



## Student Assessment

### Administrative Procedure 3.A.10

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#### **Board Governance Policy Cross Reference:**

- *Assess to Learn – Learn to Assess* – Anne Davies (2004)
  - *Feed Back...Feed Forward: Using Assessment to Boost Literacy Learning* – Anne Davies (2003)
  - *Classroom Assessment and Grading that Work* – Robert Marzano (2006)
  - *Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind* – MECY (2006)
  - *How to Grade For Learning* - Ken O'Connor (2002)
  - *Portfolios: More than just a file folder* – Saskatchewan Professional Development Unit
  - *Student-Involved Classroom Assessment* – Rick Stiggins (2001)
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#### **Legal Reference: Public Schools Act**

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**Date Adopted: June 2007**

**Date Amended: March 2008**

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Evergreen School Division believes that assessment, evaluation and the communication of student achievement and growth are essential to the teaching and learning process. These practices should be carried out in a positive way that supports continuous learning, development and personal growth for students. The ultimate goal of assessment is to help develop independent, lifelong learners who regularly monitor and assess their own progress.

#### **Guiding Principles of Assessment**

1. The primary purpose of assessment is to support learning and to inform instruction.
2. Assessment requires a critical professional skill to plan for assessment, observe student learning, interpret the evidence of learning, and then provide feedback to the learners. Teachers should use assessment information to revise and guide their teaching in order to improve student learning.
3. Assessment practices should recognize all educational achievement, learning styles, and intelligences that involve students in the process, enabling all learners to achieve their best in all learning activities. This includes self-assessment and self-reflection which assists students in determining the next steps in their learning.
4. Assessment promotes the understanding of goal setting where learners understand what it is they are trying to achieve, and have a role in deciding the learning goals and the criteria for assessing their progress.
5. Feedback to students should be descriptive and clear, identifying both areas of strength and improvement, fair and appropriate to the developmental needs of the learner, and be frequent and immediate. Numerous and various opportunities should be provided to students to improve upon their learning.

6. Assessment should foster motivation by building on student success and self-confidence, with its focus on achievement and progress rather than failure. Assessment strategies enhance motivation by providing choice, descriptive feedback, and opportunities for student direction as well as learning from each other.
7. Assessment should be flexible in order to respond to a variety of ideas emerging from observations and discussions about student learning as students' progress through their educational experiences.
8. Assessment must be sensitive and constructive, focusing on the *learning* - the "how" as well as the "what" - rather than the *learner*. Assessment should be ongoing and fluid, involving the teacher and the learner in reflection, dialogue, and decision-making which is central to everyday classroom practice.

Evergreen School Division is committed to the guiding principles of assessment through the implementation of Assessment **OF** Learning, Assessment **FOR** Learning and Assessment **AS** Learning practices. These terms are defined as follows:

**Assessment FOR Learning:** is designed to provide feedback to students to help them advance their learning. It provides teachers with information to modify and differentiate teaching and learning activities. Teachers should also use this information to streamline and target instruction and resources. The instructional decisions that have the greatest impact on student learning are made day to day in the classroom by teachers who are skilled in Assessment *FOR* Learning practices.

**Assessment AS Learning:** is a process of developing and supporting metacognition for students. Assessment *AS* Learning focuses on the role of the student as the critical connector between assessment and learning. It requires that teachers help students develop, practice, and become comfortable with reflection, and with a critical analysis of their own learning. Note: Assessment *AS* Learning is frequently categorized under Assessment *FOR* Learning.

**Assessment OF Learning:** is summative in nature and is used to confirm what students know and can do, to demonstrate whether they have achieved the curriculum outcomes, and, occasionally, to show how they are placed in relation to others. Teachers concentrate on ensuring that they have used assessment to provide accurate and sound statements of students' proficiency, so that the recipients of the information can use the information to make reasonable and defensible decisions.

**Refer to Appendix A: Middle Years and Senior Years Grading Guidelines.**



## **Adaptations and Modifications**

**Adaptation** - The act of making changes in the teaching process, materials or student products to help students achieve the expected learning outcomes.

**Modification** - Altering of the number, essence and content of the curricular outcomes the student is expected to meet in the provincial curriculum.

Given these definitions, when a student requires “adaptations” (for example, they are non-print users), the student is working to achieve all of the curricular outcomes of that subject and/or course. The adaptations can be applied to all or any of the outcomes; used by teachers to instruct and/or assess and by students to demonstrate their learning. Adaptations are not a reduction in expected learning outcomes.

All students are to be evaluated and graded based on their demonstrated achievement of expected learning outcomes. Students who require and receive adaptations are assessed and evaluated on their achievement of the same outcomes as their peers. However, the manner in which they demonstrate their learning may differ.

Modified designation requires a determination of “significant cognitive difficulty” (as per psychological assessment). The Specific Outcomes can be altered or modified to meet the needs of those individuals. The student must have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and the evaluation of the student is based on the work the student does in relation to that student-specific plan. For Senior Years students, a Modified course designation may result.

For example, if a student has a significant cognitive difficulty but can benefit from curriculum they could in fact be placed in a S1 ELA class, and the teacher would address all the GO’s in the course; however the SO’s may be altered to better match the student’s classroom functioning (possibly working closer to Grade Two), the student may use different resources and texts, and it may not be appropriate to ask the student to read independently.

When a student receives adaptations or modifications, parents must be informed. This information may be communicated either through an Individual Education Plan and/or through regular reporting procedures. Adaptations may not require an IEP and may be reported to parents through the use of an insert in the report card or through anecdotal comments in the report card.

## **Final Assessments and Examinations**

Final assessments and examinations may be used as a major assessment of student learning when they are conducted in such a way that they effectively assess the achievement of the learning outcomes of the curriculum upon which the course is based.

The following regulations apply for Grades 9-12:

- All courses will have a final cumulative assessment
- All core subjects (ELA, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies) will have a final cumulative examination or standards test. The percentage of the final mark will be as follows:
  - Grade 9/10 – 25%
  - Grade 11/12 – 30%
- Students that have an excused absence on the day of final examination or standards test must write an alternative exam.
- There will be no exemptions for examinations (unless stated in an IEP).

