



## **Guide to Student Assessment, Achievement, and Growth**

Ignite Centre for eLearning is committed to ensuring all students are successful. Fair, consistent, and reliable assessment of student learning is an important part of this mandate.

This guide will help you understand:

- responsibilities of staff, students and parents/caregivers;
- how we will tell you about your student's progress and learning;
- how we assign grades/marks to your student;
- how your student is assessed; and
- the steps we take if your student's work is missing or not finished.

### **What is assessment?**

In this guide, we use the terms *assessment* and *evaluation* to describe what students have learned, and how well they have learned it. Assessment and evaluation aren't just about tests and grades. Assessment means gathering information about what your student knows, understands and can show the teacher based on the Alberta programs of study (curriculum) or their Individualized Program Plan (IPP). Teachers can't use your student's behaviour, effort and work habits to decide on their grades/marks, unless that's outlined in the Alberta programs of study for a specific subject.

To find out where your student is at in their learning, teachers use many tools. Conversations, observations and student work are just some of the ways teachers discover students' strengths and where they might need extra help. These activities – conversations, observations and the products students create – help teachers shape their lesson plans. They even guide how they'll explain a concept, to help every student meet their learning goals. The activities also help inform the teacher's understanding so that they may assign each student a grade, course or level of programming. All of this allows teachers to give you a clear and accurate picture of your student's progress in school.

## **Supporting Your Student's Learning**

As a parent or caregiver, you are your student's first teacher. So, understanding how your student is doing in school is important. Read this guide, and contact the school or make an appointment to see your student's teacher or Principal if you have any questions.

## **Supporting Student Success**

We all have a role to play in helping your student be successful.

You can support your student's learning by:

- working in partnership with school staff;
- providing a quiet place for your student to study at home;
- staying informed and keeping in touch with school staff. This includes reading digital newsletters and other school materials; and
- attending parent/teacher/student conferences.

Teachers will help your student succeed by:

- providing programming that is appropriate for your student;
- providing many opportunities and different ways for students to show what they know;
- giving students who have missed important assessments and activities the chance to complete the work;
- clearly explaining what's expected of students in all courses and how student work will be graded/marked (i.e., course outline);
- keeping accurate notes describing your student's successes and challenges;
- communicating with you about your student's progress and achievement; and
- providing opportunities for you to be involved in your student's learning.

Students have a responsibility for their attendance to their learning and are expected to:

- attend all live classes unless excused from doing so due to external circumstances;
- finish their assignments, projects, and tasks to the best of their ability;
- participate in activities to celebrate learning;
- show that they're learning; and
- take advantage of chances to revise or redo assignments or tests so they can show growth in their knowledge and skills.

## **Our Communication Plan for Reporting Progress**

There are many ways we help you stay informed about your student's learning throughout the year. We encourage you to review your student's reports and attend conferences regularly.

## **Reporting Periods**

Progress Reports will be issued electronically via our student portal. Current marks are always posted in Moodle. Students can share their current progress with parents/caregivers at any time.

## **Conferences**

Progress Meetings will be held as per our [school calendar](#).

**Individualized Program Plans (IPPs)** will be created for students who need specialized services and supports.

The IPP is a working document that is developed as needed during the school year. It is a record of your student's progress related to specific goals. It gives you confirmation that your student's needs are being addressed and gives information about accommodations and strategies your student needs to succeed. The IPP is reviewed at least three times a year.

We expect you and your student (as appropriate) to provide input into the IPP.

IPP planning will begin in September and input will be requested from students and parents/caregivers by means of a student interview with a teacher and a survey sent home with the IPP signature page. The signature page is signed to confirm the parent/caregiver agrees that the school prepare an IPP for their student. The IPP areas for growth and baseline information will be shared with the parent/caregiver.

Reviews will be uploaded in December, March and May. Parents/caregivers can meet with their student's teacher by appointment at any time during the school year. Parents are also invited to take part in the Progress Meetings in November and March.

## **English as a Second Language (ESL) Proficiency Benchmarks:**

For students learning English, the ESL Proficiency Benchmarks measure English abilities in four areas: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Teachers use this tool each year to help them plan lessons and communicate with you about your student's

progress in learning English. To be eligible for enrolment at Ignite Centre for eLearning and to ensure student success, students must be at a minimum of level three on the ESL Proficiency Benchmarks.

