

## STUDENT ASSESSMENT

### Background

#### Education Act

According to the **Education Act**, a board, as a partner in education, has the responsibility to be accountable and provide assurances to students, parents, the community and the Minister for student achievement of learning outcomes.

#### Teacher Quality Standards

According to the **Teacher Quality Standards**, the teacher should apply a current and comprehensive repertoire of effective planning, instruction, and assessment practices to meet the learning needs of every student.

Achievement of this includes planning and designing learning activities that:

- address the learning outcomes outlined in programs of study;
- reflect short, medium and long range planning;
- incorporate a range of instructional strategies, including the appropriate use(s) of digital technology, according to the context, content, desired outcomes and the learning needs of students;
- foster student understanding of the link between the activity and the intended learning outcomes;
- are varied, engaging and relevant to students;
- build student capacity for collaboration;
- incorporate digital technology and resources, as appropriate, to build student capacity for:
  - acquiring, applying and creating new knowledge
  - communicating and collaborating with others
  - critical-thinking
  - accessing, interpreting and evaluating information from diverse sources

#### Leadership Quality Standards

The **Leadership Quality Standards** state that school administrators must provide instructional leadership by ensuring that every student has access to quality teaching and optimum learning experiences. This can be achieved by (but not limited to):

- implementing professional growth, supervision and evaluation processes to ensure that all teachers meet the Teaching Quality Standard, (particularly the statements regarding assessment).
- ensuring that student instruction addresses learning outcomes outlined in programs of study
- demonstrating a strong understanding of effective pedagogy and curriculum
- ensuring that student assessment and evaluation practices are fair, appropriate and evidence-informed
- interpreting a wide range of data to inform school practice and enable success for all students

## DEFINITIONS

1. **Accommodation:** student functioning in the regular program of studies working on grade-level learner outcomes with specific supports.
2. **Adapted Programming & Modified Programming:** adaptations or modifications in one or more subjects can be required to meet individual student learning needs
  - **Adapted Program** means programming that retains the learner outcomes of the Program of Studies and where adjustments to the instructional and/or assessment process are provided to address the education needs of the students.
  - **Modified programs**, which require an individualized program plan (IPP) are based on learner outcomes that are significantly different from the grade level outcomes from the Alberta Program of Studies. Modified programs are not graded in the same way as the other programs and are developed specifically to meet a student's educational needs.
3. **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** the ability of computing programs/systems to complete language, recognizing patterns, learning from experience, making decisions, and solving problems.
4. **Diagnostic Assessment:** assessment that provides reliable and valid information to teachers about student learning and progress, and direction for improvement and/or adjustment to a program or instruction.
5. **Differentiated Instruction:** teacher's instructional response to learner's needs. Teachers can differentiate content, process, or product according to the student's readiness, interests and/or learning profile, through a range of instructional strategies.
6. **Formative Assessment**
  - a. **Assessment for Learning:** assessment that provides information about student progress and direction for improvement and/or adjustment to a program for individual students or for a whole class but is not part of an achievement grade.
  - b. **Assessment as Learning:** actively involves student reflection on learning (metacognition), monitoring of their own progress, and: supports students in critically analyzing learning related to curricular outcomes; is student-driven with teacher guidance; and occurs throughout the learning process.
7. **Grade:** a summary statement of student achievement relative to curriculum standards.
8. **Learner Outcomes:** what students are expected to learn from the curriculum provided by the Alberta Program of Studies, locally developed courses or religious studies programs.
9. **Reporting:** a process of providing information about a student's achievement, progress, and growth. This includes live reporting, a report card and/or an Individual Program Plan.
10. **Summative Assessment (assessment of learning):** assessment that provides information to make judgments about student achievement, usually at the end of a

period of instruction and for determining an achievement grade. It is a snapshot of where the student is at in their learning at that moment in time.

