

Philosophy and Core Beliefs

Schutz American School Mission

The mission of Schutz American School family is to provide a premier education empowering all of our students to pursue their passions as confident global citizens.

The International Baccalaureate Mission

The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Assessment Philosophy

Schutz American School believes that student assessment informs and improves teaching and learning. Assessment provides continuous evidence of our students developing their knowledge, skills and dispositions to fulfill their pursuit as confident global citizens.

Key Principles of Assessment Practices:

- At Schutz, students and teachers use feedback to improve learning, teaching and assessment. (*IB Standards and Practices, 0404-01*)
- Schutz uses assessment methods that are varied and fit-for-purpose for the curriculum and stated learning outcomes and objectives. (*IB Standards and Practices, 0404-02*)
- Schutz administers assessment consistently, fairly, inclusively and transparently. (*IB Standards and Practices, 0404-03*)
- Assessments should be opportunities for students to consolidate their learning. (*IB Standards and Practices, 0404-04*)

Key Outcomes of Assessment Practices:

- Students become effective, self-regulated learners when they are actively engaged in assessment and act on constructive feedback. Schutz learners will reflect, set goals and take action toward those goals.
- Teachers become more effective when they continually learn about what students know and can do. Schutz teachers will reflect on data, adjust instruction, and offer constructive feedback.
- Parents become more informed when they understand the learning goals and the progress their child is making. Schutz parents will extend the students' understanding and development of skills outside the classroom; and contribute through sharing insights.
- Schools have a big impact when PLCs use assessment as a tool to evaluate the depth of their curriculum and the effectiveness of their teaching. The Schutz administrative team will target resources and support priorities and professional development needs based on the data.

Assessment Practices

Schutz uses a range of strategies and tools to assess student learning. Assessment is integral to collaborative planning, teaching, and learning.

Types of Assessment

Pre-Assessments occur before beginning new learning in order to uncover prior knowledge and experiences before embarking on new learning. Pre-assessments determine current levels of knowledge, skills, and performance, to diagnose possible needs, and to guide future learning. Some examples can include: KWL (What do you know? What do you want to know? What have you learned?) charts, class discussions, mathematics and language arts skills tests, questionnaires, and written responses.

Formative Assessments are incorporated into the daily learning process. It provides teachers and students with information about how the learning is developing. It is used to help the teacher plan the next stage of learning. Some examples can include: teacher observation, individual teacher-student interviews, self-assessment and peer assessment.

Summative Assessments occur at the end of a teaching and learning cycle. It gives students an opportunity to demonstrate what has been learned by applying their knowledge in new and authentic ways. Some examples can include: reports, explanations, plays, presentations and exhibitions. Commonly used assessment tools can include checklists, rubrics and anecdotal notes.

Benchmark Assessments are given periodically throughout a school year to establish baseline achievement data and measure progress toward an academic standard or goal. Examples can include: Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) in math, reading and science, as well as Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System in reading.

Exhibition, in grade 5, students will participate in the PYP Exhibition. The Exhibition will be a culminating, transdisciplinary, self-directed experience that requires each student to demonstrate their understanding of the five essential elements of the programme: Knowledge, Concepts, Skills, Attitudes and Action. Exhibition will provide an authentic summative assessment that reflects the student's entire PYP experience.

MYP Projects, an accumulation of student learning in the MYP, are student-centered and age-appropriate, and they enable students to engage in practical explorations through a cycle of inquiry, action and reflection. MYP projects help students to develop the attributes of the IB learner profile; provide students with an essential opportunity to demonstrate

approaches to learning (ATL) skills developed through the MYP; and foster the development of independent, lifelong learners.

Student Self-Assessments are interwoven throughout daily learning to engage students in reflection and assessment on their own learning. The students are given time to reflect on the progress in all subject areas, including the attributes expressed in the Learner Profile. After each Unit of Inquiry, students need to be given the opportunity to reflect on their learning using a reflection sheet developed by the teachers.

Assessment Strategies and Tools

Strategies (How do students demonstrate learning at Schutz?)

- **Performance Assessments:** Students create, produce, perform or present work; used to assess skill or proficiency
- **Process Assessments:** Focus on processes which students underwent in order to arrive at products and outputs (collaborative protocols, research process, etc.)
- **Selected Responses:** Common examples are multiple choice, true/false tests and quizzes
- **Open-Ended Tasks:** Students are presented with a challenge and asked to provide an original response. The response could be a brief written answer, a drawing, a diagram or a solution.

Measuring: Tools (How do teachers measure student learning at Schutz?)

- **Observations:** Documents students' process of learning in both collaborative and independent settings, including their approaches to learning, attitudes towards learning, use of inquiry, and responses to learning through action.
- **Conferring and Invitational Groups:** Teachers will check in with individual students or small groups during composing time, allowing him/her to provide feedback on students' work and provide them immediate differentiated support.
- **Student Self-Assessment and Reflection:** Students' own assessment of personal progress in knowledge, skills processes, and attitudes, leading to a greater understanding of themselves as learners.
- **Rubrics:** An established set of criteria for rating students in all areas. The descriptors tell the assessor what characteristics or signs to look for in students' work and then how to rate that work on a predetermined scale. Rubrics can be developed by students as well as by teachers.
- **Checklists:** Lists of information, data, attributes, or elements that should be present.
- **Journals:** A students; personal notebook including but not limited to written reflective responses, notes on key learning, ideas to share with collaborative groups, and questions to extend their thinking.
- **Anecdotal Records:** Brief, write notes based on observations of students.
- **Writing Samples:** May be used to assess the students' understanding of a particular genre of writing and/or the student's understanding of a particular concept or ability to analyze and synthesize information.
- **Graphic Organizers:** Visual representations of knowledge, skills used as tools for probing and analyzing thinking and learning.
- **Exemplars:** Samples of students' work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged.

