



# **Guide to Student Assessment and Achievement 2023-2024**

## **Grades 10-12**

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## **Guide to Student Assessment and Achievement 2023-2024**

In Black Gold School Division, we recognize that successful student learning relies on a partnership between students, teachers, parents/guardians, and school administration. We believe that regular communication between all parties is an essential component of student assessment.

This guide will help you understand:

- responsibilities of teachers, students, parents/guardians, and school administration;
- how and when we will tell you about your child's progress and learning;
- how we assign grades/marks to your child;
- how your child is assessed; and
- the steps we take if your child's work is missing or not finished.

### **What is assessment?**

In this guide, we use the terms assessment and evaluation to describe what students have learned, and how well they have learned it. Assessment and evaluation aren't just about tests and grades.

Student assessment is ongoing and cumulative. Teachers gather information about what students know and can demonstrate to the teacher based on the Alberta programs of study (curriculum) and, when applicable, the Instructional Support Plan (ISP). Marks are only earned through assessment of learning outcomes achieved in assignments, activities, projects, portfolios, performances, and tests. Teachers will not use your child's attendance, behaviour, effort, attitude, homework completion or work habits to decide on their grades/marks, unless it is included in the Alberta programs of study for a specific subject.

To determine a student's current level of achievement in relation to curriculum, teachers use a variety of tools. Conversations, observations, and student work are just some of the ways teachers discover students' strengths and where they might need extra help. This helps teachers shape their lesson plans and guide how they will explain a concept, to help every student meet their learning goals.

The activities also help inform the teacher's understanding so that they may assign each student a grade, course, or level of programming. All of this allows teachers to give you a clear and accurate picture of your child's progress in school.

## Screening Assessments

All Black Gold schools administer universal screening assessments for reading, writing and math at the beginning of the year to help teachers identify those students who may be at risk for not meeting grade-level learning outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy. The goal is to support success for every student and screening assessments help teachers check for indicators that a child may have some gaps in their learning and identify interventions that will help to reduce these gaps so students can be more successful.

Screening assessments in the classroom work the same way that an eye screening from a doctor does. In an eye screening, your child is asked to read the eye chart. If the results show their eyesight is fine, they are not screened again for a year. If the results show that your child has some trouble seeing, the doctor will likely suggest some strategies to reduce eye strain or prescribe glasses to help your child see better.

Reading screeners consist of three short assessments, two to three minutes each and the writing screener has students write a short story on a given topic (one class period). The math screener takes one class period. These screeners help teachers identify students who may have gaps in their understanding (based on material from the previous year) and are only used to see if your child is on track; they do not count for marks.

Teachers use this information to help plan their instruction (including lesson planning and grouping students) and determine which interventions are best for each student. Like the eye doctor, even though all children are given screening assessments, only the students with identified learning gaps will receive interventions. Teachers will re-administer screening assessments with the identified students periodically to check that the interventions are working.

Black Gold Screening Assessment Plan		
September	January - February	May - June
<b>English Reading:</b> Gr. 1-10 <b>French Reading:</b> Gr. 1-10 <b>English Writing:</b> Gr. 2-9 <b>French Writing:</b> Gr. 2-9 <b>English Math:</b> Gr. 1-10	<b>English Reading and Math:</b> <i>Gr. 1-9 Only those students who were identified below grade level in Sept.</i> Gr 10 – semester 2 courses	<b>English Reading and Math:</b> <i>Gr. 1-9 Only those students who were identified below grade level in Jan./Feb.</i>

## Supporting Student Success

As a parent or guardian, you are your child's first teacher. We know that understanding how your child is doing in school is important to you. This guide will help you understand student assessment in your child's school. If you have any questions, contact the school or make an appointment to see your child's teacher or Principal.

**You can support your child's learning** (*Education Act, Section 32*) **by:**

- working in partnership with school staff;
- providing a quiet place for your child to study at home;
- keeping current with your child's progress online through the Power School Portal.
- staying informed and staying connected with school staff. This includes reading newsletters and other school materials; and
- participating in parent-teacher conferences.

