

## **Commack Middle School Assessment Guidelines**

At Commack Middle School we take pride in being an International Baccalaureate World School. We recognize and appreciate that it is through the collaborative efforts of each member of the Commack Middle school staff and community that we have earned such prestigious recognition. Our students' success in academic, social, emotional, physical and international mindedness is ensured by several factors, including an adherence to our school's mission statement and the promotion of core values. These are in turn, strengthened by the IB Learner Profile and the IB Mission Statement. The Commack Middle School Mission statement declares that:

The Commack Middle School will provide a child-centered environment with a wide range of learning experiences that enable children to achieve developmentally-appropriate academic and personal growth, helps them to meet educational objectives, and supports them in their development as independent, life-long learners and responsible, globally'-minded citizens.

### **Purpose of Assessment**

We believe that assessment supports and encourages student learning and understanding, and to this end, we believe formative assessments should be utilized throughout each grade level and subject area. These formative assessments are frequent and varied and designed to check for knowledge and understanding. We use formative assessments to guide decisions and facilitate instruction, and to help students meet the required state and MYP objectives.

Additionally, upon completion of units of study, often times summative assessments are used to determine a students level of achievement. Through a combination of learning opportunities and evaluative tools, we aim to sustain effective teaching and learning. Assessments should afford students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of various Approaches to Learning Skills and promote critical-thinking. In addition, teachers will provide timely feedback to both students and parents with regard to the students' progress in meeting the final objectives.

Another purpose of assessment is to develop coherence between the assessment and learning. It is important that subject content and assessment are aligned with the desired learning outcomes. We have developed unit plans and scopes and sequences for each subject area around the tenets of the IB MYP framework. Professional development time has been allocated during the period under review for teachers to work collaboratively to this end.

### **Standardized State Assessments**

We are required by the New York State Department of Education to administer standardized tests as a means to monitor student achievement against the Next Generation State Standards, World Readiness Standards, and other State Standards. We utilize student assessment data to differentiate instruction and provide necessary support(s).

### **Assessment Tasks**

We believe assessment tasks should promote development of the students' learning within the grade level and subject area. Tasks should be varied depending upon the needs of the subject and on the desired demonstrable understandings within the MYP units of study.

Our staff has devised assessment tasks that are grade level specific and allow adequate opportunities for students to clearly show what they can achieve in accordance with the objectives of the subject group.

There are a range of assessment tasks that are used to enhance student understandings:

|                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Mathematical Investigations | Creative Writing  |
| Technology Workbook         | Portfolios        |
| Developmental Art Workbook  | Research projects |
| Essays                      | Quizzes           |
| Scientific Investigations   | Socratic seminars |

Unit tests/exams  
Dialogues  
Surveys  
Compositions  
Debates  
Exhibits  
Performances

Oral presentations  
Reflections  
Projects  
Practical/experimental work  
Homework  
Group work  
Journal writing

## **Recording of Assessment Data**

Teachers at Commack Middle School have a responsibility to document assessment data on all their students, as a means to determine students' level of understanding as measured against agreed-upon learning outcomes. Teachers are expected to utilize the MYP subject-based criteria to assess their students' achievement within a subject. Through the various assessment tasks developed, the methods of recording data below are used to collect evidence of student achievement and progress on a consistent and ongoing basis. Teachers will formally record this student data four times per school year on the student report card however progress and achievement are recorded at least weekly by teachers via the electronic gradebook.

## **Methods of Recording Data**

### Rubrics:

At Commack Middle School, we strive to employ rubrics as an effective tool to provide clear direction, expectations and evaluative feedback to our students and parents. Rubrics are course-specific, are reflective of defined holistic MYP assessment criteria, and are modified to better assess the performance based on year of study and distinct task.

### Examples and Modeling:

Our teachers routinely collect and catalog multiple samples of students' work at various levels of achievement. Our goal has been to create a catalog of work to serve as benchmarks for the particular task and to use as a tool in collaboratively assessing student progress and achievement. On a daily basis, through oral and written examples, teachers also model the standard against which students will be evaluated.

### Checklists:

Checklists enable teachers to supply formative feedback during instruction and in evaluating target skills. They also support students' ability to develop metacognitive skills.

## **Reporting of Assessment Data**

At Commack Middle School, we have a responsibility to inform parents of student achievement and growth. This is done formally four times per year in the traditional form of report cards which are available for access by parents on an Internet portal. The report card reflects the individual student's progress toward achievement of academic goals, and toward the development of ATL skills and IB Learner Profile traits. It includes assessment data from each of the eight subject areas in the form of numerical grades. A grade is based on student work and reflects levels of proficiency in each of the subject areas, as measured through successful completion of subject-based tasks both in the classroom and at home, and achievement on both formative and summative assessments. It also includes anecdotal information regarding the student's progress in learning and work habits.

Additionally, Commack Middle School has an electronic gradebook where parents and students can view student achievement and growth daily, which enables ongoing communication between school and home. School to home communication is further developed through voluntary team meetings, individual parent/teacher conferences, Open House Events, and Meet the Teacher Night. Such events provide insights into the academic program as well as information related to student achievement and progress in class.

Student progress is monitored in numerous ways. Academic teams and Instructional Support Team meet weekly to discuss student progress. The academic team consists of teachers of Language and Literature (English), Mathematics, Individuals and Societies, and Sciences. The Instructional Support Team consists of a building administrator, school counselors, a social worker, a school psychologist, a school nurse, and a teacher representative for each case discussed. Via academic team meetings, instructional support team meetings and through other avenues, student academic and social-emotional development is consistently monitored.

Moreover, all teachers are expected to communicate frequently with parents via email and telephone and are encouraged to convey important information through maintenance of individual and/or team Google classrooms.

### **Assessment expectations for the Commack Middle School**

Students should:

- have a clear idea of the concepts, content, learning outcomes and skills that are being assessed, and the criteria on which they are being assessed.
- have a clear understanding that they will be assessed in a variety of ways that will contribute to their overall evaluation.
- receive clear and timely feedback regarding assessment outcomes.
- be given clear notification of assessments for which preparation is needed.
- engage in self-reflection to identify challenging goals for their own learning.
- monitor their progress, performance and learning goals with the use of a daily planner.

Teachers should:

- use student performance data to inform curriculum and instruction.
- clearly define common assessment objectives within subjects for each grade level.
- use a variety of assessment strategies and tasks to thoroughly evaluate student progress.
- allow appropriate time for the completion of assignments.
- prepare learning experiences with the purpose of extending knowledge and enhancing understanding.
- engage in self-reflection in order to sustain effectiveness.
- seek opportunities to collaborate on the preparation and evaluation of assessments.
- provide feedback to parents regarding formative and summative assessments.

The school should:

- work through the academic teams to ensure a balanced assessment schedule.
- ensure a periodic review of the curricular scopes and sequences and assessment expectations to ensure student progress.
- maintain records of achievement.
- continue to support and provide professional development time for the purpose of assessment development and revision.

Parents should:

- support Commack Middle School practices and the IB policies that relate to learning.
- support student adherence to assessment timelines.
- help motivate their children in all aspects of learning.
- help create a supportive learning environment that is to the benefit of their children.

### **The Role of the MYP Learner Profile**

We believe that a successful MYP student embraces the Learner Profile and is motivated to acquire all the traits listed. It is the well-balanced student who prepares for our varied assessments with open-minded interest, who demonstrates academic and emotional growth through our formative assessments, who is challenged to express their knowledge through our summative assessments, and who reflects on their learning to ascertain how they might further develop those traits we value. Our assessment practices are infused with experiences that support our students in becoming caring, internationally minded, life-long learners.

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