

April 28, 2020

## Lethbridge School Division Assessment Plan During Class Cancellation Due to COVID-19

### Background

During class cancellations due to COVID-19, teachers in Lethbridge School Division (LSD) have continued to provide quality learning opportunities for students. Students are engaging in creative activities with *learning* at the centre and assessment focused on feedback that encourages growth and enhances students' understanding of key concepts.

Assessment of student learning continues to be an integral part of the teaching and learning provided through this emergent and continually evolving platform. Due to a number of factors beyond our control or knowledge, we cannot assume the capacity for student learning at home to be consistent or equitable during the COVID-19 pandemic class cancellations. Assessment for the purposes of assigning a mark needs to recognize there are factors that lie outside the control of the school. Therefore, formative assessment, in the form of feedback, becomes the most important form of assessment as it focuses on students' strengths and areas for growth. To best support students during and through the transitioning of their learning environments, careful consideration has been given regarding how best to assess learning and report on students' academic progress.

In reference to the guidelines put forward by Alberta Education (see below), the following general principles will act to guide student assessment in Lethbridge School Division:

- Teachers will continue to prepare learning opportunities for students with tasks and assignments that draw from the key elements of the Alberta Programs of Study;
- Assessment will occur in many different forms that allow students to demonstrate what they are learning;
- Students will receive meaningful feedback on work from their teacher with a continued focus on providing continued learning opportunities;
- Students are expected to make every effort towards addressing the work that teachers are providing under the focus areas. It is important that every student makes their best effort in their at-home learning experiences;
- Teachers will continue to provide ongoing feedback and comments regarding student progress to inform students and parents;
- Gaps in learning that may impact ongoing success in the coming year due to a changed method of delivery and condensed curriculum focus for the last part of this school year, will be assessed and addressed by teachers. Teachers have always been, and will continue to be, skilled in providing students with the support necessary for ongoing success.

## Elementary June Report Cards

As per the direction of Alberta Education, the content at the elementary level emphasizes literacy and numeracy. Students in Elementary School will receive a regular report card in June. Where teachers believe they have enough evidence to provide an effort mark (i.e., **Very Good**, **Acceptable**, **Needs Improvement**) and/or an achievement mark (i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4) they will do so. In circumstances where teachers do not believe they have enough evidence, they will leave the effort and achievement areas blank and provide a comment. Teachers will provide parents with a description of the outcomes covered in each area as well as descriptive feedback regarding the level of accomplishment specific for each student. Where there is insufficient evidence to support an assessment at the end of the year that is different from Term 2, parents will be referred back to the mark in Term 2. No marks will be reduced from what was provided in the second term. Teachers may use the following comment in report cards where there is no change from Term 2 to Term 3 for subjects such as Science, Social Studies, Music, PE, Health, and French: *Due to pandemic COVID-19 class cancellations and the resulting change in delivery of instruction with a primary focus on literacy and numeracy, some curricular outcomes have not been formally assessed for Term 3. Please refer to Term 2 marks for subjects where no mark is available. In accordance with Alberta Education's expectations, Literacy and Numeracy content will be assessed as well as commented on anecdotally wherever possible.*

## Middle School June Report Cards

Students in Middle School have received numerical grades for Terms 1 and 2 on their report cards. For Term 3, teachers will provide parents with a description of the outcomes and concepts covered in each of the four core subjects (Math, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies) as well as descriptive feedback regarding the level of engagement and accomplishment specific for each student. No numerical grades will be provided for Term 3.

## High School June Report Cards

Students in High School will receive numerical grades on their June report cards. Teachers will communicate a revised assessment plan to students and parents by May 5, 2020 that includes processes for ongoing feedback as well as how the final grade will be determined.

As suggested by Alberta Education, all students registered in courses on track for completion will pass the course. Students will be supported with ongoing learning and assessment feedback as well as assessment plans structured to enhance grades. The semester culminating activities may include a final production, performance, project, essay, or exam. Teachers will have the professional autonomy to determine what cumulative activities are most appropriate for the subject discipline. Any cumulative activities will be outlined in the revised assessment plan.

*\*Note: The information provided in this guiding document is to be used unless a more detailed assessment directive from Alberta Education is issued prior to June 30, 2020.*

## **Provincial Guidelines**

The following provincial guidelines provided to school jurisdictions in response to the changed context of learning are being used to guide assessment practices in Lethbridge School Division.

“For all kindergarten to Grade 12 students, school authorities will offer at-home learning opportunities, either through online means or through other accommodations, such as course packages and telephone check-ins.”

“To identify what content needs to be delivered, teachers will evaluate curricular outcomes that have not yet been covered, prioritize remaining outcomes based on what is manageable for students working from home, and will plan specific tasks and projects for students.”

“Teachers will be responsible for assessing a student’s progress and assigning a final grade.”

**-News Release Education System Update – March 20, 2020**

“We trust the professionalism of teachers and education leaders to assess their students’ progress, no matter the learning environment, to determine suitable final grades.”

“Report cards might not be exactly how they were in the past, but there is an expectation for schools to still provide final report cards for this school year.”

**-AB Ed Continuity Plan QAs - March 20, 2020**

“Those [Grade 12 students] who are on track to receive 100 or more credits will still be eligible to graduate and receive a high school diploma.”

**-Information Sheet - Unallocated Credits - March 2020**

“Schools will continue to support planning for success in school and progression through courses and planning for their post-secondary or employment future.”

**-FAQ Unallocated Credits - March 2020**

“Student learning is reinforced when what is taught is reflected in what is assessed. The methods used in assessing student progress, as well as mastery of the subject matter, should be consistent with the outcomes that have been communicated to students.” p.4

“Flexible programming involves... using a wide variety of assessment strategies to monitor student progress in all areas of the programs of study.” p.5

**-Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12, September 2019**