**Teachers will help your child succeed** (*Education Act, Section 196*) **by:**

- providing programming that is suitable for your child;
- providing many opportunities and diverse ways for students to show what they know;
- giving students who have missed important assessments and activities the chance to complete the work, as specified in the course outline;
- providing a course outline for all courses that clearly explains what is expected of students and how student work will be graded/marked;
- keeping detailed, accurate notes describing your child's successes and challenges;
- communicating with you regularly about your child's progress and achievement; and providing opportunities for you to be involved in your child's learning.

**Students have a responsibility for their own learning** (*Education Act, Section 31*) **and are expected to:**

- come to school every day and on time;
- finish their assignments, projects, and tasks to the best of their ability;
- participate in activities to celebrate learning;
- demonstrate that they are learning; and
- take advantage of chances offered to revise or redo assignments or tests so they can show growth in their knowledge and skills.

## Our Communication Plan for Reporting Progress

### PowerTeacher Pro Electronic Gradebook:

All teachers will use PowerTeacher Pro to record and communicate student assessments and provide comments to parents/guardians and students. Students and parents can access current marks at any time.

- Schools will provide parents with instructions on the school's website on how to access PowerSchool Parent Portal, view student grades and learning outcomes;
- If you have questions about your child's mark at any time, please contact your child's teacher to discuss.
- If parents/guardians do not have access to technology to view student grades, please contact the school to make arrangements to view your child's grade.
- If you would like assistance in accessing the PowerSchool Parent Portal, please contact the school office at 780-929-6282
- Marking turn-around will vary as it is often dependent on the assignment and, in some cases, the subject area. Assignments may be returned anywhere from the next day to three weeks.
- Teacher gradebooks will be kept up to date on a regular basis and in conjunction with the timelines communicated in course outlines.
- Student assignments will be posted in PowerSchool within three days of the collection of the assignments.

### Reporting Periods:

#### Semester 1:

Quarter One: October 27, 2023

Semester 1 Final Marks: January 30, 2024

#### Semester 2:

Quarter Three: April 5, 2024

Semester 2 Final Marks: June 28, 2024

**Formal Reports Issued:**

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- Formal Reports will be issued online through PowerSchool.
- If a student has an ISP, it will be included as part of the formal report. Paper copies will be made available upon request.

**Conferences:**

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Parent communication is important and parents are always welcome to contact their child's teacher at any time during the school year to discuss their child's progress. Each school will provide a minimum of two separate opportunities per year for their parents to meet with teachers to discuss student achievement and progress. The intention of these conferences is to celebrate growth in learning and set future goals.

The dates for these parent/teacher conferences are:

1. Semester 1: Tuesday, November 7, 2023 (in-person) & Wednesday, November 8, 2023 (online) - 4:30 pm - 8:00 pm
2. Semester 2: Thursday, April 11, 2024 (4:30 pm - 8:00 pm)

Parents/Guardians can book appointments online by following the instructions sent out by the school prior to each interview session.

**Instructional Support Plan (Gr 10 – 12):**

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For students who need specialized services and supports, the ISP, is a working document that is developed within the first two months of the school year. The ISP is a record of specific goals for a child. It provides information about accommodations and strategies a child is using to succeed. It is reviewed a minimum of three times per year. The student and the guardian are expected to provide input into the ISP.

An ISP, is updated as students show growth and learning. Depending on the program, ISP conferences will take place in conjunction with the first round of parent-teacher interviews or earlier as appropriate.

- ISP planning input forms will be sent home during the first week of school.
- ISP's for current students will be shared by September 30th
- ISP's for new students will be shared by October 15th
- A completed signature page will be collected and stored at the school.
- Reviews will be completed at the end of each semester (end of January and end of June)

## English Language Learners:

For students learning English, the EAL (English as an Additional Language) Proficiency Benchmarks are used to measure a student's English abilities in four areas: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Teachers use this tool to help them plan lessons and communicate with you about your child's progress in learning English.

