



Prairie Rose
SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 8

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A102.1 STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

The Board shall ensure ongoing, meaningful, consistent and accurate assessment for all students. Assessment shall improve student learning, guide effective instruction, provide information for reporting on achievement related to the outcomes as described in the Program of Studies and inform decisions about student programming and placement.

General Guidelines:

1. Assessment information shall be used for the purposes of assessment *of* learning, assessment *for* learning and assessment *as* learning.
2. Students shall be actively involved in assessment as users of assessment information to support learning.
3. Principals shall ensure that procedures are in place within the school to support assessment.
4. Teachers shall inform students on an ongoing basis how their achievement will be determined.
5. Teachers shall assist students to understand achievement standards for learning outcomes.
6. Teachers shall inform students and their parents/guardians of how students' achievement will be assessed and of the achievement standards.
7. Teachers shall assess student achievement across the range of learning outcomes.
8. Communication among teachers, students and parents/guardians shall be ongoing and timely employing a variety of methods to identify progress, success and gaps in students' achievement of the learning outcomes.
9. Learner attributes and effort shall be communicated separately from achievement.



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Administrative Procedures Handbook

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10. When students fail to submit a sufficient number of assessment *of* learning for grading purposes, and every effort to obtain the assessments has been exhausted, teachers in consultation with the Principal shall use professional judgment to determine students' marks for the missing assignments, that is, failing marks or zeros
 11. The Board of Trustees shall hear appeals for administrative decisions that significantly affect the education of a student provided the appeal is brought in accordance with this policy and Governance Process GP#11 – Delegations and Appeals Procedures.

Student Achievement

1. Primary responsibility for the evaluation of student achievement rests with the professional teaching staff member providing instruction.
 - (a) The teacher shall:
 - i) conduct regular and continuing assessment of student achievement,
 - ii) maintain accurate and current records of student achievement,
 - iii) regularly keep the student and/or parent informed as to individual achievement progress,
 - iv) formally report on student achievement
 - (b) The principal shall:
 - i) ensure the development of school policy and rules on student achievement which provides for:
 - a) procedures for recording and reporting of student achievement within the school.
 - b) procedures for the review and appeal of individual student evaluations at the classroom and school level.
 - ii) monitor the student evaluation practices and procedure of individual members of the professional teaching staff.
 - iii) report to the Superintendent on matters of evaluation as required.
 - (c) The Superintendent shall:
 - i) monitor the student evaluation policies and procedures of individual schools and members of the professional teaching staff.
 - ii) report to the Board on matters related to student evaluation as required.
2. The practices and procedures of student evaluation shall be FAIR, JUST and EQUITABLE.
 - (a) The student and/or parent shall be informed, in writing at the commencement of instruction, as to the:
 - i) instructional objective of the program.



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- ii) content of the program.
 - iii) procedures of evaluation.
 - iv) evaluation criteria and standards
- (b) Evaluation shall reflect differences in student abilities, learning styles and needs.
3. The practices and procedures shall be structured to serve the best interests of the student.
- (a) Evaluations of academic achievement shall reflect the level of mastery of the instructional objectives in an approved program of studies.
 - (b) Evaluation procedures shall be consistent with the instructional method(s) utilized.
 - (c) Information gathered through the system of student evaluation shall be utilized in making student program placement decisions.
4. Reporting of student evaluation results must safeguard the students' confidentiality.
- (a) Teachers shall maintain a record of the results of student evaluations.
 - (b) These records shall remain the property of the Division and shall be returned to the school administration upon request.
 - (c) Records shall be kept in accordance with *Policy A308 – Student Records*.
5. The student and/or parent shall be provided with the opportunity to review and appeal individual evaluations.
- (a) The first level of review shall be to the teacher responsible for instruction in the program.
 - i) The request for review must be made, either verbally or in writing, within seven days of receipt of the evaluation mark.
 - ii) The teacher shall respond to each request by conducting a reappraisal of the evaluation and procedures utilized in light of school policy.
 - iii) The teacher shall respond to each request by conducting a re-appraisal of the evaluation procedures in the same form as that used for the request (verbal or written) within seven days of receipt of the request.
 - (b) In the case of report card marks, the student and/or parent may appeal to the principal if not satisfied with the results of the review conducted by the teacher.



