



Parents as partners in learning

Moving from reporting to informing.

Providing parents with ongoing information on student progress that reflects high expectations, rigorous standards and clearly defined learning targets.

Six ways that assessment has changed

1

It used to be that teachers chose what they were going to teach...

Now, teachers teach, assess and evaluate the curriculum, based on learning outcomes.

The Saskatchewan curriculum documents are broad and deep, addressing the broad areas of learning as well as specific learning outcomes. <http://www.curriculum.gov.sk.ca/>

2

It used to be that the fastest to “get it done” won the race...

Now, students have until the end of the course to learn.

Curricula across this country allow students until the end of the term, the semester or the course to achieve the learning outcomes. In other words, our curriculum does not ask “How fast?”, but rather it poses the question: “to what degree of quality and proficiency?”

3

It used to be that test scores and results from quizzes were sufficient evidence of learning...

Now, teachers also observe and listen while students demonstrate and apply what they are learning.

For example, we cannot determine whether a student engages safely in a scientific investigation by giving them a test. We need to watch them in action. Nor can we determine whether a student can engage in classroom discussion by having them write a paragraph about it.

4

It used to be that all students had to show what they had learned in the same way and at the same time...

Now, students have more options to show what they have learned – everything a student does, says and makes is evidence of learning.

The curriculum describes the learning target but not the way that students should get there. For example, a student should not be penalized if she can solve a mathematical problem but has difficulty describing the solution in perfectly written sentences.

5

It used to be that external examinations were the most important source of assessment evidence...

Now, students and teachers continuously collect evidence of learning. The teacher’s informed professional judgment is part of the final evaluation.

We look to our teachers and their understanding of the curricula that they teach, of the ways in which students learn, and of what proficiency and quality look like.

6

It used to be that percentage grades were used to rank and sort students to determine – or limit – their choices for careers or post-secondary education...

Now, students are accountable to the goals and outcomes of the Provincial curriculum.

Teachers are increasingly using four-point grading scales, rubrics and self-assessment to determine the student’s degree of proficiency.