11. **Triangulation of Evidence:** evidence of student learning is collected through formal and informal observations, conversations, and products to arrive at a final evaluation of student achievement.
  - **Observations** (Anecdotal Evidence) (e.g. Checklists, group work, lab procedures, performance)
  - **Conversations** (Anecdotal Evidence) (e.g. Anecdotal notes, questioning, class discussions, self/peer assessment)
  - **Products** (e.g. Projects, exams, quizzes, daily work samples)
12. **Universal Screening:** a process to quickly and proactively identify what level of support students need in a given topic. Assessments for universal screening should be valid and reliable measures of performance in a particular skill or topic and predict future performance in that area. They should also provide information on how students are performing relative to normative data (usual or typical of a student at a particular age or grade). e.g. Acadience, EYE (Early Years Evaluation), CAT (Canadian Achievement Test) etc.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

### **Assessment is Based on Outcomes**

**Guiding Statement:** Assessment should represent where a student is at in their learning in relation to the outcomes from the curriculum.

The evaluation of student achievement and collection of evidence is based on course objectives as defined by Alberta Education and the Division. Student evaluation procedures are fair, equitable, valid, and timely reflecting curricular outcomes, taking into account individual student needs and abilities.

### **Multiple Sources of Evidence Required**

**Guiding Statement:** Students should be given numerous and varied opportunities to demonstrate the full extent of their achievement of the learner outcomes. This includes triangulation of evidence (products, conversations, observations).

### **Formative and Summative Assessment**

**Guiding Statement:** Assessment and reporting is an ongoing process. The assessment of student achievement shall be formative (assessment for learning & assessment as learning) and summative (assessment of learning).

Formative and summative assessment contributes to holistic student growth and achievement. Grounded in equity and inclusivity, assessment will ensure every student has the opportunity to demonstrate their growth and potential.

### **Most Recent Assessments Replace Older Assessments**

**Guiding Statement:** Teachers will determine the student's most consistent level of achievement with consideration given to the most recent or comprehensive evidence. Older assessments may be eliminated from student achievement if no longer accurate.

## **Reporting and Communication**

**Guiding Statement:** It is important to have ongoing, consistent, timely, and meaningful communication between teachers, students, parents/guardians and administrators to proactively work together to enhance student learning.

## **Grading Accuracy**

**Guiding Statement:** The teacher must be confident that the grades students earn are accurate, meaningful, and reflect and support student learning. The primary purpose of student assessment and evaluation is to support learning and to have students improve their performance. Grades must be compiled in reference to how each student is progressing toward mastery of the learning outcomes, and not a reflection of their behavior, attendance, used as a punishment, or an assessment of timely completion.

## **Reluctant Zeros (IE or INS)**

**Guiding Statement:** When students do not submit work or are absent for assessments, assessing progress can be challenging. Assigning zeros decreases motivation and can impact a student's ability to achieve the outcome(s). Zeros should only be assigned if a number of strategies have been employed to support students in completing the outcome.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **1. Assessment is Based on Outcomes**

- 1.1 Teachers (K-6) are responsible for providing course descriptions in PowerSchool.
- 1.2 Teachers (gr. 7-12) are responsible for providing a clear statement of the course or program objectives, content, and assessment procedures (a course outline) to students at the beginning of a new course.
- 1.3 Communication about learning is outcome based (i.e. evidence aligned with learner outcomes).
- 1.4 If non-achievement factors are collected, recorded or communicated, this should be done separately from achievement-based evidence. For example, attendance, behavior, effort, participation, attitude, homework completion, etc. should not be calculated as part of a student's mark when it is not a curricular outcome.
- 1.5 Adapted Programming retains some or all of the grade level learner outcomes. Adjustments can be made to the instructional and/or assessment process to address a student's educational needs.
- 1.6 Modified Programming is not assessed on grade level outcomes. Programs are specifically selected to meet a student's educational needs based on their IPP.

### **2. Multiple Sources of Evidence Required**

#### **Assessment practices will:**

- 2.1 report student learning related to learner outcomes based on multiple sources of evidence over time.
- 2.2 require teachers to collect evidence of learning from multiple sources, such as observations, conversations and products to ensure valid and reliable evidence of student achievement.
- 2.3 actively involve students in the assessment process (e.g. co-constructing criteria, peer/self-assessment, etc).