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- i) Appeal to the principal shall be made in writing within seven day of receipt of the results of the teacher review.
 - ii) Appeal request shall state specific reasons for the appeal.
 - iii) Principal shall review the evaluation in light of the appeal.
 - iv) Principal shall advise the student and/or parent, in writing, of the results of the appeal within seven days of receipt of the request.
- (c) Marks of final standing in a program may be appealed to the Superintendent.
- i) Appeals to the Superintendent shall be acted upon only in situations where appeals to the teacher and principal have been unsuccessful.
 - ii) Requests for appeal to the Superintendent shall be made in writing within seven days of receipt of the appeal decision of the principal and must clearly state the nature of the policy or guideline contravention.
 - iii) The Superintendent shall review the evaluation in light of existing policy and advise the student and/or parent of his decision within fourteen days.
 - iv) A copy of the Superintendent's decision shall be filed with the principal.

6. Analysis of Achievement and Diploma Exams

Results obtained on Diploma and Achievement Tests are an important indicator of student performance and careful analysis of the test questions can lead to improved teaching strategies which will ultimately improve student performance.

- (a) Division-Level teachers will cooperatively analyze test questions and develop Action Plans.
- (b) Principals shall be responsible for monitoring the Action Plans and their implementation.
- (c) Principals shall analyze 5-year trends and ensure that anomalies are acted upon.
- (d) Test results shall be shared publicly with all stakeholders.
- (e) The test analysis should be completed within two months of receiving the School Reports.
- (f) Central Office Personnel will meet with individual Principals to discuss their results.
- (g) In-service should become a priority for those areas where deficiencies are noted.



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A102.2 STUDENT ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Assessment *OF* Learning

1. Principals ensure that guidelines and procedures are in place within the school to support assessment *of* learning. Principals ensure that teachers' instructional plans include assessment *of* learning.
 - (a) Most assessments will assess a number of integrated outcomes. Not every outcome will be assessed for a grade/achievement level.
 - (b) Teachers assess information about students' achievement separately from other information, such as students' progress, effort, or learner attributes.
 - (c) Teachers determine students' achievement independently of the achievement of other students. If students meet the standard, they receive the grade regardless of how many other students meet the same learning outcomes.
2. Teachers select a variety of assessment methods that are compatible with the learning outcomes being assessed.
 - (a) Assessment tasks and instruments are current, valid and reliable and clearly linked to identified learning outcomes.
 - (b) Teachers ensure students have sufficient assessment *for* learning opportunities before assessment *of* learning occurs.
 - (c) Teachers ensure students with special education needs receive appropriate accommodations to complete assessments.
3. Principals monitor that teachers inform and actively involve students in their own assessment *of* learning.
 - (a) Teachers regularly establish with students clear performance and achievement standards, based on learning outcomes.
 - (b) Teachers provide students with clear descriptions / examples of performance criteria and/or standards, such as rubrics and exemplars, prior to assessment tasks.
4. Principals ensure that procedures and supports are in place within the school to enable the collection of a reliable body of evidence to determine students' summary grades.
 - (a) Teachers ensure that assessment *of* learning is valid and reliable (accurate) by excluding from students' summary grades: bonus marks, effort marks and group awarded marks. These should be reported separately from achievement.



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- Teachers should strive to eliminate reductions for late assignments and assignments not completed. Students should be held accountable for the behaviour that resulted in a late, incomplete or missed assignment and in some cases, such as for academic dishonesty, the student *should* face consequences at the school level that address the behaviour. Students' participation in group work may be assessed individually.
- (b) Teachers retain assessment records (grade books) for up to one year, including anecdotal notes, recordings, rubrics, and percentage scores.
 - (c) When percentages are used for final grades, teachers may use their professional judgment to raise marks that border pass/fail, honours/not honours. For example, 48 or 49% may become 50%, 63% or 64% may become 65%, 78 or 79% may become 80%.
 - (d) Teachers use the evidence that supports their most accurate judgment about students' achievement of learning outcomes. For example, a teacher may exclude an assessment that contradicts achievement consistently demonstrated by a student when determining a final grade.
 - (e) Final assessments should be comprehensive and may be administered to students in several forms. *For example, a final assessment may be a performance task to measure skills, an exit portfolio and interview or an examination.* Assessment is ongoing in grades 1-6 and final assessments may be used as a component of ongoing assessment. Teachers *may* rely on the most recent evidence to determine grades, including using unofficial results from Provincial Achievement Tests. Exemptions from final exams shall only be considered in special circumstances, in writing, from the (independent) student or parent. Special circumstances may include bereavement, severe illness as verified by a physician and impassible roads or severe weather.
 - (f) When student achievement has been reported as Incomplete (I) and students fail to submit a sufficient number of assessments *of* learning for grading purposes, and every effort to obtain the assessment(s) has been exhausted, teachers in consultation with the principal shall use professional judgment to determine students' marks for missing assessments, that is, failing marks or zeros.

