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## **1. GENERAL**

The Winnipeg School Division shall develop and maintain processes for the assessment of student performance which will provide information regarding individual student's progress, the identification of specific educational needs, and the provision of appropriate programming required to meet these needs. The Winnipeg School Division believes that the assessment and communication of student learning is a critical component of the educational process, and provides the foundation for meaningful dialogue between educators, families, and the broader community. This policy is aligned with, and reflects the expectations set by Manitoba Education.

## **2. PURPOSES FOR STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

The purposes for assessing and evaluating student performance shall be:

### **2.1 Programming for All Students**

Assessment of students is a continuous process, which occurs as an integral part of the teaching and learning process to guide instructional decisions and improve student learning. Appropriate educational programming shall reflect curriculum outcomes and/or an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

### **2.2 Information to Students and Parents/Guardians**

Information from the assessment of students shall be used to inform the student and his/her parents/guardians of the rate of progress in relation to curricula outcomes and/or an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

### **2.3 Improvement of Instructional Planning**

Information from the assessment of students shall be used to assist teachers and administrators in the planning and modification of educational programs and curricula for individuals or groups of students.

### **2.4 Program Evaluation**

Information from the assessment of students may be used to assist in determining the effectiveness of educational programs.

### **2.5 Information to Superintendents/Board of Trustees**

Information from the assessment of students may be provided to the Board of Trustees and the superintendents as a generalized indication of academic throughout the Division.

### **2.6 Information to General Public**

A broad range of information provided through the assessment of students in the Winnipeg School Division may be available for dissemination to the general public.

### **2.7 Allocation of Resources**

Information from the assessment of students shall be considered by the Superintendent's Department and the principals as one factor in allocating resources.

## **3. PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT**

The following principles of assessment shall form the basis for the development and implementation of local student assessment policies and procedures:

- (a) The primary goal of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning.
- (b) Assessment is a continuous process taking place as an integral part of the teaching and learning process.
- (c) Assessment takes into account the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains and the developmental level and learning style of the students.
- (d) Evidence of learning is used in identifying student strengths and to plan next steps in student programming; it also allows for informed decision-making at the classroom, school, and divisional level;



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- (e) Assessment and evaluation measure student progress toward the expectations/outcomes at the classroom, school, system, and Department level; this information is used to inform instruction;
- (f) Assessment and evaluation procedures are based on clearly stated expectations/outcomes, indicators/criteria and standards (where they exist) to ensure that the assessment and evaluation data are both accurate and valid - that is that they measure what they are intended to measure;
- (g) Assessments focus on process skills, as well as content knowledge;
- (h) Assessment and evaluation foster students' abilities to transfer knowledge, skills and values into life experiences.
- (i) Assessment and evaluation consider the abilities, needs, interests, learning styles, and multiple intelligences of students of both genders and reflect the rich diversity of our student population;
- (j) Assessment and evaluation involve the use of a variety of strategies, address both the process and product of learning, and are matched to the particular learning activity.

### **3.1 Feedback and Communication about Student Learning & Assessment**

Descriptive and timely feedback is provided to students on an on-going basis. Assessment shall be used to engage students in their own learning, while focusing on their individual growth and achievement as a learner:

- (a) Teachers shall establish and clearly communicate expectations regarding assignments;
- (b) Clear and reasonable timelines shall be outlined for students;
- (c) Descriptive feedback and support shall be provided to students to ensure on-going progress;
- (d) Protocols and consequences for late or missing work shall be clear to students and their families;
- (e) Consistent grading practices, related to curricula outcomes must be established at the classroom, school and division levels;
- (f) Students shall be provided with a learning environment that will support them in understanding the importance of academic responsibility and honesty. Students shall be provided with a learning environment that will prepare them for becoming responsible citizens;
- (g) The Winnipeg School Division recognizes that students vary in their abilities to learn, and in the rate at which they learn. Student promotion and retention will be reviewed on an individual basis with the school administrator(s), classroom teacher (s), student, and parents/guardians (for students under the age of 18).