### 3. Formative and Summative Assessment

- 3.1 The Alberta Program of Studies and locally developed courses direct both formative and summative assessments. The primary purpose of formative and summative assessment is to guide and improve instruction and student learning.
- 3.2 Assessment must be varied in type (e.g. not just quizzes and exams) and be the result of triangulation of evidence (observations, conversations and products).
- 3.3 Formative Assessment (assessment for/as learning) is:
  - 3.3.1 an ongoing process that guides planning and instruction.
  - 3.3.2 often recorded but not counted towards final grade.
  - 3.3.3 implemented to check for understanding to inform learning and guide instruction.
  - 3.3.4 timely with feedback to inform students of their areas of strength and areas of growth.
  - 3.3.5 an opportunity for students to be active participants in the assessment and learning process.
  - 3.3.6 utilized to improve student learning.
- 3.4 Summative Assessment (assessment of learning) is:
  - 3.4.1 usually conducted at the end of a learning period or instructional unit.
  - 3.4.2 a measure of a student's overall understanding, mastery, or achievement of the outcomes taught.
  - 3.4.3 inclusive of but not limited to: exams, quizzes, written work, etc. (e.g. Essay, story, projects, etc.).
  - 3.4.4 based on the most recent demonstration of student learning.
  - 3.4.5 a reflection of individual achievement, and not of a group's collective work. However, if a group project provides clear differentiation of each member's contributions according to the learner outcomes, then each individual's portion can be factored into the grade for that student.
  - 3.4.6 a reflection of student understanding of the learner outcomes and not be based on factors such as effort, participation, behavior, completion, bonus marks, etc.
- 3.5 **Junior and Senior High Final Assessments or Exams**
  - 3.5.1 Final exams will have a **maximum weighting** of:
    - 10% for grade 7 courses
    - 15% for grade 8 courses
    - 15% for grade 9 courses
      - Provincial Achievement Tests can serve as the grade 9 final. Teachers can use their professional judgment to determine if they would like to provide an in-class component (e.g. written response) to count for some or all of the final exam weighting. When determining the use of the PAT as a final exam, consideration should be given to maintain consistency across subjects areas within a school.
    - 20% for 10 level courses
    - 25% for 20 level courses
    - 30% for 30 level non-diploma courses
    - 30% for Outreach courses at the 10-20-30 levels
  - 3.5.2 The weighting of Diploma exams are determined by Alberta Education.
  - 3.5.3 No individual summative assessment during the course should match or exceed the weighting of the final assessment.

- 3.5.4 Teachers can choose to assign a summative project or alternate assessment to replace a final exam in non-diploma courses.
- 3.5.5 Credit recovery for high school courses can be implemented to extend a course to the following semester when a student has successfully completed at least 50% of the course.
  - 3.5.5.1 The teacher in consultation with the principal would determine if the student is a good candidate.
  - 3.5.5.2 If out of school support is required, it is recommended that STAR Catholic Outreach be utilized.

#### **4. Most Recent Assessments Replace Older Assessments**

- 4.1 Reassessment opportunities are recommended when a student shows they have engaged in learning activities that increase the likelihood of success.
- 4.2 Teachers are recommended to have the student complete an alternate assessment.
- 4.3 Teachers can choose to have students redo an assessment or a portion of an assessment.
- 4.4 When more recent and/or convincing evidence of learning is demonstrated by a student, teachers should de-emphasize (i.e. reduce the weighting of) or replace prior evidence of learning with more recent, or more convincing evidence.

