

Milo Community School believes all students have learning potential and a teacher's critical role and privilege is to design the learning in such a way for students to discover and realize their acquired knowledge, skills and optimal potential.

Assessment is the foundation for all meaningful and authentic learning and involves the ongoing gathering and analysis of diverse information used to evaluate progress and performance.

CORE COMPONENTS OF EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT:

1. **Assessment for learning** – evaluating as a learning experience for growth
 - Focuses on **process**: steps, re-learning, unlearning and discovery
 - **Formative assessment** which forms and shapes learning
 - Encourages progress: through growth and change
 - **Uses project steps, re-work opportunities, practice of skills, formative on-going feedback, and guidance** (written and verbal)
 - Involves students in formative assessment (reflection, self-assessment, peer assessment, interviews, gathering data, analyzing data and setting goals)
 - **Allows for multiple opportunities**, adjusted time frames and additional accommodations which support student differences and learning needs.
 - Involves parents in the learning process through communication

2. **Assessment of learning** – evaluating knowledge and skill learned
 - Focuses on **product**: outcomes achieved, applied skills acquired
 - **Summative assessment** which summarizes learning attained
 - Encourages progress: through reflection after the assessment
 - **Uses tests/quizzes, performance tasks, final project work, rubrics** with criteria and outcomes described
 - Involves students in summative assessment through study, preparation, research, clear expectations and project criteria, final reflection
 - **Allows for multiple opportunities**, adjusted time frames and additional accommodations which support student differences and learning needs.
 - Involves parents in the learning product through communication

3. **Teacher reflection and learning**- on-going teacher learning of effectiveness
 - Analyzing student achievement data
 - Analyzing accountability pillar results
 - Interpreting results and classroom implications/improvements
 - Classroom learning walks, teacher collaboration, professional learning
 - Daily reflection of classroom effectiveness and student growth
 - Assessment is used to drive instruction

PURPOSEFUL ASSESSMENT

From Alberta Education’s Guide to Education 2015, “the primary purpose of assessment is to improve student learning.” Assessment information is also used to:

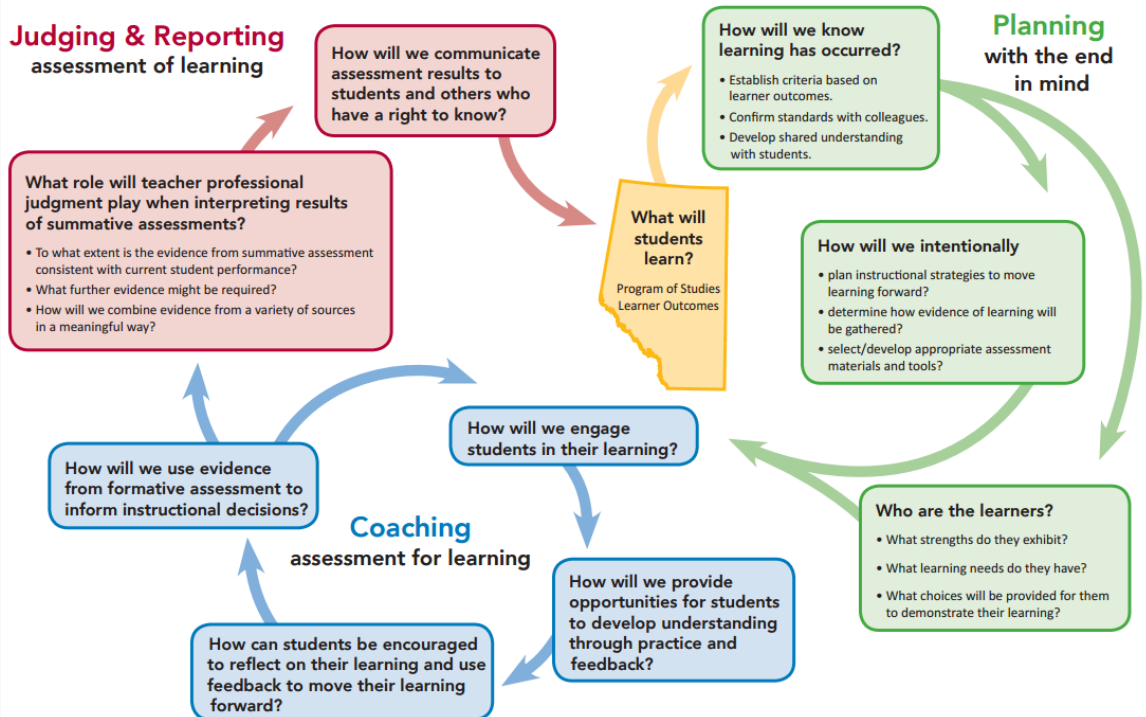
- enhance instruction to students
- assures Albertans that the education system is meeting the needs of students
- achieving the outcomes of the Ministerial Order on Student Learning, where students develop cross-curricular competencies and are able to:



