Student Assessment

Administrative Procedure 3.A.010

Legal Reference: Public Schools Act, Education Administration Act
Provincial Assessment Policy Kindergarten to Grade 12

Board Governance Policy Cross References: 2, 3, 5, 11, 15

Date Adopted: September, 2011
Date Amended: December, 2021
Date Reviewed : March, 2018; December, 2021; February, 2025

Policy Statement

The School District of Mystery Lake believes that assessment, evaluation and reporting of student learning are key components of the educational process. Consistent, systematic and positive practices will be used to support learning, development and personal growth for students. Further, the primary purpose of assessment is to improve student learning. It is also an essential aspect of communication between the teacher, the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

This policy was developed using the following professional references:

- Provincial Assessment Policy Kindergarten to Grade 12- Manitoba Education (2010)
- Communicating Student Learning-Manitoba Education (2008)
- Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind-Manitoba Education (2006)
- Principals for Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada-Joint Advisory Committee (1993)
- Mb Report Card Policy and Guideline Document.

In addition, the School District acknowledges: Portage La Prairie School Division, Evergreen School Division, Louis Riel School Division and River East Transcona whose policies were used as the foundation and framework for policy development in the School District of Mystery Lake.

Guidelines

A. Purposes of Assessment

Assessment is an important part of the educational process. It is comprised of four separate, yet related purposes.

1. Assessment ***for*** Learning

   It is the ongoing analysis of the student's learning designed to give teachers information to plan, modify and differentiate teaching and learning activities to meet curricular outcomes. Teachers will use this information to determine what students know and to gain insights into how, when, and whether students apply what they know, individually and as a class. This is both diagnostic and formative, occurs during the instructional process and is primarily intended to inform teacher instruction.

2. Assessment ***as*** Learning

   It is the process of developing metacognition for students (supporting students as they think and learn about their own thinking and learning).This process is intentionally planned and nurtured in the classroom. The purpose is for students to be engaged learners who set their own goals and monitor their progress. At the school or district levels it is used in different ways to support student learning by providing evidence of achievement, and to determine to what extent instructional goals have been achieved.

3. Assessment ***of*** Learning

   It is the periodic summary of student progress, based on evidence showing to what degree the student meets stated outcomes. Assessment of Learning is used to communicate progress towards standards, to the student, to the parent/guardians, and to other educators. At the school or district levels it is used in a variety of ways to support student learning by providing evidence of achievement, and to determine to what extent instructional goals have been achieved.

4. Specialized Assessment (Assessment for the identification and programming for students with special needs)

   The purpose of this assessment if to provide detailed information and analysis for programming to meet the special needs of some children. Students will not be denied an educational program pending the completion of a specialized assessment and every effort will be made to complete specialized assessments, following ups, meetings and reporting in a timely manner. Written parental/guardian consent shall be obtained prior to the completion of any specialized assessment.

B. Assessment Practices

Educational research and Manitoba Education guidelines in assessment and student learning have identified the following as best assessment practices:

1. Begin with the End in Mind (Backward mapping)

   a. Identify the desired outcomes to be achieved.

   b. Explain what the target outcomes are and what students need to do to reach them.

   c. Determine acceptable evidence. Evidence may include but not be limited to:

      - Samples or exemplars to develop criteria with students and to give descriptive feedback to students on their work;
      - Observation of learning;
      - Products student create;
      - Conversations.

   d. Plan learning experiences and instruction.

2. Plan for Assessment ***for*** Learning:

Assessment for learning involves collecting specific descriptive feedback that will inform the teacher's next steps and the students' next learning steps towards meeting the learning outcomes.

3. Plan for assessment ***as*** learning

When students are involved in the classroom assessment process, they are more engaged in learning. Teachers need to support students in developing and applying self-monitoring skills including self- assessment, peer assessment and increasing the amount of descriptive feedback.

4. Plan for assessment **of** learning

Assessment of learning is designed to measure, certify and report the level of students' learning. It requires the collection and interpretation of information about the student's accomplishments in curricular outcomes. Assessment of learning is based on a variety of products and demonstrations of learning such as:

- Tests and examinations;
- Portfolios;
- Exhibitions;
- Performances; and
- Multimedia projects.

