

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE NO. 350

STUDENT EVALUATION

Background

In partnership with families, the parish and the community, Catholic education is directed at developing the full spiritual, physical, academic, cognitive, social and emotional well-being of each student. Through their learning experiences, students develop a sense of self-worth and dignity as members of the people of God and are able to make a useful contribution in a complex and changing society.

Assessment, evaluation and communication of student achievement and growth are positive, thoughtful and meaningful experiences for students and promote growth. Student learning in education programs shall be assessed to assist in:

- improving student learning.
- guiding teaching practices congruent with research based principles,
- and establishing and maintaining standards,

Division schools are committed to ensuring the best education possible for all students supported by a comprehensive approach to student evaluation. Evaluation instruments complement the on-going assessment of student achievement by teachers, who assess results in a variety of ways to maintain and further improve the quality of education provided to students. The legal cornerstones for communicating student achievement are found in Alberta Education policies.

Procedures

1. It is the responsibility of the teacher to use assessment for learning to improve student achievement. Assessment and reporting is an ongoing process.
 - 1.1 The collection of evidence related to student learning is known as assessment. It consists of teacher professional judgment in the form of observations, conversations, products, processes and student reflection on progress.
 - 1.2 The primary purpose of student assessment, both formative and summative, is to support and improve learning and teaching instruction.
 - 1.3 Effective classroom assessment is broad-based (i.e. includes a variety of evidence, gathered over time using varied assessment methods).
 - 1.3.1 Assessment of learning or summative assessment aligns, visibly and verifiably, with learner outcomes from the Program of Studies and may count toward student grades.

- 1.3.2 Assessment for learning or formative assessment is used to coach students into deeper understanding and higher achievement of learner outcomes. Formative evidence is often recorded, may not necessarily be calculated in student grades.
- 2. Student evaluation procedures are fair, equitable and valid, reflecting desired curricular outcomes and taking into account individual student needs and abilities.

2.1 While student learning is measured in relation to learner outcomes from the Alberta Education Programs of Study, some students' programs are adapted or modified in one or more subjects to meet their individual learning needs.

- 2.1.1 Adapted program means programming that retains the learner outcomes of the Program of Studies and where adjustments to the instructional process are provided to address the education needs of the students.
- 2.1.2 Modified programs, which require an individualized program plan (IPP) are based on learner outcomes that are significantly different from the Alberta Programs of Study, are not graded in the same way as regular or adapted programs, and are specifically selected to meet a student's special education needs.
- 2.1.3 Accommodations are specific support provided for individual students working from the Alberta Programs of Study.
- 2.1.4 Fair and accurate assessment, centered on an outcome-aligned body of evidence, is inherently connected to teacher professional judgment and the Alberta Education Programs of Study.

2.2 Teachers are responsible for:

- 2.2.1 Aligning instruction with general and specific learner outcomes;
- 2.2.2 Using outcome-aligned assessments to measure learning at the diagnostic, formative and summative stages;
- 2.2.3 Sharing learner outcomes and criteria with students throughout the learning process;
- 2.2.4 Openly communicating information about learning with students and parents/guardians
- 2.2.5 Actively involving students in their learning assessment;
- 2.2.6 Adapting and/or modifying programs based on students' educational needs;

- 2.2.7 Creating opportunities for ongoing descriptive feedback that deepens the understanding of student learning;
 - 2.2.8 Designing learning experiences and assessments with real-world connections for students;
 - 2.2.9 Creating opportunities for student input and in demonstrating learning;
 - 2.2.10 Deriving evidence of student learning from a variety of sources (i.e. observations, conversations, products) and types of assessment (i.e. projects, tests, daily work);
 - 2.2.11 Distinguishing between and documenting, formative and summative evidence;
 - 2.2.12 Assessing each student's individual achievement within the context of partner or group work;
 - 2.2.13 Differentiating the evidence that best reflects each student's level of understanding and achievement (i.e. may not be the same evidence for every student);
 - 2.2.14 Incorporating student learning profiles;
 - 2.2.15 Timely feedback appropriate to the nature of the assignment.
3. The evaluation of student achievement and collection of evidence will be based on course objectives as defined by Alberta Education and the Division, which have been explained to students.
- 3.1 Teachers will focus on a balance between lower and higher levels of cognition (i.e. Bloom's Taxonomy) guiding students to higher levels of thinking deemphasizing lower levels of cognition and rote learning.
 - 3.2 Evidence of learning, formative and summative, is recorded on a regular basis using a meaningful system of data
 - 3.3 Summative assessment weightings are determined by teacher professional judgment and clearly communicated to students.
 - 3.4 When more consistent and/or convincing evidence of learning is demonstrated by a student, teachers de-emphasize (i.e. reduce the weighting of) or replace prior evidence of learning with more recent, more consistent, or more convincing evidence.