students develop cross-curricular competencies and are able to:

1. Know how to learn
2. Think critically
3. Identify and solve complex problems
4. Manage information
5. Innovate
6. Create opportunities
7. Apply multiple literacies
8. Demonstrate global thinking
9. Demonstrate good communication skills and the ability to work cooperatively with others
10. Identify and apply career and life skills

AAC KEY VISUAL: ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING IN THE CLASSROOM



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SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Administrative Procedure 361: Palliser Regional Schools

AP 361 - Communicating Student Achievement

The most crucial part of communicating student learning is to ensure a shared understanding between the current teacher, the student, the parent and the future teacher receiving the information. "Assessment, evaluation and communication of student achievement and growth are essential parts of the teaching and learning process" (Western Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Education, 2006, p. viii). The greater the role students are given in this process, the richer the information that is shared and the greater the impact on future learning.

Alberta Education's Three-Year Business Plan identifies communicating student achievement to parents in a meaningful way as a focus for improvement. Reporting student progress should reflect a close relationship between curriculum objectives, grade level achievement and the ongoing information that parents receive about their child's progress. While there is a need for flexibility and variety of reporting practices, there is also a need to define common expectations and guidelines for sites in order to promote alignment and consistency within the system.

Definitions

1. Accommodation means adjustments to the instructional process in such a way as to ensure the optimal learning opportunity for the student with regard to such things as instructional strategies, assessment procedures, materials, facilities or equipment.
2. Achievement means a student's demonstration of knowledge, skills and attitudes relative to grade level learner outcomes.
3. Adapted programming means programming that retains the learner outcomes of the Program of Studies and where adjustments to the instructional process (accommodations) are provided to address the special education needs of the student. A student may be working on learner outcomes at grade levels above or below his/her enrolled grade.
4. Curriculum standards means the expected student learning outcomes sequenced by grade level against which student performance is judged.
5. Grade means the enrolment designation.
6. Grade level means the level the child has achieved in relation to the grade levels of the provincial programs of study.
7. Learner outcome means what students are expected to learn – the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are provincially mandated.

8. Modified programming means programming in which the learner outcomes are significantly different from the programs of studies and are specifically selected to meet the student's special education needs.
9. Performance means how well a student is able to demonstrate the learner outcomes at a particular grade level.

Procedures

1. The principal will ensure that appropriate assessment strategies are practiced which link instruction and evaluation, and facilitate fair and consistent reporting of student progress.
2. The methods for assessing and evaluating student achievement shall be communicated to students and parents. (See Appendix 361A.)
3. Teachers shall communicate to students and parents the level of student achievement relative to grade level learner outcomes for each subject/course in which students are enrolled.
4. Each school shall maintain a plan which outlines the process for communicating student achievement to parents. This process will include informal and formal communication to the extent that parents are currently aware of their child's achievement. (See Appendix 361A.)
5. Conferences are important opportunities to share information about the child's achievement and should include students. These conferences should be structured, organized and scheduled to maximize participation. There shall be a minimum of two conferences each school year. (See Appendix 361C.)
6. Each school shall establish at least three regular reporting periods per school year accompanied by a written progress report. This report will serve as a formal progress report confirming previous communications between the teacher, parent and student, as appropriate, regarding the student's achievement. (See Appendix 361C.)
7. In all grades, student achievement should be reported separately from factors such as assignment completion, timeliness, participation, personal conduct, neatness and effort. These are all important student attributes that should be communicated along with, but separately from, achievement unless they are defined in the student outcomes.