Assessment *FOR* Learning

- 5. Principals ensure that procedures are in place within the school to support assessment *for* learning. Principals ensure that teachers use assessment to modify their teaching practice and students' learning experiences.
 - (a) Teachers use and monitor a variety of methods to gain insights into students' interests and learning profiles for the purpose of planning assessment and responding to learning needs.



- (b) Teachers monitor students' actions and performance on an ongoing basis to determine and respond to their learning needs.
- (c) Teachers provide time and opportunities for students to internalize their learning through the use of feedback and guided practice to independence. Teachers provide assessment *for* learning tasks that allow risk taking and exploration in learning.
- (d) Teachers prepare students for assessment *of* learning by providing assessment *for* learning tasks that are similar in form and content.
- (e) In some cases, when mastery of learning outcomes is noted during assessment *for* learning, a teacher may use this as assessment *of* learning evidence.

Assessment AS Learning (see glossary / appendix)

- 6. Principals monitor teachers to ensure teachers use assessment as learning strategies as an integral part of instruction and learning.
 - (a) Teachers teach students to become aware of their own learning strengths and needs and to identify their own progress toward learning outcomes.

Communicating Achievement to Parents

- 1. Principals ensure communication with parents/guardians about students' learning.
 - (a) Teachers employ a variety of strategies to communicate student progress and achievement to parents/guardians. This may include mark book printouts, use of the school website, phone calls home, Pearson Power School, etc.
 - (b) Teachers communicate in a sensitive and hopeful manner about student achievement.
 - (c) Teachers communicate information about students' achievement separately from information about progress, effort, or learner attributes.
 - (d) Teachers inform parents/guardians and students about the achievement standards (how well a student demonstrates grade level learning outcomes, such as: Mastery, Proficient, Basic, etc.)
 - (e) Principals ensure that the schedule for final assessments is communicated to students and parents/guardians.
 - (f) Students unable to write a final assessment because of serious illness, injury, bereavement or for other compelling reasons for which sufficient cause is



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- demonstrated, should apply to the principal who determines, in consultation with the teacher, if an alternative final assessment is appropriate. Accommodation may take the form of
- an exemption from the final assessment, if sufficient assessment evidence is available to determine students' achievement of the learning outcomes.
 - students writing an equivalent final examination or the same final assessment administered under secure conditions at a more appropriate time given the reason for missing the final exam.
- (g) Report cards will be issued a minimum of twice during a semester and a minimum of three times for full year programs in grades 1-12. Parents of Kindergarten children will receive a progress report at least twice per year.
- (h) The report card and Individualized Program Plan (IPP) are complementary documents for students identified with special education needs. An IPP is based on diagnostic information and provides the means for intervention strategies. The report card indicates achievement in life skills, foundational skills, academic readiness and/or achievement of learning outcomes.
- (i) Students who have not completed a sufficient number of assessments, as determined by the teacher, for the assessment of their achievement, will have their achievement reported as Incomplete (I) until these assessments have been completed. Parents / Guardians and students should be informed as to the specific actions/steps and time frame that can be taken to remove the incomplete rating.
- (j) Parent/teacher/student conferences (students optional) will be held a minimum of two times per year.
2. Principals ensure that appeals are dealt with in a timely manner according to appeal procedures.
- (a) Every student and/or parent/guardian has the right to appeal final assessment results to the principal or designate. Information regarding the appeal procedures is to be made available to students and parents/guardians (unless students are independent). If the student and parent/guardian are not satisfied with the decision made at the school level, they may appeal to the Superintendent, Refer to policy GP#11 - Appeals Concerning Student Matters.

Outcome-Based Grading and Reporting Guidelines:

1. Relate grading procedures to learning goals as defined by the Program of Studies.
2. Limit the valued attributes to be included in scores to individual achievement. Report effort, attendance, etc. separately from achievement.



3. Sample student performance (using a variety of assessment methods). Do not include all scores in final grade. Revise student scores as new evidence demonstrates proficiency.
4. Discuss and involve students in assessment, including scoring, throughout the teaching and learning process.

