

Sycamore Lane Elementary School

Communicating Student Learning

2020-2021

Introduction

At Sycamore Lane Elementary School we believe that children are most successful when a collaborative effort exists between all those involved in the education of the child. This collaboration includes teachers, students, and parents/guardians. The following plan for Communicating Student Learning will explain what we do at the school to assess and evaluate your child's learning, and how we will communicate our expectations for learning and achievement.

What and How Children Learn

Our educational programs are based on a common set of understandings about how children learn, referred to as the Principles of Learning (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development). It is our responsibility as teachers to plan culturally relevant learning experiences for our students with these principles in mind. Students construct knowledge and make it meaningful in terms of their prior knowledge and experiences (their culture). 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. The evaluation and assessment of student learning is based on the expected learning outcomes as established by the EECD in collaboration with the other Atlantic Provinces. The outcomes framework tells us what children will learn, while the Principles of Learning tell us how children learn. The province provides teachers 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.

The Essential Graduation Learning (EGLs) describes the knowledge, skills and attitudes expected of all students who graduate from high school.

The General Curriculum Outcomes (GCOs) are statements of what students are expected to know and be able to do upon completion of study in a particular curriculum area.

Key Stage Outcomes (KSOs) are statements of what students should know and be able to do by the end of grades 3, 6 and 9.

Specific Curriculum Outcomes (SCOs) are statements of what students are expected to know and be able to do at a particular grade level, or level of development. Parents/Guardians can learn more about this framework by discussing it with school staff, attending information sessions, or visiting the Nova Scotia Department of Education website. <http://www.ednet.ns.ca>

Methods of Assessing Students Learning

Assessment is the systemic process of gathering information about what children know and can do. Evaluation is the process of analyzing, summarizing and making decisions based on the information collected. The decisions teachers make in evaluating student learning relates to where each child is on the continuum of learning, and also where the child needs to go to next in their learning. We use a

variety of methods in assessing student learning so that we gain an accurate picture of what student know and are able to do. We refer to this a balanced assessment. Children have different learning styles and therefor they demonstrate their learning in different ways. Therefor, teachers use a range of methods recognizing that any one method will suit some students more than others. The following are types of assessment methods that may be used to gather information on student learning.

- **Work Samples** – collected and dated daily assignments
- **Writers Notebooks**
- **Reading Records**
- **Conferencing** – discussion between students and teacher regarding student work and accomplishments
- **Observation Survey** – structured assessment activities giving evidence of child's reading ability
- **Peer/Self Evaluation** – students assessing own, or each other's work using clear guidelines
- **Rubrics** – specific criteria that are set for an activity against which a student's work will be measured
- **Journals** (informal writing)
- **Reports/Projects/Presentations** – formal assignments extended over a period of time demonstrating understanding of a concept of topic
- **Tests/Quizzes** – a time limited written or oral response to teacher questions
- **Observation/Anecdotal Records/Checklist**
- **Portfolios** – a collection of selected work that portrays a student's effort, progress and achievement over a period of time
- **Student Led Conferences** – students demonstrate ownership of their learning and make him/herself accountable to the parent
- **Parent/Teacher Conferences** – the first session in **December** and the second, a progress update in **April**. These meetings with parents/guardians will be conducted remotely by phone or through technology. Students will be evaluated in relation to the expected learning outcomes for that grade level and not in comparison to other students in the class.

The following is Sycamore Lane Elementary School's proposed plan for communicating student learning for the school year **2020-2021**:

September – Curriculum Share/Newsletters/Phone Calls

December – 1st Term Report Cards – virtual Parent/Teacher Conferences

April – 2nd Term Report Cards – virtual Parent/Teacher Conferences

June – 3rd Term Final Progress Reports sent home

Parents are not limited to these scheduled times, but are encouraged to communicate with their child's teacher at other times as the need arises. Communication between home and school is extremely important. Calls and emails sent to staff members will be returned within two business days. Email addresses are listed on the staff directory of our school website <https://sle.hrce.ca/>

Curriculum After 6 Months of Home Learning

While a focus on safety and well-being of students and educators is a priority for September 2020, thoughtful and intentional instruction is needed to ensure the future success of all students. The importance of ongoing learning and assessment cannot be understated after a prolonged period of at-home learning. In response to this reality, foundational learnings will be the focus this school year. This focus, guided by teachers' professional judgment, will provide students with a firm foundation on which to build their learning moving forward. For more information please visit:

<https://curriculum.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/documents/resource-files/supporting%20learning%20in%202020.pdf>

Integrated Curriculum

P-6 is now an integrated curriculum. This is one of the initiatives of the Nova Scotia Action Plan for Education based on the feedback from Nova Scotian parents and teachers. In 2015, the grade P-3 integrated curriculum was implemented and the Grades 4-6 integrated curriculum was implemented in the 2016-2017 school year.