References

School Act, Section 18, 20, 60
Student Evaluation Regulation 169/98
Student Evaluation Policy 2.1.2
Standards for Special Education (amended 2004)
Principles for Fair Assessment Practices for Education in Canada(1993)
Grade Level of Achievement Reporting – Teacher and Administrator Handbook (2006)

AP 361 - Communicating Student Achievement - Appendix A

Purposes for and Methods of Communicating Student Achievement

Purpose	Possible Methods to Achieve Purpose
<p>Communicate daily concerns/celebrations/learning</p> <p><i>(Suggested Time: ongoing)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agendas: written by student/teacher • Phone calls home • Notes: written by student/teacher • E-mails • Student written letter/note informing parents what they learned that day, including evidence of learning
<p>Gather information about students Establishing contact with parents/guardians</p> <p><i>(Suggested Time: beginning of the year/ semester)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone calls home • Questionnaires sent home about: student interests, motivations, stresses, social skills, out of school activities, academic strengths and areas of concern • Parent/student/teacher meeting at the beginning of the year • Meet the teacher night
<p>Share information about program(s), assessment procedures and teacher expectations</p> <p><i>(Suggested Time: beginning of the year/ semester)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informational night • Introductory letter • Program outline letter • Class newsletter • Class website • Student written letter/note informing parents what they learned that week/day
<p>Communicate information about student progress, goal setting, and address concerns such as: homework skills, work habits, attendance, social interactions, etc. Discuss strategies for improvement or enhancement</p> <p><i>(Suggested Time: before report cards)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher/parent/student conferences • Portfolio sharing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - parents/guardians come to the school and student shares work collected and reflected upon in portfolio - portfolio or work samples/assignments/ tests with student reflection are sent home for parents/guardians to look at and respond to • Student-led conferences • Celebration of learning • Narrative reports by students • Interim mark statements/reports

Purpose	Possible Methods to Achieve Purpose
Provide written affirmation of student achievement <i>(Suggested Time: At the end of designated reporting periods)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report cards • Mark statements • Interim mark statements/reports
Clarify questions/concerns resulting from the report card <i>(Suggested Time: after report cards)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/teacher conference by request • Phone calls • Notes home
Discuss program placement for next year <i>(Suggested Time: near year-end)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal parent/teacher meetings • IPP meetings

“The most crucial part of the communication process is to ensure a shared understanding between the person providing the information and the information receiver. Communication of student achievement should be timely and should involve multiple reporting strategies.” (*A Framework for Student Learning*, Alberta Assessment Consortium, 1997)

A wide variety of communication tools, each with a specific purpose and designed for a particular audience, is essential for effective communication of student achievement. It is crucial to select the tool (method) that best serves the purpose. (*Developing Grading and Reporting Systems for Student Learning*, Thomas Guskey and Jane Bailey, 2001)

AP 361 - Communicating Student Achievement - Appendix B

Involving Students in the Communication Process

“Effective communication informs the student, parent and others about what has been accomplished and what the next steps are in the learning process. The communication process involves all the key players. However, the greater the role students are given in this process, the richer the information that is shared and the greater the impact on future student learning.” (*A Framework for Student Assessment*, Alberta Assessment Consortium, 1997)

