

ASSESSMENT & REPORTING OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Background

Student assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. The decisions made in assessment and evaluations are critical to informing instructional decisions and enhancing student learning and are always made in the best interest of the child.

It is the professional responsibility of teachers to provide clear communication in describing student learning. Accurate and meaningful reporting requires the teacher to be able to assess student progress and achievement in a valid and reliable way. The principles embodied in this procedure identify the issues to consider in exercising professional judgment and in striving for fair and equitable assessment for all students.

Assessment plays a major role in how students learn, their motivation to learn, and how teachers teach. There are three distinct but inter-related purposes for classroom assessment:

- ⇒ Assessment for Learning is designed to give teachers, students and parents information that will inform instructional decisions to enhance learning;
- ⇒ Assessment of Learning is summative in nature and is used to confirm what students know or are able to do in terms of the learner outcomes;
- ⇒ Assessment as Learning is the process of developing and supporting metacognition for students and focuses on the role of the learner as the critical connector between assessment and learning. When not distinguished from assessment for and of learning, assessment as learning strategies fall within the domain of assessment for learning.

When assessment is balanced to serve all three purposes it becomes a powerful process for enhancing student learning and instructional practices.

Definitions

Academic Dishonesty –includes cheating and the use of unauthorized materials on examinations, recycling of your own work without acknowledgment (e.g. submitting the same paper for different classes); the fabrication of information or making up sources; improper collaboration; and plagiarism.

Assignments – are created by teachers in the gradebook. Each assignment includes grading scale, category, max value and weight and is referenced in terms of learner outcomes.

Balanced Assessment - refers to a balance in the types of assessments administered and, from a broader perspective, refers to a balance in the three essential purposes of assessment - assessment of learning, assessment for learning, and assessment as learning

Criteria - what students need to do in order to show they have achieved the learner outcomes

Exemplar – a model; an example that is typical or representative

Formative Assessment - provides information about student progress and direction for improvement and adjustments to a program for an individual student or a whole class, but has no part in an achievement grade

Grading Scales – are percentage or rubric based, and define the letter grade breakpoints. The grading scales only apply to a particular assignment created

Learner Outcome - the knowledge, skills and attitudes a student needs to demonstrate as a result of schooling in order to meet the standards established by Alberta Education

Mark (Grade) - a letter, number or comment reported at the end of a period of time as a summative statement of student performance

Mounting Evidence – the collection of ongoing evidence of student success on the achievement of outcomes

Rubric - a fixed measurement scale and list of criteria that describes the quality of product(s) or performance(s) used to evaluate student learning.

Summative Assessment - provides information to make judgments about student achievement to summarize student learning and for determining an achievement grade

Assessment Procedures

Assessment and reporting is an on-going process that adheres to the following principles:

1. Curriculum, instruction, assessment and reporting all need to be aligned.
2. Assessment shapes planning and instruction.
3. Teachers must keep accurate, meaningful records. Evidence and/or artifacts will be available to support teacher assessment of learner outcomes.
4. Outcomes should be attached to assignments in gradebooks.
5. Gradebooks will include appropriate dates and descriptive titles referenced in terms of the learner outcomes being assessed.
6. Assessment involves continually checking and informing the teacher, student, and parents as to where each student is in relation to the learner outcomes.
7. In order to effectively influence student learning, feedback must be timely, ongoing, descriptive, and contain specific direction for students.
8. Students participate in the assessment and reporting process through activities such as involvement in establishing criteria, peer and self-assessments, sharing portfolios, and personal goal setting.
9. A variety of assessment and evaluation practices are needed to determine student achievement (e.g. performance assessments, extended written responses, demonstrations, projects, portfolios, observations, selected responses, personal conversations).
10. Teachers need to provide students with more than one opportunity, when necessary, to demonstrate their ability to meet learner outcomes within reasonable timelines.

Grading and Reporting Procedures

It is the responsibility of the teacher to summatively assess and report what the student knows and is able to do in terms of learner outcomes. Consistent and accurate assessment occurs when:

1. Assessment is derived from the learner outcomes outlined in the Program of Studies.
2. Reporting of student achievement and progress to students and parents will be timely, frequent and involve multiple communication strategies (i.e. phone calls, reports, on-line parent/student access).
3. Students need a clear understanding of the assessment criteria which may come in the form of rubrics and/or exemplars.
4. Elementary schools will use a 4 point academic divisional rubric which will remain in effect for the entire year.
5. Junior and Senior High schools will use a 4 point academic divisional rubric or percentage scale which will remain in effect for the entire year.
6. Grades will reflect accurate evidence of learning based on mounting evidence of curricular outcomes throughout the period of instruction (year/semester).
7. Assessment results need to be free of non-curricular influences such as lateness of work and/or extra credit.
8. Attitude, effort, work-habits, behavior and attendance are reported separate from grades reporting academic achievement, unless they are defined in the learner outcomes.
9. All schools will use an attitude and behavior rubric to report student success on responsible learner skills such as but not limited to work habits, behavior, participation and/or working in group.
10. If there is not enough evidence of a student's level of proficiency because of missing summative information or academic dishonesty, the student will initially receive an incomplete. In discussion with the teacher and parents, students will be given a reasonable amount of time to provide acceptable evidence for learning.
11. Schools on semester system will provide written reports to parents at least four times per year, while schools not on a semester system will provide written reports to parents at least three times per year.
12. Schools will hold student-led conferences a minimum of two times per year.
13. On-line grading and reporting access will be available to all parents and students. All teachers' emails will be activated to support and encourage communication.
14. All schools will use a rubric or percentage based divisionally developed report.
15. Students or parents have the right to appeal a grade in any subject, and the following directions apply to such an appeal:
 - a. A teacher must provide evidence to substantiate the grade.
 - b. If the student or parent is dissatisfied with the outcome of an appeal to a teacher, the student, or parent may appeal to the principal.
 - c. If the student or parent is dissatisfied with the outcome of an appeal to the principal, the student or parent may appeal to the Superintendent.
 - d. Appeals must be initiated by student and/or parent in writing within 30 days following the issuance of the report under appeal.

August, 2007

Updates: 2012; April 2020

References

Sections 11, 18, 31, 32, 33, 41, 52, 53, 55, 56, 196, 197, 222 Education Act

Alberta Regulation # 71/99 Student Records

Alberta Regulation # 177/2003 Student Evaluation

Alberta Education Policy 2.1.2 Student Evaluation

Alberta Education Policy 2.1.3 Use and Reporting of Results on Provincial Assessment

Ministerial Orders and Directives 4.2.1 Teaching Quality Standards Applicable to the Provision of Basic Education in Alberta

The Principles for Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada (1993)

Student Assessment and Evaluation: The Alberta Teaching Profession's View (Fall 2004 Revised 2006)