

## Interim Guide on Student Assessment

### Introduction

The Interim Guide on Student Assessment outlines how Yukon used to do assessment, how B.C. is doing assessment, the changes we proposed and the interim assessment guidelines Yukon schools will follow in 2017-2019.

These changes will begin in the 2017/18 school year. This guide provides options for schools so that they have some flexibility in how they transition into the new changes to assessment through the 2017/18 and 2018/19 school years. Principals will discuss with their staff and Schools Councils and decide on their school's transition plan.

To support school staff in these changes to assessment, we are developing a resource and professional learning tool called *Communicating Student Learning*. It is an integrated resource with professional development material and information on how to follow the interim reporting guidelines. [A draft PDF of this resource](#) is being posted on the Learning Branch website this week and it will be finalized and made available as an interactive iBook for staff in the fall. The draft PDF includes sample report card formats for your information.

We will gather feedback again in spring 2018 through school staff and School Councils. We encourage students, parents and partners to share their experiences and thoughts on the changes to their School Councils so we can collect them at this time.

### Summary of feedback on assessment changes

The assessment survey was completed by 688 respondents:

- 477 parents or guardians of students in Yukon public schools
- 128 other school community members
- 33 students
- 50 educators

688 is a low response rate, which means the results do not represent any majority opinions in school communities or among staff. The results tell us about how some students, teachers, parents and community members feel.

We looked at the survey results as well as the feedback we heard from partners in meetings in deciding which changes to make to student assessment.

In this summary, you will see a table of how we used to assess students, how B.C. is assessing its students under the new curriculum, what we proposed to change and lastly, what we will change. We have also provided some information below each table about how we came to these decisions.

<b>INFORMAL REPORTING</b>	Old practice in Yukon	Current practice in B.C.	Proposed practice in Yukon	<b>2017-2019 interim practice in Yukon</b>
<b>Gathering and using evidence of learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must provide parents with a minimum of two informal reports each school year (face-to-face discussions or over the telephone, written reports, or reviews of school work, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommends schools provide parents with 2-5 informal reports per year with option of using portfolios of student work</li> <li>Collect evidence of student learning (for informal reports and to report on student's development of core competencies)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would provide parents with 2-5 informal reports per year with option of using portfolios of student work</li> <li>Collect evidence of student learning (for informal reports and to help students learn how to self-assess on the core competencies)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Schools will provide parents with at least two informal reports per year or semester with option of using portfolios of student work</b></li> <li><b>Teachers will collect evidence of student learning (for informal reports and to help students learn how to assess their own learning progress on the core competencies)</b></li> </ul>

<p><b>Parent and Student Conferences</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers should meet with parents at least once per school year to discuss their children's progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings with parents is one of several options for informal reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers must meet with parents at least once per school year to discuss their children's progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Teachers must offer the opportunity for parents to meet face-to-face at least once per school year or semester to discuss their children's progress with examples of student work</b></li> </ul>
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**Feedback results and decision:**

The survey results told us that some parents (63%) and community members (58%) were interested in more informal reports, samples of student work (75%; 58%) and parent-teacher meetings (81%, 74%). We know that face-to-face meetings are important for building relationships in schools, especially with Yukon First Nations. We know we need to provide flexibility for schools to shift to providing more informal reports to better support student learning over the next two years. Part of the new curriculum includes teaching students how to think about and assess their learning and progress, including how they are meeting the standards in each grade for key skills like critical thinking, communication and personal-social responsibility.

After reviewing and considering the survey results, feedback from partner meetings, and the research and recommendations, the Education Assessment Committee recommended that:

- Yukon schools follow the interim guide on student assessment for the next two years and continue to provide six reports each school year, as per current practice, with more of these becoming informal reports.
- Each school works with its School Council and school community to help them understand informal reports and how they support learning.
- Teachers be required to offer the opportunity for families to meet face-to-face at least once per year with the teacher to discuss their child's progress and see samples of their child's work.
- Teachers are provided with more training at Summer Academy and over the next two years on informal reporting, student self-assessment, and how to assess the core competencies.

These changes to informal reporting will help teachers, students and parents to better understand how the student is learning. Informal reports show examples of student work and provide ongoing feedback about a student's progress during the year to help them understand where they need to go.

