



PARENT GUIDE TO ASSESSMENT & REPORTING



UNDERSTANDING ASSESSMENT & REPORTING

In the past, assessment had been used solely for the purpose of calculating overall final grades. Twenty years of education research has resulted in the knowledge that it can be used to improve student learning as well. Parents play an important role in their child's education; when parents, students and educators work together, students are successful!



WHAT IS ASSESSMENT?

Assessment is the process of gathering information about what a student knows, understands, and can do, in relation to the learning outcomes. In Edmonton Catholic Schools, all assessments are criterion-referenced, meaning student performances are not compared to one another, as is seen in post-secondary institutions who grade “on the curve”. Rather, student performances are compared to the learning objectives as set by the Ministry of Education in the **Programs of Study (Alberta curriculum)**.

TYPES OF ASSESSMENT

There are three types of assessment, each with different purposes:

Assessment FOR Learning

- provides useful feedback on what, how much, and how well students are learning
- context-specific: it responds to the particular needs and characteristics of the teachers, students and disciplines to which they are applied
- is ongoing, and not based solely on discreet assessment “events”

Assessment AS Learning

- actively involves student reflection on learning, monitoring of his/her own progress, accompanied by teacher guidance
- supports students in critically analyzing performance in relation to learning objectives
- supports students in answering three crucial learning questions: What am I learning? Where am I in my learning? What’s next for my learning?

Assessment OF Learning

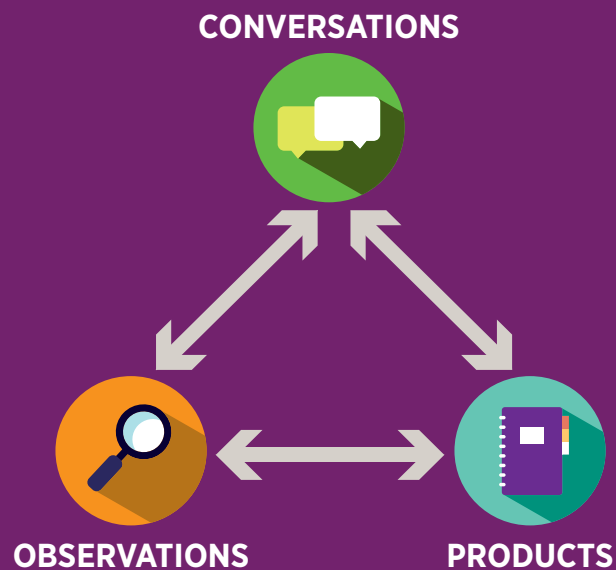
- judges student learning and understanding for the purposes of grading and reporting
- used to determine the degree to which learning objectives are attained

Formative: used throughout the learning process to monitor student learning and provide ongoing feedback to both students and teachers for the purpose of improving learning

Summative: used to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional/ learning cycle

MULTIPLE MODES OF ASSESSMENT

For many teachers and parents, assessment is synonymous with evidence of learning apparent in a *product*, such as an essay or written exam. We can gather a more well-rounded collection of evidence of learning by *observing* students while they demonstrate skills, or engaging them in *conversation* to reveal their understanding. The teacher can then capture what they see and hear, in addition to product-based evidence of learning, to provide a balanced and more accurate picture of a student's level of proficiency in demonstrating knowledge, conceptual understanding, and skill.



OBSERVATIONS

- lab skills
- debate
- physical education skills
- art techniques
- classroom dialogue:
partner work, small group,
whole class discussion



CONVERSATIONS

- student teacher conferences
- classroom dialogue
- debate
- oral reflection



PRODUCTS

- written work
- creating models
- posters
- quizzes/tests/exams



WHAT IS REPORTING?

Reporting is the process used to communicate relevant information about a student's progress, knowledge that is gained from assessing and evaluating student learning.



ONGOING REPORTING

In Edmonton Catholic Schools, we report to parents and students on an ongoing basis. Gone are the days when parents and students would have to wait for a report card to come out just three times a year. We use a gradebook program that integrates with PowerSchool, called PowerTeacher Pro, into which teachers input assessment information *as it happens*. Parents and students are encouraged to check PowerSchool "Grades and Attendance" regularly to keep up-to-date on student progress.

If your child is on an individualized program plan, please check the IPP for updates regarding student progress.

HOW ARE GRADES DETERMINED?

In Edmonton Catholic Schools, we report to parents and students on an ongoing basis. Gone are the days when parents and students would have to wait for a report card to come out just three times a year. We use a gradebook program that integrates with PowerSchool, called PowerTeacher Pro, into which teachers input assessment information *as it happens*. Parents and students are encouraged to check PowerSchool “Grades and Attendance” regularly to keep up-to-date on student progress.



