



# **Guide to Student Assessment and Achievement 2021-2022**

**Grades K–6**

**Willow Park School**

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Updated: October 18, 2021

## Guide to Student Assessment and Achievement 2021-2022

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:

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

- Schools will provide parents/guardians 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 780-986-8456.
- Generally, students will receive their marks within 2-4 days. Larger assignments will be graded within two weeks.
- Grade books are considered current within two weeks of the assignment due date. All grades are considered up-to-date at the end of each reporting term.
- Marks are posted as the assignments are marked. This will be completed within the two week window.
- Grade books will contain both summative and formative assessments.
  - Formative assessments are typically ongoing, flexible and diagnostic. They include check-ins and assignments that are used to gauge student understanding and where extra instruction may be required.
  - Summative assessments are more formal. They include unit tests and quizzes, projects, etc.

### Reporting Periods:

Term 1: August 30, 2021 - January 17, 2022

Term 2: January 18, 2022 - June 28, 2022

### Formal Reports Issued:

Formal reports will be available on PowerSchool at the end of each reporting period.

If a student has an ISP, it will be included as part of the formal report. Paper copies will be made available upon request.

**Conferences:**

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Parent communication is important and parents/guardians 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/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.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, conferences this year will take place virtually. Teachers will contact parents to set up a time to discuss student learning through Google Meets or by phone.

The dates for these conferences are

- Between November 15 - 26th, 2021
- Between March 14 - 24th, 2022

**Instructional Support Plan (Gr K – 12):**

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For students who need specialized services and supports, the ISP is a working document that is developed within the first two months of the school year. The ISP 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.

The ISP is updated as students show growth and learning. ISP co-planning conferences will take place by the end of October.

- Parents are encouraged to provide input into their child's ISP planning using input forms or other means.
- A copy of the ISPs will be sent home for parents following the planning conference.
- A completed signature page will be collected and stored at the school.
- Reviews will be completed in March and June 2021.

**English Language Learners:**

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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/guardians 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 Willow Park School we use the following Grading Scale(s):

### Grade Scales:

| <b>Grades 1-3 Grading Scale</b><br>Every course uses 1-3 Grading Scale |                     |  |
|--|---------------------|--|
| Scale Label  | Scale               | Description  |
| <b>EXP</b>   | <b>Exemplary</b>    | Achievement is exemplary and consistently meets grade level outcomes. Student independently demonstrates in-depth understanding. |
| <b>PRF</b>   | <b>Proficient</b>   | Achievement consistently meets grade level outcomes. Student consistently demonstrates achievement independently.                |
| <b>ACQ</b>   | <b>Acquiring</b>    | Achievement generally meets grade level outcomes. Student requires support in some areas.  |
| <b>BEG</b>   | <b>Beginning</b>    | Achievement does not yet meet grade level outcomes. Student requires ongoing support.  |
| <b>INS</b>   | <b>Insufficient</b> | Insufficient evidence to assess.   |

| <b>Grades 4-6 Grading Scales</b>   |                     |  |
|--|---------------------|--|
| <b>Elementary Core Courses</b><br>Grades 4-6 core courses grading scale<br>(ELA, Math, Science and Social)   |                     |  |
| Core courses (ELA, Math, Science, Social) use % (can include letter scale for formative assessment only) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage grades will be given for summative assessment in all core courses (0% - 100%)</li> <li>• Teachers can choose to use percentages, checkmarks and/or the NON-Core scale for FORMATIVE assessments as these do not count in final grades.</li> </ul> |                     |  |
| <b>Elementary Non-core Courses</b><br>Gr 4 - 6 for all non-core courses and Formative assessment grading scale   |                     |  |
| All other courses (Fine Arts, Health, PE) use Grades 4-6 Letter Scale  |                     |  |
| <b>Scale Label</b>   | <b>Scale</b>        | <b>Description</b>   |
| <b>EXP</b>   | <b>Exemplary</b>    | Achievement is exemplary and consistently meets grade level outcomes. Student independently demonstrates in-depth understanding. |
| <b>PRF</b>   | <b>Proficient</b>   | Achievement consistently meets grade level outcomes. Student consistently demonstrates achievement independently.                |
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### Missing or Incomplete Student Work:

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Principals will ensure that teachers communicate with parents/guardians promptly and regularly about missing or incomplete student work. When your child has missing or incomplete work, we will 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
- provide targeted tutorials
- contact student's parent/guardian
- 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
- assign an "**incomplete (INC)**" which awards a mark of 0 on the assignment.

When your child has missing or incomplete work, we will make arrangements for your child to complete the work. This may include:

- Teacher/student discussion
- Contact with parent/s guardians
- Drop in support

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 for extended illness, etc. As well, students can access Google Classroom for specific assignments details.

### Vacations:

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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/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 may be made up when the student returns, at the teacher's discretion.

### Types of Assessment:

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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:**

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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:**





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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:**

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

| <b>Other Icons</b>  |              |   |
|---|--------------|---|
| <b>Icon</b>   | <b>Label</b> | <b>Description</b>  |
|  | 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.                       |
| <b>ISP</b>  | 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

### 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. Students may only work to complete tasks in the current reporting period. Once report cards are issued, marks are locked and zeros will be reluctantly awarded.
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.

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.

5. If a teacher determines that a student is abusing the policy, the privilege can be rescinded by the teacher.

### **Academic Integrity:**

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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 classroom teacher and/or administration will contact you to discuss the matter, further work to be done and any consequences for the actions.

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

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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.

### **Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs):**

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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:

Grade 6 PATs:

May 11, 2022: ELA 6, Part A - Writing

June 22, 2022: Science 6

June 23, 2022: ELA 6, Part B - Reading

June 24, 2022: Math 6, Parts A & B

June 27, 2022: Social Studies 6

*Please ensure your child is at school during this time.*

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?**

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Student final marks will be determined by the classroom teacher and approved by the Principal.

In Grade 6, the final mark may include the PAT and/or a teacher developed final exam at the discretion of the Principal. At Willow Park Elementary, we will not be including the PAT as part of a student's final grade.

The Alberta government requires that we report the raw scores from Grade 6 and 9 PATs. Unofficial results will be reported to parents by the classroom teachers. Official results will be available when released from Alberta Education according to their timeline.