An integrated curriculum develops skills and understandings that overlap across subjects. It enables students to see and experience connections amongst subjects and can connect real-world and relevant learning opportunities to the classroom. Integration supports and better reflects how students typically process information and can foster deeper learning experiences. We use an integrated model where outcomes from one or more subject areas (Health, Information Communication Technology, Science, Social Studies and Visual Arts) are addressed within Language Arts and/or Mathematics for active and interactive learning. The number of outcomes were reduced to focus on essential learning outcomes.

Understanding Your Child's Report Card

The purpose of a report card is to provide a student's parent(s) or guardian(s) with a summary of how well a student understands what is being taught and their level of academic achievement and social development. Report cards should be used in addition to other forms of communication between the home and school such as the parent-teacher meetings, newsletters and e-mails.

Here is what you can expect on your child's report card:

Attendance: Reports the number of days the student has been absent from school. Teachers monitor student attendance daily using PowerSchool and include the information in report cards.

Learner Profile: Reports on the behaviors, social skills and work habits that are important to being a successful learner and is reported with a developmental scale and a comment from the classroom teacher.

Grade Primary Report Card:

- Integrated English/French Language Arts and Integrated Mathematics will report each term with a comment
- Physical Education and Music will only be reported in Terms 2 and 3 using a comment
- While all subjects are taught, assessed and evaluated, Science, Social Studies, Health, Information and Communication Technology, and Visual Arts are not reported on in the report card template directly. Comments on the report card may include those subjects as applicable and will focus on your child's strengths, an area for improvement and a suggestion on ways to support their learning.

Grades 1 to 3 Report Card:

- Integrated English/French Language Arts and Integrated Mathematics will report each term with a comment and a developmental scale:
- Physical Education and Music will only be reported in Terms 2 and 3 using a comment and the developmental scale
- While all subjects are taught, assessed and evaluated, Science, Social Studies, Health, Information and Communication Technology, and Visual Arts are not reported on in the report card template directly. Comments on the report card may include those subjects as applicable and will focus on your child's strengths, an area for improvement and a suggestion on ways to support their learning.

Grades 4 to 6 Report Card:

- English/French Language Arts and Mathematics will be reported in Term 1 using a comment and the developmental scale
- English/French Language Arts and Mathematics will be reported in Terms 2 and 3 using a comment and letter grade
- Physical Education, Music, and Core French will be reported in Terms 2 and 3 using a comment and the developmental scale
- While all subjects are taught, assessed and evaluated, Science, Social Studies, Health, Information and Communication Technology, and Visual Arts are not reported on in the report card template directly. Comments on the report card may include those subjects as applicable and will focus on your child's strengths, an area for improvement and a suggestion on ways to support their learning.

Developmental Scale:**WD** - well developed**ND** - needs development**D** - developing as expected**INS** - insufficient evidence**Letter Grade the Scale:**

A - The student demonstrates achievement with thorough understanding and application of concepts and skills in relation to the expected learning outcomes.

B - The student demonstrates achievement with good understanding and application of concepts and skills in relation to the expected learning outcomes.

C - The student demonstrates achievement with basic understanding and application of concepts and skills in relation to the expected learning outcomes.

D - The student demonstrates achievement with limited understanding and application of concepts and skills in relation to the expected learning outcomes. The student has not met expectations.

Teacher Support Team

The school has established a process for the identification, assessment and program planning for students with special needs. Classroom teachers, resource teachers and parents may initiate and/or assist in identifying students with special needs. A referral may be made to the Teacher Support Team. This team may consist of the principal/vice-principal, resource teacher and classroom teacher and supporting staff members (School based or Board based). Parents are consulted and written permission is required for any formal individual assessment. Parents will be informed of the test results, which may be used, along with other information, in making adaptations to the student's program, or developing an Individual Program Plan. The development and implementation of an Individual Program Plan involves the Program Planning Team, including the parents.

Parent Concern Protocol

Halifax Regional Centre for Education is committed to addressing parent concerns in a manner that is efficient and respectful. If a matter of concern arises pertaining to a student, or an issue within the school, this protocol provides a systematic process intended to respond to their concerns. Parent/guardians are asked to raise the issue first with the teacher. Where the parent is not satisfied with the response, please follow up with the principal or designate. The entire policy is available for viewing at www.hrce.ca.