## **4. DEFINITIONS**

### **4.1 Student Assessment**

Student assessment is a systematic process for gathering information from a variety of sources. Assessment may include classroom observations and structured conversations with students, reading inventories, writing folders/samples, performance testing, portfolios, teacher-developed tests, checklists/rating scales, oral/written examinations and assignments.

### **4.2 Evaluation**

Evaluation is the process of interpreting assessment information, determining to what extent students have attained the prescribed outcomes and standards, and identifying what knowledge and skills still need to be learned. The quality and merit of student response, product, or performance is judged using predetermined criteria.



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#### **4.3 Formative Assessment**

Formative assessment is an assessment procedure that a teacher uses during instruction to find out how well individual students or the whole class is learning the concepts presented and then making necessary adjustments to the program/instruction. Formative assessment is designed to:

- monitor student progress
- provide meaningful feedback on student achievement relative to learning outcomes
- improve instruction rather than assign marks to students

#### **4.4 Summative Assessment**

Summative Assessment is assessment/evaluation that is designed to provide information to be used in making judgements about a student's achievement toward the attainment of the prescribed learning outcomes at the end of a block of instruction. It is used primarily for assigning marks.

#### **4.5 Standards Tests**

Standards tests are achievement assessment instruments in which the test items are based on the specific learning outcomes that the student has been taught and compares a student's performance in relation to expected levels of performance (standards). Such assessment instruments are Criterion-referenced Tests.

#### **4.6 Standardized Tests**

Standardized tests are achievement assessment instruments given to a large number of students under similar circumstances that compares the scores of each student to the scores of those in the "norm group" (a nationwide sampling of students who have already been given the test by the publisher of the test). The test items may or may not reflect the specific learning outcomes that the student has been taught. Such assessment instruments are Norm-referenced Tests.

#### **4.7 Diagnostic Assessment**

Specialized Assessment is assessment designed to determine a student's aptitude, skill or knowledge in order to identify specific student needs prior to instruction.

#### **4.8 Student Progress**

The Winnipeg School Division ensures that each student receives instruction in terms of his/her current educational needs. As required by Manitoba Education, students should be placed in the grade that is appropriate for their curricular, cognitive, social and emotional learning needs. Decisions regarding promotion or retention of students is reviewed on an individual basis by the school principal. Protocol is established at the school level that specifies a process for resolving conflicts related to a student's progress, achievement, and retention/promotion.

##### **4.8.1 Early/Middle Years (K – Grade 8)**

The Winnipeg School Division endorses the concept of continuous progress to ensure that each student receives instruction in terms of his/her current educational needs. The organizational arrangement for such instruction shall be based on a graded system as set out by Manitoba Education. The following terms shall be used in reporting to parents/guardians to indicate the progress of a student at the early/middle years level:

(a) Promoted

The individual student has acquired the minimum expectations/outcomes needed to proceed to the next grade level.

(b) Continuing

In those cases in which a student has not acquired the minimum expectations/outcomes to proceed to the next grade level, the student shall continue with the program at that instructional level for part or all of the next school year.



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The program for students who are continuing in the early/middle years grades shall be adapted to provide for remedial services in the development of basic skills and for new experiences and opportunities to assist in the development of concepts.

Under normal circumstances, such continuation shall not typically exceed two (2) additional years in total at the grade K - 6 level and shall not continue for students at the Grade 7-8 level longer than the school year in which they attain their sixteenth birthday.

(c) Accelerated

In those cases in which a student has achieved the expectations/outcomes to proceed to the next grade level in less than a full school year and has met all other criteria for promotion, the program for the student shall provide for enrichment activities at the grade level assigned as well as opportunities for instruction in the skills and concepts at the next grade level.

A student who has been accelerated shall meet the requirements for each grade level.

(d) Placement

The term 'placement' shall be used when a student has not met the minimum expectations/outcomes for promotion for a particular grade level but is assigned to the next grade level based on the specific criteria established by the local school.