3.5 Where evidence of learning is related to non-achievement factors (e.g. attendance, behavior, effort, participation, attitude, homework completion, etc.) is collected, recorded, and communicated separately from achievement-based evidence (i.e. aligned with learner outcomes).

3.6 Subsequent opportunities to demonstrate learning may be necessary or beneficial for students. The subsequent assessment may take a similar or varied form.

3.7 Prior to a re-assessment, it is recommended that students participate in specific learning activities to increase the likelihood of success (e.g. study session, learning contract, previous assignment completion, conference with the teacher, etc.).

3.8 Grading practices must ensure the accurate measurement of learning. Assessment practices that distort the accuracy of measurement include:

3.8.1 Awarding extra credit for bonus points

3.8.2 Giving all members of a group a single grade for a demonstration of learning

3.8.3 Deducting marks for student work submitted after the due date

3.8.4 Deducting marks for student lates or absences

3.8.5 Applying a grade of zero as punishment

3.8.6 Assigning zeros for academic dishonesty and/or missing evidence of learning. Both will be dealt with on an individual basis.

3.9 Teachers, under the leadership of the principal, will establish consistent, student success-driven processes to support and ensure completion of student work, and to develop and implement alternatives to zeros through the pyramid of intervention. After all efforts have been made by the teacher to support students, in consultation with the principal, a zero may be assigned to a student who is not responding to interventions.

3.10 Academic dishonesty and incomplete evidence of learning will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

4. Teachers and administrators shall communicate evaluation procedures to students, parents and School Councils. Under the leadership of the principal, teachers will ensure that feedback, communication and reporting of student learning are consistent with the *Alberta Education Act*, *Alberta Education Guide to Education* and Division reporting periods.

4.1 Feedback occurs in regular, accessible and timely ways through a combination of:

- 4.1.1 Verbal feedback (e.g. conversations, coaching, phone calls, conferencing, etc.)
 - 4.1.2 Written feedback (e.g. assignments and assessment tools, e-portfolios, web pages, email, web-based grading platform, report cards, etc.)
- 4.2 Teachers will provide ongoing information to students and parents/guardians about units of study, learner outcomes and assessment.
- 4.3 Within a timely manner of the commencement of a course, students and parents/guardians will receive written communication about the purpose of the course, key learner outcomes, topics, and general assessment methods in the course.
- 4.4 Communication about learning is outcomes based (i.e. evidence aligned with learner outcomes). Norm-referenced information such as class or course averages (i.e. where students are measured in relation to peers) will not be communicated, reported or published.
- 4.5 Teachers at middle and high school will use the grade book component of the Student Information System. (Powerschool)
5. At a minimum of three times per year, or twice per semester (with the exception of Kindergarten which reports twice), schools will formally report student achievement to students and parents/guardians. As a result of electronic report cards students and parents have continuous access to progress on learner outcomes.
 - 5.1 Achievement in relation to the Alberta Education Program of Studies, for each course a student takes at all grade levels are referred to in Appendix A.
6. Records of individual student evaluations are confidential and, therefore, are not for public scrutiny. The following procedures will govern the maintenance of these confidential records:
 - 6.1 Teacher record books shall be stored in a secure place.
 - Individual Student Record files shall be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the central office of the school.
 - Records of student scores on standardized/selected tests will be maintained in the Student Record for each child.
 - 6.2 The confidentiality of all student records maintained by the school are the responsibility of the school principal. Security procedures regarding the responsibility

of the individual teachers for their record books shall be specified by the school principal.

