



STUDENT PROGRESS REPORT RENEWAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PARENTS OF STUDENTS IN GRADES 6-9

Background

Three years ago our school division started the process of renewing the division report cards. The process included a year of research and review, a year of development and a year of pilot at the grades 6-9 levels in 2011-2012. The renewal is occurring in phases following curriculum development and implementation. The grades 6-9 student progress report was the first to be implemented during the 2012-2013 school year. Grades 1-5 and 10-12 are implementing the new progress report in 2013-2014. Changes to the report card at the kindergarten and prekindergarten levels are under development.

Why was the renewal necessary?

The report card is being renewed because Saskatchewan curricula are being renewed. There has been a fundamental shift in the curricula that requires a different approach to assessing student learning, to evaluating student learning, and ultimately to grading and reporting on student learning.

What has changed?

The change in name from 'report card' to 'student progress report' summarizes the shift in the approach to reporting student achievement and growth. The goal is to give students feedback and inform parents regarding what a student knows and is able to do. Another goal is to show growth. Students enter the education system and develop knowledge and skills through the years to graduate as competent members of society. The emphasis is on monitoring student growth. Progress is reported at key times during the year.

Why is there a focus on competencies?

Each subject area has outcomes that are to be met for the grade level. The outcomes have indicators that detail what the student ought to know and be able to do. The development of knowledge and skills outlined in the outcomes and indicators lead to the development of overall competencies. Students have many opportunities during the year to achieve the outcomes for the subject at their grade level. Students develop competencies from the time they enter the education system to the time they leave at graduation as competent individuals who have attained the goals of education.

Why is this approach more appropriate than current reports?

Emphasis is placed on learning and not on working to achieve a “mark”. Students can focus on acquiring skills and knowledge rather than on earning points. Everything they do “counts”. Every task, assignment, or project is an opportunity to gain knowledge and develop skills and provide evidence of competence. There are many opportunities to develop the competencies, building on each other to improve overall learning.

What is reported on the student progress report?

Information is shared regarding a student’s performance and progress for each subject area in four ways:

- 1) Competencies - the competencies describe the knowledge and skills that are developed through each of the subject areas:

Example – English Language Arts has three competencies which are reported:

- Comprehend and Respond
- Compose and Create
- Assess and Reflect

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------|----|----|---------------------------|--|----|----------------------|--|--|--|
| Subject | English Language Arts | | | | Teacher | | | | | | |
| _ Record of Adaptations is attached | | | | | Attendance | | | | | | |
| | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 | Total Classes Absent ____ | | | | | | |
| Achievement | | | | | Total Times Late ____ | | | | | | |
| Competencies | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Competencies | | | | | |
| Comprehend and Respond Constructs meaning from oral, print and other media texts and responds appropriately and effectively | T1 | [Progress bar: 25%] | | | | Compose and Create Demonstrates understanding through creation of visuals, speaking and writing for a variety of purposes | T1 | [Progress bar: 25%] | | | |
| | T2 | [Progress bar: 50%] | | | | | T2 | [Progress bar: 50%] | | | |
| | T3 | [Progress bar: 75%] | | | | | T3 | [Progress bar: 75%] | | | |
| | T4 | [Progress bar: 100%] | | | | | T4 | [Progress bar: 100%] | | | |
| Assess and Reflect Reviews, practices, responds, synthesizes, and applies new knowledge and reflects on own learning | T1 | [Progress bar: 25%] | | | | | | | | | |
| | T2 | [Progress bar: 50%] | | | | | | | | | |
| | T3 | [Progress bar: 75%] | | | | | | | | | |
| | T4 | [Progress bar: 100%] | | | | | | | | | |

* At Grades 6-8 there are three terms.

