

# HIGH PRAIRIE SCHOOL DIVISION STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT HANDBOOK



## Mission

To inspire, lead, and empower success through accountability and resilience, creating a culture of lifelong learning.

## Vision

High Prairie School Division will inspire students to learn, lead, and succeed in an ever-changing world.

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[hpsd.ca](http://hpsd.ca)

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# FOREWORD

High Prairie School Division recognizes the importance of a strong partnership among students, teachers, parents/guardians, and school administration. One critical component of student achievement is how it is reported.

This assessment guide will help you understand:

- Responsibilities of teachers, students, parents/guardians, and school administration
- How we will tell you about your child's progress and learning
- How we assign grades/marks to your child
- How your child is assessed
- Steps we take if your child's work is missing or not finished

High Prairie School Division would like to thank the following staff whose many contributions have made this document both meaningful and articulated in a way that reflects the values of our students, families, teachers, and staff; our sincere appreciation and thank you to our Report Card and Assessment Committee:

- |                   |                      |                    |
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| - Amanda Norman   | - Kamryn Schmidt     | - Lyndsay Fleming  |
| - Angie Uhrig-Dow | - Karen Dana         | - Monique Dubrule  |
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# SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

As a parent and guardian, you are your child's first teacher. We know that understanding how your child is doing in school is important to you. We view you as a partner in your child's education and we would like to highlight some things that you can do to support your child's learning and achievement:

You can support your child's learning by (**Education Act, Section 32**):

- 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 EDSBY Portal
- Staying informed and staying connected with school staff. This includes reading the monthly school newsletter and other school materials and
- Participating in Parent-Teacher interviews regardless of what grade your child is in.

Teachers will help your child succeed by (**Education Act, Section 196**):

- Providing programming that is suitable for your child
- Providing many opportunities and diverse ways for students to show what they know
- Keeping detailed accurate records 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 by (**Education Act, Section 31**):

- Coming to school every day and to be on time
- Finishing their assignments, projects and tasks to the best of their ability
- Participating in activities that show or demonstrate their learning and
- Demonstrating that they are learning.

All of these responsibilities were outlined in your

registration package (new families). Existing families who did not see the Family Commitment Statement that is now part of the registration package, please click [HERE](#) to read our Family Commitment Statement.

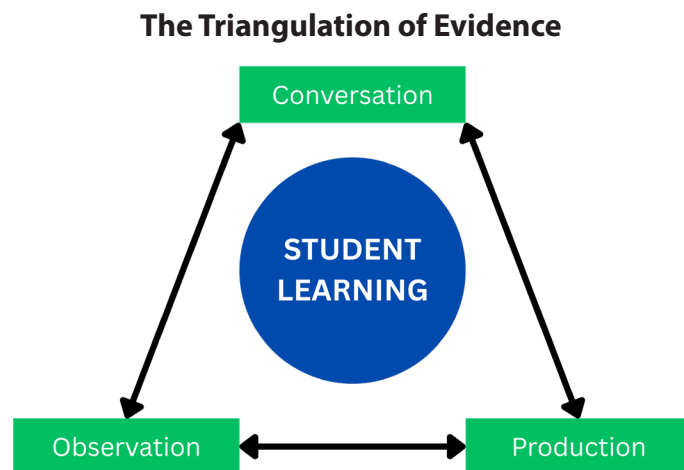
<https://www.hpsd.ca/documents/b294c77f-35f6-4d32-a6e5-26fea4cbecca/Family%20Commitment%20Statement.pdf>

# WHAT IS ASSESSMENT?

In this guide, we use the terms assessment and evaluation to describe what students have learned and how they have learned it. Assessment is not just about tests and grades/marks, it is also a judgment made by the teacher on how your child has progressed in their mastery of the curriculum.

Student assessment is ongoing and cumulative. Teachers gather information on what students know based on the Alberta Program of Studies (the curriculum) and, when applicable, the Individual Support Plan (ISP).

To determine a student's current level of achievement in relation to the curriculum, teachers use a variety of tools. Conversations, observations, and student work (products) are just some of the ways teachers identify students' strengths and where they need extra support. The following diagram shows how teachers assess and shows what "the triangulation of evidence" is in assessment:



There are two main forms of assessment - Summative and Formative. Summative assessments are things such as tests, quizzes, written reports, etc and formative assessments can be conversations, observations, exit slips, student conferencing, etc.