- **Test/Exams:** Intended to measure a student's knowledge, skills, aptitude, or classification in a variety of topics. A test may be administered orally, on paper, or on a computer.

Assessment in the Early Years

Students in the early years acquire key learning milestones that are fundamental for future school success. This includes their cognitive ability to reflect on their knowledge, conceptual understandings and skills. A wide range of assessment strategies informs learning and teaching of young learners.

Early years teachers observe how students monitor and adjust their own behaviour, especially at play, in order to:

- build a clear picture of the student and their interests
- identify what and how the student is thinking and learning
- assess the effectiveness of the learning environment on the student's learning
- plan learning engagements for individuals and small groups.
- track growth and development over time

When observing, teachers also document what the students say and do. By listening carefully to the dialogue between students, teachers learn about their current interests, existing knowledge, level of involvement and social skills. Teachers sometimes ask skillful questions to capture thinking, understanding or feelings. Teachers share these observations with students and parents. Collaborating with colleagues, they analyse group interactions, discover strengths, identify learning goals and reflect on the effectiveness of teaching practices. (*IB Principles to Practice, Assessment*)

Assessment Strategies and Tools

Varied formative assessments are used to provide a holistic picture of development, which can become a rich opportunity for continued shared learning through a reflective process between the child, teacher and family.

- Readiness assessments, social benchmarking, and development continuums are tools used to inform teachers of how to provide a learning environment conducive to student phases of development and track growth and development over time.
- Formal interviews and informal conversations are used to uncover a learner's thinking, understanding, and feelings.
- Pedagogical documentation extends the use of traditional observation and documentation for analysis and reflection to make the learning process visible and meaningful. Teachers document learning through photos, videos, artifacts, and reflections. The teachers and students collaborate to create meaning through multiple perspectives and invite parents into the process through learning stories.

Reporting on Students' Learning

Conferences: The purpose of conferences is to give information to both students and parents. At the Primary School we offer three different types of conferences:

- **Teacher-Parent Conferences:** These are formal conferences with both language teachers, any support teachers who work with the student, and the parents to provide feedback about the student's progress and needs. Teachers take this opportunity to answer parents' questions, to address their concerns and to help define their role in the learning process. At the Primary School these conferences take place in October.
- **Student-Led Conferences:** These are formal conferences between students and parents. The students will, with the support and guidance of the teacher, select the work to be discussed. Students reflect on their progress and share the responsibility of informing their parents. These conferences take place in May in Kindergarten and grades 1-5.

During any time of the year, both teachers and parents can request a conference to discuss the progress of the student.

Report Cards: Schutz sends out four written report cards at the end of each quarter to report back on student progress.

Determining Grades

<u>Appropriate</u>	<u>Inappropriate</u>
<p>Grades are based upon a range of assessment data related to defined learning outcomes and/or grade-level benchmarks.</p> <p>Teachers focus on the <u>most consistent and most recent</u> assessment evidence against defined achievement levels.</p> <p>Behavioral concerns are addressed through direct communication with students and their parents, as well as the reporting of performance against Approaches to Learning (ATL) targets.</p>	<p>Determine grades using a proportion of scores for classwork, homework and tests</p> <p>Determine grades by averaging summative performance scores over the year</p> <p>Using single pieces of work to determine final grades</p> <p>Using behavioral factors such as perceived effort, attendance, late submission of work, or other self-management elements to determine final grades</p>

Documenting Students' Learning

Portfolios:

“Documentation of learning is shared with others to make learning visible and apparent. It reveals insights into learning and provides opportunities to reconnect with learning goals and success criteria. Students and teachers can document learning goals, questions, reflections and evidence of learning using a variety of formats.”

Portfolios at the Primary School

The purpose of the portfolio is to reflect student's learning and growth. The portfolio highlights a student's internalized learning process. It is an excellent way for students to articulate their growth and share personal reflections about their learning.

Essential Agreements:

- the portfolio will reflect a student's growth over time (the portfolio is a growth/process portfolio)
- the portfolio will show a holistic picture of the student
- portfolio pieces will be selected by the teacher or by the student with guidance from the teacher
- the student will complete a reflection for each selected piece
- all entries will be dated
- in the spring, the student will reflect upon the portfolio itself and will share the portfolio with his/her parent(s) during the student-led conference
- portfolios will be sent home at the end of the school year
- the portfolio will include various pieces of evidence to show progress of learning.

Review Cycle:

The Assessment Procedure will go through an bi-annual review process. This process will include a variety of stakeholders as an Assessment Committee. The committee will work towards ensuring that all members of the learning community have input and feedback on the document.

Key Assessment Resources

Assessment Practices that Enhance Learning, Jay McTighe

IB PYP Principles to Practice, Assessment

Assessment in the MYP

IB Assessment Standards and Practices

SAS Reporting Guidelines

SAS Assessment Calendar