- **Work Samples:** Students choose work samples to take home that show growth in their learning. They show and talk with an audience about the samples and ask for a response to their work.
- **Portfolio Afternoon:** Students collect work samples over the term and organize them into a portfolio. They write personal comments about each piece, explaining why they have selected it and what they want others to notice. Teachers schedule a time for a portfolio afternoon. Students invite someone who is important to them to come and view their portfolios. Invited guests provide feedback to the learners.
- **Goal Envelopes:** Students set a personal goal they want to achieve. They collect evidence to put in an envelope to show an audience how they are meeting or have met their goal. Students choose a time, place and audience to present what they have accomplished.
- **Picture This:** Students select or are given photos that have been taken of them in class. They then write about the learning that is captured in the picture.
- **Criteria with Evidence:** Students take home a work sample with a list of criteria developed in class. They explain the criteria to an audience. They point out where in their assignment they have met the criteria as well as what they still need to work on. They then ask their audience for a response.
- **Mind Maps:** Students create mind maps about something they have learned in class. They choose an audience and show and talk to them about their mind maps. The audience listens, asks questions and responds.
- **Home Performances:** Students perform a skill at home for family members. The audience listens and comments on the performance.
- **School Performances:** When students introduce school performances, they tell the audience what skills they will be observing. Members of the audience are asked to give specific feedback to the performers.
- **Personal Newsletter:** Students use a newsletter format to write about their learning. They select an audience to give their newsletters to and ask for specific feedback.
- **Student-Parent-Teacher Conference:** Students, parents/ guardians and teachers meet to review the learning that has taken place during the term. Each participant comes prepared to take an active part. A summary of this conference can provide information for report card comments or become a written report.
- **IPP Conference:** During the year, students, teacher, parents/guardians and other IPP team members meet to review the IPP.
- **Student-Teacher Conference:** Teachers meet individually with students to review the learning that has taken place. Students lead the conference and present evidence of their learning in relation to goals or outcomes in a subject or course.

(The above suggestions are taken from *Conferencing and Reporting – For Use in Middle and Secondary School Classrooms* by Kathleen Gregory, Caren Cameron, Anne Davies, 2001.)

- **Student-led Conferences:** Students are responsible for leading the discussion and reporting on and demonstrating their learning to parents. The teacher serves primarily as facilitator and observer.
- **Agenda Entries:** At the end of every day, students record a sentence in their agenda which explains something that they learned that day. If possible, students can also include evidence of that learning.
- **Sharing of Assignments/Tests:** Students take work home to share with parents/guardians. Work includes student reflections and opportunity for parental/guardian feedback.
- **Student Writing:** Students write narrative reports, notes, sentences or letters at the end of the day, once a week or at the completion of a unit of study, that explain to parents/guardians what they have been learning, along with some form of evidence of their learning. Parents/guardians have the opportunity to provide feedback.

AP 361 - Communicating Student Achievement - Appendix C

Effective Communication Practices

An effective reporting document:

- Promotes a student's feelings of success and positive self-worth;
- Encourages further student learning;
- Promotes home-school communication;
- Provides a context for judgments;
- Is clearly understood by students and parents;
- Provides information on student achievement and growth;
- Is aligned to provincial curriculum standards;
- Tells what individual students know and can do;
- Ensures that the mark awarded is an accurate and current reflection of student learning;
- Factors out elements not related to the curriculum, or not reflective of the student's typical achievement level; and
- Acknowledges actions that need to be taken by partners in learning—students, parents and teachers.

An effective conference:

- Includes the students as an active participant;
- Uses student products to demonstrate achievement and growth;
- Focuses clearly on individual student learning and includes specific strategies for improvement;
- Expands upon the information provided in the report card;
- Engages all participants in discussing achievement and setting goals;
- Includes a discussion of the successes and difficulties the student is experiencing;
- Provides an opportunity for open and relevant sharing of information between participants;
- Establishes an atmosphere in which everyone feels welcome to participate;
- Provides information about curriculum;
- Includes an action plan that is supportive of student learning; and
- Ends on a positive note.