**Formative assessment** provides an ongoing exchange of information between students and teachers about student progress but it does not provide marks or grades. It is also known as "assessment for learning" as it is intended for

the student and the teacher to know what the student's strengths are and where they still can improve. Teachers use this information to adjust their teaching so they give your child feedback to help them prepare and improve for summative assessments.

**Summative assessment** is the evidence used to determine grades/marks and future next steps for students. This is 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. Using their professional judgement, teachers make decisions and award grades/marks to your child based on their performance. They base these decisions on what they have seen your child do (observations), discussions they have had with your child (conversations) and the work your child has completed (products).

# SCREENING ASSESSMENTS

At HPSD, all schools administer universal screening assessments for reading, writing, and math at the beginning of the year to help teachers identify those students who may be at risk for not meeting grade-level benchmarks in Literacy and Numeracy.

The goal is to support success for every student. Screening assessments help teachers check for indicators that a child may have some gaps in their learning and identify interventions that will help to reduce these gaps, so students may be more successful.

Reading screeners and Benchmark Assessments for grades K-3 consists of three short assessments. Grade 4-12 students read short excerpts and answer questions based on their comprehension. The writing screener for grades 1-12 has students write a short written response on a given prompt. The math screener for K-3 is a shorter assessment, whereas the screener for students in grades

4-10 takes a bit longer. Kindergarten teachers use a screener that assesses a child's readiness skills. These screeners may or may not be used in determining grades or marks.

In Kindergarten, Teachers use the EYE-TA screener to assess the universal, targeted, and individual areas of growth and strengths of children as they enter kindergarten and as a tool to identify children who may require specialized services and supports.

Teachers use this information to help plan their instruction (including lesson planning and grouping of students) and determine which interventions are best for each student. Teachers will re-administer these screeners at various points throughout the year to verify the effectiveness of the interventions being implemented.

Administration of Screening Assessments:

HIGH PRAIRIE SCHOOL DIVISION SCREENING ASSESSMENT PLAN			
GRADES	SEPTEMBER	JANUARY/FEBRUARY	APRIL/MAY
<b>K-3</b>	English/French Reading English/French Writing English/French Math	English/French Reading English/French Writing English/French Math	English/French Reading English/French Writing English/French Math
<b>4-6</b>	English Reading English/French Writing English Math	At the teachers' discretion for students who may be struggling or may need enrichment.	English Reading English/French Writing English Math
<b>7-12</b>	English Reading English/French Writing English Math	At the teachers' discretion for students who may be struggling or may need enrichment.	English Reading English/French Writing English Math

# COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

## Course Outlines

Teachers in all grades will provide a curriculum newsletter (grades 1 to 6) and course outlines (grades 7 to 12) to all students and parents/guardians within the first two days of the course starting. This outline will highlight the topics and units that students will be learning and it will explain how student grades/marks are determined for the course. Please contact your child's teacher if you did not receive a course outline for one of your child's subject areas.

## Edsby Electronic Gradebook

All teachers will use the Edsby Electronic Gradebook to record and communicate student assessments and provide comments to parents/guardians and students. Students and parents/guardians can access current grades/marks at any time.

Please note the following items:

- Teachers will ensure that the electronic markbook is current and up to date. Teachers will update and add marks at a minimum of every two weeks in all core subject areas. Option courses may be at lesser frequency, however minimally, option classes will be updated every 3 weeks.
- Schools will provide parents/guardians with instructions on how to access Edsby Parent Portal on the school's website to view student grades/marks.
- If you have questions about your child's grades/mark at any time, please contact your child's teacher and/or school to discuss.
- If parents/guardians do not have technology to view student grades, please contact your school to make arrangements to view your child's grade/mark.

## Reporting Periods

In Kindergarten through grade 9, we have one continual term during the school year with two formal report cards which are printed and sent home at the end of January and on the last day of

school in June.

High school grades 10-12 are semestered with two terms per semester. Like above, report cards will be printed and sent home at the end of January and on the last day of school in June.

Parents are encouraged to log into the Edsby Parent and Student Portal often throughout the semester and the year. Current grades, achievements, and teacher comments can be viewed through this domain. Should you have questions or concerns regarding a grade/mark or a comment, you are kindly asked to contact the teacher directly for assistance.

