JHW Assessment Policy

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide a safe and caring environment, where all students can be prepared academically and socially for our future society. Providing excellence in education through a rigorous curriculum, international awareness, and lifelong learning skills, to develop future leaders with a passion to serve and create a more peaceful world. Learning for all, whatever it takes.

Introduction & Purpose

The purpose of this document is to communicate to all stakeholders in our IB community – administrators, teachers, students, and parents – the programmatic expectations for assessment for all learners as required by International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). This document also provides clear guidelines and responsibilities of all stakeholders. Assessment is integral to Janie Howard Wilson's (JHW) mission. This policy provides the instructional staff at JHW with a system for effective assessment practices and creates an essential agreement that is the professional expectation for all members of the instructional staff and administration.

The contents of this policy are based on best practice and information as found in educational research, IB assessment workshops, and other school-based and external professional development. The policy also fulfills verification and evaluation requirements for the Primary Years Programme (PYP) set by the International Baccalaureate (IB). At JHW, we believe that the ultimate purpose of assessment is to guide our planning and instruction so that we can support and enhance student learning rather than simply generate a grade. We believe that setting high standards and providing appropriate instructional support, while encouraging critical thinking and application of meaningful knowledge through the IB PYP, is vital for student success.

Teachers at JHW regularly discuss assessment in order to ensure alignment of our philosophy and practices and are committed to working collaboratively to design instruction that actively engages and appropriately challenges all students. We believe that in order to improve learning, assessment needs to:

- Provide frequent and effective formative assessment feedback to students and guidance on how to improve and help students set goals and timelines for improvement.
- Ensure students are reflecting upon, analyzing and evaluating their own work and that of their peers.
- Generate data that teachers use to reflect upon and adapt their teaching strategies, which includes strategies for differentiation based on the differing needs of students.
- Celebrate the progress of students, based on actual academic progress as well as effort.

- Empower and encourage IB students to become lifelong learners, who take ownership of their learning.

We have developed this assessment policy to:

- Align with current Florida Common Core Standards.
- Align with current Florida's Best Benchmarks.
- Align with current Florida, district, and IB assessment practices and policies.
- Vertically align across all grade levels and subject areas, with a balanced range of tools and strategies.
- Focus on the process of learning as well as the final product, and encourage reflection on both.
- Students participate in quarterly student-led conferences with their parent/guardian that allow them to reflect on their learning throughout the year.
- Communicate expectations and foster common understanding amongst all stakeholders.

Janie Howard Wilson's assessment policy encompasses six closely related components: Planning, Assessing, Recording, Evaluating, Reporting, and Reflecting. This policy outlines and clarifies the school's approaches to each of these important areas of assessment.

Planning for Assessment

At Janie Howard Wilson, we believe that the teaching and learning cycle starts with assessment, rather than teaching. We begin our lesson planning with the end goal in mind. Assessment is the gathering and analysis of information about student performance and is designed to inform practice. This information is used to drive teaching in our classrooms to ensure academic mastery from our students.

Assessment practices at JHW allow teachers to effectively plan and differentiate for learning by evaluating students' current ability and level of understanding. This understanding allows teachers to collaboratively plan and design curriculum that ensures students continuously grow and progress in socially and academically relevant and meaningful ways.

When planning for student learning within the IB PYP, JHW teachers strive to provide opportunities for learners to construct meaning primarily through structured inquiry. This is accomplished by emphasizing the connections between subject-specific knowledge and the transdisciplinary skills and themes. At JHW, PLCs collaborate and plan regularly to ensure that the PYP transdisciplinary themes for learning provide a focus for inquiry.

Janie Howard Wilson's philosophy of assessment recognizes the value of assessing the process of inquiry as well as the product(s) of inquiry, and aims to integrate and support both. During PLC collaboration, teachers begin with the "end in mind" to identify summative assessments that allow students to reflect and demonstrate their understanding of the "big ideas" explored

within the planner (PYP Central Idea). Summative assessments measure students' understanding of new learning and application of strategies. Our teachers identify, define and align assessments based on students' current understanding and grade level content and standards throughout each unit.

Student progress and growth is also regularly assessed using formative assessment tools and strategies. This allows teachers to continually analyze, track and communicate student learning. Formative assessments used during instruction help identify what students are learning so teachers can differentiate and adjust the pace and content of instruction. Because the zone of proximal development differs for every child, assessment strategies and tools are adapted to meet individual student needs.

At JHW, we believe that students should see assessment as a tool to help them self-assess and reflect on their own work and the work of their peers. Active involvement in the assessment process empowers students to work toward standards by setting personal goals and action plans, and to celebrate and reflect on their achievements and understanding along the way. At JHW, students and parents play an active role in monitoring student learning and planning for success. Teachers meet with individual students regularly in "data chats" to discuss strengths and weaknesses and set goals for future learning. This information is also shared and collaborated upon with students' families at scheduled conferences.

Planning and assessment at JHW is an ongoing evaluation of how we analyze the effectiveness of our teaching and the degree of student learning. Assessment is integral to all teaching and learning and the cornerstone to guide instructional practices. The prime objective of assessment in JHW's implementation of the PYP is to provide feedback on the teaching and learning process and drive future instruction.

Why do we assess?

- To reflect, set goals and plan for continuous student learning and growth.
- To guide children through the five essential elements (acquisition of knowledge, the understanding of concepts, the mastering of skills, the development of attitudes and the decision to take action) of learning contained in the PYP.
- To support and encourage student learning by providing feedback on the learning process.
- To know and celebrate what students can do, rather than what they cannot do.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the learning program.

What do we assess?

- Understanding of concepts across the transdisciplinary (PYP) subject areas.
- Mastery of Approaches to Learning (ATL) and other identified skills.
- Student progress and performance in all subject areas.
- Ability to develop, understand and apply the IB learner profile attributes and attitudes.

Assessing, Recording & Evaluating

At JHW, we recognize the importance of establishing a consistent process and criteria for assessing student work through the use of exemplars. We assess student work for three reasons; to promote student learning, to provide information about student learning and to guide teaching.

Student work is assessed to promote student learning through…	Information about student learning is provided by…	Guide teaching to…
• Assessing students' prior knowledge and experience about a topic or task • Planning to differentiate the teaching and learning to meet individual or group needs • Engaging students in reflection on their learning and in the assessment of their work • Engaging teachers in reflection on student learning and in the assessment of their teaching • Refining and re-evaluating teaching methods in order to maintain rigor	• Examples of students' work and performance tasks • Student wonderings • Statistics based on explicit benchmarks and/or rubrics • Classroom test results • Standardized test results • Special education diagnostic assessments • Teacher observations/ anecdotal notes • Student/teacher reflections • Goal setting conferences with students	• Assess students' performance in relation to the general & specific expectations of the program • Assess group performance in relation to other classes or groups both internally and externally • Inform parents, students, teachers and community • Assess student thinking processes/ metacognition • Refine instruction • Differentiate according to individual needs of students • Promote further inquiry

Assessment & Recording Strategies

We use a variety of strategies to provide a comprehensive view of our students' achievement across all subject areas. These cover a range of approaches, from the subjective and intuitive to the objective and scientific, to assure a balanced view of the whole child.

Grades	Progress Monitoring
Kindergarten – 2	- Early Star - Writing - Math Star - iReady Reading & iReady Math - Science
3 – 5	- Star Reading - Writing - Math Star - iReady Reading & iReady Math - Science - FAST Cambium Math - FAST Cambium Reading