FORMAL REPORTING	Old practice in Yukon	Current practice in B.C.	Proposed practice in Yukon	2017-2019 interim practice in Yukon
<p><b>Calculating Student Grades</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Averaging marks, which over the full term may not provide a true picture of a student's overall performance and progress in achieving the learning standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Varies because it is decided by each school district</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focuses on most recent and consistent marks instead of averaging all class marks</li> <li>Give separate, informal reports for homework, attendance, behaviour, etc. rather than marks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Report cards will be based on most recent and consistent scores to best reflect a student's current understanding and their progress on the new learning standards, instead of averaging all class work over the reporting period</b></li> <li><b>Information on work habits (homework, attendance, behaviour, etc.) may be provided through informal reports and on report cards, but are not part of marks</b></li> </ul>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Reporting Student Grades</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades K-3: no letter grades</li> <li>• Grades 4-9: must provide letter grades to parents</li> <li>• Grades 10-12: must provide letter grades and percent scores to parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades K-3: No letter grades</li> <li>• Grades 4-9: Decided by each school district</li> <li>• If performance reports are used letter grades must be provided to parents when they request them</li> <li>• Grades 10-12: must provide letter grades and percent scores to parents</li> </ul> <p>Requires that all final report cards include student's self-assessment on their core competencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades K-3: No letter grades</li> <li>• Grades 4-9: Performance reports on skills development (e.g. minimally meeting, fully meeting, exceeding) provided to parents</li> </ul> <p>No letter grades. Schools are required to provide parents with a chart that demonstrates the letter grades that correspond with the performance report descriptions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades 10-12: must provide letter grades and percent scores to parents</li> <li>• All final report cards include student's self-assessment on their core competencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Grades K-3: No letter grades. Performance descriptions on report cards (subjects, learning standards and core competencies), e.g. Not Yet Meeting (only Grade 1-3 and not K reports), Approaching Expectations, Meeting Expectations, Exceeding Expectations</b></li> <li>• <b>Grades 4-9: Performance descriptions on report cards (subjects, learning standards and core competencies), e.g. Not Yet Meeting, Approaching Expectations, Meeting Expectations, Exceeding Expectations</b></li> </ul> <p><b>No letter grades. Schools will provide parents with a chart that shows the letter grade that matches the new performance descriptions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Grades 10-12: must provide letter grades and</b></li> </ul>
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				<p><b>percent scores for report cards and transcripts for post-secondary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>All grades: students learn to self-assess their core competencies and their self-assessment is included on their final report cards</b></li> </ul>
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**Feedback results and decision:**

The survey results told us that some parents and school community members (46%; 44%) agreed that the most recent and consistent marks should be used to determine grades instead of averaging marks and some weren't sure (14%; 18%). Some parents found letter grades to be very helpful (55%) and some found comments and other feedback very helpful (71%). Some parents strongly disagreed with the recommendation to only use letter grades and percent scores for Grade 10-12 report cards (31%) and some parents and community members agreed with this change or were neutral (49%; 48%).

To assess student progress, teachers and students gather evidence of learning from different projects and work. The teacher then provides a summary and representation of the student's achievement and progress, which can be a letter grade, numeric scale, percent score, description, etc. We want students to understand where they are in their learning and where they need to go, to keep them motivated in their learning when they face challenges. We know from research that when we use letter grades, student learning is undermined (Kohn, 2011). Using performance descriptions helps students and parents to see what specific skills a student needs to work on and what skills they have developed well. Letter grades only reflect their achievement, not their progress, and report cards need to show how students are developing their skills over time.

After reviewing and considering the survey results, feedback from partner meetings, and the research and recommendations, the Education Assessment Committee recommended that:

- Schools provide more information to families about new assessment methods, including providing a table that shows how the new performance descriptions match up with letter marks and by providing sample report cards in September 2017 for parents to see what the new report cards will look like.
- Teachers be provided with relevant training at Summer Academy and over the next two years on the transition to the new assessment guidelines, such as using GradeBook, assessment of learning skills or competencies using performance scales, etc.

