Assessment Policy

1. Introduction

Purpose

This Assessment Policy aims to articulate a coherent and unified approach to the assessment process at School of the Nations. This policy serves as a comprehensive guide for evaluating student learning and performance, ensuring that assessments are aligned with the curricular objectives and the broader educational goals of the School.

Scope

This policy applies to a wide range of stakeholders within School of the Nations community, including students, teachers, administrators, and parents.

This policy is an integral part of a set of policies. It is considered a living document and is reviewed annually. It was developed with the collaboration of a steering committee composed of the academic and executive directors, data coordinator, International Baccalaureate (IB) coordinators, section principals, admissions officer, and lead teachers.

Alignment with IB Philosophy

In line with the International Baccalaureate's commitment to fostering globally-minded individuals, this Assessment Policy complements the IB's educational philosophy. It aims to support and promote the creation and analysis of assessments that are rigorous and fair and cultivate the skills and attributes outlined in the IB learner profile, which aligns naturally with School of the Nations' vision and mission.

The national standards for assessing students align well with both the IB's and School of the Nations' approaches. They all agree that assessment should be a continuous, iterative process. This process includes collecting and looking at information about how students are learning, which helps teachers improve their teaching methods. Further, these standards advocate using a diverse array of assessment tools. They also underscore the importance of giving equal consideration to both the outcomes of learning and the processes underpinning it.

2. Assessment in view of the School's Vision and Mission

Vision: School of the Nations strives to be exemplary among Brazilian and international schools for its commitment to world citizenship and for helping young people develop outstanding academic, ethical, and spiritual qualities and a clear understanding of their roles in building a better world.

Mission: School of the Nations educates students to be world citizens based on standards of academic, bilingual, and ethical excellence to develop their capacities to know, love, and serve humankind.

The vision and mission of School of the Nations are aligned with the IB's assessment principles and practices through their shared commitment to developing reflective, ethical, and academically excellent

world citizens who are actively engaged in their learning processes and prepared to contribute positively to the global community.

3. Principles of Assessment

Validity: Ensuring the Assessment Measures What It Is Intended To Measure

The cornerstone of our Assessment Policy is validity. Assessments are carefully designed to accurately measure the intended learning outcomes, aligning with both the curriculum and the broader educational objectives of School of the Nations. This ensures that assessments are both evaluative and diagnostic, providing valuable insights into what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge and skills.

Reliability: Consistency in the Assessment Process

Reliability is another fundamental principle that underpins our assessment policy. Standardized grading criteria, rubrics, and other assessment practices help maintain consistency in the assessment process. This helps ensure that assessments are dependable measures of student performance, regardless of the assessor or the timing of the assessment.

Fairness: Ensuring Equitable Opportunities for All Students

Fairness in assessment is essential. We strive to provide equitable opportunities for all students to demonstrate their learning. This includes making necessary accommodations for students with exceptionalities and ensuring that assessments are free of bias.

4. Assessment Practices

Comprehensive Understanding of Assessment

Assessment at School of the Nations is a multifaceted process involving collecting, discussing, and analyzing evidence from various sources. This comprehensive approach aims to deepen our understanding of student learning and inform instructional practices.

Formative Assessment

The primary goal of formative assessment is to facilitate ongoing learning. It provides timely feedback to students, helping them identify their strengths and areas for improvement. Teachers also use this feedback to tailor their instruction to meet the learning needs of their students. In general, formative assessments are not graded but are instrumental in the learning process.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessments serve to evaluate student learning against defined standards or benchmarks. These assessments, which may include midterm exams, final projects, or presentations, are chosen based

2

on the learning outcomes teachers expect students to master. While summative assessments are evaluative in nature, the information gleaned from them can also be used formatively to guide future learning and instruction.

Assessment Tools

To complement our evaluation methods, we use a variety of assessment tools designed to measure specific skills and abilities, or benchmarks, from the curriculum. These tools include:

- **Diagnostic, Formative, and Summative Evaluations**: These can be formal, objective, or subjective tests, quizzes, observations, and group papers.
- **Daily Systematic Observation:** Teachers observe student performance in real-time to make immediate pedagogical decisions.
- **Evaluation Portfolios**: A collection of student work that shows progress over time.
- **Individual Work and Group Research**: Assignments that may be completed individually or collaboratively.
- **Projects**: Long-term assignments that require a deep understanding of the subject matter.
- **Self-Evaluation**: Students assess their learning as part of the reflective process.
- **Other Pedagogical Activities**: These could include oral presentations, debates, and other interactive methods.

