

GUIDING ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

The St. James-Assiniboia School Division believes that Assessment and Evaluation informs instruction, increases student motivation, and promotes student learning. This process provides the foundation for meaningful communication among teachers, students, parents, and the community.

The Board is committed to supporting a balanced assessment and evaluation process that uses various forms of data for informed decision-making at the classroom, school, and Board level.

The Board recognizes the following inter-related purposes of assessment (*Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind*, Manitoba Education, 2006):

Assessment for Learning: Assessment is designed to give teachers information in order to make appropriate modifications to teaching and learning activities. Teachers also use this information to provide feedback to students so that they may advance their learning. In this process teachers help students actively develop, practice, learn to reflect upon and analyze their own learning.

Assessment of Learning: Summative in nature and used to confirm what students know and can do and to demonstrate whether they have achieved the curriculum outcomes. Teachers concentrate on ensuring that they have used assessment to provide accurate and sound statements of students' achievement at specific times throughout a grade or course, so that the recipients of the information can use the information to make reasonable and defensible decisions. Typically this happens at the end of a period of learning.

Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting

Assessment is a systematic process of gathering information about what a student knows, is able to do, and is learning to do. When teachers use classroom assessment to become aware of the knowledge, skills, and beliefs that their students bring to a learning task, use this knowledge as a starting point for new instruction, and monitor students' changing perceptions as instruction proceeds, classroom assessment promotes learning. (*Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind*, Manitoba Education, p. 5) Ultimately, the purpose of assessment is to improve student learning.

Evaluation is the process of making judgments and decisions, as a result of the interpretation of information collected from a variety of sources.

Reporting is the process of summarizing and communicating to students, parents, and administrators, data collected through assessment and evaluation. Reporting may take various forms and may be done informally or formally.

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Belief Statements/Guiding Principles

1. The primary purpose of assessment is to improve learning and instruction.
2. Assessment practices are diverse and are used consistently.
3. Communication about student learning is ongoing, clear, and meaningful.
4. Assessment practices are reviewed and refined to promote student success.

Attributes of Quality Assessment

1. Quality Assessment Practice
 - a. Fair and equitable for all students
 - b. Supported through professional learning and collaboration
 - c. Regularly reviewed and refined
 - d. Involves both teacher and student reviewing and reflecting on the assessment data
 - e. Helps students recognize learning targets

2. Effective Assessment Practices
 - a. Use varied methods to gather accurate information about student learning.
These methods may include observations, diagnostic interviews, group/peer assessments, self-assessments, paper and pencil tests, student journal writing, learning log entries, conversations and products
 - b. Engage students in the assessment process
 - c. Maintain records of student learning
 - d. Communicate student learning in a variety of ways, such as report cards, portfolios, and student led conferences

Academic Responsibility

It is the responsibility of each school to ensure that all assessment and evaluation communication and reporting of student achievement will be:

- A. consistent with the direction provided in the St. James-Assiniboia School Division policy and related support documents.
- B. compatible with Manitoba Education, guidelines e.g., *Reporting on Student Progress and Achievement: A Policy Handbook for Teachers, Administrators, and Parents* (MECY, Winnipeg, 1997); *Provincial Assessment Policy Kindergarten to Grade 12: Academic Responsibility, Honesty and Promotion/Retention* (Manitoba Education, 2010)
- C. supportive of the Principles for Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada (Joint Advisory Committee, Edmonton, 1993).

Expectations

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1. The Superintendent will

- a. provide leadership and support in the development of assessment, evaluation and reporting practices
- b. receive reports related to assessment, evaluation and reporting
- c. inform the board of trustees annually of student assessment and evaluation data
- d. communicate information to the community regarding assessment and evaluation
- e. use various forms of data to inform decisions

2. School Administrators will

- a. ensure that school staff members understand and fulfill provincial legislative requirements, as well as provincial, divisional, and school policies and practices related to student assessment, evaluation, and reporting
- b. provide leadership for effective communication between teachers and parents in the development and implementation of sound assessment, evaluation, and reporting policies and practices at the school level
- c. encourage and support ongoing discussion, consultation, and collaboration among teachers in matters of assessment, evaluation, reporting of student progress and achievement and professional learning
- d. ensure that parents are provided, on a regular basis, with information pertaining to their child's progress and achievement
- e. review all report cards before distributing them to parents
- f. support teachers in using assessment and evaluation data to enhance teaching and learning

3. Teachers will

- a. understand and apply legislative requirements, as well as provincial, divisional, and school policies and practices related to assessment, evaluation, and reporting
- b. improve knowledge and skills in assessment, evaluation, and reporting through participation in professional learning opportunities
- c. collaborate with colleagues in the development of student assessment and evaluation strategies
- d. establish and clearly communicate expectations regarding assignments
- e. set and communicate reasonable timelines for assignments and support students in meeting these timelines
- f. establish, communicate and apply consequences for late and missing work
- g. consult with school-based administrators prior to determining final academic status of a student in a course in cases where a student has numerous incompletes in a course. This ensures that all possible sources of evidence as to whether the student has met the course outcomes have been exhausted
- h. apply sound instructional, assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices that promote validity, reliability, and fairness to all students
- i. advise parents of ways to encourage and support student progress and achievement

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- j. provide written and verbal reports on student progress and achievement that are clear, accurate, and meaningful to the intended audiences
- k. report on student attitudes and behaviours in addition to and separate from achievement
- l. advise students and parents about curriculum expectations
- m. provide for meaningful student involvement in the assessment process
- n. use assessment and evaluation data to enhance teaching and learning
- o. ensure that assessment practices support students' responsibility for their learning

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