

Bicentennial School

School Plan for Communicating Student Learning



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**Created by the Bicentennial School staff in accordance
With the Halifax Regional School Board
Policy for Assessing, Evaluating and Reporting
Student Learning.**

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Bicentennial School Plan for Communicating Student Learning 2009-2010

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to provide parents and guardians with information related to the “principles of learning”, to outline the methods by which their children are assessed for learning and to describe how assessments will be communicated.

To set the framework for our annual assessment plan, it is important to include the mission statement for the Halifax Regional School Board, and for Bicentennial School. One cannot consider assessment and progress without the inclusion of the direction in which we are going as a school community.

“The mission of the Halifax Regional School Board is to ensure that each student develops a passion for learning, for achieving personal success, and for building a harmonious, global community.”

Section 1

How Children Learn

At Bicentennial School, we develop our educational programs on the basis of a common set of understandings about how students learn, referred to as the Principles of Learning. These principles are described in the Public Schools Program, sent annually to schools by the Department of Education. Teachers have a responsibility to plan all educational activities with these principles in mind.

Principles of Learning

Students construct knowledge and make it meaningful in terms of their prior knowledge and experiences.

- learning is a process of actively constructing knowledge
- learning is enhanced when it takes place in a social and collaborative environment
- students need to continue to view learning as an integrated whole
- learners must see themselves as capable and successful
- learners have different ways of knowing and representing knowledge
- reflection is an integral part of learning
- several of these principles give direction as to how we assess

Teachers are provided by the Department of Education with curriculum guides that describe what children are expected to know and be able to do at various points along a continuum of learning in each curriculum area. In reading, for example, there are clear descriptions of each stage that a reader goes through (emergent, early, transitional and fluent). For each stage there are outcomes which indicate the knowledge and skills that exemplify that level of ability.

We have been assigned outcomes for most curriculum areas.

Altogether, this set of expectations about what children will learn as a result of their educational experiences is referred to as the Learning Outcomes Framework.

Essential Graduation Learnings (EGL's) are statements describing the knowledge, skills and attitudes of all students graduating from high school.

General Curriculum Outcomes (GCO's) are statements identifying what students are expected to know and be able to do upon completion of study of curriculum in all subject areas.

Key Stage Curriculum Outcomes (KSCO's) describe what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of grades 3, 6, 9, and 12.

Specific Curriculum Outcomes (SCO's) identify the subsets of the Key Stage Outcomes.

Teachers use the expected learning outcomes as the basis for planning and teaching and also as the basis for assessing and evaluating student learning. "Assessment" is the systematic process of gathering information about what children know and can do. Teachers gather information that relates to what children are expected to learn; that is, the expected learning outcomes outlined in the Provincial curriculum guides. Evaluation is the process of analyzing, summarizing, and making decisions based on the information collected. The decisions teachers make in evaluating student learning relate to where the child is on the continuum of learning, and also where the child needs to go next in his/her learning.

As parents/guardians, you can expect to receive information from teachers about your child's learning in relation to the expected learning outcomes.

Section 2

How Teachers Assess and Evaluate Student Learning

In order to provide all children with ample and fair opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the expected learning outcomes, teachers use a variety of different assessment methods. Because children not only learn in different ways (referred to as learning style), but also demonstrate their learning in different ways, teachers use a range of assessment methods.

Gathering information on student learning from several different types of tasks ensures that the teacher has a complete and more accurate picture of what a child knows and can do. This enables not only a clearer communication with students and parent/guardians, but also allows the teacher to plan more effectively for individuals and groups of children.

At Bicentennial School, we use a variety of ways to assess student progress. The following examples represent a range of assessment strategies, methods and tools.