7. Access to student records shall be governed by the principal.

7.1 Access will only be allowed when the information is requested by a student who is over the age of 16, by a parent or guardian or by an authorized person.

7.2 Information regarding an individual student's measured intelligence quotient shall not be given to parents or guardians except in unusual circumstances wherein the child's well-being would be properly served by such action.

8. Records will be retained in the school files for the duration of a child's attendance at school.

8.1 Upon graduation from high school, individual student records will be forwarded to Central Office for secure storage for 7 years after graduation, or age 25.

9. Transfer of student records to another jurisdiction on the occasion of a family moving away from the Division will be facilitated as follows:

9.1 In accordance with Alberta Education regulations;

9.2 The principal shall ensure that the records are reviewed and non-essential documents are removed prior to mailing.

9.3 Records shall be sent by mail in an envelope clearly marked as confidential to the addressee making the request. Records shall not be sent to a jurisdiction unless requested by a duly authorized person.

9.4 Records being sent out-of-province shall be copied and the copy kept in secure storage at central office for seven years after the student could reasonably be expected to complete Grade 12 or age 25.

10. Teachers will receive the evaluation results for their students from provincial, zone and selected tests.

10.1 Individual student results are confidential and shall be treated as such.

10.2 Teachers will be aided in the interpretation of evaluation results to enable them to improve and/or maintain student learning and instructional effectiveness.

11. The parents/guardians, School Board and the general public will be informed of the student group outcome results for the school or Division on provincially administered examinations.

Appendix A

Achievement Indicators for All Grade Levels

Kindergarten: – reporting twice a year on the seven learning areas identified in the *Kindergarten Program Statement plus spiritual development*.

<i>Kindergarten Achievement Indicators</i>		
Description	Indicator	Evidence
Meets program outcomes	M	Demonstrates skill/learner outcome independently and consistently. Demonstrates a solid level of understanding.
Progressing towards outcomes	P	Skill/learner outcome is emerging with minimal support. Demonstrates a basic level of understanding.
Just beginning to develop	J	Skill/learner outcome is emerging with direct support. Demonstrate a beginning level of understanding.
Not Yet Apparent	N	Skill/learner outcome is not evident at this reporting period.
Not covered or assessed during this reporting period	/	Skill/ learner outcome has not been introduced or assessed during this reporting period.

Grades 1 to 5:

<i>Grade 1 to 5 Achievement Indicators</i>		
Descriptor	Level of Achievement	Description
Excellent	E	The evidence of learning indicates a convincing, in-depth, sophisticated understanding of the learner outcomes. Perceptive understandings and subtle distinctions are applied in varied situations. The evidence skillfully demonstrates acceptable grade level standards.
Proficient	P	The evidence of learning indicates a solid understanding of the learner outcomes. Evidence is accurate and credible without being simplistic. The evidence capably demonstrates acceptable standards for the grade level
Basic	B	The evidence indicates a basic, developing an understanding of the learner outcomes. Evidence includes the correct information, but full understanding is not yet demonstrated. The evidence meets the acceptable standards for the grade level.
Progressing Toward Grade Level	Progressing Toward Grade Level	The evidence of learning indicates a beginning understanding of the grade level learner outcomes. Evidence reveals misunderstanding or misapplication of concepts. The evidence does not yet meet the standards for the grade level.
Insufficient Evidence	I	The evidence of learning is insufficient and/or highly incomplete. Evaluation is not yet possible due to lack of evidence.

Elementary students will be evaluated on “**Growth as a Learner**” which is divided into two sections: Social Development and Work and Study Habits to better reflect a student’s strengths and areas for growth. The growth as a learner is reported using the following four descriptors: Although recorded and reported separately from achievement, “Growth as Learner” are also criteria-based and evidence-based.

<i>Grade 1 – 5 Growth as a Learner Achievement Indicators</i>	
Consistently	The student consistently demonstrates this characteristic
Usually	The student usually demonstrates this characteristic
Sometimes	The student sometimes demonstrates this character tic
Requires Improvement	The student needs additional time and support to demonstrate this skill or habit.