## **Appeal of Grades**

A student who disagrees with an assessment of their work may, within five school days, appeal the result according to the following procedure:

1. The student (or parent) must verbally request a re-evaluation from the subject teacher.
2. The teacher will re-evaluate and communicate the results. It is understood that the mark may be raised, lowered or remain the same.
3. The student (or parent) may request a second re-evaluation by submitting a request, in writing, to the school principal. This should occur within five school days after the results of the first appeal are made known.
4. The principal may request a re-evaluation by a different teacher with knowledge of the subject area. The evaluation criteria and/or scoring rubric must be provided. The teacher will re-evaluate and communicate the results to the principal.
5. The mark allocated as a result of the re-evaluation will be considered the final mark whether the mark is raised, lowered or remains the same.

## **Standards Test Reread**

If a student disagrees with a mark from a standards test, a reread may be requested according to the following procedure:

1. The request for reread must be made in writing to the school Principal within five school days of the date the final standards test mark was reported to the student. A \$35.00 fee must be included with this request (the fee is refundable to the student *only* if the mark increases on the reread).
2. A trained marker from outside the student's school will be selected by Division Administration to reread the exam.
3. The mark given on the reread of the standards test will be the final mark issued, whether the mark is raised, lowered, or remains the same. This standards test mark will then be recalculated into the student's final course mark by the classroom teacher.

### **Appeal of Final Grades**

A student who disagrees with a final grade may, within five days of the grade being issued, request a re-calculation of the grade according to the following procedures:

1. The student (or parent) must submit a request for mark re-calculation, in writing, to the principal of the school.
2. The principal will conduct a mark recalculation. The mark allocated, as a result of this re-calculation, will be considered the final mark for that course, whether the mark is raised lowered or remains the same.

**Note:** In order to properly review a final grade, the teacher shall make course outlines available with assessment items, weighting and a record of grades as requested. All student assessment records must be maintained for a minimum of two years.

### **Recording and Reporting**

In accordance with The Public Schools Act, Evergreen School Division has an obligation to conduct regular assessments of student learning, record that data and to report to parents at regular reporting periods.

There are a minimum of four reporting periods in a school year for Early and Middle Schools. For High Schools, there are a minimum of two reporting periods per semester. Student Involved conferences may be included as part of these reporting periods and must occur a minimum of twice in a school year.

Teachers should keep their Principal informed of the progress of all students, including those performing above and below grade or course expectations. Whenever a student is judged to be achieving below grade or course expectations, parents must be kept fully informed through regular parent-teacher contacts.

Student achievement should be reported and communicated appropriately, meaningfully and accurately to students, parents and other teachers. The results should indicate to the parents and the students the attainment of learning outcomes.

Reporting should include or consider the following:

- a) In written reports, comments should be provided that describes student achievement in relation to the curriculum:
  - What the student knows or is able to do;
  - Areas of learning that require further attention and development;
  - Ways the teacher is supporting the student's learning needs (and where appropriate, ways the student might support the learning).
- b) Teachers are encouraged to make informal contact with parents regarding student progress. Informal reports provide a vital link between home and school and can be accomplished in a variety of ways such as notes, letters, journal entries, phone calls and meetings.
- c) The involvement of students in reporting to parents is viewed as a vital part of the process. Students are very aware of their strengths and weaknesses and can share this information with their parents. Student self-assessment, portfolios and student

involved conferences are strategies that will assist with this process (see Appendix B and C).

Schools must have a formalized appeal process for the purpose of providing an alternate assessment perspective when one is requested by parents or students in writing.

### **Promotion and Retention of Students**

In general, students shall be placed at the grade level to which they are best adjusted academically, socially, and emotionally. Evergreen School Division shall provide for the continuous progress of students from grade to grade.

Should teachers suspect that a student will not be successful in completing grade or course expectations, parents should be informed of this possibility within a reasonable time-frame (i.e. February for K-8, mid-semester for High Schools).

### **Criteria for Retention**

Retention should be considered only after all other instructional avenues have been explored and only for the purposes of assisting a student to master the requirements necessary for success at the next level. All discussions of retention will be individualized for that student. Only in unusual circumstances would a student be retained more than once in grades K-8.

ALL of the following criteria need to be met in order for retention to be considered:

- The student is in Early Years or, on very rare occasions, when the child is in Middle Years, and;
- The student is achieving significantly below ability and grade level outcomes, and;
- Retention would not cause an undue social or emotional strain, and;
- Retention would have a reasonable chance of benefiting the student developmentally, and
- An Individual Education Plan, which incorporates alternative approaches, is established for the student's year of retention. Grade retention should not be only grade repetition – there should be a clear focus on mastery of required skills.

When a student meets the criteria for retention, the teacher shall confer with the Principal and other teachers involved with the student. Parents shall be kept fully informed through regular parent-teacher contacts. They shall receive an explanation of their child's current academic standing in relationship to grade expectations, the school's assessment of the students learning difficulties, what interventions the school has used in attempts to increase the student's achievement to expected levels, and possible alternatives to retention.

The final decision to retain or promote a student in K-Grade 8 should be made by the relevant professional staff of the school. Communication and collaboration with the parents is an expectation. Opinions of other involved staff should be solicited. The support of parent(s) to this decision is considered crucial. The final decision will be made

by the Principal. All planned retentions must be communicated to the Superintendent by May 31.

Conversely, if parent(s) insist that a student be retained against the recommendation of school staff, the parent(s) wishes will be considered if:

- Alternatives to retention have already been discussed and;
- The student meets all of the criteria for retention and;
- The student's level of achievement is more than two years below grade level and;
- The parent(s) provide the school with a written statement that they insist on retention against the recommendation of the school.

### ***Kindergarten – Grade 8***

Students who achieve the required learning outcomes for a grade will be promoted to the next grade. Students who do not achieve the required outcomes will have other alternatives considered, grade retention being the *last* considered alternative.