- 2) Achievement - The legend of academic achievement is used to report how a student was able to meet the outcomes of the curriculum during the term:

Legend of Academic Achievement

- DM - Demonstrates mastery of the term outcomes
- CM - Consistently meets the term outcomes
- UM - Usually meets the term outcomes
- AO - Approaches the term outcomes
- NY - Does not meet the term outcomes
- INS - Incomplete, insufficient evidence to evaluate
- NA - Not Applicable this term

- 3) Factors Affecting Achievement – those habits, behaviours and attitudes that affect learning are reported for each subject:

| Factors Affecting Achievement | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Factors Affecting Achievement | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|--|----|------------------------|---|---|---|---|----|------------------------|---|---|---|
| Confidence Welcomes new opportunities, takes risks, engages in learning perseveres when tasks are challenging | T1 | [Bar graph: 1.5 units] | | | | Organization Plans and manages learning time, space, materials and meets deadlines | T1 | [Bar graph: 1.5 units] | | | |
| | T2 | [Bar graph: 2.5 units] | | | | | T2 | [Bar graph: 2.5 units] | | | |
| | T3 | [Bar graph: 3.5 units] | | | | | T3 | [Bar graph: 3.5 units] | | | |
| | T4 | [Bar graph: 4.5 units] | | | | | T4 | [Bar graph: 4.5 units] | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Collaboration Works well with others, is cooperative, and respectful | T1 | [Bar graph: 1.5 units] | | | | Responsibility Is punctual, is prepared, responds to feedback, makes appropriate choices | T1 | [Bar graph: 1.5 units] | | | |
| | T2 | [Bar graph: 2.5 units] | | | | | T2 | [Bar graph: 2.5 units] | | | |
| | T3 | [Bar graph: 3.5 units] | | | | | T3 | [Bar graph: 3.5 units] | | | |
| | T4 | [Bar graph: 4.5 units] | | | | | T4 | [Bar graph: 4.5 units] | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |

* At Grades 6-8 there are three terms.

- 4) Comments – additional comments give students descriptive feedback. The comments might talk about what a student is doing well, how the student has improved, or may be about setting a goal.

What marking system is used?

Student progress is reported in a similar way from grades one to twelve. All progress reports use a rubric that describes the different levels of understanding and performance on a bar graph. At the grades 6-9 level, a bar graph is used to report on the competencies. An achievement code using letters is also used. At the grades 10 - 12 levels, the bar graph to report on competencies is used. A percentage is reported as well because a percentage is required to enter post secondary institutions after graduation.

What are rubrics?

A rubric is a written description of performance levels ranging from low performance to very high performance. A four point rubric is used in the progress report. The student knowledge and understanding, as well as skills are assessed based on the description at each of the four levels. The rubrics are explained in Appendix A and B on pages 6 and 7.

| Competencies Rubric | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| 1 – Little Evidence | 2 – Partial Evidence | 3 – Sufficient Evidence | 4- Extensive Evidence |
| With help understands parts of the simpler concepts and performs a few of the simpler processes. | Understands the simpler concepts and performs the simpler processes. | Understands more complex concepts and is able to perform complex processes that are explicitly taught. | Has a deep understanding of complex concepts and processes and can apply to new situations. |

How does the four point rubric convert to a percentage?

There is no conversion. The numeral over the rubric serves as a place holder on a scale. The focus is on the description of the competencies in each of the subjects for the grade level. What is important to know is the level of knowledge and skill attainment in the subject area. The rubric helps to explain that level of attainment.

What is important to note about the Academic Achievement on the grades 6-9 progress report?

The description assigned to the letter symbols (DM, CM, UM, AO, NY, INS, NA) on the legend of academic achievement is the information that is important. Reporting on the competencies using the bar graph demonstrates growth over time. The description assigned to the letter symbols reflect the learning outcomes that were addressed during a specific period of time called a term. A student who is doing well and meeting curriculum outcomes in day to day work would generally be at a CM or a UM for Achievement. Sometimes due to a move or an absence because of illness, it may be difficult to evaluate a student's level of knowledge and skill. In those cases, the letters "INS" would indicate there is insufficient evidence to evaluate at the time.

How do I know if behaviour is affecting my child's achievement?

The behaviours that impact on student achievement are reported separately. The student progress report gives information on four areas that affect achievement. A four point rubric is used. A bar graph is used. At the grades 6 to 12 levels the factors affecting achievement are reported for each subject area. At the grades 1-5 levels, the factors affecting achievement as well as personal and social growth are reported only once by the homeroom teacher.

| Factors Affecting Achievement Rubric | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| 1 - Beginning | 2 - Developing | 3 - Progressing | 4 - Established |
| Meets some expectations with continual guidance and frequent reminders. | Meets most expectations with some guidance and several reminders. | Meets all expectations with minimal guidance and occasional reminders. | Meets all expectations independently, provides a positive influence. |

What are the Factors Affecting Achievement?