C. Grading Guidelines

Grading Procedures

The assessment of student learning is the responsibility of the teacher and should include various considerations for mark inclusion. All grading procedures will be linked to curriculum standards as determined by Manitoba Education. Teachers shall use learning goals (general and specific learning outcomes) as the basis for grade determination.

1. Teachers shall use criterion-referenced assessment to determine marks and grades rather than interpreting a student's performance in relation to other students.
2. Whether an independent or cooperative learning strategy is used, a student's mark shall be based on individual achievement. Academic grades are bases on what students know and can do relative to the curriculum. Grades are bases on individual student achievement, not group achievement.
3. Effort, participation and attendance require teacher feedback but should not be reflected as part of a student's overall grade in a given subject area,

unless stated otherwise as part of a Manitoba Education curriculum or supplementary document. Student specific learning behaviours will be reported separately.

4. Teachers must establish and clearly communicate assignment expectations. Teachers, where possible, should provide exemplars and co-create with students the assessment criteria.

5. A student's grade will represent the latest and most consistent evidence of achievement relative to curricular learning outcome and should include a variety of methods such as observations, conversations and products.

D. Academic Responsibility

1. **Teachers must establish and clearly communicate expectations regarding assignments.** Assignments, requirements and assessment criteria should be discussed with students. Teachers will communicate to students the intended learning outcomes, the nature of the products and performances, and co-create the criteria for judging the evidence of learning with students. Teachers should be prepared to clarify the expectations if necessary, by providing exemplars, and to provide timely and specific feedback to students. Students must be actively and meaningfully involved in all phases of learning and assessment. Of particular importance is the need to ensure that students are "assessment literate" and able to self-assess. It is critical that all students participate in self and peer assessment. However, the final grade will be determined by the teacher.

2. **Teachers must set and communicate reasonable timelines for assignments and support students in meeting these timelines.** The timelines teachers set should provide adequate time for students to complete the work, while being mindful of other demands the student may have and student's strengths and challenges.

3. **Teachers should use their professional judgement to establish reasonable but firm expectations regarding timelines, and support and motivate students who do not take responsibility for their work to ensure students make regular progress on assignments.** Regular communication about student progress among teachers, students and parents will support timely completion of assignments. Other strategies may include the following:

    - Solicit and consider student input and collaborate with other staff to coordinate the timing of major assignments;

- Share assignment timelines and reminders through many means, including classroom web pages, emails, and course outlines;
- Assist students to manage time effectively-monitoring student progress at each stage of a complex assignment can ensure they stay on track;
- Anticipate which students may require additional supports to complete assigned tasks, and monitor those students more closely;
- Contact parents to discuss strategies for keeping students on track when they are falling behind or not taking responsibility for their work;
- When appropriate choose to extend time for completing assignments, especially for students who communicate with the teacher in advance of the due date. An “I” for “Incomplete” can act as an excused mark until the work is completed, which would comply with the amount of time allotted to the student. If the student has shown no evidence of completing the assignment, then the “I” will essentially become a qualified grade.
- Ensure that students understand that if an assignment is not complete and handed in according to the student-teacher plan, the student may receive a zero on the assignment and/or an incomplete on the course which would lead to the loss of a credit at the secondary level.
- In applying consequences for not completing work and submitting late assignments, teachers shall consider: the nature of the assignment, the individual circumstances of the student and the impact of the consequence on learning and motivation.

E. Reassessment to Reflect Student Achievement Accurately

1. Teachers shall provide reasonable opportunities for students to provide evidence of improved achievement related to curricular outcomes.
2. Teachers shall adjust a student’s grade if new evidence of learning provides a more accurate representation of student achievement.

F. Communication About Student Learning

1. The Superintendent/CEO or designate shall prepare a divisional schedule for assessment, evaluation, and reporting to guide the dates of all student progress conferences and progress report distributions.

2. School principals shall prepare school-based schedules that respect the divisional schedule including school examination dates where applicable, and

    - Submit them to the Superintendent/CEO or designate by September 30 of each school year.
    - Publicize them to their school communities.

3. Schools will send all written reports on divisional templates as scheduled each year by the Superintendent/CEO to provide information appropriate to the stages of the yearly reporting cycle.

4. There will be three reporting periods (two 'term' periods and a final report period) for Grades 1 to 8 and non-semestered high schools. There will be two reporting periods (one mid-term, one final) per term for semestered schools and other multi-term systems. As a local option for Grades 9-12, there may be four reporting periods for non-semestered courses in an otherwise semestered school so that the reporting periods align.