Each evaluation is structured on specific benchmarks; therefore, evaluations do not receive one overall grade but several, based on each benchmark assessed.

4.1 Grading Scale for Early Childhood and Elementary (Nursery to Grade 5)

The grading scale for Early Childhood and Elementary is as follows:

- **AE (Achieves Excellence)**: Students have surpassed the learning goals by completing all the requirements in a way that is particularly original, creative, innovative, and/or nuanced and demonstrates a deep-level mastery of the skill.
- **PR (Meets Standard - Proficient)**: Students have reached the learning goals by completing all requirements. At this level of mastery, students can perform independently.
- **MS (Meets Standard - Basic)**: Students have reached the learning goals by completing the basic requirements. At this level of mastery, students can perform independently.
- **ID (In Development)**: Students have almost reached the learning goals due to unfulfilled requirements when it comes to knowledge or skill.
- **NI (Needs Improvement)**: Students are in the initial stages of development regarding the learning goals.

4.1.a Grading Scale for Early Childhood (Nursery to Kinder) for Specials:

The grading scale for Early Childhood (Nursery to Kinder) for Art, Music, PE, and Habits of the Heart is as follows:

- AC (Accomplished)
- ID (In Development)

4.1.b Social-Emotional and Dispositions to Learning Curriculum and Assessment

To assess students integrally, teachers observe students' social-emotional development, behavior, and attitudes toward learning. Examples of such behavior and attitudes include responsibility, punctuality, attendance, and finishing assignments on time.

In Nursery through Grade 5, the homeroom teacher determines feedback and grades for Social-Emotional and Dispositions to Learning. One grade is given for each benchmark. Feedback given for Social-Emotional and Dispositions to Learning in Nursery through Grade 5 includes:

- AC (Accomplished)
- ID (In Development)

Grades given to students for developing their Social-Emotional and Dispositions to Learning do not affect their academic grades.

4.2 Grading Scale for Middle School and High School (Grades 6–12)

The grading scale for Middle School and High School is as follows:

- **AE (Achieves Excellence)**: Students have surpassed the learning goals by consistently completing all the requirements in a way that is particularly original, creative, innovative, and/or nuanced.
- **HP (Highly Proficient)**: Students meet the standard at a high level.
- **PR (Strongly Proficient)**: Students meet the standards at a good level.
- **SP (Solidly Proficient)**: Students meet standards at an adequate level.
- **MS (Meets Standards)**: Students meet the basic standards and requirements to pass the course.
- **ID (In Development)**: Students have not reached the learning goals due to unfulfilled requirements regarding knowledge or skill.
- **NI (Needs Improvement)**: Students are in the initial stages of development regarding the learning goals.
- **NW (No Work)**: The student has not submitted any work related to the assignment, and, therefore, the teacher is unable to assess the student's competency.

5. Assessment Roles and Responsibilities

At School of the Nations, teachers are entrusted with designing, implementing, and evaluating varied and authentic assessments that align with the curriculum and our school's educational objectives. Students are expected to actively engage in these assessments, collaborate with teachers, and use feedback for continuous learning. Administrators oversee the implementation of the policy, provide necessary resources, and ensure alignment with the IB's educational philosophy. This triad of roles aims to create a cohesive, transparent, and effective assessment environment that promotes academic integrity, continuous learning, and stakeholder engagement.

5.1 Teachers: Responsibilities in the Assessment Process

- **Curriculum Alignment**: Ensure assessments are congruent with the IB framework and specific benchmarks and standards, supporting the acquisition of subject-specific knowledge, skills, and conceptual understanding.
- **Assessment Design**: Create authentic, clear, and specific assessments. Use a variety of tools such as anecdotal records, checklists, portfolios, continuums, and rubrics to provide a comprehensive view of student learning.
- **Feedback Mechanism**: Offer timely and constructive feedback that reflects current learning and guides future learning endeavors, adhering to the principle of "feedback to feedforward."
- **Collaborative Assessment**: Engage in a collaborative process with students for assessment development and evaluation, ensuring that both teachers and students demonstrate assessment capability.
- **Data-Driven Decisions**: Use data from assessments to inform instruction and improve learning.
- **Professional Development**: Participate in ongoing training to stay abreast of best practices in assessment, including those that align with the IB's approaches to teaching.
- **Transparent Communication**: Maintain open and interactive dialogues with students, parents, and administrators about assessment expectations, deadlines, and outcomes.
- **Policy Review and Adaptation**: Participate in periodic review and adaptation of the assessment policy to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.