#### **5. Reporting and Communication**

##### **The reporting system in STAR Catholic will include:**

- 5.1 access to student grades with live reporting on Powerschool (parents/guardians are responsible for checking Powerschool frequently).
- 5.2 confidential and accurate records documenting the student's progress.
- 5.3 ongoing communication of student learning in relation to curricular outcomes.
- 5.4 communication of student effort, attitude, participation and behaviour separate from achievement.
- 5.5 timely feedback appropriate to the nature of the assignment.
- 5.6 student grades and formative feedback that is provided regularly and frequently.
- 5.7 opportunities for communication between teachers, parents/guardians, and students throughout the period of instruction.
- 5.8 report cards and/or Individual Program Plans (IPPs).
- 5.9 report card comment, by course/subject, identifying when a student is on an Adapted or Modified Program.

#### **6. Grading Accuracy**

- 6.1 To support best assessment practices teachers will:
  - 6.1.1 make themselves aware of the learning outcomes and content of the Program of Studies for each of the courses they are responsible for.
  - 6.1.2 whenever possible collaborate with other teachers in their school and/or division in order to achieve expectations for consistency and fairness.
  - 6.1.3 prioritize consistent category weightings, within their school, for courses that are the same.
  - 6.1.4 share with their students the specific expectations about what is being assessed prior to the assignment.
  - 6.1.5 actively involve students in the process of their learning and be responsive to the needs of all learners.

- 6.2 Grading practices must ensure the accurate measurement of learning. The following practices distort the accuracy of measuring student achievement and should not be included in grades:
- 6.2.1 awarding extra credit or bonus marks.
  - 6.2.2 penalties for student work submitted late.
  - 6.2.3 penalties for student absences.
  - 6.2.4 automatic grades of zero when evidence is missing or when used as a punishment.
  - 6.2.5 giving all group members of a group a single grade.
  - 6.2.6 placing too much emphasis on work completed outside the classroom (e.g. homework).

## 7. Reluctant Zeros (IE or INS)

- 7.1 Before assigning a reluctant zero (IE or INS), teachers must attempt appropriate interventions:
- 7.1.1 follow up with the student regarding expectations.
  - 7.1.2 set a new timeline/date for completion of the assessment.
  - 7.1.3 inform the parents/guardians of the issue and discuss next steps.
  - 7.1.4 collaborate with student and/or parents/guardians on required supports.
  - 7.1.5 assessment will be entered as, “missing” or “NHI” (not handed in) to demonstrate that an assignment was not completed. Entering a mark as NHI will be calculated as zero.
- 7.2 Reluctant zeros should only be assigned in the following circumstances, and after sufficient intervention has been attempted:
- 7.2.1 in spite of sufficient school support and repeated opportunities, the student did not submit any work.
  - 7.2.2 assessment is attempted to be submitted well past the cut off date that was identified and well communicated throughout the year or semester to the parent and student.
  - 7.2.3 in cases of academic dishonesty, a grade will be recorded as a zero until the student, parent, teacher (and possibly administrator) meet to discuss an alternative assessment
  - 7.2.4 a grade of “IE” insufficient evidence for grades K-6 or insufficient “INS” for grades 7-12 may be assigned to identify when a student has been away from school for an extended period of time and cannot be assessed.

## 8. **Administrators will:** be responsible for ensuring teachers are following the administrative procedures related to assessment practices. This includes:

- 8.1 approving course outlines for teachers teaching grades 7-12.
- 8.2 approving the gradebook setup e.g. category weightings of Junior and Senior high teachers.
- 8.3 ensuring teachers are keeping up to date records of student progress and providing timely feedback.
- 8.4 ensuring teachers are collecting adequate and varied assessments to assess learning outcomes.

## **9. Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

- 9.1 Teachers are required to inform students, parents/ guardians if AI will be used to grade an assessment.
- 9.2 Any data that is inputted into AI must be reclusive of student information; this means completely free from student information, including but not limited to: student names, personal information, personal details, and any student personal disclosures.

### **References:**

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Teaching Quality Standard, Alberta Education, 2024

Leadership Quality Standard, Alberta Education, 2024

Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard, Alberta Education, 2024

Guide to Education

O'Connor, K. (2011). *A Repair Kit for Grading: Fifteen Fixes for Broken Grades* (2nd ed.).

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