ESL benchmarks are completed once per year and a report will be shared with parents/caregivers.

Parents/caregivers are welcome to discuss benchmarking with teachers at any time during the school year.

## How Student Performance is Determined

Student academic performance is judged by teachers against a broad range of learning outcomes from the Alberta programs of study, based on evidence collected from a variety of sources. This is based on sufficient, consistent, valid, and most recent evidence of learning.

Percentages will be used for formal reporting in Grades 10 to 12.

Student performance in junior high will be reported with the following:

### Student Performance

The quality of performance, or how well your child is demonstrating curricular expectations, is reported as follows:

Excellent (EXC)	Proficient (PRO)	Adequate (ADQ)	Emerging (EMR)
<p>Learning goals are met in an astute and comprehensive way.</p> <p>Assignments are well crafted, organized in a purposeful fashion, and demonstrate attention to precise details.</p> <p>Demonstrates an in depth understanding and degree of skill on summative assessments.</p> <p>Has assembled an in depth understanding of the concepts, generalizations.</p>	<p>Learning goals are met in a practical and thorough way.</p> <p>Assignments are complete, organized in a competent fashion, and demonstrate attention to relevant details.</p> <p>Demonstrates a substantial understanding and degree of skill on summative assessments.</p> <p>Has assembled a thorough understanding of the concepts, generalizations, and skills fundamental to the program</p>	<p>Learning goals are met in an appropriate and reasonable way.</p> <p>Assignments are generally complete, organized in an acceptable fashion, and demonstrate attention to predictable details.</p> <p>Demonstrates a satisfactory understanding and degree of skill on summative assessments.</p> <p>Has assembled a basic understanding of the concepts, generalizations, and skills fundamental to the program.</p>	<p>Student has demonstrated insufficient performance in relation to learner outcomes.</p>

### Term and End of Year Codes

On your student's progress report, a teacher may use the following codes for term or end of course grades/marks:

<b>NGC</b>	Not on Graded Curriculum	Used as a term mark to indicate when a student is not working on the graded curriculum.
<b>IEA</b>	Insufficient Evidence Available	Used only as a <b>term</b> mark when a teacher does not have enough evidence about a student's progress to give them a mark at the end of a reporting period.
<b>CMU</b>	Course Mark Unavailable	Used when a student submits evidence of learning that may not have been assessed at the time of the reporting period deadline. Assessment results will appear on the subsequent progress report.
<b>WDR</b>	Withdrawal	WDR is used only as an <b>end of course</b> mark when a student chooses not to complete a course and the school agrees to withdraw the student from the course. WDR may be used for all courses.
<b>INC</b>	Incomplete	Incomplete is used only as an <b>end of course mark</b> when a student does not withdraw from a Career and Technology Studies (CTS) course and does not successfully complete the course with a mark of 50% or more. No mark is submitted to Alberta eEducation and the course does not appear on the student transcript. INC is used only for CTS courses.

### How We Determine Student Grades/Marks

Student academic performance is judged by teachers against a broad range of learning outcomes from the Alberta programs of study, based on evidence collected from a variety of sources. This is based on sufficient, consistent, valid, and most recent evidence of learning.

For students in grades 10 to 12, if there is a discrepancy of 25% or greater between the student's coursework mark prior to the midterm and their midterm exam mark, the teacher may, at their discretion, award the midterm mark as their first reporting period grade in each semester. If there is a discrepancy of 25% or greater between the student's overall coursework mark and their final exam mark, the teacher may, at their discretion, award the final exam mark as the student's overall final course mark. Teachers will reach out to students to discuss this scenario with students to whom it applies.

**Formative Assessments (Also known as Assessment FOR Learning - AFL)**

Throughout the year, your student will work on many activities that help them increase what they know and practice their skills. These activities show your student's teacher how they are doing, what their strengths are and where they can improve. This is called formative assessment.

Teachers use this information to adjust their teaching, give your student feedback to help them improve and prepare your student for times when they will receive grades/marks.

**Summative Assessments (Also known as Assessment OF Learning - AOL)**

During the school year, your student will have a chance to show what they have learned up to that point in time (summative assessments).

Using their judgment as professionals, teachers make decisions and assign grades/marks to your student. They base these decisions on what they've seen your student do (observations), discussions they've had with your student (conversations), and the work your student has completed (products).

