

West End Secondary School

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Wonder, Compassion, Creativity, Resilience



www.westendsecondary.com

WESS Terminology

Assessment for Learning (AfL)

An *assessment for learning* is an assessment given to students for the purpose of assessing their current progress in mastering a skill or topic.

Assessment of Learning (AoL)

An *assessment of learning* is an assessment given to students for the purpose of assessing whether or not they ultimately mastered a skill or topic.

Case Study

A *case study* is one part of a larger learning expedition (see definition under *expedition* below). During a *case study* students will undergo a focused investigation of a specific topic or theme related to the learning expedition.

Core Values

WESS has four *core values*: compassion, creativity, resilience, and wonder. These core values live in every classroom and all of the work we do every day at WESS.

Crew

Crew is an integral part of the WESS experience. Your *crew* consists of a small group of students who are your WESS family. Your crew and crew teacher stays the same every year you are at WESS. Crew teachers are the first point of contact for every WESS family, and help advocate for individual student needs.

Expedition

An *expedition* (or learning expedition) is the core structure for learning at WESS. It is an interdisciplinary exploration of a topic or theme across subject areas. An expedition starts with a *kick off* and ends with a *presentation of learning*.

Fieldwork (or Field Experience)

Fieldwork (or *field experiences*) are targeted learning experiences at offsite locations designed to engage students in a hands on experience directly related to their current expedition.

Google Classroom

Google Classroom is a platform used by WESS teachers to assign homework and digital classwork. Homework assignments are uploaded to *google classroom* with their due date and are automatically exported to all students' WESS google calendars. Google classroom is **not** a grading platform.

Guiding Question

A *guiding question* is an open ended overarching question that students explore over the course of a learning expedition or case study.

Habits of Work

Under *Mastery Based Grading* students work habits and academic content and skill mastery are graded separately. WESS uses Habits of Work that support students to become effective learners. We clearly articulate habits at each grade level that enable students to become ethical people, which include traits like respect, responsibility, honesty, and compassion. We believe habits of work are essential for success in school and in life. At WESS homework completion grades live under Habits of Work.

Kick Off

A *kick off* is an immersive learning experience designed to engage students in thinking about the theme, topic, or guiding question of the learning expedition and how the learning expedition will connect across subject areas.

JumpRope

JumpRope is the grading platform used at WESS. Families can access *JumpRope* (updated weekly) to view students' progress toward mastery of learning targets and habits of work.

Learning Targets

Learning Targets are specific goals either for a learning expedition or case study (called a Long Term Learning Target or LTLT) or for daily classwork (called a Supporting Learning Target or SLT). Learning Targets are derived from academic and Common Core standards and are written in student-friendly language (I can...).

Mastery Based Grading

Mastery Based Grading also known as *Standards Based Grading* focuses on student learning. Grades are based on demonstrated understanding of specific *Learning Targets* (LTs). These LTs indicate exactly what students should know and be able to do in each academic content area. Instead of a simple letter, students receive grades in multiple different learning targets and can see which targets they understand well and which they need to improve on. This way, students and parents can track performance thoroughly, rather than just being handed a vague letter grade with no explanation. A score of a "3" means that the student has met the learning standard. A score of a "4" means that the student has met the standard and exceeded expectations. A score of "1" or "2" indicates that the student needs to keep working towards mastery of a given set of learning targets. Mastery and work habits are separated. Students receive two different grades for each subject; one for mastery of learning targets (achievement) and one for work habits. Scores are determined based on the level of mastery demonstrated, not just by completing work. While your child may have completed work, they may have to revise in order to demonstrate high levels of mastery.

Passages

Passages are student led presentations given at the culmination of a significant era of schooling. Passages are an opportunity for students to reflect on their process of learning and present their growth and readiness to move on to the next phase of their learning. At WESS students complete passage presentations at the end of 8th and 12th grade.

Presentation of Learning (PoL)

A *Presentation of Learning (PoL)* is a culminating event or experience at the end of a learning expedition in which students present their learning to an authentic audience. Students may present *assessments of learning* or they may present an interdisciplinary expedition project that explores the theme or topic of the expedition.

Re-engagement

At WESS, we provide students additional opportunities to master learning targets because we understand that an assignment deadline is not the final opportunity for students to master a content area or skill. We do this through the policy of *re-engagement*. Re-engagement allows students to return to the content area or skill and demonstrate mastery. All students who receive grades below mastery on *assessments of learning* are given the opportunity to re-engage without conditions. Students who receive mastery or above on specific *assessments of learning* (projects and papers) may formally request to re-engage by writing a proposal for re-engagement that integrates the teachers feedback and an action plan.

Student Assessment Notebooks (SANs)

At WESS students preserve their *assessments of learning* and other important pieces of work in their *Student Assessment Notebooks (SANs)*. SANs are an integral part of the *student led conference* and *passages* processes and allow students to reflect on their learning throughout their schooling. At the end of case studies and learning expeditions, students may complete SAN sheets in their classes that ask them to return to their learning targets from the case study or expedition and self-reflect on their own mastery. This allows students to make their learning concrete, and reinforces the value of students' own assessment of their learning.

Student Led Conferences (SLCs)

Student Led Conferences (SLCs) are an opportunity for students to reflect on their progress and process of learning and have a thoughtful discussion around their growth. In Crew, students select work samples and reflect on how this work represents their process of learning. Students are encouraged to select work samples that represent their best effort as well as work samples that reflect areas of growth and opportunity. SLCs take place between the student, their family, and their crew teacher, and take the place of parent teacher conferences.