An effective portfolio:

- Is a planned and organized collection of student work;
- Tells detailed stories about a variety of student outcomes that would be otherwise difficult to document;
- Includes self-reflections that describe the student as both a learner and an individual;
- Serves as a guide for future learning by illustrating a student's present level of achievement;
- Includes a selection of items that are representative of curriculum outcomes and what the student knows and can do;
- Includes the criteria against which the student work was judged;
- Supports the assessment, evaluation and communication of student learning; and
- Documents learning in a variety of ways—process, product, growth and achievement.

(A *Framework for Communicating Student Learning*, Alberta Assessment Consortium, June 1999)

Background

Grading practices of Palliser Regional Schools are designed to encourage student success and support learning. The purpose of grading is to communicate high-quality information to stakeholders. Effective grades need to meet four overarching criteria for success: they must be consistent, accurate, meaningful, and must support learning. (O'Connor, 2007)

Definitions

1. Assessment means the process of collecting information on student achievement and performance to improve student learning.
2. Evaluation means making decisions about the quality, value or worth of a response for the purpose of providing descriptive feedback (formative) and grades (summative).
3. Formative assessment means **assessment experiences that result in an ongoing exchange of information** between students and teachers about student progress toward clearly specified learner outcomes. This information is not used for grading purposes.
4. Summative assessment means **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. This data is compiled as a grade.**
5. Achievement means a student's demonstration of knowledge, skills and attitudes relative to grade level learner outcomes.
6. Grade (Mark) is a statement of student achievement, at a point in time, relative to curriculum standards.

Procedures

1. Grades will be based on the outcomes of the Alberta *Programs of Study*. Teachers will gather direct evidence of student achievement in relation to specific learning outcomes.
2. Teachers will use a variety of assessment tools and evaluation methods with their students to determine achievement.
3. Teachers will include only evidence from summative assessments intended to document learning. As learning is a progressive and incremental process, students will be provided opportunities to practice and learn before a professional judgment is made.
4. Teachers will use the most current information to provide the most accurate depiction of the student's learning at the present time. This supports that learning is developmental and will grow with time and repeated opportunities.

5. The principal will ensure that appropriate grading practices are being used so that continuous student learning is supported and grades are an accurate reflection of student achievement.

References

Principles of Fair Assessment Practices for Education in Canada (1993)
Grade Level of Achievement Reporting – Teacher and Administrator Handbook (2006)
Emerging Data: Grading . . . More Than Just Number Crunching (Alberta Assessment Consortium, 2001)
A Repair Kit for Grading: 15 Fixes for Broken Grades (O'Connor, 2007)
How to Grade for Learning (O'Connor, 2002)
Developing Grading and Reporting Systems for Student Learning (Guskey and Bailey, 2001)
Effective Student Assessment and Evaluation in the Classroom: Knowledge and Skills and Attributes (Alberta Education, 2006)

Administrative Procedure 365

AP 365 - Reporting Student/Child Achievement and Attributes

Background

The report card is a formal summary of the student's current academic achievement, work habits and citizenship. It is one form of communication about student achievement among teachers, parents and students. The information on a report card should adequately reflect the student's development of demonstrated understanding, skills and knowledge relative to outcomes contained in the Program of Studies. In addition to academic achievement, development of attributes critical to success as a contributing, caring citizen is important to share. Through the process of reporting, teachers, parents and students are encouraged to discuss a student's performance and identify strategies for future progress and achievement.

The criteria established for our report card identified the following parameters:

- Concise, clear, easy to understand by parents/students
- Manageable for teachers
- Consistent symbol usage
- Reflects Program of Studies
- Meets the stated purpose
- Consistent format
- Flexible in determined areas
- Transitions well from division grading practices (AP 364)

Definitions – refer to AP 361

Procedures

1. Reports cards will be provided to parents a minimum of three times during the year.

2. School communities have flexibility in reflecting the Alberta Program of Studies; however, Appendix A provides a recommended format.
3. School communities have flexibility regarding the use of achievement indicators for students from Grades 1-9 to communicate achievement in relation to the Alberta Program of Studies at their **grade level** (see definition). Either percentages or the descriptive indicators below will be used unless an exception has been approved through the Superintendent's Office.
4. Achievement of Grade 10 to 12 students will be reported in percentages.