In addition to student progress reports and/or conferences, teachers may share the student's ESL Proficiency Benchmark. Teachers will inform parents/guardians of goals, accommodations or supports provided to students which may be associated with the ESL Proficiency Benchmark.

## Grades/Marks and Codes

To decide on your child's grade/mark at the end of a reporting period, teachers use evidence of what your child has learned and their professional judgment. All marks are cumulative. When percentages are used, 47.5 and up will be rounded to 50 as a final grade only.

At ESBCHS we use the following Grading Scale(s):

Grades 10-12 Grading Scale		
Grades 10-12 Grading Scale for ALL subjects		
Every course uses this grade scale		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every course uses % for summative assessments.</li> <li>• Teachers can include Grades 10-12 Formative Assessment Letter Scale for formative assessment only.</li> </ul>		
Grades 10-12 Formative Assessment Letter Scale		
This scale can be used by any teacher who wishes to record formative assessment - these marks will not count towards a final grade.		
Scale Label	Scale	Description
E	Exemplary	Exemplary and consistent achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows in-depth understanding and achieves outcomes independently.
P	Proficient	Skillful and consistent achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows substantial understanding with occasional support.
S	Satisfactory	Basic and/or inconsistent achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows adequate understanding with some support needed
L	Limited	Partial achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows inaccurate understanding and ongoing support is needed.
I	Insufficient	Insufficient evidence to assess.

## Missing or Incomplete Student Work:

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Principals will ensure that teachers communicate with parents/guardians promptly and regularly about missing or incomplete student work. When your child has missing or incomplete work, we will do **one or more** of the following:

- provide student with additional time to complete the assignment
- assign an alternative assignment
- assign student to complete the activity at lunchtime or after school
- provide targeted tutorials
- contact student's parent/guardian
- meet with parents/guardians, teachers, students and administration to emphasize consequences if work is not completed
- create a behavioural contract between the student and the teacher
- assign an **"incomplete (INC)"** which awards a mark of 0 on the assignment.

When your child has missing or incomplete work, they are encouraged to take the initiative and make arrangements with their teacher to complete the missing work. This may include:

- teacher/student discussions
- contact with parent/s guardians
- student request for drop-in support
- student attending the missed assignment/exam room
- peer tutoring in academic support center or teacher's classroom
- targeted tutorials through subject/department teachers

If your child is away from school for an extended period of time, other than vacation, please contact their teacher/administrator. ESBCHS has an [Extended Leave Policy](#) that can be viewed under Students → Student Policies on the ESBCHS website. As partners in your child's learning, we can work together to design a plan that best meets your child's needs including homework, alternate assignments or other strategies that will support them through their course. Homework can be requested through the school office for extended illness etc. As well, students can access Google Classroom, or the teacher's preferred digital methods, for specific assignment details.

## Vacations:

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It is the expectation that students will attend school on scheduled school days and take holidays according to the school year calendar. In the event that parents choose to take their child out of school at times other than school holidays, teachers will not provide work for that time. In situations where a teacher has an online forum for students to join, such as Google Classroom, Moodle etc., students can access class readings and submit assignments as pre-arranged with their teacher. Any missed work or tests will be made up when the student returns, at the teacher's discretion. Please see the [ESBCHS Extended Leave Policy](#) under Students → Student Policies on the ESBCHS website.



## Types of Assessments

Student assessment relies on both assessment for learning (formative) and assessment of learning (summative). While it is crucial that students' work, abilities and progress be tracked and assessed throughout the entire learning process, it is also important that teachers have evidence of what the students have learned during that process.

### Formative Assessments




Formative assessment provides an ongoing exchange of information between students and teachers about student progress but it does not provide marks/grades. It is also referred to as "assessment for learning" as it is intended for the student and teacher to know what the student's strengths are and where they can still improve. Many of these activities help students increase what they know and practice their skills. Teachers also use this information to adjust their teaching, give your child feedback to help them improve and prepare your child for summative assessment.








