



Guide to Student Assessment and Achievement 2018-2019

Grades 5 – 9

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In Black Gold Regional Division, we recognize that successful student learning relies on a partnership between students, teachers, parents/guardians, and school administration. We believe that regular communication between all of these partners is an essential component of student assessment.

This guide will help you understand:

- responsibilities of teachers, students, parents/guardians, and school administration;
- how and when we will tell you about your child's progress and learning;
- how we assign grades/marks to your child;
- how your child is assessed; and
- steps we take if your child'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.

Student assessment is ongoing and cumulative. Teachers gather information about what students know and can demonstrate based on the Alberta programs of study (curriculum) and, when applicable, the Instructional Support Plan (ISP) in grades 1-12, or the Individualized Program Plan (IPP) in Kindergarten. *Marks are only earned through assessment of learning outcomes achieved in assignments, activities, projects, portfolios, performances and tests. Teachers won't use your child's attendance, behaviour, effort, attitude, homework completion or work habits to decide on their grades/marks, unless it is included in the Alberta programs of study for a specific subject.*

To determine a student's current level of achievement in relation to curriculum, teachers use a variety of tools. Conversations, observations and student work are just some of the ways teachers discover students' strengths and where they might need extra help. This helps teachers shape their lesson plans and guide how they will 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 child's progress in school.

Supporting Student Success

As a parent or guardian, you are your child's first teacher. We know that understanding how your child is doing in school is important to you. This guide will help you understand student assessment in your child's school. If you have any questions, contact the school or make an appointment to see your child's teacher or principal.

You can support your child's learning (*School Act, Section 16.2*) **by:**

- working in partnership with school staff;
- providing a quiet place for your child to study at home;
- keeping current with your child's progress online through the Power School Portal.
- staying informed and keeping in touch with school staff. This includes reading newsletters and other school materials; and
- participating in parent-teacher conferences.

Teachers will help your child succeed (*School Act, Section 18*) **by:**

- providing programming that is suitable for your child;
- providing many opportunities and different ways for students to show what they know;
- giving students who've missed important assessments and activities the chance to complete the work, as specified in the course outline;
- providing a course outline for all courses that clearly explains what's expected of students and how student work will be graded/marked;
- keeping detailed, accurate notes describing your child's successes and challenges;
- communicating with you regularly about your child's progress and achievement; and providing opportunities for you to be involved in your child's learning.

Students have a responsibility for their own learning (*School Act, Section 12*) **and are expected to:**

- come to school every day and on time;
- finish their assignments, projects and tasks to the best of their ability;
- participate in activities to celebrate learning;
- demonstrate that they are learning; and
- take advantage of chances offered to revise or redo assignments or tests so they can show growth in their knowledge and skills.

Our Communication Plan for Reporting Progress

PowerTeacher Pro Electronic Gradebook:

All teachers will use PowerTeacher Pro to record and communicate student assessments and provide comments to parents/guardians and students. Students and parents can access current marks at any time.

- Schools will provide parents with instructions on the school's website on how to access PowerSchool Parent Portal, view student grades and learning outcomes;
- If you have questions about your child's mark at any time, please contact your child's teacher to discuss.
- If parents/guardians do not have access to technology to view student grades, please contact the school to make arrangements to view your child's grade.
- If you would like assistance in accessing the PowerSchool Parent Portal, please contact us at 780 – 987 - 2204
- Expectations regarding marking/turnaround time:
 - LA & Social – 14 calendar days from due date
 - Math & science – 7 calendar days from due date
- Prior to returning the assignment to the students, the teacher will have entered the marks in PowerSchool
- PowerSchool will be updated within 48 hours for submitted assignments indicating collected, late, missing, absent, incomplete or an excused.

Reporting Periods:

Term One: *Sept 4 – Dec 3, 2018*

Term Two: *Dec 4 – March 19, 2019*

Term Three/Final mark: *March 20 – June 27, 2019*

Formal Reports Issued:

Formal Reports will be communicated electronically through PowerSchool one day after each term. If a student has an ISP (or IPP for Kindergarten students), it will be included as part of the formal report. Paper copies will be made available upon request.

Conferences:

Parent communication is important and parents are always welcome to contact their child's teacher at any time during the school year to discuss their child's progress. Each school will provide a minimum of two separate opportunities per year for their parents to meet with teachers to discuss student achievement and progress. The intention of these conferences is to celebrate growth in learning and set future goals.

Parent- teacher interviews:

- October 18 – 3:15 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.
- February 21 – 3:10 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Parents/Guardians can book appointments by through School Appointments (www.devonrms.schoolappointments.com)

Instructional Support Plan (Gr 1 – 12) and Individualized Program Plan (Kindergarten):

For students who need specialized services and supports, the ISP, or IPP for Kindergarten, is a working document that is developed within the first two months of the school year. The ISP (or IPP) is a record of specific goals for a child. It provides information about accommodations and strategies a child is using to succeed. It is reviewed a minimum of three times per year. The student and the guardian are expected to provide input into the ISP, or IPP for Kindergarten.

The ISP, or IPP for Kindergarten, is updated as students show growth and learning. ISP and IPP co-planning conferences will take place in October.

