations to MYP and DP programs and discussed both formally and informally in classes and town hall meetings.