

## *Context*

As part of the work of C2, a workload reduction initiative at the school-board level mandated by the Framework Agreement that was legislated by the Alberta government in 2013, the CBE and ATA agreed to a number of recommendations in the area of assessment and reporting:

1. The establishment of a jurisdictional congruity in expectations between school-based administrators to address the volume and content of Results Reporting comments.
2. Parameters for report card comments need to respect teacher professionalism and judgment.
3. Reasonable expectations need to be created such that report cards have greater consistency and system congruence in terms of expectations when it comes to report card comment writing.
4. Clear direction needs to be provided regarding interim reports. Setting clear parameters might ensure congruity between schools regarding teacher/parent expectations regarding written reports.

In response, the CBE updated its *Vision for Assessment and Reporting: Guiding Principles* document, among others, available online via the CBE Staff Insite (*Support Teaching & Learning >> Assessment >> Resources*).

Note that throughout discussions related to reporting, it is expected that principals and their staff *work together with the school community* to create a comprehensive approach to communicating individual student progress and achievement. They consider alignment with the CBE expectations and requirements for reporting and communicating student learning, and factors such as community needs, school culture, and teacher efficacy. (*Requirements, pg. 2*)

## *Summary of Changes*

### Comment Writing Style

Principals and their staff should meet to decide on/develop a standard writing style (eg: all teachers use point form/all teachers use full sentences) **OR** decide that writing style is at the discretion of each individual teacher. Comment banks are not to be used. (*Requirements, pg. 14*) Comments should be absent of complex educational terminology and be able to be easily understood by students and families. Comments reflect professional integrity in both content and structure (*Criteria for Report Card Comments, pg. 1*); editorial *suggestions* from other staff (e.g.: administration) may assist in writing accurate and descriptive comments. Colleagues must remember to respect each teacher's professional judgment and integrity.

### Volume of Comments

As part of a reasonable and balanced approach to comments, it is **not** intended that an elementary/junior high teacher comment on *every* course on *every* report card; schools will use one of three possible approaches (*Requirements, pg. 16-17*). See the guide for more detail.

A report card comment is as many words as is necessary to be clear, informative and understandable. Individual student considerations influence the length of a comment. The length of a report card comment does not determine its quality. (*Requirements, pg. 6*)

### Content of Comments

- Comments must be student-specific, strength-based and growth-oriented (*Requirements, pg. 6*).

- It is appropriate to embed comments related to student achievement in Results 3, 4, & 5 in EITHER course comments OR the general comments section *at least* once per year. Note that the *summative scales* are to be used twice per year. (*Requirements, pg. 6-7*)

### Learning Conferences

Learning conferences can take multiple formats, but are all focused on evidence of individual student learning, the student's strengths, areas for growth, learning strategies, and next steps for improvement. No guidelines have been set regarding a minimum or maximum number of learning conferences required in any given school year. (*Requirements, pg. 10-11*)

### Report Card Frequency

Report cards are sent home twice per school year for students in K-9 (once between Dec 1 – Jan 31, and once in June). High schools must issue report cards a minimum of two times per course for students in grade 10-12. For high schools, more can be issued at each school's discretion; likewise, the timing is at each school's discretion. (*Update, pg. 3*) We encourage high school administrators to adhere to the minimum requirement.

### IPP Communication

IPPs are provided to families within the first six weeks of school. For K to 9 students, evaluated IPPs are shared twice per year in conjunction with report cards (i.e.: once between December and January, and once in June). For 10 to 12 students, evaluated IPPs are shared a minimum of two times per course. (*Requirements, pg. 4*)

### Outcome Adjustments

Outcomes for some K-9 courses have been slightly adjusted. Chinese/German/Spanish Language & Culture 4 to 9, FSL K-3 and 4-9, Mathematics 1-9, Math K&E 8-9, ELA/Science/Social K, and Chinese/French/German/Spanish/ASL Language Arts K. (*Update, pg. 5*).

### Student Learning Updates/Interim Progress Reports

Interim Progress Reports are **not** to be used to communicate student achievement with parents. Report cards and IPPs are the only documents that communicate summative achievement. (*Requirements, pg. 8*)

Student Learning Updates that communicate student growth and progress between report cards **may** be used but are **not a system requirement** (*Requirements, pg. 8*). **Principals use their professional judgment to make informed final decisions with their staff and school communities** in determining the appropriateness of Student Learning Updates as part of their comprehensive communication plan (*Requirements, pg. 12*).

The *format* of Student Learning Updates is decided upon *collaboratively* between principals and staff (*Requirements, pg. 12*), but **do not include**: Percentages/indicators/raw scores, information related to student behaviour/attendance, or scores from diagnostic/standardized assessments. They **do** include: student-specific, meaningful, and significant information about ongoing learning and progress, student strengths, areas of growth, and next steps re the Program of Studies or IPP. They **may**, optionally, include: learning strategies, student voice/quotes, a summary of supports provided, progress related to Results 3, 4, and 5, ELL progress information. (*Requirements, pg. 13*) Writing style for comments is the same as noted above.