(e) Grade Expectations

The student has met the expectations/outcomes for the grade in the curriculum area as outlined by the Department of Education and Youth.

(f) Adapted

The program for the student in the specified subject area has been adapted to meet the particular learning needs of the student.

#### **4.8.2 Senior High (Grade 9 - Grade 12)**

- (a) A student shall earn one credit by undertaking and successfully acquiring the expectations/ outcomes of a course of study for which a minimum of 110 hours of instruction has been scheduled. Half credits may be earned in like manner (55-60 hours).
- (b) A student may challenge for a special credit for languages and the private music option as defined by Manitoba Education.
- (c) A student may challenge for a high school credit offered at a school by filing a notice of intent with the school principal and following the Division guidelines for *Challenge for Credit Option*.
- (d) The final decision on whether or not to grant credits rests with the principal, who consults with teachers, parents, and other specialists as appropriate.

### **5. REPORTING TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

**5.1** There shall be four reporting periods (November, January/February, March/April, and June) during the school year to parents/guardians of which at least two shall involve written reports. The written reports shall be provided in the second and final reporting periods and may be provided at other times.



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There shall be two reporting periods at the kindergarten level one of which shall involve a written report.

## **5.2 Written Reports**

Summative information is provided to parents/guardians through written reports in the following formats:

### **5.2.1 Elementary**

#### (a) Kindergarten

A written report to parents/guardians using the standardized report format established by the Division shall be provided in June and may be provided mid-year.

#### (b) Grades 1 - 5

The standardized report format for The Winnipeg School Division shall be used to report student performance at the Grades 1-5 levels. Key symbols shall be assigned to reflect the students' progress and performance related to program learning outcomes. It is expected that schools shall provide parents with other student progress information for clarification. This may include scope and sequence charts, reading continuum, portfolios, anecdotal comments, and work samples.

#### (c) Grade 6

The standardized report format for the Winnipeg School Division shall be used to report student performance at the grade 6 level.

The report card shall be supplemented by additional reporting information, including teachers' anecdotal comments and other information such as portfolios, skills lists and resource teacher reports.

### **5.2.2 Middle Years (Grades 7-8)**

The standardized report format for the Winnipeg School Division shall be used to report student performance at the grades 7-8 levels. Final marks (at the end of the year) shall be stated as percentage marks in each of the subject areas.

The report card shall be supplemented by additional reporting information including teachers' anecdotal comments, and other information such as portfolios, skills lists and resource teacher reports.

### **5.2.3 Senior Years (Grade 9 - Grade 12)**

The standardized report format for the Winnipeg School Division shall be used to report student performance at the senior years level.

A standardized system of percentage marks shall be used to report student performance in all secondary schools in the Winnipeg School Division.

The results from the provincial standards test at grade 12 shall be a percentage of the final marks in the subject areas tested but shall be reported separately on students' final report cards. At the grade 12 level the report cards shall include final marks obtained through classroom-based assessments and standards tests/provincial examinations. These two marks shall be combined and reported using the percentages of the final mark designated by Manitoba Education for the standards tests.

### **5.2.4 Special Education**

For those students for which an Individualized Education Plan is required the updated Current Academic Performance Profile shall be provided to the parent/guardian at the school's regular reporting periods.

Refer to IGBA-R Special Education Policy and Procedures.



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### **5.2.5 General**

The written reports shall clearly indicate if the assessment of performance is based on the regular program or if the program has been adapted to meet the individual student's needs.

Parents/guardians shall be informed in writing, generally by the third reporting period, if an alternative placement is being considered for the following year.

### **5.2.6 Final Report**

- (a) The final report shall have a clear indication of student progress as outlined in section 4.8.
- (b) If a student has been placed, parents/guardians shall be informed in writing of the basis on which the placement was made and that the student shall receive instruction at a grade level other than that assigned. The parents/guardians shall be advised of the Adapted Education Plan developed for the student who has been placed.

## **5.3 Parent/Teacher Conferences**

### **5.3.1 Early Years/Middle Years (N – Grade 8)**

Parent/teacher conferences shall be scheduled at least twice per school year and the dates of these conferences shall be well publicized.