Alternatives for K-8 students include:

1. Adaptations or modifications.
2. Differentiated instruction.
3. Promotion with intensive remediation services as outlined in an Individual Education Plan.
4. Promotion on condition of proof that the student completes summer school.
5. Promotion with individualized instruction, peer tutoring and/or a parent involvement program. (e.g. contracted home study)
6. Placement in an un-graded program or partially graded program with an Individual Education Plan.
7. Computer assisted instruction.
8. Placement in an alternative setting

### ***Grades 9-12***

Students who achieve the required outcomes of a course at Senior Years will receive a credit for that course. Students who do not achieve the required outcomes will have other alternatives considered, repeating the course being one of them.

Alternatives for Senior Years Students include:

- a) distributed learning courses
- b) challenge for credit (full year exam)
- c) Independent study courses

### **Special Needs Programming**

In accordance with Appropriate Education Programming, Regulation 155, accommodations can be made for assessing all learners to assist the pupil in meeting the expected learning outcomes.

### **Assessment Regulations**

1. A principal must ensure that a pupil is assessed as soon as reasonably practicable if he or she is having difficulty meeting the expected learning outcomes.
2. A principal must ensure that a pupil is referred for a specialized assessment if the pupil's teacher and resource teacher, guidance counselors or other applicable in-school personnel are:
  - a. unable to assess why the pupil is having difficulty meeting those outcomes;  
or
  - b. of the opinion that differentiated instruction and adaptations are insufficient to assist the pupil in meeting those outcomes.
3. A principal must ensure that the pupil's parent is informed before the pupil is referred for a specialized assessment, and no interviewing or testing as part of the assessment may occur without the parent's consent.
4. A specialized assessment must be
  - a. coordinated by a person who has been designated by the school board or, if the board has not designated such a person, by the principal; and
  - b. conducted by one or more qualified practitioners, as designated by the person coordinating the assessment, who may, if relevant in the circumstances, take into account reports and other information obtained
    - i. from the pupil's pupil file, or
    - ii. from or with the consent of the pupil's parent.
5. A specialized assessment must identify the following, as applicable:
  - c. other methods of differentiated instruction and adaptations that can be used to assist the pupil in meeting the expected learning outcomes, if it is determined that such methods or adaptations will be sufficient to assist the pupil in meeting those outcomes;
  - d. if it is determined that differentiated instruction and adaptations will be insufficient to assist the pupil in meeting the expected learning outcomes, what the pupil requires to meet or approximate
    - i. the expected learning outcomes, or
    - ii. the learning outcomes the pupil can reasonably be expected to achieve.

## **Appendix A**

### **Middle and Senior Years Grading Guidelines: Assessment of Learning**

- *Adapted from Ken O'Connor – How to Grade For Learning (2002), Student-Involved Classroom Assessment – Rick Stiggins (2001) and Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind – MECY (2006)*

#### **Introduction**

Assessment *OF* Learning refers to strategies designed to confirm what students know, demonstrate whether or not they have met curriculum outcomes or the goals of their individualized programs, or to certify proficiency and make decisions about students' future programs or placements. It is designed to provide evidence of achievement to parents, other educators, the students themselves, and sometimes to outside groups (e.g., employers, other educational institutions).

Assessment *OF* Learning is the assessment that becomes public and results in statements or symbols about how well students are learning. It often contributes to pivotal decisions that will affect students' futures. It is important, then, that the underlying logic and measurement of Assessment *OF* Learning be credible and defensible.

Effective Assessment *OF* Learning requires that teachers provide:

- a rationale for undertaking a particular assessment of learning at a particular point in time
- clear descriptions of the intended learning
- processes that make it possible for students to demonstrate their competence and skill
- a range of alternative mechanisms for assessing the same outcomes
- public and defensible reference points for making judgments
- transparent approaches to interpretation
- descriptions of the assessment process
- strategies for recourse in the event of disagreement about the decisions

Assessment *OF* Learning methods include not only tests and examinations, but also a rich variety of products and demonstrations of learning-portfolios, exhibitions, performances, presentations, simulations, multimedia projects, and a variety of other written, oral, and visual methods. It is important that Assessment *FOR* Learning practices that support student learning and the Assessment *OF* Learning practices that support systems needs are not in conflict. Specifically the grading practices, how, when and if percentages grades are used in reporting student progress, need to be clearly aligned to the current assessment and philosophy research.

The following guidelines have been developed to provide teachers with clear expectations so that they grade and report student learning accurately and fairly, based on evidence obtained from a variety of contexts and applications.

### **Guidelines for Grading**

1. Grading procedures should be related directly to curriculum learning outcomes or clusters of outcomes.
2. Sample student performance using a variety of methods. Do not include all assessments in grades. Provide ongoing feedback on formative performance using words, rubrics, or checklists, not grades.
3. Grades must be derived from clear descriptions of curriculum outcomes and standards (criterion referenced). If students achieve the outcome, they get the grade. Bell curves should not be used. Seeking evidence of a higher level of achievement should replace the awarding of bonus marks and extra credit for showing additional effort of the same outcome.
4. Grades should only be based on individual achievement of the targeted learning outcomes. Report on behaviours such as effort, participation, and attitude, for example, separately, unless they are a stated curriculum outcome.
5. Penalties for late work or unexcused absences should not distort achievement or motivation. Teachers may exempt students from penalties. Penalties, *if used*, will be implemented as follows:
  - Teachers should set due dates and deadlines for all marked work that will be part of a student grade.
  - Work handed in late should not exceed 2% per day to a maximum of 10%.
  - Absent students should be given make-up opportunities for all missed summative assessments (marked work that will be part of student grade) without penalty. If students do not take the opportunity to make up missed work, then they can be penalized. Students should not be penalized only for absence.
6. Work that is not submitted will be identified as 'I' (incomplete). A reasonable amount of time should be provided to the student to complete the required work (guidelines to be developed by schools). The 'I' acts as an excused mark until the work is completed, which would comply with the amount of time allotted to the student. If the student has shown no evidence of completing the assignment, then the 'I' will essentially become a qualified grade. A zero would only be awarded if the student did not complete any of the assignment during the time provided by the teacher. For example, in a high school semester situation, the student must hand in the missed work before the end of the semester the course ends in.
7. In determining grades, teachers must decide whether they have sufficient evidence of achievement. If they do not have sufficient evidence of achievement, then the grade recorded should be an 'I' for Insufficient Evidence / Incomplete.
8. Where repetitive measures are made of the same or similar knowledge or skills, the more recent mark or marks should replace the previous marks for grade determination.
9. "Second chance" assessment opportunities could be made available to students; students should receive the highest, most consistent mark, not an average mark for any such multiple opportunities.