KINDERGARTEN

Grades in Elementary are Levels of Achievement. In Kindergarten, levels of achievement are assigned to outcomes in June. In lieu of levels of achievement, teachers will provide descriptive, written feedback to illustrate the child’s learning over time. Parents will see individual assignments in Grades and Attendance, with written descriptions of the task/activity in which students engaged, along with written feedback or observations on targeted learning tasks.



GRADES 1 – 6

Grades in Elementary are Levels of Achievement. In Grades 1 – 6, assignments are associated with learning outcomes, and each of these outcomes will receive a level of achievement. Outcomes are grouped within *Reporting Standards*, or the general outcome that encompasses the specific outcomes upon which students are graded. Teachers use the *most recent* level of achievement data from the outcomes to determine an overall level of achievement final grade for each Reporting Standard. Only Reporting Standard grades will appear on the final report card.

**Note: in lieu of levels of achievement, teachers may provide descriptive, written feedback for the purpose of improving learning.*



GRADES 7 – 9

Grades in Junior High are expressed as both numeric and **Levels of Achievement**. In the academic core courses (Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies) and Religion, students will receive numeric scores, levels of achievement on outcomes, and an overall final percentage grade. Percentage grades are calculated based on a predetermined formula created by the teacher, found in the course outline. Please contact the school for more details. In all other courses, students will receive levels of achievement on outcomes and an overall final level of achievement.

In Grades 7 – 9, all assignments are associated with learning outcomes, and each of these outcomes will receive a level of achievement. Outcomes are grouped within *Reporting Standards*, or the general outcome that encompasses the specific outcomes upon which students are graded. Teachers use the *most recent* level of achievement data from the outcomes to determine an overall level of achievement final grade for each Reporting Standard. Reporting Standard grades will appear on the final report card. To view grades from all outcomes, visit the *Grades and Attendance* page in the PowerSchool Parent Portal.

**Note: in lieu of levels of achievement or scores, teachers may provide descriptive, written feedback for the purpose of improving learning.*



GRADES 10 – 12

Grades in High School are expressed numerically. In all courses students will receive numeric scores on assignments and an overall final percentage grade. Percentage grades are calculated based on a predetermined formula created by the teacher, found in the course outline. Please contact the school for more details.

Some select high schools are piloting Outcome-Based reporting, with Levels of Achievement and numeric scores. Please check with your administration if you have any questions about this pilot.

**Note: in lieu of scores, teachers may provide descriptive, written feedback for the purpose of improving learning.*

FINAL GRADES AND REPORT CARDS



Elementary (Kindergarten to Grade 6) students receive one final report card at the end of the year. The Levels of Achievement on the report card *are* the final grades for these students. Edmonton Catholic Schools does not assign overall averages to our young students', rather, we provide information about their level of understanding in relation to the learning objectives.



Junior High (Grades 7 - 9) students receive a final report card at the end of the year, in which both an overall final grade (either a percentage or a level of achievement) *and* levels of achievement for learning objectives will appear. Final grades for the current school year are available on the PowerSchool Parent Portal *Grades and Attendance* page upon completion of each course.



High School (Grades 10 - 12) students receive a final report card at the end of the year, in which overall final percentage grades will be listed, often accompanied by a recommendation for next steps for students moving to the next grade. Final grades for the current school year are available on the PowerSchool Parent Portal *Grades and Attendance* page upon completion of each course. Students may order official transcripts from **MyPass** from the Alberta Government.

UNDERSTANDING THE CODES IN GRADES AND ATTENDANCE

LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT (LOA) FOR GRADES 1 – 12

Levels of Achievement are the scores teachers use to indicate a student's level of performance, in relation to the learning objectives from the Programs of Study.



In grades 1 – 6, Levels of Achievement are used exclusively.

Numeric scores/grades are **not** reported in grades 1 – 6.



In grades 7 – 9, numeric scores/grades *and* Levels of Achievement are used:

- LoAs are used on outcomes for all subjects, and as overall grades in Health, Physical Education, and options.
- Numeric scores are used on assignments and as final grades in the core subjects and Religion.



In grades 10 – 12, levels of achievement are used to provide feedback for improved learning only and are not used to formulate grades.

In the 2021-22 school year, we will be piloting these levels of achievement at two sites. In 2022-23, parents can expect to see the use of levels of achievement in academic core classes at all sites.