### **5.3.2 Senior Years (Grade 9 – Grade 12)**

Parent/teacher conferences shall be scheduled at least once per school year/semester and the dates of these conferences shall be well publicized.

## **5.4 Supplementary Reporting**

Individual schools shall develop such additional reporting mechanisms beyond those outlined in Section 5.1 to ensure that parents/guardians are kept well informed regarding their child's progress.

## **6. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **6.1 Chief Superintendent**

The Chief Superintendent shall be responsible for the implementation of the policy and procedures on student assessment.

### **6.2 Superintendents of Schools**

The Superintendents of Schools shall be responsible for monitoring the student assessment and evaluation procedures used at the local school level. Superintendents shall also be responsible for responding to appeals from parents in regard to retention and promotion queries.

### **6.3 Principal**

The principal shall be responsible for:

- (a) Student assessment at the school level in accordance with provincial regulations and the policies and procedures of the Winnipeg School Division.
- (b) The development of procedures for student assessment, evaluation and reporting that are consistent with the Division's policies and procedures and providing a copy of these procedures to the appropriate superintendent.
- (c) The decisions surrounding retaining or promoting students at the Kindergarten to Grade 8 level, and the final decisions around the granting of credits at the Grades 9 – 12 level.
- (d) Ensuring that continuous assessment of students is conducted and that records of the same are maintained.



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- (e) Ensuring that there is a common understanding among all staff about equitable grading practices and the process for determining the final grade
- (f) Ensuring that appropriate and accurate information is provided to parents/ guardians on student progress.
- (g) Forwarding students' records upon request from the receiving school when a student transfers.
- (h) The assignment of students to grade levels/programs.
- (i) Informing the local school public about the school's student assessment and evaluation program.
- (j) Informing the parents/guardians about the requirements for promotion including the minimum skills and concepts required for successful completion.
- (k) Ensuring that adequate opportunities are provided each year, or semester, to explain to parents/guardians the program/ course objectives and assessment procedures;
- (l) Ensuring that if parents/guardians request additional assessment information on their child that all available data is reviewed and further assessment is conducted as required.

#### **6.4 Instructional Staff**

##### **6.4.1 Department Heads/Team Leaders**

Under the direction of the principal, department heads/team leaders shall be responsible for the supervision of the preparation of assessment and evaluation instruments for use within the department/team.

##### **6.4.2 Teachers**

Classroom teachers shall be responsible for:

- (a) Aligning instruction with curricular outcomes at the appropriate levels for the learner;
- (b) Establishing and communicating clear expectations regarding timelines for assignments, and protocols and consequences for late or missing work;
- (c) Ensuring that grading practices are consistent, and that student assessment at the classroom level is in accordance with provincial regulations and the policies and procedures of The Winnipeg School Division and the local school;
- (c) Ensuring that assessments are based on what was taught and how well the student has progressed toward meeting the objectives of the instruction;
- (d) Determining, through assessment techniques, procedures, or instruments, the appropriate level of instruction and instructional strategies;
- (e) Providing students with descriptive, timely feedback about their learning;
- (f) Ensuring that middle and senior years students are informed of the criteria for success and promotion;
- (g) Ensuring that all students are involved in the assessment process;
- (h) Maintaining records of information obtained through the assessment of student achievement;
- (i) Reporting to the parent/guardian the progress of the individual student as outlined in the procedures for student assessment.



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### **6.5 Professional Support Service Personnel**

The professional support service staff shall be responsible for:

- (a) assisting teachers and principals in developing and implementing student assessment procedures;
- (b) providing inservices on assessment strategies in the various curriculum areas;
- (c) interpreting the assessment results of the provincial standards tests and other data as required.

### **6.6 Students**

The students shall be responsible for:

- (a) their own learning with the assistance of their teachers;
- (b) being involved in the process of taking steps to improve their learning;
- (c) assisting in the development of assessment criteria, communicating with others about their learning and goal setting;
- (d) playing an active role in the assessment of their performance by being involved in the planning and implementation of assessment activities, where appropriate.