Effort is a personal and social characteristics. During the reporting process, effort levels indicate a child’s progress primarily on two criteria: participation and work completion. Participation means the extent to which a student is engaged in the class, whereas work completion refers to the extent to which students meet expectations about the tasks presented as part of the curriculum. The effort levels indicators are:

<i>Grade 1 – 5 Effort Level Indicators</i>	
Applies Extra Effort	Student engagement in class activities and discussion that is exemplified by a high degree of positive and meaningful participation initiated by the student. These students are punctual in turning in assignments and consistently go beyond the stated requirements relative to neatness and adherence to conventions.
Displays Effort Consistently	This range describes student engagement in class activities and discussion that is voluntarily initiated by the student but more often requested by teacher. These students are punctual in turning in assignments and meet the stated requirements relative to neatness and adherence to conventions.
Effort is Inconsistent	This range describes student engagement in class activities and discussion only when requested to do so or when the request involves or do not meet the stated requirements relative to neatness and adherence to conventions. Use of this code suggests that the teacher will likely want to discuss the student's effort in the progress report conference
Requires more Effort	This range describes student engagement in class activities and discussion is minimal or nonexistent. These students are not punctual in turning in assignments and frequently do not meet the stated requirements relative to neatness and adherence to conventions. Use of this code requires conversations with students and parents/guardians and warrants further investigation

Grades 6 – 9:

<i>Grade 6 – 9 Percentage Achievement Indicators</i>	
Percentage	Marking Code
80 – 100%	Excellent
65 – 79%	Proficient
50 – 64%	Basic
Below 50%	Failing to meet expectations

Middle schools use an outcomes based report card and Power School Grade book is used to generate an outcomes based report with percentages as achievement indicators. Parents/guardians can view their child's progress in real time through the parent portal. Parents/guardians are able to check their child's marks for each class, view school bulletins, attendance history and teacher comments.

Middle School Honours - Students average of 80% or better in all 5 Core subjects (English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social and Religion with no mark in any class (core or other) lower than 70%.

Middle School Exemptions (optional) – Grade 7 and 8 students can be recommended for exemptions from one final exam per year. Students can only be exempted from a particular subject area once in middle school. If the student qualifies for an exemption in both grade 7 and 8, it must be taken in a different subject areas.

- A recommendation for exemption from one final exam is based on a minimum of 80% average in each term in the core subject being exempted
- Proper work habits must be demonstrated
- Each student's exemptions will be reviewed on an individual basis.

- Exemptions are optional and must be approved by the principal, parent, and student. There are no recommendations at the grade 6 or 9 level.

Grades 10 – 12:

<i>Grade 10 – 12 Percentage Achievement Indicators</i>	
Percentage	Marking Code
80 – 100%	Excellent
65 – 79%	Proficient
50 – 64%	Basic
Below 50%	Failing to meet expectations

High schools use Powerschool Gradebook to record marks. Parents/guardians can view their child’s progress in real time through the parent portal Powerschool Gradebook. Parents/guardians are able to check their child’s marks for each class, view school bulletins, attendance history and teacher comments.

The dates and sequence of report cards and conferences about learning are determined by the division office with communication with school administrators and district calendar dates. These dates are clearly communicated to students and parents/guardians

In addition to reporting, and at least twice per school year, schools will arrange and extend invitations for school-based conversations, showcases, or student-led conferences about learning with parents/guardians.

References:

- Sections: 196,197 of the Education Act
- Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12 (Alberta Education)
- Grade Level of Achievement: Teacher and Administrators Handbook (Alberta Education 2009)
- Effective Student Assessment and Evaluation in the Classroom (Alberta Education, 2006)
- Classroom Assessment for Student Learning: Doing it Right, Using it Well (Stiggins et al., 2004)
- How to Grade for Learning (O’Connor, 2002)
- Kindergarten Program Statement (Alberta Education, 2008)
- “Making the Grade: What Benefits Students?” (Guskey, Educational Leadership, 52 (2), 1994, p. 14-20)
- A Repair Kit for Grading: 15 Fixes for Broken Grades (O’Connor, 2007)
- Research on Grade Retention: <http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/rspe/researchforparents/guardians/>
- Merging Data: Grading...More than Just Number Crunching (AAC, 2001)
- Teaching Quality Standard (Alberta Education Policy 4.2.1, 1997)

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