REPORTING GUIDELINES	Old practice in Yukon	Current practice in B.C.	Proposed practice in Yukon	2017-2019 interim practice in Yukon
<p><b>Communicating with Parents</b></p> <p><b>(Reporting Guidelines)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report by subject area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some B.C. schools still report by subject area. Others report using B.C.'s revised guidelines as outlined below:</li> <li>• Reporting about student progress is ongoing throughout the year.</li> <li>• Communications with parents shall be made at least 5 times during the year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Yukon schools should report by curricular outcomes and learning standards by the end of the 2018/2019 school year.</li> <li>• Principals will discuss feedback from this survey and options with their staff and then decide whether to introduce the "Communicating Student Learning" guidelines in the 2017/18 school year or the 2018/19 school year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>To support the transition to these changes, some Yukon schools will choose to report by subject area and some will choose to report by learning standards over the next two school years, choosing from Option 1 or 2 in the below table.</b></li> <li>• <b>By September 2019, all Yukon schools will report by learning standards.</b></li> </ul>

		A final written summative report provided at the end of the school year.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The interim assessment guide for schools, “Communicating Student Learning” identifies how schools will determine how to provide the 2-5 informal reports each year and how to share this plan with their school community.</b></li> </ul>
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**Feedback results and decision:**

The survey results told us that some parents and community members felt the following information was very important: where their child needs improvement, where they have shown growth, their work ethic and ideas on how to support their learning. We know schools need some time to transition to the new assessment methods as they start reporting by the learning standards of the new curriculum, rather than just by subject area. Teachers will need to outline the learning standards required in each lesson or activity and then report on the student’s performance and progress. The interim guide will help schools to transition. In 2017/18 and 2018/19, schools will use either Option 1 or Option 2 below and by 2019/2020, all Yukon schools will follow Option 1.

After reviewing and considering the survey results, feedback from partner meetings, and the research and recommendations, the Education Assessment Committee recommended that:

- Principals decide which of the two reporting options outlined in the interim assessment guide that their school will follow each year, in collaboration with their school community.
- Teachers be provided with relevant training at Summer Academy and over the next two years on formal and informal reporting practices.
- The Department of Education conduct a second round of feedback with school staff and through School Councils in the spring of 2018.



**Interim  
guidelines for  
student  
assessment**

**Option 1: Report by learning standards**

**Option 2: Report by subject areas**

**Frequency and  
Types of Reports**

As per current practice, communication with parents shall be made **six** times during the year.

A total of **six** informal and formal reports consisting of:

A) **At least 1 final written report card (1)**, to be provided at the end of the learning cycle – terms and/or school year (by learning standards).

*Note: Teachers must still provide percent scores and letter grades on final report cards for students in Grades 10-12.*

B) **Up to 5 informal reports** (one should be a conference)

- **1** written informal report on learning standards;
- **1** in-person meeting (either Parent/ Teacher/ Student interview, parent/teacher conference, or student-led conference), with samples of student work to show evidence of learning; and
- **3** of any of the following:
  - i. digital or paper portfolio of student work;
  - ii. phone call;
  - iii. electronic communication;

As per current practice, communication with parents shall be made **six** times during the year.

A total of **six** informal and formal reports consisting of:

a) **3-4 report cards (as was done in previous years)**, one of which shall be provided at the end of the learning cycle - terms and/or school year (by subject).

b) **2 informal reports** (e.g. mid-terms and one should be a conference)

iv. meeting or another means of communication appropriate to y school community.

**Letter Grades**

Kindergarten to Grade 3: reports describe student performance and progress for learning standards; no letter grades.

Grades 4 and 9: reports describe student performance and progress for learning standards; no letter grades. Schools provide students and parents with a chart that shows the letter grades that match the performance report descriptions.

Grades 10-12: final report cards continue to provide percent scores and/or letter grades.

Kindergarten to Grade 3: reports describe student performance and progress in subject areas; no letter grades.

Grades 4 and 9: reports describe student performance and progress in subject areas; no letter grades. Schools provide students and parents with a chart that shows the letter grades that match the performance report descriptions.

Grades 10-12: final report cards continue to provide percent scores and/or letter grades.

**Reporting on the Core Competencies**

Students learn how to assess themselves and their learning progress on the core competencies each year. The final report card includes the student's self-assessment of the Core Competencies (Communication, Thinking, and Personal and Social), completed with the support and guidance of the teacher when needed or appropriate.

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**Final Report Cards**

A final report card shall be provided at the end of the term and/or school year.

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