



COMMUNICATION OF STUDENT LEARNING

PARENT GUIDE TO REPORT CARDS

AUGUST 2014



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Children Need Champions

Children learn best when the significant adults in their lives – parents, teachers, family and friends – work together to support them.

Report cards are just part of the story

Report cards are a snapshot in time of the much larger story of your child's learning. Through discussions with your child, with teachers and with your school, you will learn much more about your child's individual learning goals, areas of strength, areas for growth and significant achievements. And with your child, you will be able to review examples of his or her learning, often online.

The purpose of the report card, and of all assessment, is to improve student learning. We hope you will celebrate the work your child has done in building the areas of strength identified in the report and partner with your child and the teacher in setting goals and planning strategies for growth as a learner.

What's different about the new reports?

- The new reports are just one part of a larger [Communication of Student Learning](#) strategy that encourages ongoing communication between you, your child, and your child's teacher about your child's progress as a learner.
- Through teacher comments on areas of strength and areas for growth, the report will indicate how your child is developing the essential learning skills and abilities (competencies) required for success in our information rich, and globally-connected world.

21 st Century Learner Competencies	
Ways of Thinking	Critical Thinker – Builds logical connections between ideas Problem Solver – Uses information and knowledge to achieve a solution Innovator – Creates or introduces something new
Ways of Working & Tools for Working	Communicator – Expresses thoughts, ideas, and emotions effectively Collaborator – Builds relationships to achieve common goals Information & Media Literate – Uses technology responsibly to explore and build knowledge Financially & Economically Literate – Understands and evaluates personal and global economic issues
Ways of Living in the World	Self-Directed Learner – Takes ownership of one's learning Globally Aware – Understands a citizen's role in an interconnected world Civically Engaged – Reflects a commitment to democracy, social participation, and advocacy
Strengths/Next Steps in relation to the 21 st Century Competencies:	

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Parent Champions...

- Encourage children to complete homework
- Attend school events and meetings
- Share expertise and knowledge to bring real life experience to the curriculum

- Achievement in academic areas is indicated with an assessment of the student's level of understanding. The student demonstrates higher levels of understanding by applying the learning to increasingly difficult tasks, with increasing levels of independence.

Academic Achievement Reporting Key	
LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING	ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
Mastering (MAS)	Can apply the learning to complex tasks independently.
Advancing (ADV)	Can apply the learning to increasingly difficult tasks with prompts.
Progressing (PRG)	Can apply the learning to moderate tasks with support.
Emerging (EMG)	Can apply the learning to basic tasks with guidance.
Beginning (BEG)	Can apply the learning to simple tasks with direction.
Limited (LIM)	Cannot yet apply the learning to simple tasks. Extensive support required.
IE	Insufficient evidence to accurately assess progress.
NA	Not applicable this term.
IPP	Please see your child's Individual Program Plan.
ELL	Please see your child's English Language Learner Assessment.

- For core academic subjects (language arts, mathematics, social studies and science) each learning objective outlined in the Alberta Program of Study is assessed. This helps you and your child more clearly identify any areas that need attention.

English Language Arts (Literacy)	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Teacher:			
Explores thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences			
Comprehends and responds to a variety of types of texts/media			
Manages ideas and information			
Organizes, presents and revises thoughts and opinions to communicate ideas			

- At least once per year, you will be told if your child is *at*, *above*, or *below* the expected grade level for literacy and numeracy. This assessment will be given in the overall comment section for students in lower grades, and under the English Language Arts (Literacy), and Mathematics (Numeracy) subject areas for higher grades. Strategies for growth will be included in the comments.
- To begin the transition to high school and post-secondary learning for students in Grades 7, 8 and, in some schools, 9, students will receive an overall grade for core subjects expressed as a percentage. They will continue to receive indicators of the level of understanding for the specific learning objectives (learning outcomes) of the Alberta Program of Study.



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Build Bodies, Boost Brains

Research finds that better fitness is linked to significantly higher achievement scores.

Children need at least an hour a day of vigorous physical activity to maintain the kind of aerobic fitness that amplifies their ability to learn.

Science Teacher:	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Demonstrates and applies knowledge and understanding of the concepts			
Uses knowledge to explain, interpret, predict, solve problems and communicate			
Demonstrates skill in using scientific inquiry to explain, interpret or make predictions			
Demonstrates understanding of the connections among science, technology, society			
Percentage:			
Areas of Strength/Areas for Growth/Next Steps			

- The percentage grades assigned in Grades 7 and 8 align with the levels of understanding.

Academic Achievement Reporting Key		
LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING	ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT	RANGE
Mastering (MAS)	Can apply the learning to complex tasks independently.	(90% - 100%)
Advancing (ADV)	Can apply the learning to increasingly difficult tasks with prompts.	(80% - 89%)
Progressing (PRG)	Can apply the learning to moderate tasks with support.	(70% - 79%)
Emerging (EMG)	Can apply the learning to basic tasks with guidance.	(60% - 69%)
Beginning (BEG)	Can apply the learning to simple tasks with direction.	(50% - 59%)
Limited (LIM)	Cannot yet apply the learning to simple tasks. Extensive support required.	(Less than 50%)
IE	Insufficient evidence to accurately assess progress.	
NA	Not applicable this term.	
IPP	Please see your child's Individual Program Plan.	
ELL	Please see your child's English Language Learner Assessment.	

- Finally, the reports will contain comments specific to your child's learning, which outline areas of strength, areas for growth, and the next steps for learning.

How will teachers determine my child's grades?

Throughout the term, teachers will gather examples of your child demonstrating understanding of the learning outlined in the curriculum. These examples may include assignments, exams, presentations, projects, and performances. Teachers also will record observations of your child in class and talk with them about their learning to gather as much information as possible before assigning a grade.

In addition to determining a grade, this process of continuing assessment and feedback helps students adjust learning strategies as they learn and improve their chances of success. It also helps students build awareness of themselves as learners, and become increasingly self-directed.

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As much as possible, this evidence of learning is collected in student portfolios, often digital, so students can share their learning with family and friends.

Surprising Secrets to School Success

- *Praise effort, not ability*
- *Minimize absences*
- *Use TV watching as an opportunity to develop critical thinking skills through discussion*
- *Give kids a daily dose of nature*
- *Fill your home with books (libraries are great!)*
- *Keep your children active*
- *Give your child age-appropriate chores*

How will I know if my child is making the effort?

By reviewing your child's learning regularly, through their portfolio or PowerSchool in the higher grades, you will have a sense of what assignments are being completed and how much effort the child is putting into the work. You should speak to your child's teacher any time you have concerns.

A grade of IE (insufficient evidence) often indicates assignments are not being completed and should prompt a conversation with your child's teacher.

What should I do to support my child?

The best support you give your child is your loving home, healthy meals, a daily dose of nature and plenty of physical activity. After that, your positive, supportive interest in your child's learning also can result in better grades, better attendance, and greater success in completing additional post-secondary education or training.

Consider your child's teacher and school as partners with you in supporting your child's health, wellbeing, and growth as a learner. Stay involved through school activities, attend meetings, and contact your child's teacher any time you have questions. Your strong partnership with the school will provide your child with an integrated team supporting his or her success.