## Formal Reports Issued

Formal report cards will be issued and shared with parents/guardians via an email notification and a paper copy sent home. Please ensure your mailing address is current at the school main office.

## Specialized Reporting

For students who need special accommodations, supports and services, an Individual Support Plan (ISP) and a Positive Behaviour Support Plan (PBSP), both are working documents that are developed within the first two months of the student starting school. The ISP is a record of specific goals for a student. The PBSP focuses on proactive strategies to support challenging behaviours. Both provide information about accommodations and strategies a child is using to succeed.

If a student has an ISP or PBSP, it will be created with parent and student input. The ISP or PBSP will be formally reviewed a minimum of three times a year, once by the end of November, mid March, and by the end of May. Updates and changes to such documents may be made at any time of the year based on student needs and growth. If updates or changes have been made, parents will be notified and asked to review and sign the document for approval. Paper copies will be sent home for parents/guardians.

The ISP is updated as students show growth and learning.

- ISP co-planning conference will be initiated in September for identified students
- Teachers will meet with parents/guardians to sign the document a minimum of 3 times per year as mandated by Alberta Education. Signing may be electronic.
- The document is intended to be changed and updated regularly as goals are met and new goals and strategies are required
- A copy of the document will be stored digitally
- A parent/guardian will be provided a copy at each review time and may request a copy of the document at any time

In Kindergarten, Teachers use the EYE-TA screener to assess the universal, targeted and individual areas of growth and strengths of children as they enter kindergarten and as a tool to identify children who may require specialized services and supports.

### **Student and Parent/Guardian - Teacher Conferences**

Parent communication is important and parents/guardians are always welcome to contact their teacher at any time during the school year to discuss their child's progress. Each school will provide at least two opportunities per year for their parents/guardians 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.

During our conferences, parents will be provided with the opportunity to meet in person with their child's teacher(s). Each teacher will set up their own communication schedule and times based on their availability. Information regarding each teacher's schedule will be sent directly to parents a week prior to the event.

### **English as an Additional Language Learners (EAL)**

For students learning English, the EAL Proficiency Benchmarks are used to help determine a student's proficiency in English and to monitor their language development. It measures a student's ability 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 will share the student's language development using the EAL Proficiency Benchmarks. Teachers will inform parents/guardians of goals, accommodations or supports provided to students which may be associated with the EAL Proficiency Benchmarks.

# GRADES/MARKS (GRADING SCALES) - HOW ARE GRADES DETERMINED?

To determine 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, 48.5 % and up will be

rounded to 50% as a final grade only.

## Grading Scales

In High Prairie School Division, we use the following grading scales:

### KINDERGARTEN GRADING SCALE

LABEL	SCALE	DESCRIPTION
<b>PRO</b>	Proficient	Achievement is proficient and consistently meets grade level outcomes. Student independently demonstrates in-depth knowledge.
<b>SAT</b>	Satisfactory	Achievement generally meets kindergarten outcomes. Student requires support in some areas.
<b>BEG</b>	Beginning	Achievement does not yet meet kindergarten level outcomes. Student requires ongoing support and is acquiring these new skills.
<b>N/A</b>	Not Applicable	Not applicable or unable to assess at this current time.

### GRADES 1 THROUGH 4 GRADING SCALE

LABEL	SCALE	% RANGE	DESCRIPTION
<b>EXP</b>	Exemplary	85% to 100%	Achievement is exemplary and consistently meets grade level outcomes. Student independently demonstrates in-depth knowledge.
<b>PRF</b>	Proficient	70% to 84%	Achievement consistently meets grade level outcomes. Student consistently demonstrates achievement independently.
<b>SAT</b>	Satisfactory	50% to 69%	Achievement generally meets grade level outcomes. Student requires support in some areas.
<b>NMT</b>	Not Meeting	49% or less	Achievement does not yet meet grade level outcomes. Student requires ongoing support.
<b>INS</b>	Insufficient	Mark cannot be determined	Insufficient evidence to assess.
<b>EXM</b>	Exempt	Mark is not used in determining grade	Exempt due to extenuating circumstances.

## GRADES 5 THROUGH 9 CORE COURSES GRADING SCALE

All courses will use % and can include letter scale for formative assessments only

- Percentage grades will be given for summative assessment in all courses (0% to 100%).
- Teachers can choose to use percentages, checkmarks, etc and/or the non-core scale for formative assessments as these do not count in final grades.