- ISPs drafts will be completed and sent both electronically and a hard copy to parents on October 11, 2018.
- ISPs will be shared October 18, 2018 and presented to parents on October, 2018.
- A completed signature page will be collected and stored at the school.
- Teacher reviews will coincide with February parent-teacher interviews on February 21, 2019.
- Joint planning and/or transition opportunity will be coordinated for May 23, 2019.

English Language Learners:

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

In addition to student progress reports and/or conferences, teachers may share the student's ESL Proficiency Benchmark. Teachers will inform parents of goals, accommodations or supports provided to students which may be associated with the ESL Proficiency Benchmark.

Grades/Marks and Codes

To decide on your child’s grade/mark at the end of a reporting period, teachers use evidence of what your child has learned and their professional judgment. All marks are cumulative.

When percentages are used, 47.5 and up will be rounded to 50 as a final grade only.

At Riverview Middle School we use the following Grading Scale(s):

2018-2019 Grade Scales:

Grades 4-6 Grading Scales		
Elementary Core Courses Grades 4-6 core courses grading scale (ELA, FLA, Math, Science and Social)		
Core courses (ELA, FLA, Math, Science, Social) use % (can include letter scale for formative assessment only) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage grades will be given for summative assessment in all core courses (0% - 100%) Teachers can choose to use percentages, checkmarks and/or the NON-Core scale for FORMATIVE assessments as these do not count in final grades. 		
Elementary Non-core Courses Gr 4 - 6 for all non-core courses and Formative assessment grading scale		
All other courses (Fine Arts, Second Languages, Health, PE and CTF) use Grades 4-6 Letter Scale		
Scale Label	Scale	Description
EXP	Exemplary	Achievement is exemplary and consistently meets grade level outcomes. Student independently demonstrates in-depth understanding.
PRF	Proficient	Achievement consistently meets grade level outcomes. Student consistently demonstrates achievement independently.
ACQ	Acquiring	Achievement inconsistently meets grade level outcomes. Student requires support in some areas.
BEG	Beginning	Achievement does not yet meet grade level outcomes. Student requires ongoing support.
INS	Insufficient	Insufficient evidence to assess.

Grades 7-9 Grading Scales		
Junior High Core Outcomes Junior High Core courses grading scale		
Core (ELA, FLA, Math, Science, Social, PE) use % (can include Junior High non-Core Outcomes Letter Scale for formative assessment only) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage grades will be given for summative assessment in all core courses (0% - 100%) Teachers can choose to use percentages, checkmarks and/or the NON-Core scale for FORMATIVE assessments as these do not count in final grades. 		
Junior High Non-Core Outcomes Scale Grades 7-9 Grading Scale for <i>Non-Core</i> subjects		
All other courses (Fine Arts/Options, Second Languages, Health, and CTF) use Junior High non-Core Outcomes Letter Scale		
Scale Label	Scale	Description
E	Exemplary	Exemplary and consistent achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows in-depth understanding and achieves outcomes independently.
P	Proficient	Skillful and consistent achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows substantial understanding with occasional support.
S	Satisfactory	Basic and/or inconsistent achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows adequate understanding with some support needed
L	Limited	Partial achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows inaccurate understanding and ongoing support is needed.
I	Insufficient	Insufficient evidence to assess.

Missing or Incomplete Student Work:

Principals will ensure that teachers communicate with parents/guardians promptly and regularly about missing or incomplete student work. Teachers will indicate “**Missing**” assignments on PowerSchool and enter a grade of “0”.

When your child has missing or incomplete work, we will also do **one or more** of the following:

- provide student with additional time to complete the assignment
- assign an alternative assignment
- assign student to complete the activity at lunchtime or after school
- contact student’s parent/guardian by email or phone
- meet with parents/guardian, teachers, students and administration to emphasize consequences if work is not completed
- create a behavioural contract between the student and the teacher
- Scheduled Drop in support (i.e. by appointment with teacher)

If your child is away from school for an extended period of time, other than vacation, please contact their teacher/administrator. As partners in your child's learning, we can work together to design a plan that best meets your child's needs including homework, alternate assignments or other strategies that will support them through their course. Homework can be requested through the school office or individual teachers for extended illnesses. As well, students can access RMS Homework Calendar to stay up-to-date with assignments, homework, and tests

Vacations:

It is the expectation that students will attend school on scheduled school days and take holidays according to the school year calendar. In the event that parents choose to take their child out of school at times other than school holidays, **teachers will not provide work for that time**. Any missed work or tests will be made up when the student returns, at the teacher's discretion.

Types of Assessment:

Student assessment relies on both assessment for learning (formative) and assessment of learning (summative). While it is crucial that students' work, abilities and progress be tracked and assessed throughout the entire learning process, it is also important that teachers have evidence of what the students have learned during that process.

Formative Assessment:

Formative assessment provides an ongoing exchange of information between students and teachers about student progress, but it does not provide marks/grades. It is also referred to as "assessment for learning" as it is intended for the student and teacher to know what the student's strengths are and where they can still improve. Many of these activities help students increase what they know and practice their skills. Teachers also use this information to adjust their teaching, give your child feedback to help them improve and prepare your child for summative assessment.