### **Guidelines for Weighting**

1. Student marks are cumulative and should not be based on an average of terms.
2. Consideration could be given to the use of statistical measures other than the mean for grade calculations; for example, consider using median or mode.
3. Grades should be weighted carefully to ensure the intended importance is given to each learning outcome and to each assessment. Mark breakdown for core courses (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, PE/HE) would necessitate weighting each cluster/strand/unit according to the number of outcomes. For example, in Science, each cluster would be worth approximately 25% of the final mark. In Mathematics, the Number Strand has more outcomes than the others and should be reflected in the weighting. Weighting should be consistent across the grade in the school.

### **Assessment Instruments**

1. Teachers should use quality assessment instruments, i.e. each assessment should meet five standards of quality (Stiggins, 2001):
  - i. must arise from a clearly articulated set of achievement expectations
  - ii. serve an instructionally relevant purpose
  - iii. rely on a proper method
  - iv. sample student achievement in an appropriate manner
  - v. control for all relevant sources of bias and distortion that can lead to inaccurate assessment
2. Teachers should properly record evidence of student achievement on an ongoing basis.

### **Methods of Assessment and Criteria/Scoring Scales**

1. Teachers should discuss assessment with students, in an age appropriate manner, at the beginning of instruction.
2. Where feasible, students should be involved in decisions about methods of assessment and criteria or scoring scales.
3. Teachers should provide to students and parents a written overview of assessment, including grading, in clear, easily understandable language during the first week of classes in each course or grade.
4. Teachers should provide students with a written overview in clear, easily understandable language, indicating how each summative assessment throughout the course will be evaluated before each such assessment is administered.

## Appendix B

### Portfolio Guidelines

#### Introduction

A portfolio can be defined as “a purposeful collection of student performances that exhibits a student’s effort, progress and achievement over a period of time” (Hibbard et al, 1996, p. 188 as cited in *Portfolios: More than just a file folder* – Saskatchewan Professional Development Unit). This compilation of work acts as an avenue for students to demonstrate what they know and what they can do.

Portfolios in the classroom coincide with Evergreen School Division’s philosophy on supporting continuous learning, development and personal growth for students. Portfolios also endorse the Division’s goal on assessment, which is to help develop independent, lifelong learners who regularly monitor and assess their own progress.

#### Guidelines for Portfolios

The guidelines will be presented in regard to three different levels of decision-making: Division, School, and Teacher

#### **Standardized Divisional Guidelines for all schools**

Teachers must ensure that the portfolio:

- **is reflective** – students come to understand themselves as learners through the process of reflection. Portfolios need to include reflection to support learning.
- **is continuous and ongoing** – work needs to be collected on a continuous basis to show development over time that tells the story of a student. This ongoing collection is essential to the value of the portfolio, and the importance of portfolios conveyed to the students.
- **is multidimensional** – the collection should represent a wide variety of materials in order to demonstrate different learning processes and methods of assessment.
- **is selective** – the act of *selecting*, not just collecting, artifacts for the portfolio is a valuable process for students that promotes assessment *for* learning.
- **has clearly defined criteria** – the criteria for selecting must be clearly understood by the teacher and articulated to and understood by the students from the beginning of the process. This criteria should be *teacher-guided* to support the process of *student-selected*.
- **is presented by the student** – portfolios should be shared by the student at ‘Student-Involved’ or ‘Student-Led’ conferences.

#### **School-based decisions for portfolio implementation**

Schools need to decide the following:

- How the portfolio will be put together with all of the subject areas/courses for a particular student over a one year period.
- Process for sharing portfolios – Student Involved Conferences.  
**(Refer to Appendix C)**

The categories that could be included in the portfolio:

- ≈ Process – a collection of student work that may be selected later for a more permanent display (like a holding tank for work).
- ≈ Showcase/Celebration – collection of work that represents student’s best efforts; may also include artifacts from the student’s personal life.
- ≈ Growth – demonstrates growth and/or student learning in particular skills/subjects over time.
- ≈ Selected Works – collection of student’s best efforts with a criteria determined by the teacher for students to base their selection on.

### **Teacher-based decisions for portfolio implementation**

Teachers will decide the following for portfolio implementation in their classroom/subject area:

- Process for collecting, selecting, organizing and reflecting.
- Criteria for selection process.
- Content guidelines (projects, tests, journal entries, self-assessment; best work samples, learning goals and reflection sheets).
- Purpose (to promote student control of learning, to track student progress, to demonstrate individual growth, to respond to individual needs, to report on student progress, to facilitate student-led conferences, to show process and product, to show final products, to show student achievement in relation to specific curricular goals)
- Management of the portfolio system (container, table of contents, organization)
- Timelines (scheduled time for selection/reflection, and portfolio sharing)

### **Suggestions for the portfolio processes – collection, selection, reflection, projection** (varies in level from Early, Middle, and Senior Years)

**Collection of Work** (according to type of portfolio):

- Work samples could be collected in the following ways:
  - ≈ Hanging files; file folders
  - ≈ Magazine file boxes
  - ≈ Pocket folders
  - ≈ Pizza box
  - ≈ Portfolio bin
- Regularly select from different subject areas (once every week or 2 weeks) beginning this process in September
- Classroom and personal goals and reflections
- Items could include student selections, teacher directed or personal items
- Assessments, self-assessments
- “How I see myself as a learner” reflection work
- Celebration work
  - ≈ Pictures, certificates
  - ≈ CD’s (PowerPoint, etc), DVD’s
  - ≈ Project work and/or photos of projects
  - ≈ Field trip mementos and pictures with reflections
  - ≈ Classroom celebrations

