

CODE: GK.BP**EFFECTIVE DATE:** (29-01-2020)**TOPIC:** Student Assessment, Achievement and Growth**ISSUE DATE:** (29-01-2020)**REVIEW YEAR:** (2020)

PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to encourage and enhance the use of assessment to guide instruction and improve learning. Assessments provide teachers information to understand what students know and do not know in relation to programs of study outcomes. This information is then used to guide instruction and provide support for students to achieve the Board's Vision.

The Board's Vision and Mission speak to each student learning and achieving his or her full potential. The Board expects students to be diligent in their studies and develop the attributes of responsibility, creativity and accountability while completing their studies. These attributes will assist students in their transition to post-secondary and/or the world of work and are crucial in order for students to achieve their full potential and contribute to their community. Assessment practices based on individual educational needs will assist and enhance the development of these attributes and the completion of individual student programs. In addition, the *Education Act* requires that schools and school divisions report on student achievement and growth.

DEFINITIONS

Achievement - a student's demonstration of knowledge, skills and attitudes relative to grade level learner outcomes in the Alberta programs of study or in Individualized Program Plans (IPPs).

Assessment - the process of gathering, from a variety of sources, information that accurately reflects how well a student is achieving the Alberta programs of study.

Evaluation - the process of judging the quality of student learning on the basis of established criteria and assigning a value to represent that quality. Evaluation is based on assessments of learning that provide data on student achievement at strategic times throughout the course, often at the end of a period of learning.

Formative Assessment - assessment experiences that result in an ongoing exchange of information between students and teachers about student progress toward learner outcomes. Formative assessment is also referred to as "assessment *for* learning" which refers to information not used for evaluation.

Graded Curriculum - the grade-specific Alberta programs of study for Kindergarten to Grade 12. Some students, in need of specialized supports and services, are not working on the graded curriculum but proceed with an alternative set of goals and outcomes outlined in the IPP.

Growth - changes in student learning over time, measured against the relevant programs of study and/or IPP.

Individualized Program Plan (IPP) - a concise plan of action designed to address students' special education needs, and is based on diagnostic information which provides the basis for intervention strategies.

Performance - how well a student demonstrates grade level learner outcomes represented by a grade. Grades are represented by letters A, B, C, D; percentages 0-100%; or descriptors: not yet demonstrating to demonstrating in-depth understanding.

Programs of Study - provincial documents that define the learning outcomes for all students working on the graded curriculum.

Reliable - the extent that assessment results are repeatable; giving similar results in similar situations over time.

Students in Need of Specialized Supports and Services - students in need of special education programming because of behavioural, communicational, intellectual, learning or physical characteristics or a combination of those characteristics. An IPP is created for all students in need of specialized support and services.

Summative Assessment - the process of collecting and interpreting evidence for the purpose of evaluation. This is also known as "assessment of learning" which refers to information used for evaluation.

Valid - the extent to which an assessment accurately measures what it is intended to measure.

POLICY

The Board is committed to ensuring that information about student achievement and growth is used to inform instruction and to meet students' individual educational needs. Assessments and evaluations shall be based on evidence of learning demonstrated throughout the course of the term. Information on achievement and growth shall be related to learner outcomes stated in the Alberta programs of study and/or IPP. Assessment information is required for students, parents and teachers to track and understand individual student progress and to inform a student's performance, grade/course placement and/or level of programming.

As an accountable public institution, the Board believes that the public should be provided with Division and school-level information about the growth and achievement of students on an annual basis. The Board believes the communication of valid, accurate, and meaningful information about student achievement and growth to parents/guardians, Division staff, and community members help to build confidence in the school Division and the educational services that it provides.

EXPECTATIONS

1. The development, implementation and monitoring of consistent Division assessment practices, format of progress reports, and/or IPPs shall be guided by an administrative regulation.
2. The administrative regulation shall state expectations for the development and sharing of individual school assessment plans with the school community. The Principal shall be responsible for the development of the assessment plan in collaboration with school staff. The school assessment plan shall articulate the schools' performance measures, progress report format, philosophy in support of the policy and expectations for communication to parents/guardians. The administrative regulation shall outline all expectations for the school assessment plan.
3. A range of bias-free assessments that are respectful of student differences and reflective of the diverse student population will be used.

4. All learning activities, including all forms of formative and summative assessment shall be linked to the learner outcomes in the programs of study and/or an IPP.
5. The Principal shall ensure that all assessments are reliable and valid and that evaluation is fair.
6. The Principal shall make grade and/or course placement decisions in consultation with staff and parents/guardians. These decisions are based on student achievement.
7. Teacher(s) shall make grade level of programming or course of study decisions. These decisions are based on student achievement.
8. Staff are expected to provide ongoing support and opportunities for students to demonstrate their achievement.
9. Teacher(s) shall determine students' final level of achievement and communicate the level of achievement through the performance measure specified in the school's assessment/evaluation plan (A-D, 0-100%, not yet demonstrating to demonstrating in-depth understanding).
10.
 - a. Students enrolled in a course of studies shall complete assignments in order to demonstrate their achievement throughout the term of their course of studies. This shall be achieved through:
 - i. communicating to students and parents/guardians when assignments are absent or incomplete; and
 - ii. communicating to students and parents/guardians about the remedial procedures that are in place when incomplete or absent student work will adversely impact student achievement.
 - b. Alternatively, at high school, students can request to challenge a course and complete a formal, summative assessment process if the student believes they have the knowledge, skills and attitudes for the course as specified in the programs of study. The process for a course challenge is outlined in the Guide to Education.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Guide to Education requires that student progress be assessed in relation to the outcomes outlined in the programs of study and/or IPP. An individual student's progress and growth shall be communicated regularly to the student and the student's parents/guardians throughout the year. This information will be outlined in the school assessment plan, and monitored by the Superintendent of Schools to ensure consistency of practice.

Each year, the Division reports student achievement data in the Division Accountability Pillar reflecting Division student achievement in provincial categories which include preparation for lifelong learning, world of work, citizenship and achievement on Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma exams.

The Accountability Pillar is included in the Annual Education Results Report (AERR), which is reported annually to the Board of Trustees.

REFERENCES

GKB.AR - Standards of Education

HO.AR - Student Records

Alberta Education - *Guide to Education*, pages 77 and 97

Alberta Education Programs of Study

Accountability Pillar
Education Act Sections 196, 197