



For students to be able to deepen their understanding and improve the quality of the work they produce and to reflect that understanding, they rely mainly on information from the teacher. Test scores and letter grades have traditionally played a dominant role in communication about assessment, but these symbols in themselves do not provide students with the feedback and guidance they need to learn (Wiggins, G., and J. McTighe, *Understanding by Design*, Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 1998). When students receive specific, descriptive feedback, they know what it is they need to do differently to improve their work.

ASSESSMENT

All assessment must:

1. be based on the appropriate program of studies
2. provide opportunities for students to use accommodations and/or assistive technology as appropriate
3. focus on a range of outcomes reflecting multiple dimensions of skill development (p.102 Guide to Education)
4. ensure that grades are based on an individual's performance rather than group achievement grades
5. separate effort, participation, attitude, attendance, and other behaviours that may not be curriculum-based, from academic achievement
6. use learning tasks, such as homework, as a source of formative assessment which are not to be factored into a student's achievement grade.

No single assessment event will be considered as the main source of evidence when making professional judgment about student achievement toward the expected learning outcomes.

Teachers responsible for the same grade or course within a school should establish common expectations for levels of student achievement of learning outcomes, and should assess student learning in light of these expectations.

Teachers and principals will:

1. be assessment literate and follow guiding principles about assessment outlined by board policy and procedures.
2. use a variety of strategies and tools for assessment in order to give students a range of opportunities and a variety of ways to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and attitudes pertaining to the expected learning outcomes.
3. consider cultural background, language proficiency, and prior experiences, in order to give all students equitable opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of the expected learning outcomes.
4. adapt assessment tools and strategies for students with specific needs to ensure that all students have equitable opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of expected learning outcomes.



COMMUNICATION OF STUDENT LEARNING

Communication about student learning must:

1. use formal and informal methods of communication that are timely, ongoing, clear, concise, accurate, embedded in the learning process and are meaningful for the student and parents.
2. clearly communicate the learning outcomes and the essential elements of the successful completion of the learning task to the student/parents.
3. describe what the student is able to do, and provide direction for next steps.
4. encourage the student to set and revise learning goals.
5. make reference to adaptations when communicating student learning.
6. help teachers, students and parents plan collaboratively for student success.
7. assist parents in supporting the student at home.
8. transparently outline procedures for the student's/parents' right to appeal.

Teachers and principals will:

1. strive to communicate in ways that encourage students to understand themselves as learners, to understand where they are in the progression of their learning and to understand the direction they need to take their learning or what they need to do differently in order to be more successful.
2. provide frequent opportunities within their instructional routines, for students to discuss their learning with others using a wide variety of strategies such as effective use of conferencing and portfolios, the collaborative identification of assessment criteria and the corresponding indicators of quality work, and the routine use of self-reflection and peer coaching to enable students to internalize the attributes of quality work and performance.
3. communicate frequently with students and parents about student learning, providing rich descriptions of student performance.
4. separate effort, behaviour and participation from achievement of outcomes in the Program of Studies.
5. ensure procedures are in place for assessment *for* learning and assessment *as* learning, in addition to assessment *of* learning and these are communicated annually to parents.
6. accurately represent a student's current grade level of achievement and performance in relation to the curriculum (e.g., GLA- student may be in grade 9 but completing grade 7 curriculum).



REPORTING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Assessment of learning (Summative Assessment) is concerned with examining and summarizing the critical evidence of student work that reflects achievement of the learning outcomes in a given grade and subject. Teachers use a variety of strategies to communicate student progress and achievement. At the K-12 level, communication about student achievement will include summary information about student achievement and behaviours, and narratives about their strengths, areas for improvement, and next steps. (Reference: Communicating Student Learning: Guidelines for Schools 2008, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth.)

The reporting of student achievement must include:

1. school name, address and phone number
2. school division logo and mission statement
3. name of the school principal and the student's teacher(s)
4. record of student attendance and punctuality
5. Alberta student identification number and legal name of student, or preferred alternative name, where both names are recorded in the Student Information System.
6. grade or program placement level of student, including an indication where the program has been modified to meet individual needs
7. a year end program promotion or placement recommendation for K-9 students
8. identification of the grade level of achievement (grades 1-9) demonstrated by the student for mathematics and language arts at the end of each school year.