**Reflection of student work** (completed during collection and selection process):

- Reflect on work as it is finished and collected
- Reflections should be based on outcomes
- These reflections can be written on teacher created Reflection slips and attached to the work sample
- Modeling and teaching of reflection needs to be completed before students are expected to self-reflect
- Reflect on progress of classroom and personal goals
- Reflect on student growth

**Selection of student work:**

- Portfolios can take on many forms, some suggestions are:
  - ≈ Binders
  - ≈ Pizza boxes
  - ≈ File or pocket folders
  - ≈ Scrapbook
- Include class/personal goals, self-evaluations and reflections
- Select pieces from the “collection” that are both student choices and teacher directed choices
- Include all subject areas in the selection
- Select items from “celebration” items
- Introduction (All About Me, Name poem, Autobiography, my favorite things, photos)
- A checklist could be useful at some grade levels for students to follow

\*\*\*work that is not selected from the “collection” could be sent home or placed back in its original place.

**Project** (*Presenting the Portfolio ~ Student Involved Conferences*):

- Modeling and teaching students how to present a portfolio (see suggestions below)
- Guided questions for students and for parents (see suggestions below)
- Students practice presenting their portfolio
  - ≈ With partner
  - ≈ Cross-grade or classroom sharing
  - ≈ With a volunteer
  - ≈ With EA or teacher

*Guided Questions for Parents*

- Two things I am proud of my child for doing are....
- Two things I would like my child to work on....
- Two stars, an improvement and a wish for my child
- As we shared the portfolio, I noticed growth in and/or improvement in....
- What advice do you have to help us support your child at home?
- Feedback form ~ PROGRESS noticed; GOAL for next term; FEELINGS about my child’s growth; what I like BEST about the work I saw

*Guided Questions for Parents to ask their child*

- What have you learned about yourself by putting together your portfolio?
- What is your favorite piece? Why?
- Tell me about this piece of work.
- What did you learn from this piece of work?
- Which piece of work would you like to improve on?
- What piece of work was the most difficult to do? Why?

*Guided Student Presentation (practiced before conference)*

- This is my portfolio
- Present All About Me/Autobiography
- Present goals, self-evaluations
- Suggested items to highlight
  - Reading sample
  - Writing sample
  - Two Math pieces
  - 3-4 pieces from other subject areas
  - Favorite celebration/piece
- Thank you for coming to share my portfolio

**Suggestions for Portfolio implementation and Resources** as presented in the Saskatchewan Professional Development Unit. *Portfolios: More than just a file folder.* Retrieved November 21, 2006 from:  
[http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/aar/afl/docs/assessment\\_support/portfolios.pdf](http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/aar/afl/docs/assessment_support/portfolios.pdf)

The following titles are provided on these pages:

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| • Student Self-Reflection                      | p. 13 & 14 |
| • What Can Be Included In A Portfolio          | p. 15      |
| • How Do I Get Started?                        | p. 16      |
| • How Do I Develop A Portfolio?                | p. 17      |
| • Grade Eleven Math Portfolio                  | p. 18-20   |
| • What Other Resources Might Be Helpful to Me? | P. 21-22   |

## Student Self-Reflection

It is the process of reflecting on the artifacts selected for inclusion in the portfolio that support student thinking about their learning as they identify areas of strength and set goals for further growth. The reflective process can be initiated by providing students with a set of prompts such as: “Why is this my best piece? What learning does this sample demonstrate? This piece was a challenge for me because . . . (Bower & Rolheiser, 2000).

Depending on the age of the students, you might consider using one of the following frameworks to support student learning.

### Retell, Relate, Reflect

<p><b>Retell</b> Retell in your own words Summarize the information State the main idea List the sequence of ideas Point out details Describe significant parts Answer specific parts Clarify information</p>	<p><b>Related prompts may include</b> This was about . . . I noticed that . . . The most significant part was . . . A thought I especially liked was . . . I particularly liked, valued, or enjoyed... An idea that captured my interest was... Key words for me were . . . An idea that “sparkled” for me was . . .</p>
<p><b>Relate</b> Make connections Refer to personal experiences, books, media, issues, events, related topics, feelings Compare Contrast Analyze Give examples</p>	<p><b>Related prompts may include</b> This reminds me of . . . This makes me think of . . . Something I identify with is . . . It makes me feel . . . What I found especially meaningful or significant for me was . . .</p>
<p><b>Reflect</b> Draw conclusions beyond the text or situation Apply judgment State opinions Share insights and new understandings Ask relevant questions Give reasons for what you did</p>	<p><b>Related prompts may include</b> Now I understand that . . . I think that . . . I wonder why or if . . . I realize now that . . . How . . . ? A question raised in my mind is . . . Maybe . . . Something that you wrote that pushed my own thinking was . . . I learned that you . . . Thank you for reminding me how important it is to . . . An idea that “sparkled” for me was...because...</p>

(Rolheiser, Bower & Stevahn, 2000, p.47)

The set of criteria on which student reflections will be assessed should support students as they reflect on both the processes and products of their learning. Criteria might include:

- The thoroughness of their analysis through the inclusion of details and evidence
- Honesty of assessment
- Evaluation of personal goals
- Personal voice
- self-understanding/revelation
- statement of future goals
- quality of writing

An example of a rating scale for student reflection is provided; you may need to adapt or modify this scale to suit your students. This rating scale would be appropriate for students in middle years and in high school. A simpler checklist could be used for primary students based on completion of a reflection, awareness of the learning goals and understanding of progress toward those goals.