Summative Assessments:

Summative assessment is the evidence used to determine grades/marks and future directions for students. This is also known as assessment of learning. Your child will have many opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of learning outcomes and receive grades/marks for their work. These summative assessments are evidence of student learning and come in many forms; assignments, performance tasks, projects, performances, quizzes, tests, videos, etc. Using their judgment as professionals, teachers make decisions and give grades/marks to your child. They base these decisions on what they've seen your child do (observations), discussions they've had with your child (conversations) and the work your child has completed (products).

Additional Mark Codes and definitions:

In addition to the marks from the grade scale, the following mark codes may be used within PowerTeacher Pro for individual assignments.

<i>Other Icons</i>		
Icon	Label	Description
	Missing	Assignment was not handed in. Please contact your teacher to discuss.
	Collected	Work has been collected but no mark will be assigned (often used for formative assessment).
	Late	Assignment is late or was handed in late. Please contact your teacher to discuss.
	Incomplete	Assignment is not complete. Please contact your teacher to discuss.
	Exempt	Student is exempt from this assignment.
	Absent	Student was absent. Please contact your teacher to discuss.
	Comment	Click the icon to read a comment on this assignment from the teacher.
	Excluded	This assignment is not required from this student.
ISP	ISP	The student has an Instructional Support Plan.
	Has Description	Click the icon to see the description of the assignment.
	Outcomes/Standards	Click the icon to see the learning outcomes assessed by this assignment.

How We Determine Student Grades/Marks

Course Outlines:

Teachers will provide a course outline to all students and parents/guardians within the first two days of the course. This will highlight the topics and units that students will be learning and explain how student grades are determined for the course. Please contact your child's teacher(s) if you do not receive one.

Reluctant Zeroes:

Students are expected to take ownership of their own learning. If they fail to complete a daily task or assignment, they must talk to their teacher about catching up on the assignment. If students do not take the opportunity to complete the assignment, they may receive a zero.

Parameters:

1. A reluctant zero policy will apply to daily tasks and assignments. Major projects and evaluations are expected to be completed by all students in a timely manner. Parent and grade advisor communication will be utilized for students who do not complete major evaluative tasks that greatly affect their marks.
2. Students can access their marks through PowerSchool or printouts from their teacher to keep track of their incomplete assignments.
3. Deadline extensions are at the discretion of the teacher but may not extend beyond the current term.
4. Teachers will consider the reasons for absences before awarding a zero. Excused absences may be considered as a reason to take in work beyond a scheduled due date.
5. If a teacher feels that a student is overusing the reluctant zero policy, he/she will contact a parent to discuss work ethic and homework habits of the student.
6. If a teacher determines that a student is abusing the policy, the privilege can be rescinded by the teacher.

A reluctant zero will not be given until at least two school days have passed from the due date; at which time, the assessment can be returned or graded with the class.

Academic Integrity:

Cheating is not acceptable. This includes plagiarism (copying someone else's work and passing it off as your own), copying, taking work from a source without citing the source (including electronic sources), stealing tests or assignments and getting answers for a test or assignment in advance. Cheating also includes giving answers or work to others to claim as their own. If your child is suspected of plagiarism or cheating, the teacher will have a conference with them and make contact with their parents.

Grades/Marks Appeal Process:

To appeal a mark (assignment, test or final mark), students/parents/guardians are encouraged to talk to the teacher within 10 school days of receiving the grade. If they can't resolve the appeal with the teacher, they should contact the principal who will make the final decision. The principal's decision is final.

Exams

Include all exam dates: ***Please do not book family vacations during this time.***

Midterms: Jan 22 – 31, 2019

Finals: Part A of LA PATs 6 & - May 9, 2019

PATS- June 20 – 26, 2019

Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs):

Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs) measure how well students are learning what they are expected to learn. Results are shared publicly to show how Alberta students are doing, compared to provincial standards. Results from PATs help schools, school authorities and the province monitor and improve student learning.

Students in Grades 6 and 9 in English and French language arts, math, science and social studies write PATs. The PATs will be administered:

Part A for LA will be on May 9, 2019 and the remaining PATs will be from June 20 – 26, 2019.

While PATs are an important part of determining student growth and achievement, they address only those learning outcomes that can be readily assessed by a paper-and-pencil test. The clearest picture of students' growth and development is gained when a wide variety of assessment information is considered. The achievement tests provide part of the picture.

How do PAT scores affect student marks?

Student final marks will be determined by the classroom teacher and approved by the principal. The weightings and grade calculations will be consistent with what was shared with parents and students prior to the beginning of the course on the course outline.

In Grade 6, the final mark may include the PAT and/or a teacher developed final exam at the discretion of the principal.

In Grade 9, the final exam category will be weighted between 10% and 20% of the student's final mark in English and French Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies. The final exam category may include the PAT and/or a teacher developed final exam at the discretion of the principal.

The Alberta government requires that we report the raw scores from Grade 6 and 9 PATs. Unofficial results will be reported on the final formal report in June. Official results will be available when released from Alberta Education according to their timeline.