A102.3 PLACEMENT

1. For children experiencing academic, emotional, or behavioral difficulties, neither grade retention nor social promotion is an effective remedy. If educational professionals are committed to helping all children achieve academic success and reach their full potential, we must discard ineffective practices, such as grade retention and social promotion, in favor of "promotion plus" specific interventions designed to address the factors that place students at risk for school failure. In each case of possible retention, teachers and principals must ensure that the school and division pyramids of intervention are utilized.
2. Decisions concerning course, grade and program are made in consultation with the student (where appropriate), parents/guardians (unless students are independent), and teachers and principal/designate. These decisions are the result of ongoing communication between the school and student and parents/guardians. Retention of a student in Kindergarten to Grade 9 will be considered only if parents/guardians and the principal and teacher(s) are in agreement that a student's social, emotional, and academic development would benefit and after consultation with the division central support team. Where parents and the school team do not agree, the school shall make a recommendation to the Superintendent for placement. Parents have the right to appeal this decision as indicated below.
3. Principals ensure that appeals are dealt with in a timely manner according to appeal procedures.
 - (a) Every student and/or parent/guardian has the right to appeal final placement results to the principal or designate. Information regarding the appeal procedures is to be made available to students and parents/guardians (unless students are independent). If the student and parent/guardian are not satisfied with the decision made at the school level, they may appeal to the Superintendent, Refer to policy GP#11 - Appeals Concerning Student Matters.

- (b) Appeal Procedures:

The student and/or parent/guardian may appeal a school awarded final course grade, final examination mark or a course or program placement.



This appeal must be submitted in writing, to the principal/designate within 60 days of the assessment results being made available. Once received, a decision on the appeal must be made in writing within ten school days.

In reviewing an appeal, the principal/designate:

- i) meets with the student and parent/guardian (unless independent student)
 - ii) consults with appropriate teachers to review assessment information
 - iii) submits, in writing to the student, parent/guardian (where applicable) and teacher(s), a decision regarding the appeal
4. If a student is being considered for retention, a meeting of the student's learning team, including the appropriate Coordinator of Student Services and the parent, will be held prior to March 30. If, after this meeting, retention is still being considered, the name of the student will be forwarded to the Superintendent. This shall be confirmed before June 15.
 5. If the student is to be retained, a transition plan that indicates the strengths and weaknesses as they relate to social, academic and emotional development shall be forwarded to the receiving teacher. Strategies for the next year could include but are not limited to tutoring and peer tutoring, multi-aged grouping, IPP, summer school, extended learning time, cooperative learning and assessment for learning strategies. As much as possible, these and other strategies should be offered the student proactively before retention is considered. Refer to the PRSD Pyramid of Interventions found in the PRSD Special Needs Procedure Manual.
 6. A similar process shall be initiated when whole grade acceleration is considered. A student shall only be considered after the use of the Iowa Acceleration Scale and its results by the student learning team. Generally only those students who are identified as an "excellent" acceleration candidate will be considered.

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Appendix

Assessment / Evaluation: The School Act (NB: The School Act is currently under review/revision)

Principal: Supervise the evaluation and advancement of the students

Teacher: Regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students, the students' parents and the Board

Assessment / Evaluation: Guide to Education

1. Student Assessment: ECS to Grade 9
2. Student Assessment in Senior High School

Key Definitions:

Achievement – a student's demonstration of knowledge, skills and attitudes relative to grade level learner outcomes

Assessment – the process of collecting information on student achievement and performance that includes a variety of assessment tasks designed to monitor and improve student learning

Assessment FOR Learning – assessment experiences that result in an ongoing exchange of information between students and teachers about student progress toward clearly specified learner outcomes (also called diagnostic and formative assessment; refers to information NOT used for grading purposes)

Assessment OF Learning – assessment experiences designed to collect information about learning to make judgments about student performance and achievement at the end of a period of instruction to be shared with those outside classrooms (also called summative assessment; refers to performance data compiled as a grade)

Assessment AS Learning - involves students in becoming more responsible participants in the entire learning process, including assessment. They understand the purposes of their work, generate personal learning goals that link into the outcomes they are working towards, ask themselves questions to actively reflect on their progress and regularly undertake formal and informal self and peer assessment

Grade – a letter, number or comment reported at the end of a period of time as a summary statement of student performance based on a variety of summative assessments

Grading – a process to determine a student's performance level

Learner Outcomes – What we expect students to learn; the provincially mandated knowledge, skills and attitudes we expect students to demonstrate as a result of schooling.

See also: <http://www.aac.ab.ca/glossary.html>