### Student Reflection Rating Scale

Scale:	4-Always	3-Usually	2-Occasionally	1-Seldom
1. Clear and careful link evident between reflection and artifact	4	3	2	1
2. In-depth, insightful, and critical analysis of learning	4	3	2	1
3. Detailed examples, references, and connections provided	4	3	2	1
4. Honest, realistic self-assessment	4	3	2	1
5. Evidence of progress toward achievement of goals	4	3	2	1
6. Future goals clearly outlined	4	3	2	1
7. Vivid impressions create a sense of connection with audience	4	3	2	1
8. Creative, effective use of language	4	3	2	1
9. Appropriate use of grammar, spelling and punctuation	4	3	2	1

(Adapted from Salwierak, 2001)

## What Can Be Included In A Portfolio?

The simple answer to this question is, just about anything! However, just as purpose determines the type of portfolio and the criteria for assessment, so does it drive the content to be included. In addition, you will also need to consider the age of the students and their experience in working with portfolios. Young students or students inexperienced with the portfolio process will need more support and perhaps more explicit guidelines as to what should be included.

Things to consider as you are developing guidelines for content:

- Number and kind of artifacts
- Work in progress and/or finished product
- Variety and types of samples
- Curricular objectives

If you are considering a subject specific portfolio, here are a few suggestions as to what could be included. Please note that many of these examples could be used in more than one subject area. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but merely a starting point.

### Literacy Portfolios

- Reading logs
- Journal entries
- Reader response
- Different genres of writing at different stages of development
- Teacher observations
- Tape recordings of readings
- Tape recordings of readings
- Group projects
- Email

### Math Portfolios

- Completed puzzles
- Computer designs/programs
- Graphs
- Venn diagrams
- Demonstrations of problem solving processes
- Writing about math

### Social Studies Portfolios

- Diaries, letters, speeches
- Map and globe activities
- Pictures and drawings of historical events
- Slide shows

### Science Portfolios

- Observations
- Predictions
- Data collections
- Lab reports
- Performance assessment tasks
- Research
- Taped debates on issues
- Photo essays

### Art Portfolios

- Photographs
- Illustrations
- Posters, charts, pictures
- Storyboards
- Collages

(Burke, Fogarty, Belgrad, 2002; Seely, 1994)

## How Do I Get Started?

Now that you have determined the purpose, the type of portfolio, the criteria you will use for assessment, and the guidelines for content, there are some organizational matters you will want to consider.

### Portfolio containers/storage

Which storage container would best suit your purpose and the needs of your students?

- File folders
- Accordion folders
- Binders
- Boxes
- Scrapbooks
- Computer disks

### Teacher implementation process

- Discuss the portfolio with students
- Develop criteria for assessment and the guidelines for content with students
- Provide copies of the assessment tools and content criteria to each student
- Set up the expectation for collection of **all** materials that might be relevant to the portfolio your students are developing
- Discuss the management of the portfolio system
  - use of index/table of contents
  - dating all materials
- Develop timelines
  - Set aside time on a regular basis for the selection of artifacts and for student reflection
  - Designate a time for portfolio sharing either through student-led conferences, at a portfolio night, or through a take home process
  - Designate timelines for evaluation of the portfolio
- Assess the portfolios

### Student implementation process

- Collect everything
- Select pieces regularly for inclusion
- Reflect on artifacts using the reflection tools provided
- Set learning goals
- Self-assess using the assessment tool provided
- Revise as needed
- Share portfolio with a parent, guardian, care partner, etc.
- Submit portfolios

## Parental Involvement

Informing parents about the portfolio process and inviting them to be a part of that process is an excellent way to share information. Portfolios provide an opportunity to develop and support the home/school connection. You will want to consider how you can best achieve these goals.

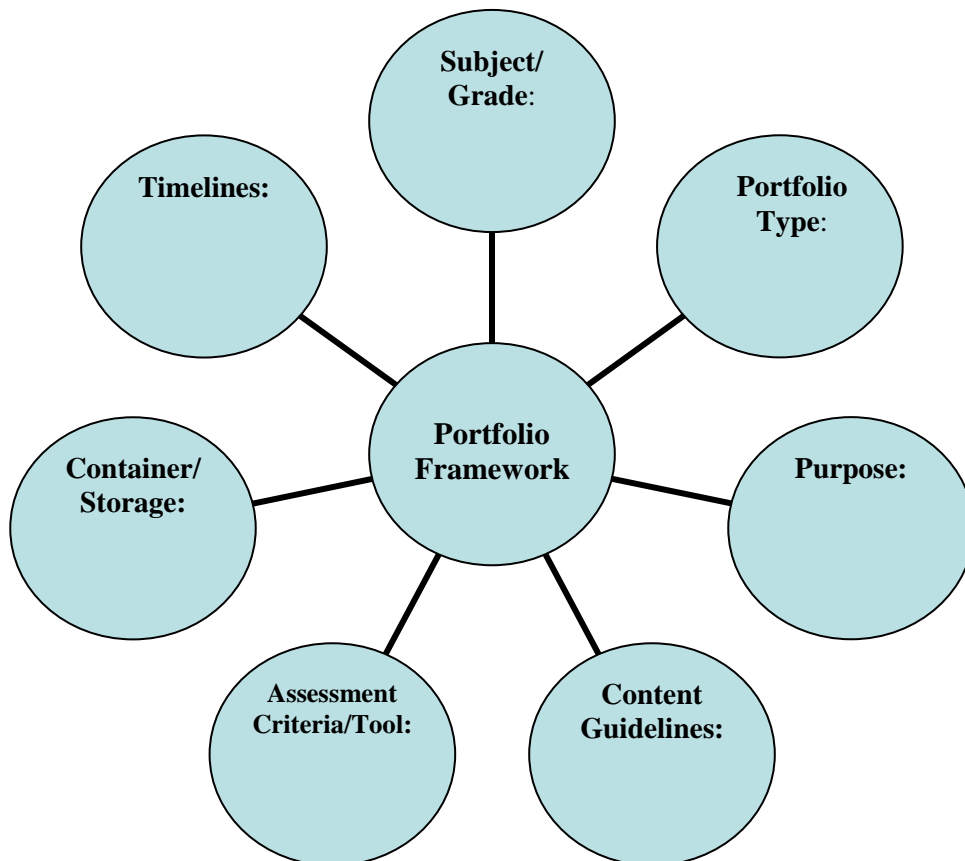
Many teachers using portfolios:

- Share criteria for assessment and guidelines for content with parents at a curriculum evening or through a letter,
- Provide opportunities for the sharing of portfolios, and
- Provide parents with a reflection tool to use when students share their

## How Do I Develop A Portfolio?

There are as many different portfolios as there are types of classrooms. There is no right or wrong way to develop a portfolio; the “perfect” portfolio does not exist. It is a process you and your students will continuously revisit as you become more experienced with the process.