Achievement Indicators

Level	Descriptor
4	Work is excellent at grade level and provides evidence of an in-depth understanding and application of the learner outcomes.
3	Work is proficient at grade level and provides evidence of a solid understanding and application of the learner outcomes.
2	Work is at grade level and provides evidence of a basic understanding and application of the learner outcomes.
1	Work is not yet at grade level . Additional instructional opportunities are required to meet learner outcomes.
NMA	No mark assigned due to insufficient evidence of achievement.

5. Teachers are expected to comment on the development of student attributes critical to success as a contributing, caring citizen in the following areas:
 - a) **Work Habits:**
 - Demonstrates an interest in learning
 - Demonstrates independence
 - Demonstrates cooperation
 - Works effectively to complete tasks
 - b) **Citizenship Skills:**
 - Demonstrates respect
 - Accepts and practices responsibility
 - Expresses feelings and needs appropriately (Elementary grades)
 - Demonstrates appropriate Social Skills (Middle school grades)
 - Follows established routines

6. School communities have flexibility to add one additional student attribute in each of work habits and citizenship skills.

At grades 1 to 8 or 9, based on school grade configuration, student attribute indicators are: Consistently Demonstrates (C), Sometimes Demonstrates (S), Infrequently Demonstrates (I). At the high school level, student attributes are addressed through teacher comments.

7. For students on **modified programming** (see definition), Appendix B provides a recommended format.”
8. For reporting growth and development at the Kindergarten level, please use Appendix C.
9. The report card is only one method of communicating information. Conferences are a critical component of the reporting process and provide an opportunity to share information about the student’s learning.
10. Grade Level of Achievement will be communicated to parents by mid-June using our division template, located in the Forms Manual, and not provided with the year-end report card.

References

Guide to Education
Grade Level of Achievement Reporting – Teacher and Administrator Handbook
Forms Manual, Grade Level Achievement template
Cross Reference: Administrative Procedure #361 (Communicating Student Achievement)
Administrative Procedure #364 (Grading for Learning)

Administrative Procedure 365

AP 365 - Reporting Student/Child Achievement and Attributes - Appendix A

Recommended Reflection of the Program of Studies for Palliser Regional Schools Report Cards

It is the responsibility of the teacher to communicate to parents the achievement level of their children relative to the learner outcomes in the Alberta Program of Studies. AP 365 describes the criteria for report cards. The criteria that the focus of this appendix is based on are:

- Concise, clear, easy to understand by parents/students
- Manageable for teachers
- Reflects the Program of Studies

The recommendation is an attempt to accurately meet these criteria through the merging of outcomes to reflect enduring understandings and skills.

English Language Arts – Reading, Listening, Viewing

Demonstrates comprehension

Applies strategies

English Language Arts – Writing, Speaking, Representing

Develops ideas

Organizes ideas and information

Communicates clearly

Mathematics

Communicates as understanding of math concepts

Applies math skills/understandings

Science

Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of content

Applies scientific skills

Social Studies

Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of content

Applies critical thinking skills

Locates, organizes, interprets and presents information

Physical Education

Applies basic skills
Health Demonstrates an understanding of concepts
Music Applies basic skills
Art
Applies basic skills

SUMMARY

Assessment helps us to know what we have learned and is integral to all teaching and learning. It is central to the PYP goal of thoughtfully and effectively guiding students through the five essential elements of learning:

1. the understanding of concepts,
2. the acquisition of knowledge,
3. the mastering of skills,
4. the development of attitudes and
5. the decision to take action.

The Primary Years Program divides assessment into three components:

1. Assessing – how we discover what students have learned
2. Recording – how we make note of our findings about what students have learned
3. Reporting – how we pass that information on to parents, administration and other parties directly involved in students’ learning