### Summative Assessments

Summative assessment is the evidence used to determine grades/marks and future directions for students. This is also known as assessment of learning. Your child will have many opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of learning outcomes and receive grades/marks for their work. These summative assessments are evidence of students learning and come in many forms; assignments, performance tasks, projects, performances, quizzes, tests, videos, etc. Using their judgment as professionals, teachers make decisions and give grades/marks to your child. They base these decisions on what they've seen your child do (observations), discussions they've had with your child (conversations) and the work your child has completed (products).

### Additional Mark Codes and definitions:

In addition to the marks from the grade scale, the following mark codes may be used for individual assignments.

<b>Other Icons</b>		
<b>Icon</b>	<b>Label</b>	<b>Description</b>
	Missing	Assignment was not handed in. Please contact your teacher to discuss.
	Collected	Work has been collected but no mark will be assigned (often used for formative assessment).
	Late	Assignment is late or was handed in late. Please contact your teacher to discuss.

	Incomplete	Assignment is not complete. Please contact your teacher to discuss.
	Exempt	Student is exempt from this assignment.
	Absent	Student was absent. Please contact your teacher to discuss.
	Comment	Click the icon to read a comment on this assignment from the teacher.
	Excluded	This assignment is not required from this student.
<b>ISP</b>	ISP	The student has an Instructional Support Plan.
	Has Description	Click the icon to see the description of the assignment.
	Outcomes/Standards	Click the icon to see the learning outcomes assessed by this assignment.

## How We Determine Student Grades/Marks

### Course Outlines:

Teachers will provide a course outline to all students, parents/guardians within the first two days of the course. This will highlight the topics and units that students will be learning and explain how student grades are determined for the course. Please contact your child's teacher(s) if you do not receive one.

### Reluctant Zeros:

Students are expected to take ownership of their own learning. If they fail to complete a daily task or assignment, they must talk to their teacher about catching up on the assignment. If students do not take the opportunity to complete the assignment, they may receive a zero.

### Parameters:

1. A reluctant zero policy will apply to daily tasks and assignments. Major projects and evaluations are expected to be completed by all students in a timely manner. Parent and

school administrator communication will be utilized for students who do not complete major evaluative tasks that greatly affect their marks. Please note the following:

- Students will receive a zero if they skip class in which a formal assessment such as a quiz or exam occurs
  - Students who are absent from a formal assessment will have the opportunity to make arrangements with their teacher to complete the assessment if they were absent for legitimate reasons, such as illness, as confirmed by their parent/guardian
2. Students can access their marks through PowerSchool or printouts from their teacher to keep track of their incomplete assignments.
  3. Students may only work to complete tasks in the current reporting period. Once report cards are issued, marks are locked and zeros will be reluctantly awarded.
  4. Teachers will consider the reasons for absences before awarding a zero. Excused absences may be considered as a reason to take in work beyond a scheduled due date.
  5. If a teacher feels that a student is overusing the reluctant zero policy, he/she will contact a parent to discuss work ethic and homework habits of the student.
  6. If a teacher determines that a student is abusing the policy, the privilege can be rescinded by the teacher.

“Would we ever give a zero? Absolutely,” said Michael Hauptman, superintendent of EICS. “But we call them reluctant zeros. What that means is, we give them because we’ve done everything possible to support that student to be successful, and it really is about assessment, where giving a zero on the first time a child fails could be considered to be — let’s just say, would we be doing our job?”

“We recognize that there does come a point in time where, yup, we have to give a zero because the student is just not responding to intervention or choosing to accept assistance, so we can’t leave it blank,” Hauptman said. “It’s a policy of supporting students first and reluctant zeros second, not first,” Hauptman added. “To say that you’d never give a zero would be incorrect, but to say that the first time a child fails, you’d give a zero, is also not appropriate, either. It’s a balanced approach between assessment versus consequence.”