Here is a design template you can use to develop a portfolio. Remember to consider the guidelines provided. Your portfolio should be: ongoing, multidimensional, selective, reflective, and have clearly defined criteria. Samples of teacher-developed portfolios follow.



## Example of Grade Eleven Math Portfolio

**Portfolio Type:** Selected Works Portfolio

**Purpose:**

- To show process and product of work
- To evaluate and report on student progress in math
- Show student achievement with respect to specific curricular goals in math

**Content Guidelines:**

- Three quizzes
- Two unit tests
- One math project such as:
  - A mathematical slide show related to a Math 20 concept
  - Review of math sites applicable to Math 20 on the Internet
  - Car purchase plan including information from various sources on interest rates, payment schedules, length of loan, early pay-out options, etc
  - Student suggestion
  - One Math journal entry related to each of the eight Math 20 units
  - Two completed performance assessment tasks from Saskatchewan Learning Web site  
<http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/k/pecs/ae/docs/plap/math/math2001/gr11tasks.pdf>
  - Self-Assessment of Group Work Skills

**Assessment Criteria/Goals:**

- Individual work will have been assessed prior to inclusion in the portfolio
- Student Reflection Sheet
- Portfolio Rubric

**Container:**

- Large 3-ring binder for collecting
- 1" binder for final portfolio

**Timelines**

- All work will be collected in 3" working binder
- Monthly selections placed in 1" portfolio binder
- Two weeks prior to end of reporting period – final selection, reflection, and organization in binder
- Submitted for evaluation
- Share portfolios with parents as take home assignment – parents to complete parent reflection sheet

- How might this portfolio fit into my math curriculum?
- What modifications would I need to make before I could use this portfolio with my students?

## Self-Assessment of Group Work Skills

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Circle the following on working within the group. Additional written responses may be included.**

- |  |        |           |       |
|--|--------|-----------|-------|
| 1. I encouraged others.  | Seldom | Sometimes | Often |
| 2. I shared ideas and information.   | Seldom | Sometimes | Often |
| 3. I checked to make sure that others in the group knew what they were doing.                  | Seldom | Sometimes | Often |
| 4. I was willing to help others.   | Seldom | Sometimes | Often |
| 5. I accepted responsibility for completing the work properly and on time.                     | Seldom | Sometimes | Often |
| 6. I was willing to listen to others in the group.   | Seldom | Sometimes | Often |
| 7. I was willing to receive help from others in the group.                                     | Seldom | Sometimes | Often |
| 8. I offered encouragement and support to others in the group.                                 | Seldom | Sometimes | Often |
| 9. Others in the group shared ideas and information.   | Seldom | Sometimes | Often |
| 10. The group checked with the teacher to make sure we knew what we were supposed to be doing. | Seldom | Sometimes | Often |
| 11. All members of the group contributed equally to this project.                              | Seldom | Sometimes | Often |

**Answer the following questions about working in a group.**

12. How did you distribute the workload within your group?
13. What problems, if any, arose within your group?
14. What would you do differently next time?
15. How is working in a group different from working by yourself?

## Student Reflection Sheet Math 20

This three-part self-assessment is to be submitted in your portfolio. For each part, you will need to assign yourself a mark out of 5 and justify this mark in a short, clearly written paragraph. Your reflection on each part must specifically refer to the work samples you have included in the portfolio. You may also refer to other work you have completed this term.

Evidence of positive attitude /5

Effort and work ethic /5

Understanding of Math 20 Concepts /10

## What Other Resources Might Be Helpful To Me?

Print resources available from the Stewart Resources Centre:

- Burke, K., Fogarty, R. & Belgrad, S. (2002). *The portfolio connection: Student work linked to standards*. Arlington Heights, IL: Skylight Professional Development

These authors offer practical advice and user-friendly strategies to develop and use portfolios. There are blackline masters provided as well as samples of student work.

- Jasmine, J. (1992). *Portfolio assessment for your whole language classroom*. Huntington Beach, CA: Teacher Created Materials, Inc.

This resources is designed to assist classroom teachers with utilizing portfolios in their language-arts program. An overview of authentic assessment is provided along with ideas and forms to help implement portfolios.

- Jasmine, J. (1993). *Portfolios and other assessments*. Huntington beach, CA: Teacher Created Materials, Inc.

This resource provides dozens of blackline masters of assessment tools to be used in assessing performance assessments and portfolios. In addition, there are samples of student responses to performance assessments and models of portfolio entries. Suitable for K-Grade 6.

- Spandel, V. & Culham, R. (1995). *Putting portfolio stories to work*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

This video and facilitator guide provides an opportunity to learn about the use of portfolios in primary, elementary, and secondary classrooms. The video shows students collecting, selecting and reflecting as they create their portfolios.

### Internet resources:

Saskatchewan Learning Website

- <http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/midlsoc/gr9/assess9.html>  
This link provides a number of different assessment tools related to portfolios.

Teachervision.com Website

- <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/teacher-training/curriculum-planning/20153.html?detoured=1>  
This site links to dozens of resources on portfolios and includes information on specific curricular areas, assessment tools, and professional portfolios.