**Missing or Incomplete Student Work**

Principals must make sure that teachers communicate with parents/caregivers promptly and regularly about missing or incomplete student work, and will adhere to the following process:

Principals will work with their teachers to comply with the following:

- a. evidence of student achievement has been collected by the teacher;
- b. communication plans for reporting student achievement and growth to parents/caregivers are developed and aligned with school-wide assessment and intervention plans;
- c. a student has been given multiple opportunities and ways to demonstrate his/her learning;
- d. follow up has occurred to determine the reason when a summative assessment item (assignment, test, project, etc.) is missing or incomplete, and that opportunities for the student to fulfill the requirement of the summative assessment item (assignment, test, project, etc.) are provided;

- e. if the student continues to be unsuccessful, the student/parents/caregivers will be informed and the teacher will solicit a solution in consultation with the student's parents/caregivers to hold the student accountable and/or plan for further learning;
- f. teachers will engage in on-going, timely communication with parents/caregivers/ students and the Principal regarding missing or incomplete work; and
- g. providing 4. b–f have been followed, the teacher may assign the student a mark of zero for that missed summative assessment item (assignment, test, project, etc.).

When your student has missing or incomplete work, we will endeavor to ensure that all work is completed to the best of the student's ability. As each case is unique, the process may include any or all of the following steps: discussion with the student; discussion with the parents/caregivers; one-on-one teacher support during virtual drop-in times; special codes in a teacher's grade book to alert parents/caregivers; and re-scheduled assessment completion time.

### **Academic Integrity**

If a student is suspected of plagiarism or academic dishonesty, the teacher, along with school administration, will meet with them and take action in accordance with the school's Student Behaviour and Conduct policy.

The use of artificial intelligence/ChatGPT to complete summative assessments is prohibited, unless otherwise indicated by the course teacher. When AI use has been detected, or academic dishonesty suspected, teachers will inform students/parents regarding consequences. In addition, students who are found to be using AI on summative assessments and/or academic dishonesty suspected/proven, will be required to pay a fee for future in-person supervision of exams.

Students who are found to engage in academic dishonesty on final exams may be assigned a failing final grade and be required to retake the course.

### **Grades/Marks Appeal Process**

To appeal the grade/mark a student has been assigned, the student/parent/guardian/ caregiver should contact the teacher. If the appeal cannot be resolved with the teacher, the Principal will make a decision regarding this and explain it to the parent/guardian/caregiver/ student. The Principal's decision is final, as per the Education Act.

In early July, there will be a day to contact the school to appeal June final marks. When this date is set, it will be communicated to students/parents/caregivers.



## **The Role of Large Scale Tests**

### **Provincial Achievement Tests**

Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs) measure how well students across Alberta are learning content as described in the programs of study. Average PAT scores for the school are shared publicly to show how Alberta students are doing, compared to provincial standards. Results from PATs help schools, school authorities, and Alberta Education monitor and improve student learning.

While PATs are an important part of determining student growth and achievement, they are just one part of the assessment process. They are sources of information that must be interpreted, used and communicated within the context of regular and continuous assessment by classroom teachers.

Students in Grade 9 are expected to participate in language arts, math, science and social studies PATs. PATs are typically administered in the spring. Specific dates for the administration of PATs in the 2021-2022 school year will be provided by Alberta Education. A draft of PAT dates is available from Alberta Education here (pages 5-8). Once confirmed, these dates will be shared with families. Alberta Education expects schools to report the scores from Grade 9 PATs. We will report the results to students and parents/caregivers on the June final progress report.

Information regarding the location of PATs will be shared in early, 2022.

### **The Grade 12 Diploma Examinations Program:**

- certifies the level of individual student achievement in selected Grade 12 courses;
- helps maintain province-wide standards of achievement;
- reports individual and group results; and
- helps inform the evidence-based, continuous improvement process for diploma-level teachers.

For all 30-level diploma courses, the school mark will be weighted at 70 per cent of the total mark, and the diploma examination mark will be weighted at 30 percent of the total mark, unless otherwise indicated by Alberta Education. To pass a diploma course, a student must earn a final 'blended' mark of at least 50 per cent.

Students are expected to contact local high schools to register for the diploma exams. Please contact the school Principal if assistance is needed with this process.

More information about the Diploma Examination Program is available online at <https://www.alberta.ca/diploma-exams-overview.aspx>