### **6.7 Parents/Guardians**

Parents/Guardians shall be responsible for:

- (a) becoming informed about what the students are expected to learn and actively supporting students' learning activities and experiences;
- (b) working in partnership with their children, their children's teachers, and the school personnel in monitoring their children's progress and achievement;
- (c) communicating to the appropriate school personnel any information which is pertinent to their child/children's learning.

## **7. ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS**

The Winnipeg School Division shall use a variety of instruments and techniques to provide data at the Division, school, and individual student level with regard to overall and individual performance levels of students as well as diagnostic information for specific program planning.

### **7.1 Provincial Standards Testing**

#### **(a) Purposes**

In accordance with the mandate of Manitoba Education, information on the general level of student achievement in the province is required by the province in order to:

- (i) provide clear, accurate information about each student's skills and abilities in relation to clearly articulated provincial curriculum/outcomes and standards;
- (ii) improve classroom instruction, student learning, classroom programs, and school effectiveness;
- (iii) provide schools, divisions, and districts with benchmarks to review student learning, local student assessment and evaluation policies and procedures, and educational standards;





- (iv) establish and measure a consistent set of achievement expectations in targeted grade levels and subject areas for students;
- (v) contribute to a better understanding of student achievement across the province;
- (vi) respond to strong public concerns for improved educational standards;
- (vii) enhance accountability to students, parents, and the community.

(b) Format and Frequency

- (i) The Winnipeg School Division shall participate in the Provincial Standards Testing Program according to the expectations determined by the Manitoba Education.
- (ii) The implementation of the Provincial Standards Testing Program will be monitored by the Superintendent's Department.

(c) Student Participation

The Chief Superintendent shall ensure that the Division complies with the expectations of Manitoba Education that all students in Grade 3, 7 and 8, and Grade 12 will participate in the Provincial Standards Testing Program within the parameters outlined by Manitoba Education.

## **7.2 Division-Wide Assessment Programs**

### **7.2.1 Comprehensive Assessment Program**

(a) Purposes

- (i) To implement a comprehensive student assessment program for nursery through grade six children in the Winnipeg School Division.
- (ii) To identify the strengths and areas of difficulty of all children through the early school years.
- (iii) To provide information at the school and division level on program requirements.
- (iv) To provide appropriate programming to meet the needs of children through nursery to grade six.

(b) Format and Frequency

The Comprehensive Assessment Program assesses children's development in Language Arts, Mathematics, Movement, Social-Emotional, Hearing. Assessments are conducted in English and, at specified levels, in French. C.A.P. is conducted at the beginning of each school year and/or when a student first registers in the Winnipeg School Division.

(c) Student Participation

All students in nursery through Grade six with the exception of those in Individualized programs, will participate in the Comprehensive Assessment Program.

### **7.2.2 Grade 8 Common Exams**

As a component of the ongoing assessment of student performance, written examinations/performance tests will



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be developed in Grade 8 Language Arts and Mathematics which are common to all students across the Division and administered under the supervision of the department head/team leader at the local school. These examinations/performance tests will be based on the curriculum objectives and will include test items on the objectives that have been taught up to the date of the testing.

The final exam will make up 25% of the student's final mark.

(a) Purposes

- (i) To provide clear, accurate information about each student's skills and abilities in relation to the curriculum outcomes;
- (ii) To use the information from the examinations to improve classroom instruction, student learning, and program effectiveness;
- (iii) To provide the student with experiences in the writing of examinations;
- (iv) To assist teachers in using assessment and evaluation procedures consistent with the expectations of the curriculum;
- (v) to provide information to the school, parents, and the Division on the overall achievement levels of grade 8 students prior to entry into the credit system.

(b) Format and Frequency

- (i) The examinations will be developed by a committee of teachers from across the Division.
- (ii) The examinations will be administered once a year at a time to be determined by the Division.

(c) Student Participation

All grade 8 students with the exception of those in Modified or Individualized programs, will participate in the examinations.