### **Academic Integrity:**

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Cheating is not acceptable. Plagiarism is the use of another’s words or ideas and the presentation of them as though they were one’s own. Acts of plagiarism might include, but are not limited to:

1. Using words or ideas from any source without proper documentation and/or if you were not supposed to use a source. (Students may not use any outside sources unless explicitly told to do so.)
2. Using the work of another student (e.g. copying an assignment partially or completely).
3. Using excessive editing suggestions of another student, teacher, parent, or any other editor.
4. Using AI generated material and presenting it as your own.

**To submit work that is not entirely your own is plagiarism.** The consequences are a zero for the assignment/exam, documentation in the student discipline system, and potentially a suspension. The borrower and, if applicable, the lender will both be held responsible.

### **Grades/Marks Appeal Process:**

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To appeal a grade/mark given on an assignment/test or for a final mark, students and parents/guardians are encouraged to talk to the teacher within 10 school days of receiving the grade. If they can't resolve the appeal with the teacher, they should contact the principal who will make the final decision. The principal's decision is final.

### **Final Exams 2023-2024:**

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Students should not have planned absences during exam times. Consult the school website for a more detailed final exam schedule as each semester progresses.

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#### **Semester 1:**

Diploma Exams: Wednesday, January 10<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday, January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Final Exam Week including Diplomas and all other class finals\*\* - Friday, January 19<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday, January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024

\*\*Classroom final exams are non-government, school-based exams developed by classroom teachers in accordance with the assessment development of our school's respective Departments.

#### **Semester 2:**

Diploma Exams: Tuesday, June 11<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday, June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Final Exam Week including Diplomas and all other class finals\*\* - Friday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, - Wednesday, June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024

\*\*Classroom final exams are non-government, school-based exams developed by classroom teachers in accordance with the assessment development of our school's respective Departments.

\*\*\*Please note there are no diploma or classroom final exams on National Indigenous Peoples Day - Friday, June 21, 2024. This will be a tutorial day and teachers will be available to support students.

### **ESBCHS Exam Accommodations Policy:**

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According to the Alberta Education Diploma Exam Bulletin, the "condition for students to use accommodations to write provincial assessments is regular use of the accommodation for classroom instruction and assessment." (page 72, Diploma Exam Bulletin September 2019)

Therefore, in order for students at ESBCHS to access accommodations to write school-based final exams as well as Provincial Diploma Exams, students must:

- practice regular use of the accommodation for classroom instruction and assessment.
  - at minimum, a student must regularly access accommodations on Major Assessments throughout the semester in which the course is taken
    - Major Assessments are defined as Chapter Tests, Units Tests and Major Writing Assessments

In addition, parents/guardians and the individual student will be required to sign a school form to confirm the following:

- their understanding of the above criteria
- the accommodations available to the student
- the courses for which the accommodations are applicable
- the student's intent to accept or decline accommodations

*\*These forms must be completed by the end of the first month of a semester*

If after the first three months of a semester a student has not regularly accessed their accommodations as defined above, they will forfeit their access to these accommodations for the final exams. Semester deadlines for accessing accommodations regularly are December 1st in Semester one and May 1st in Semester two.

According to Alberta Education, "the decision rendered by school personnel is official and final and parents/guardians of students under the age of 18 must be informed of the decision. Parents/guardians must contact the school authority should they wish to dispute the decision rendered. Students must understand, and adhere to, the accommodation and provision administration directives, rules and procedures." (Diploma Exam Bulletin September 2019)

### **The Grade 12 Diploma Examinations Program:**

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The Grade 12 Diploma Examinations Program

- certifies the level of individual student achievement in selected Grade 12 courses
- helps maintain province-wide standards of achievement
- reports individual and group results

For all 30-level diploma courses, the school mark will be weighted at 70% of the final mark, and the diploma examination mark will be weighted at 30% of the final mark. To pass a diploma course, a student must earn a final 'blended' mark of at least 50%.

More information about the Diploma Examination Program is available online at <https://www.alberta.ca/diploma-exams.aspx>.