Assessment Strategies

- observation of students
- work samples (collected and dated daily assignments)

- journals (language and math)
- group work (small and large)
- reports (oral or written)
- projects – on various curriculum topics
- quizzes
- tests
- anecdotal records (dated)
- check lists
- portfolio – collections of dated student work
- observation of notebooks and materials
- homework completion
- peer evaluation – students assessing each others work using clear guidelines from teacher
- self evaluation
- assessment of public speaking
- running records
- conferences between student and teacher
- rubrics of various types (A rubric is a guide, usually presented as a chart, which identifies and describes various levels of performance on any given assignment)
- evaluation of graphic/visual representations
- goal setting between teacher/child/parent

Children Requiring Additional Support

The school is committed to supporting the learning of all students. Staff members at Bicentennial School believe in the early identification of students requiring extra support. Staff will provide enrichment to the curriculum for some students who would benefit from extra challenges.

Early identification and timely intervention is the most effective approach in meeting the needs of children. Parents are informed before any interventions takes place.

The school has established a process for identification, assessment and program planning for students with special needs. Classroom teachers, resource teachers, and parents may initiate or assist in identifying students with special needs.

In some cases, when a student is identified as having special needs, a referral is made to the school program planning team.

The program planning team consists of the principal, vice principal, resource teacher, classroom teacher, learning center teacher, parents/family members, guidance, school psychologist, and other specialists as required.

Written permission is required before a formal individual assessment is completed. Parents are informed of the test results.

- An individual program plan (I.P.P.) will be developed for students who cannot meet the general curriculum outcomes, as outlined by the Department of Education.
- For students not requiring an individual program plan, adaptations to the program will be made in order for the student to meet with success. The program planning team will meet

and agree upon the adaptations needed. These adaptations will be reviewed periodically by the team.

- In special circumstances, a student will have a behavioural I.P.P. developed to assist the student in meeting curriculum outcomes.

Review of the School Plan

The school plan for communication of student learning will be reviewed and amended by school administration after consultation with staff, and input from the community by way of the School Advisory Council.

Section 3 **Communication with Parents and Community**

Just as there are many ways student learning can be assessed, there are also many ways that information can be communicated to parents, guardians, students, and other teachers.

For current information regarding curriculum documents, parents can check the Department of Education website <http://www.ednet.ns.ca/>.

Parents who have no home access to computers may visit the public library. The curriculum documents are also available and can be borrowed from our school. Staff members are able to assist with pertinent information concerning the curriculum.

At Bicentennial School, we communicate in the following ways:

- meet the teacher night
- curriculum night
- calendars
- newsletter (school and classroom)
- school information sheet
- primary orientation
- school web page
- parental involvement in special events
- parental visits to class, on request
- communication notebooks
- student daily notebook
- S.A.C.
- special assembly
- phone calls
- conferences (P/T)
- report cards
- portfolios
- education week activities
- performances
- pre and post trip activities
- School Messenger

Procedure for Initiating Communication with the School

During the year, there may be questions and concerns that arise regarding your child's progress. Whenever parents or guardians have a concern, they should address the teacher first.

If a follow up meeting is arranged with the administration, resolution of the matter raised will involve the teacher, even if the teacher is not present at all meetings. The goal is to resolve the issue in a climate of mutual respect while maintaining the dignity of all concerned and keeping in mind the best interest of the child.

Every effort will be made to communicate with parents with special needs.

School Calendar - Communication of Student Learning

The following is a proposed plan for the communication of student learning of Bicentennial School 2009-2010.

Thursday September 28th Meet the Teacher/Curriculum night 6PM TENTATIVE
 Wednesday November 4th Early Dismissal for Parent/Teacher Interviews (1/2 day)
 Thursday November 5th Parent Teacher Interviews 6 – 8 pm
 Friday November 27 Assessment & Evaluation Day P-9 (no classes)
 Friday December 4 Term One Ends P-9
 Monday December 7 Term Two Begins P-9
 Monday – Thursday December 7-10 Report Cards Home P-9
 Monday March 29 Term Three Begins P-9
 Monday – Thursday April 12-15 Report Cards Home P-9
 Wednesday April 21 Early Dismissal for Parent/Teacher Interviews (1/2)
 Thursday April 22nd, Parent Teacher 6 – 8 pm
 Monday June 28 Assessment & Evaluation Day P-12 (no classes)
 Tuesday June 29 Reports go home (last day of school)