### **7.3 Individual School Assessment Programs**

#### **7.3.1 Achievement Testing Programs**

Individual schools may use commercially prepared standardized achievement tests for individual students or groups of students.

(a) Purpose

Within the overall purposes of student assessment as outlined in Section 2, individual schools may choose to use standardized tests:

- (i) To determine gains in student achievement;
- (ii) To provide general information to be used in program planning.

(b) Format and Frequency

- (i) Each school shall determine the format and frequency of testing;



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(ii) If group testing is to be undertaken, the school shall inform the appropriate Superintendent of Schools of the proposed format and frequency of the tests prior to such testing;

(iii) School-based standardized testing programs shall be monitored by the Superintendent's Department.

(c) Student Participation

Student participation in the school-based standardized testing programs shall be determined by the school.

### **7.3.2 Diagnostic Testing Programs**

(a) Purpose

Individual schools may use commercially prepared diagnostic tests with individual students or groups of students.

(i) To provide in-depth diagnosis of learning strengths and weaknesses;

(ii) To provide information to be used in program planning.

(b) Format and Frequency

As determined by the teacher in consultation with the Principal.

(c) Student Participation

As determined by the teacher in consultation with the Principal.

### **7.3.3 Teacher-Prepared Assessment Programs**

Classroom teachers shall develop student assessment instruments and techniques to be used with individuals or groups of students.

(a) Purposes

(i) To provide information on individual student learning strengths and weaknesses;

(ii) To provide information on student progress as related to the objectives of the curricula;

(iii) To provide information to be used in program planning.

(b) Format and Frequency

On an ongoing basis as outlined in the local school assessment procedures (Section 6.3 b).

(c) Student Participation

As determined by the teacher.

### **7.3.4 Examinations - Secondary**

#### **A. Middle Years (Grades 7-8)**

As a component of the ongoing assessment of student performance, written examinations/performance tests



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which are common to the entire grade level will be developed and administered under the supervision of the department head/team leader. These examinations/ performance tests will be based on the curriculum/learning outcomes and will include test items on the objectives/outcomes that have been taught up to the date of the testing. A minimum of 10% to a maximum of 35% of the student's final mark will be assigned based on this written examination/performance test.

Where a given subject is assessed by a Division common exam at the grade 8 level, the percentage assigned by the Division will replace the above requirement.

(a) Purposes

The purposes of examinations at the middle years (Grades 7-8) level are:

- (i) To foster the development of study skills;
- (ii) To assess student achievement in the subject area, in relation to curricular outcomes;
- (iii) To provide experience in the writing of examinations;
- (iv) To assist in the program planning for teachers.

(b) Format and Frequency

- (i) Each school shall determine the format of the examination/ performance test;
- (ii) An examination/performance test that is common to the grade level shall be administered at least once a year at a time to be determined by the school.

(c) Student Participation

All students in regular programs will participate in these examinations/performance tests.

**B. Senior High (Grade 9 – Grade 12)**

As a component of the ongoing assessment of student performance, written examinations/performance tests will be developed which are common to all students registered in the courses and administered under the supervision of the department head/team leader.

These examinations/performance tests will be based on the curriculum objectives and will include test items on the objectives that have been taught up to the date of the testing.

A minimum of 20% to a maximum of 35 of the student's final mark will be assigned to this examination.

Where a given subject is assessed under the Provincial Standards Testing Program at the Grade 12 level, the percentage assigned to the provincial exam by Manitoba Education will replace the above requirement.

(a) Purposes

The purposes of examinations at the senior high level are:

- (i) To foster the development of study skills;
- (ii) To assess student achievement in the subject area;



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- (iii) To provide experience in the writing of examinations;
  - (iv) To assist in program planning for teachers.
- (b) Format and Frequency
- (i) Each school shall determine the format of the examinations;
  - (ii) The examinations will be administered at least once a year (or semester) at a time to be determined by the school.
- (c) Student Participation
- All students who are registered in the course will participate in the examination.