Teachers and principals will:

1. establish at least three summative reporting periods per school year. A progress report shall be provided for at least three of these reporting periods or two times per high school semester. A written year-end progress report will be provided.
2. make provisions for at least two conferences (student involved or student-led) for the purpose of discussing student learning during each school year and one per high school semester.
3. work with the jurisdiction to make provisions for proficient specialized services to facilitate effective conferencing or interviews with parents and students where appropriate.
4. share and /or review the Board policy, philosophy, and procedures with parents and teachers annually as part of the review and revision of the School Education Plan.
5. ensure that information is effectively communicated to parents of Kindergarten to Grade 9 students about:
 - 5.1 what their child knows and can do in relation to learning outcomes
 - 5.2 the grade level(s) the child has achieved in relation to the grade level(s) of the provincial programs of study for language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.



6. communicate learner attributes, student progress and effort separately from achievement, at all levels.
7. report, for every student, the Grade Level of Achievement (GLA) for Language Arts and Mathematics to Alberta Education in June of each school year.
8. use Grade 3 Provincial Achievement Tests results for no more than 10% of the student's final grade, if at all.
9. use Grade 6 Provincial Achievement Tests results for no more than 10% of the student's final grade, if at all.
10. use Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests results for no more than 25% of the student's final grade, if at all.
11. base the final assessment in all Grade 12 Diploma courses upon an equal weighting of the school-based assessment and the Diploma Exam result (Alberta Education Policy).
12. follow the guidelines below to ensure that grades in Rocky View Schools be meaningful, consistent, accurate and supportive of learning:
 - 12.1 Learning outcomes are the basis to record evidence and determine grades (not assessment methods, i.e., tests, projects, assignments).
 - 12.2 The meaning of grades comes from clear description of performance standards. Regardless of the symbol system used, it is the descriptions that make the level of performance meaningful to the teachers, students, and parents.
 - 12.3 Only individual achievement is reported in the grades; learning behaviours such as effort, attitude and other non-academic factors are reported separately. Each will be carefully recorded and maintained.
 - 12.4 A variety of summative assessments are used to determine grades.
 - 12.5 The most consistent level of achievement is used with special consideration for more recent evidence of achievement; reassessment opportunities are provided if the student shows he/she has engaged in learning activities that increase likelihood of success.
 - 12.6 "Body of evidence" and professional judgment are used to determine grades; consider using median or mode when using number values.
 - 12.7 Alternatives to zeros in grading are developed and implemented.
 - 12.8 Quality assessments are used and characterized by clear targets, clear purpose, appropriate target-method match, appropriate sampling of learning outcomes, avoidance of bias and distortion.
 - 12.9 Students are involved in assessment throughout the teaching/learning process.
13. ensure that a copy of the student's progress report or a record of final levels of achievement be placed annually in the student's cumulative file.



Individual Program Plan (IPP), Modified Programming and Adapted Programming

1. All progress reports shall include an explanation of cases in which a grading is not applicable to a particular student and/or an evaluation has not been made; e.g. a coding such as N.A. or N.E. might be used with an accompanying definition.
2. For students on a modified program, the following must be in place:
 - 2.1 parents need to be informed of the nature of the modified learner outcomes, their impact on future educational programming and provide consent.
 - 2.2 the progress report needs to clearly indicate if a student's learning goals have been modified.
 - 2.3 assessment of a student's achievement, if receiving adapted programming, is relative to currently assigned grade placement or program.
 - 2.4 assessment of a student's achievement, if receiving modified programming, is relative to the modified learner outcomes.
3. For students with a formal Individual Program Plan (IPP) the following must be in place:
 - 3.1 If a formal IPP has been prepared for a student in one or more subject areas his/her progress shall be reported on the IPP in relation to the IPP goals.
 - 3.2 For curriculum outcomes where the IPP is not relevant, the progress report shall be used to communicate the student's achievement.
 - 3.3 Where graded curriculum is used as the basis for IPP learning, the IPP must communicate the student's grade level of achievement in each curriculum area.
 - 3.4 Students with special needs whose entire programs are directed by an IPP shall have their progress reported solely in an IPP. If student progress is not being measured against grade level curriculum standards, appropriate alternative descriptors may be used to describe student performance.
4. A copy of the student's IPP shall be placed in the student's confidential file.