## Electronic Portfolio Resources

- <http://www.uvm.edu/~jmorris/ecresources.html>  
Background information on how to build an electronic portfolio are provided on this site in addition to samples of student digital portfolios at a variety of grade levels, and links to free software for constructing electronic portfolios.

There are literally thousands of Internet sites devoted to developing, using, or displaying portfolios. Because sites disappear or move with alarming frequency, the most efficient way to access sites at your grade level or in a particular subject area is to conduct a search using the search terms related to your areas of interest such as:

- Portfolio and “grade 3” and science.
- Portfolio and “high school” and English.

## Appendix C

### **Student Involved Conference Guidelines**

The principle purpose of student involved conferences is to profile the student portfolio. The use of the portfolios may provide an opportunity to increase the involvement of the parents/ guardians in the learning process of the student and in the student taking responsibility for their learning. The portfolio sharing should be a 'celebration' of the child's learning and achievements, with learning and behavior needs addressed in the format of goal-setting. It is important to keep this time as a positive experience for the child and the parents involved. This reporting format is conducted in a formal setting focusing on the child's life in the school. This means that both the reporter (the student) and the receiver (the parents/guardians) are part of the educational process, which is not inherent with the written report.

The implementation practices around student-involved conferences for reporting purposes may look different in each school, depending on the level of the school. The following guidelines are suggestions that may be used in the schools.

A typical student involved conference may look like -

- Student led or directed

  - Students share their portfolios with their parents/guardians

  - Students then share various activities or work stations set up in the classroom

- Scheduling of student involved conferences may be

  - More than one student at a time in the room *or*

  - Only one student at a time in the room

  - But** a sufficient amount of time for a student to properly present the portfolio is necessary - between 15 to 45 minutes, depending on grade level

- The focus of the conference may include

  - Product of learning

  - Thinking skills

  - Students think aloud and explain to parents how they obtained solutions

    - e.g. reading aloud, math problem, science experiment, computer exercise

  - Demonstrating strengths

  - Goal-setting: areas of weakness, inattention, future direction

- An opportunity for parents to provide feedback/reflection to child may include -

  - Responses to their child's achievement

  - Questions to ask child

  - Reflection sheets

  - Survey

  - Goal-setting

  - Involves both parent and student

An opportunity for parents to schedule a traditional teacher conference at another time will be provided if the parent so desires or if the teacher feels specific learning or behavioral items need to be addressed in a more specific manner, once the parent and student has participated in the student involved conference.

### **References**

Adapted from Rogers, T. W. *The use of portfolios in education*. Edmonton, Alberta: University of Alberta, Centre for Research in Measurement and Evaluation.

## **Appendix D**

### **Methods and Tools to Gather Evidence**

#### **Anecdotal Records**

Written descriptions of student progress that a teacher keeps on a day to day basis. These are systematic and objective narrative records of student accomplishments, needs, progress and behaviours in specific situations.

#### **Authentic Assessment**

An assessment of student performance that involves students in tasks that are worthwhile, significant, meaningful and occur in real life contexts. Authentic assessment provides students with descriptions of expected performance levels and the criteria by which they will be evaluated.

#### **Checklists**

A form used to keep track of a student's work or progress that records the presence or absence of attainment of desired concepts, skills, processes or attitudes.

#### **Conferences**

A conference involves students in examining and reflecting on their learning with a peer, teacher and/or parent. The opportunity for students to demonstrate skills and abilities during a conference gives relevance and meaning to work and practice. It also provides the teacher with feedback for further instruction. Self-assessment and goal setting are important in developing learning paths for students.

#### **Continuum**

A continuum is a method of recording student progress over time. It uses descriptors to depict each stage of development.

#### **Criterion Referenced**

An assessment designed to reveal what a student knows, understands, or can do in relation to specific outcomes. Criterion referenced tests are intended to identify strengths and weaknesses in individual students in terms of knowledge and skills by comparing a student's results to the standard of what was taught.

#### **Demonstrations and Presentations**

A presentation or demonstration where the student displays through presentation skills what they have learned, individually or as a group member.

#### **Essays**

Essay exercises call for a structured written response and can be useful to assess understanding of relationships among elements of knowledge.

#### **Journals/Learning Logs**

An on-going written record of a student's thoughts on self-selected topics of personal interest. A personal journal is usually private unless the student invites the teacher or classmate to read it. A dialogue journal is an extended written interchange between a teacher or other specialist and a student on a topic of mutual interest. Journal writing gives students practice in writing while encouraging the habit of reflective thinking.

### **Observations**

The sort of information that teachers note in their everyday work with students. Observation data may be recorded in rating forms, checklists, student profiles, narrative descriptions and anecdotal records.

### **Peer Assessment**

Extends the teacher's knowledge by having the students make systematic judgments about one another's performance relative to set criteria.

### **Performance Assessment**

Performance assessment is the gathering of information about student learning based on students' demonstrating what they can do. It values process as well as product and incorporates a variety of strategies from observation to self-assessment.

### **Portfolios**

A purposeful collection of student work that shows the student's effort, progress or achievement over time. Self-assessment and goal setting is a vital component of portfolio assessment.

### **Process Assessment**

Assessment that focuses on how well students have mastered an entire process or set of related skills.

### **Process Folio**

Contains a student's initial drafts and completed work with accompanying journal entries that encourage reflection.

### **Projects**

Projects are a type of performance assessment and provide students with an opportunity to plan and develop criteria in order to accomplish a goal over an extended period of time. Teachers can assess a student's ability work alone and/or in groups.

### **Rubric**

An established set of criteria for scoring or rating student knowledge and skills.

### **Self Assessment**

Students' self-assessment is an ongoing process of students getting to know themselves as learners by reflecting on their own performance, products, thinking and learning.

### **Standards**

Educational standards are curriculum-based and specifically describe what students are expected to know and do based on learning outcomes.

### **Individual Education Plan {IEP}**

This is a tool and structure for developing an individual education plan for a student with cognitive, physical or behavioral difficulties that require an adaptation or modification to the regular programming.

### **Tests**

A series of questions or problems designed to measure knowledge and skills based on learning outcomes.