5. Teachers are encouraged to communicate with parents more frequently than indicated above should such contact be warranted by the progress of individual students.

G. Assessment to Inform Communication

Assessment to inform communication about student learning respects the following principles:

1. Use of various assessment strategies and tools to prepare student progress reports including

    a. Classroom based strategies, including but not limited to:

        - Daily work samples, learning logs and journals, progress portfolios, observations,
        - Conferences with the teacher, self-assessments, peer assessments

    b. Progress and achievement assessments, as measured against established standards for curricular outcomes, including but not limited to:

- Individual projects, such as essays, research papers, oral presentations, lab reports;
- Group projects, such as, seminars, science/art displays, plays;
- Samples of student work that reflect student growth in key competencies including
    - Knowledge, facts, concepts and principles
    - Skills, processes and strategies

c. Inquiry activities, such as debates, experiments, investigations, survey projects

d. Tests, including

- Provincial Assessments, where applicable
- School examinations
- Classroom tests and identified standardized assessment tools.

H. Student Specific Plan

When a student's curriculum has been altered, or the student has needs in other domains a Student Specific Plan may be needed which describes his/her program and assessment plan. The Student Specific Plan shall be reviewed on a regular basis as per provincial guidelines.

I. Academic Honesty

- Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty in their work, and understand that cheating and plagiarism are serious forms of academic dishonesty that will not be tolerated.
- Cheating is an act of academic dishonesty and comes in many forms such as, but not limited to, copying from others, submitting assignments written by others, and using unauthorized notes, aids, or electronic equipment during an assessment.
- Plagiarism, a form of cheating, is defined as claiming another's words, ideas or work as one's own, such as, but not limited to, copying and pasting text from

electronic sources without citing and identifying it as a quotation, quoting a source without proper referencing, and paraphrasing but not citing a source.

- Manitoba Education's document, Provincial Assessment Policy Kindergarten to Grade 12: Academic Responsibility, Honesty, and Promotion/Retention (2010) provides examples of consequences that may be used to deal with cases of academic dishonesty which may include:
    - Contacting parents
    - Reporting the incident on the student's report card and/or documenting the incident in the students permanent file;
    - Loss of privileges
    - Deducting marks for an assignment or assigning a mark of zero
    - Rewriting the assignment.

- In applying consequences, the teacher shall consider: the nature of the assignment, the individual circumstances of the student including grade and maturity level, the impact on future learning and motivation.

J. Exams/Exemptions

1. In cases where the possibility of an exemption from an exam exists, the exemption mark shall be consistent for all subject areas in the high school. The mark should be set at 75% for each course. The exemption should be for the January and June exam, with the exception of full year courses where the exemption should be for the June exam only.
2. Exams should not count for more than 30% of the total term mark in a course.
3. Students earn exemptions if they have a mark of 75% in the course and are not in violation of the schools or District's policies in the following areas:
    a. Documented Behaviour problems
    b. Incomplete assignments or course work.

K. Appeal of Grades

A student who disagrees with an assessment of their work may, within five school days, appeal the result as follows:

1. The student (or parent) must verbally request a re-evaluation from the subject teacher.

2. The teacher will re-evaluate and communicate the results. It is understood that the mark may be raised, lowered or remain the same.

3. The student (or parent) may request a second re-evaluation by submitting a request, in writing, to the school principal. This should occur within five school days after the results of the first appeal are made known.

4. School administration may conduct a re-evaluation. The evaluation criteria and/or scoring rubric must be provided by the teacher.

5. The mark allocated as a result of the re-evaluation will be considered the final mark whether the mark is raised, lowered or remains the same.

Appeal of Final Grades

A student who disagrees with a final grade, may, within five days of the grade being issued, request a re-calculation of the grade as follows:

1. The student (or parent) must submit a request for mark re-calculation, in writing, to the principal.

2. The principal will conduct a mark re-calculation. The mark allocated, as a result of this re-calculation, will be considered the final mark for that course, whether the mark is raised, lowered, or remains the same.

3. To ensure that the final grade is properly reviewed, the teacher shall make course outlines available with assessment items, weighting and a record of the grades as requested. All student assessment records must be maintained for a minimum of two years.