## GRADES 5 THROUGH 9 NON-CORE COURSES GRADING SCALE

All other courses (Fine Arts, Second Languages, Phys Ed and Wellness, CTF)

LABEL	SCALE	% RANGE	DESCRIPTION
EXP	Exemplary	85% to 100%	Achievement is exemplary and consistently meets grade level outcomes. Student independently demonstrates in-depth knowledge.
PRF	Proficient	70% to 84%	Achievement consistently meets grade level outcomes. Student consistently demonstrates achievement independently.
SAT	Satisfactory	50% to 69%	Achievement generally meets grade level outcomes. Student requires support in some areas.
NMT	Not Meeting	49% or less	Achievement does not yet meet grade level outcomes. Student requires ongoing support.
INS	Insufficient	Mark cannot be determined	Insufficient evidence to assess.
EXM	Exempt	Mark is not used in determining grade	Exempt due to extenuating circumstances.

## GRADES 10 THROUGH 12 ALL COURSES GRADING SCALE

All courses will use % and can include letter scale for formative assessments only

- Percentage grades will be given for summative assessment in all courses (0% to 100%).
- Teachers can choose to use percentages, checkmarks, etc and/or the non-core scale for formative assessments as these do not count in final grades.

### Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs)

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

Student final marks in grades 6 and 9 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/guardians and students on the course outline at the beginning of the course. In grades 6 and 9, the final course mark may include

the PAT and/or a teacher-developed final exam at the discretion of the principal.

The Government of Alberta requires that we report the raw scores for our grade 6 and 9 PATs. Unofficial results will be reported on the final formal report card in June. Official results will be available when released for Alberta Education according to their timeline.

### Midterms and Final Exams

Students from grade 5 upwards will complete age-appropriate, mid-point assessments. This could include midterm exams, depending upon what grade your child is in. The following chart outlines the maximum weightings for midterms and finals.

**MAXIMUM MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAM WEIGHTING (OF TOTAL COURSE MARK)**

GRADES	MIDTERM	FINAL	DESCRIPTION
5-6	10%	10%	Teachers will determine age and developmentally appropriate assessments for the midpoint of the year (midterm) and for the year-end as well (final). It is the teacher's discretion as to what these assessments will be comprised of and what format they will be used.
7-9	10%	10%	Students will complete age-appropriate, mid-point assessments in January.
10	15%	20%	Students will complete age-appropriate, midterm assessments in either November or April depending on semester course is offered.
11	15%	25%	Students will complete age-appropriate, midterm assessments in either November or April depending on semester course is offered.
12	20%	30%	Students will complete age-appropriate, midterm assessments in either November or April depending on semester course is offered. Diploma exam weighting set by Alberta Education and Childcare.

**Missing or Incomplete work - Grades K to 4:**

Principals will ensure that teachers communicate with parents/guardians promptly and regularly about any missing assignments or incomplete work. When your child has missing or incomplete work, we will do one or more of the following:

- A child may miss one recess to catch up/finish outstanding work or assignments. If a recess is missed, no other recess or lunch break will be taken away that day.
- Design an alternate assignment
- Assign the student to complete the activity at lunch time or after school. If a lunch hour is taken away to provide supervised support, no other recesses or breaks will be taken away during that day.
- Provide targeted tutorials at lunchtime or after school
- Contact student's parents or guardians
- Meet with parents/guardians, teachers, students and administration to emphasize consequences if work is not completed
- Create a behavioral contract between the student and the teacher(s)
- Assign an "NHI" (Not Handed In) code in the

mark book with a mark of 0 on the assignment

**Missing or Incomplete work - Grades 5 to 12:**

School administration will ensure the following process is followed when there is missing or incomplete work for your child in the above-noted grades:

Immediate Intervention (Due Date)

- If an assignment is not submitted, teachers enter "**NHI**" (**Not Handed In**) in the gradebook. This acts as a placeholder that calculates as a 0% to immediately signal the impact on the student's overall grade to parents and the student.
- Teachers will have a documented conversation with the student's parents/guardians in order to go over what work was not handed in, the impending penalty and whether or not the student is required to attend any working sessions/tutorials in order to complete the missing work.

Late Penalties (Days 1-6):

To reflect that "late" is a behaviour separate from "mastery," small deductions may apply while still

allowing the student to demonstrate learning.