5.2 Students: What is Expected of Students

- **Active Engagement**: Actively engage in varied and authentic assessments that connect to real-world situations.
- **Self-Advocacy and Collaboration**: Collaborate with teachers in the assessment process and propose additional assessments when needed to demonstrate improved understanding.
- **Reflective Learning**: Use feedback for future learning and engage in self-reflection to improve.
- **Academic Integrity**: Uphold the highest standards of academic honesty in all assessments.

5.3 Administrators: Role in Overseeing and Implementing the Policy

- **Policy Oversight**: Ensure the assessment policy is in harmony with the IB philosophy and approaches to teaching and is uniformly applied across all educational levels and subjects.
- **Support and Resources**: Provide teachers with the necessary resources and professional development to implement a range of effective and varied assessment tools and strategies.
- **Data Monitoring**: Regularly review aggregated assessment data for quality assurance and alignment with educational objectives.
- **Stakeholder Engagement**: Promote collaborative and interactive communication among teachers, students, and parents, especially during Class Council and 360 review meetings.
- **Policy Review and Adaptation**: Lead the periodic review and adaptation of the assessment policy to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.

6. Special Considerations

6.1 Accommodations: Provisions for Students with Special Needs

As stated in our Inclusion Policy, School of the Nations is committed to an inclusive educational model that aims to meet the needs of all students through Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices and a Response to Intervention (RTI) structure. Our Learning Support Lead collaborates with teachers, counselors, and other pedagogical team members to provide evidence-based practices that support all students, including those with special needs.

Accommodations and inclusive access arrangements are introduced to teaching, learning, and assessment to remove or reduce barriers to learning. They may be applied when certain conditions, such as long-term learning support requirements, temporary medical conditions, or the need for additional language learning, may prevent students from demonstrating their level of attainment.

Accommodations are offered to students as part of everyday learning and teaching, meaning they are used during classroom instruction, classwork and related activities, and tests. These arrangements are continuously monitored to ensure they remain the optimal support for that student. Separate classrooms, adapted assessments, a reader when taking tests and assessments, extended time or deadlines, the use of technological aids (speech-to-text, text-to-speech), and the use of calculators are examples of accommodations offered at our School.

To be eligible for accommodations, students must have at least one of the following documents: a psychological report, a psycho-educational report, a medical report, or educational evidence from the teacher or school. Educational evidence can include letters from teachers who taught the student, 360 review reports, samples of tests and assignments showing the request is necessary, or an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).

For students to receive the necessary accommodations in standardized tests, students and parents must follow the specific procedures of the organization responsible for a given examination (that is, the College Board in the case of PSAT, SAT, and Advanced Placement). When it is the school's responsibility to request accommodations in the student's name, the parent must authorize the request in writing and provide any additional documents as necessary.

6.2 Academic Integrity: Ensuring the Integrity of the Assessment Process

School of the Nations places a high value on academic integrity. Students are expected to adhere to principles of honesty in all academic endeavors, including homework, assignments, quizzes, tests, essays, and projects. Violations of academic integrity, such as cheating and plagiarism, are unacceptable and subject to disciplinary action.

Consequences for violations of academic integrity are tiered, ranging from corrective actions and resubmission of work for the first offense to more severe penalties, including mandatory parent meetings, among other actions for repeated offenses.

Students, parents, and teachers are encouraged to refer to the complete Academic Integrity Policy document for a comprehensive understanding of our academic integrity policy and the specific details regarding violations and their consequences.

7. Policy Review

This policy is subject to annual, official reviews. The next scheduled review will take place in **August 2024** and include all relevant stakeholders: the executive director, data coordinator, IB coordinators, section principals, admissions officer, and lead teachers. All school policies will be communicated to the school community through the school's website and the Student-Parent Handbook.