Standards Test Reread

If a student disagrees with a mark from a standards test, a reread may be requested as follows:

1. The request for a reread must be made in writing to the principal within five school days of the date the final standards test mark was reported to the students. A $ 35.00 fee must be included with this request (the fee is refundable to the student *only* if the mark increases as a result of the reread).

2. A trained marker from outside of the student's school will be selected by the District Administration to reread the exam.

3. The mark given on the reread of the standards test will be the final mark issued, whether the mark is raised, lowered, or remains the same. This standards test

mark will then be recalculated, if necessary, into the student's final course mark by the classroom teacher.

L. Placement

- Student placement decisions (promotion, retention or alternative programming) shall be made in the best interest of the student after careful consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of the various alternatives.
- In placing a student, the school staff shall consider the student's academic achievement, his/her age and social and emotional maturity. Whenever promotion is in doubt, the appropriate school staff shall meet with the parent(s) of the students concerned, such meetings are to take place at the earliest possible time during the school year.
- Placement decisions for a student shall be made by the school staff in consultation with parents and the School District team. Placement decisions at the school level are the responsibility of the principal.
- Condition or trial promotions are discouraged.
- The evaluation and placement of students with Student Specific Plans (SSP's) shall be based on the goals and student specific outcomes in their SSP's.
- Educational programming for students new to the District shall begin within 14 days after the student seeks to be enrolled, regardless of whether that school has received that student's pupil file.

M. Promotion:

- Students who do not meet the stated requirements for promotion may be transferred to the next grade by the Principal if in his/her professional judgement the student's age, social, and emotional maturity, and other relevant factors are such that a transfer to another grade would be in the best interests of the student and/or the District.
- Kindergarten to Eight: Promotion shall be based on the overall success in the grade, with the requirements being the achievement of the goals and objectives in sufficient depth to provide the necessary foundation for the requirements of the subsequent grade.
- Grade Nine to Twelve: Promotion shall be based upon success in the compulsory and optional courses selected as determined by the course prerequisites and the credit system.

N. Retention:

- The consideration of retention, including the loss of credit at the High School level, requires regular communication between those involved ie. teacher, principals, parents, and in many cases, the student. The following procedure is intended to ensure that this communication occurs in a timely manner, that all relevant information is obtained and that parents are involved in the process.

  1. Kindergarten to Grade 8- Required activities:

     a. Discussion between the principal and the teacher by January 31.

     b. Discussion between principal and all staff involved which may or may not include or be limited to: Resource teacher, Counsellor, Psychologist, Speech and Language Pathologist.

     c. Contact with parents by February 21.

     d. Every attempt shall be made to ensure that follow up meetings with parent(s) are held.

     e. Final decision to retain shall be made no later than mid June.

     f. Ensure that the retention is properly documented in the cumulative file re; the experience during the year and future educational considerations.

     g. List of students to be retained shall be submitted to the Superintendent's department by June 30.

  2. High School: Required Activities:

     a. Students must maintain a minimum mark of at least 35% in each of their subjects at each reporting period. If not, parents will be advised by the school administration that the student may be in jeopardy of losing their credit and/or may be asked to withdraw from these courses unless improvement is shown. This notification must be documented by the school administration and shall following the timeline below:

        i. Discussion between an administrator and teacher by November 30 and April 30.

        ii. Discussion between principal, counsellor and all staff involved.

        iii. Contact with parents by November 30 and April 30.

     A student, who is in jeopardy of losing a credit, will not lose that credit if improvement is shown.

     b. Students must not have more than two courses between 35% and 50% in each reporting period. If a student has more than two courses within that

range and attendance is poor, he/she, with parent consultation, may be required to reduce the number of courses he/she is taking.

c. If a student has had to reduce his/her course load to one or two courses as a result of a and/or b above, and in the opinion of the principal and teachers is not making satisfactory effort in the remainder of this program due to lack of effort or poor attendance, the student may be required to withdraw from school for the remainder of the semester. The principal shall advise the Superintendent's department in writing when the number of courses has been reduced and/or the student has been withdrawn from school. The report shall include the student's name, grade, circumstances, and the information relevant to the situation of the student.

d. Any student who has been attending High School for more than four years and has yet to graduate and who wishes to continue attending, is to be referred to the Superintendent's Department, if in the opinion of the principal, the student has not maintained satisfactory progress or attendance up to that time.