The factors affecting achievement have been grouped under four categories.

- *Confidence*
Welcomes new opportunities, takes risks, engages in learning, perseveres when tasks are challenging
This describes the student’s approach to learning: participating to the best of ability, willing to try new tasks and to try again if necessary, not afraid to make mistakes.
- *Collaboration*
Works well with others, is cooperative, and respectful
This focuses on interpersonal skills: the ability is to work well with others in small groups as well as in a large group setting, being a team player, having an attitude of respect for others and for property, contributing to a caring school climate.
- *Organization*
Plans and manages learning time, space, materials, and meets deadlines
This focuses on organizational skills: the ability to manage the day to day tasks, to collect and organize information, to plan to complete assignments on time, to be able to plan a task from start to finish, to make good use of time.
- *Responsibility*
Is punctual, is prepared, responds to feedback, makes appropriate choices.
This area reflects the behavior and attitude that a student displays in the classroom: arriving on time with an attitude that displays he/she is ready to learn, taking constructive feedback and using it to improve, responding positively to directions and expectations, accepting responsibility for own conduct.

How do I know how my child is doing in relation to others in the class?

It is important to know how your child is doing in relation to the outcomes that have been identified in each curriculum. It is important also to know how your child is progressing, the areas of strength and areas for continued growth. That is more valuable than a comparison to others in the class. The groups of students vary greatly from class to class, the curriculum outcomes stay constant.

Appendix A

Competencies Rubric

1 – Little Evidence

With help, understands parts of the simpler concepts and performs few of the simpler processes.

A student is having a lot of difficulty attaining the curriculum outcomes. The student may be working on the same outcome but using material that is at a lower level of difficulty than the grade level. The student may require a lot of repetition and individual attention to understand some of the simpler concepts. The student may concentrate efforts on fewer tasks to allow more time to be able to perform these simpler tasks.

Knowledge and Skills: The student is able to name, recognize, list, recall, restate, reproduce...

2 – Partial Evidence

Understands the simpler concepts and performs the simpler processes but has difficulty with more complex concepts and skills.

A student is working at attaining the curriculum outcomes using the material that is at the grade level. The student, with support, understands the content and is able to complete the tasks at a basic level.

Knowledge and skills: In addition to the knowledge and skills described in 1, the student is able to connect, organize, classify, describe, explain...

3 – Sufficient Evidence

Understands more complex concepts and is able to master complex processes that are explicitly taught.

A student is meeting all the outcomes for the grade level.

Knowledge and Skills: In addition to the knowledge and skills described in 1 and 2, the student is able to plan, construct, summarize, experiment, compare, draw conclusions, analyze...

4 – Extensive Evidence

Has a deep understanding of complex concepts and can apply skills beyond what was explicitly taught.

A student is able to apply knowledge and skills to other situations.

Knowledge and Skills: In addition to the knowledge and skills described in 1, 2, and 3, the student is able to infer, evaluate, justify, hypothesize, synthesize, create...

Appendix B

Factors Affecting Achievement Rubric

1 – Beginning

Meets some expectations with continual guidance and frequent reminders.

The student has difficulty understanding and responding to expectations that help create good learning situations. Expectations have to be reviewed frequently and the student still has difficulty meeting the expectations that are appropriate for a student in that age group.

2 – Developing

Meets most expectations with some guidance and several reminders.

The student understands most expectations that are conducive to a good learning situation. When reminded of expectations the student usually is able to meet the expectations that are appropriate for a student in that age group.

3 – Progressing

Meets all expectations with minimal guidance and occasional reminders.

The student has a good understanding of expectations and generally responds positively. Some reminders may still be needed to meet the expectations for a student in that age group.

4 – Established

Meets all expectations independently, provides a positive influence.

The student understands expectations without having to be told. The student does not need to be told or reminded of expectations to meet the expectations that are appropriate for a student in that age group. Others may be positively influenced by the example set by the student.