- **Minor Deduction(s):** A 5%–10% deduction per day, capped at a maximum of 30%.
- **The “Mercy Rule”:** Late penalties cannot reduce a mark below a passing grade (50%) if the work itself meets curricular outcomes.

#### Permanent Zero

- **Conversion to Zero:** If the work remains outstanding after 6 days, or the missed assignment cannot be handed in one week prior to the report card distribution date, the NHI automatically becomes a zero.
- **Professional Judgment:** Teachers retain the right to waive penalties for documented extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness, family emergencies, etc.).

#### **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 the source (including electronic sources and AI - artificial intelligence), stealing tests or assignments and 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 and school administration will meet with the child to discuss the alleged plagiarism. Parents will also be notified and a meeting may be scheduled to discuss the event. The student may be given a chance to redo the assignment which is at the sole discretion of the school principal. Otherwise, an automatic mark of 0% will be assigned to any plagiarized work.

# HOMework

## Purpose and Philosophy

The primary goal of homework is to reinforce classroom learning and develop independent study habits. This guideline provides a framework for consistency across the division while ensuring that homework does not interfere with a student's pursuit of wholesome non-school interests such as family time, physical activity, and rest.

## General Guidelines for All Levels

- **Teacher Autonomy:** The assignment of work for completion is the professional prerogative of the teacher. Teachers may choose not to assign homework if it does not serve a clear academic purpose.
- **Purposeful Design:** Homework should be relevant to the curriculum, require no additional teaching outside the classroom, and be differentiated to meet the unique needs of individual students.
- **No New Learning:** Homework should focus on the practice of previously taught skills or the completion of work not finished in class, rather than introducing new concepts.
- **Vacations:** Students are expected to attend school on scheduled school days and take holidays according to the school year calendar.

If parents/guardians 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.

- **Exclusion Periods:** Homework will not be assigned during scheduled holidays or long weekends to ensure students have time for rest and family.

## Daily Reading Requirement (Grades 1 to 6)

For students in Grades 1 through 6, daily reading is the cornerstone of home study.

- Teachers and parents should encourage children to read from books of their choice or those suggested by the school.
- Even if no formal homework is assigned, students are expected to complete their daily reading and/or their numeracy skill development based on previously taught skills.
- This time is included within the daily time limits listed above.

## Daily Reading Responsibilities

- **Teachers:** Ensure students understand expectations before leaving school and provide

## SPECIFIC GRADE-LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

GRADE LEVEL	DAILY TIME LIMIT	DESCRIPTION
<b>Grades 1 to 3</b>	15 minutes	Must include <b>daily reading</b> . Assignments should be of the form of reading or study type rather than formal "hand-in" exercises. Homework may also focus on Numeracy activities or type of work.
<b>Grades 4 to 6</b>	20 minutes	Must include <b>daily reading</b> . Teachers may occasionally assign small independent projects or research tasks.
<b>Grades 7 to 9</b>	30 to 60 minutes	Total for all subjects combined. This time may include project work, skill practice (e.g., math fluency), or reviewing for assessments.
<b>Grades 10 to 12</b>	60 minutes	Total for all subjects combined. Focus should be on constructive activities like active problem-solving or exam review.

timely feedback on submitted work.

- Students: Use an agenda or digital organizer to track assignments and ensure all necessary materials are taken home.
- Parents: Provide a quiet, distraction-free place for study and communicate with the teacher if their child is routinely exceeding the recommended time limits.

# CONCLUDING REMARKS

In summary, the High Prairie School Division's Assessment Handbook establishes a transparent and collaborative framework designed to ensure student success through a balanced approach to evaluation.

By prioritizing the "triangulation of evidence", incorporating observations, conversations, and student products, the division ensures that grades accurately reflect a student's mastery of the Alberta Program of Studies rather than non-academic factors like behaviour or attendance.

Through the consistent use of both formative "assessment for learning" and summative "assessment of learning", teachers are equipped to provide the ongoing feedback and targeted interventions necessary for every student to reach their full potential.

Ultimately, this guide serves as a commitment to maintaining open lines of communication between the school and the home. By outlining clear expectations for grading scales, homework limits, and responsibilities for missing work, the division empowers parents and students to be active participants in the educational journey.

This partnership, supported by regular digital updates via Edsby, teacher conferences, and formal reporting periods, fosters an environment of accountability and academic integrity, ensuring that all graduates are well-prepared for their future endeavours