**LEVEL OF
ACHIEVEMENT
(GR 1 – 12)**

**CRITERIA
THE STUDENT...**

**STANDARD OF
EXCELLENCE
(SE)**

- Demonstrates an **in-depth** and/or **insightful** understanding of the learning outcomes from the program of studies
- Applies concepts in learning situations **deliberately** and/or **independently**; the student **reliably** transfers understanding to new contexts
- Demonstrates **precision** and/or **creativity** in applying skills and strategies between concepts to approach new learning situations

**PROFICIENT
STANDARD (PF)**

- Demonstrates a **comprehensive** and/or **thoughtful** understanding of the learning outcomes from the program of studies
- Applies concepts in learning situations **intentionally** and/or **logically** and can **routinely** transfer understanding to new contexts
- Demonstrates **flexibility** and/or **purpose** in applying skills and strategies to approach new learning situations

**ACCEPTABLE
STANDARD (AS)**

- Demonstrates a **rudimentary** and/or **satisfactory** understanding of the learning outcomes from the program of studies
- Applies concepts in learning situations with **scaffolded guidance and support**; the student is **inconsistent** in transferring understanding to new contexts
- Demonstrates **functional** and/or **straightforward** skills and strategies to approach new learning situations; application of skills and strategies may be **inconsistent** and/or **predictable**

**BEGINNING
STANDARD (BE)**

- Demonstrates a **simplistic** and/or **minimal** understanding of the learning outcomes from the program of studies
- Applies concepts in learning situations with **repeated guidance and support**; the student is **not yet able to transfer understanding** to new contexts
- **Lacks skills and strategies** to approach new learning situations; demonstrates **uncertainty** and/or **difficulty** in acquiring skills and strategies



LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT (LOA) FOR KINDERGARTEN

KINDERGARTEN

In January and June your child will be assigned Levels of Achievement for the learning outcomes related to the Alberta Kindergarten Program of Studies. You will notice that the levels of achievement used in kindergarten differ from those used in 1 through 12. For our youngest learners, it takes time to develop mastery of foundational skills. As such, we expect that there may be times when your child is still working on developing these important concepts.

LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT

DESCRIPTION CRITERIA

K

The child...

- **meets** the Kindergarten standards
- demonstrates **solid understanding** of the learning outcomes from the program of studies
- **applies** concepts in **most** learning situations
- **uses most** required skills and strategies effectively

N

The child...

- **needs additional time and practice** to meet the Kindergarten standards
- demonstrates **some understanding** of the learning outcomes from the program of studies
- **applies** concepts in **some** learning situations
- uses **some** required skills and strategies effectively

FLAGS AND SPECIAL CODES

Flags and Special Codes more details about an assessment. It is important to note that in elementary, only Flags appear.

The following table provides brief explanations of the flags and special codes you may see when you check your child's Grades and Attendance in the PowerSchool parent portal.

FLAG/CODE

EXPLANATION



The student has completed the assessment and the teacher has collected it.



The assessment has been turned in/attempted/observed and is not complete.



The student has not turned in or performed for an assessment.



This assessment was not completed due to the student being absent.



This assessment is late.



The student is exempt from completing this assessment.

ADP

The student receives adapted programming and is not assessed with a level of achievement on this learning outcome. It is used from Kindergarten to Grade 9.

Please visit our **Inclusive Education** page for more information.

IEA

There is insufficient evidence of learning to assess. This is used only at the end of a learning cycle, not on individual assignments. It will accompanied by communication with the parent regarding the context of its use.

NHI

“Not Handed In” is equivalent to a numeric score of zero. It is used exclusively in junior high and high school, on assignments only, and not as a final grade.



STANDARDIZED TESTING

Alberta Education requires students to write standardized tests for academic core classes in Grades 6, 9, and 12. Please visit the following sites for more information:

Provincial Achievement Tests (Grades 6 and 9)

[Provincial Achievement Tests | Alberta.ca](#)

[Diploma Exams \(Grade 12\)](#)



ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

For more information about assessment and evaluation in special programs, please click on the links below.

[International Baccalaureate Programme \(PYP, MYP, IB\)](#)

[Advanced Placement \(AP\)](#)





SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING

ALBERTA EDUCATION RESOURCES

[My Child's Learning: A Parent Resource](#)

[Alberta High School Diploma Graduation Requirements](#)

[Certificate of High School Achievement Requirements](#)

ECSD RESOURCES

[ECSD's Plan for Continuous Growth](#)

[Board of Trustees](#)

[Administrative Procedures for Assessment](#)

[Administrative Procedures for Reporting](#)

[Administrative Procedures for Inclusive Education](#)

POWERSCHOOL HELP

[Visit the PowerSchool Parent Portal](#)

[How to Use the Parent Portal](#)

[How to track your child's learning \[video\]](#)

[How to access your child's report card \[video\]](#)



FURTHER READING

The Case Against Percentage Grades - Guskey, T.R. (2013). The Case Against Percentage Grades. *Educational Leadership*, 75(5), 68-72.

