

Redesigning Assessment

The redesign of assessment will bring coherence to curriculum, assessment, and communicating student learning. Assessment and curriculum are interconnected. The approach used to redesign assessment will ensure that all forms of assessment and evaluation are aligned with changes in curriculum. Assessments will continue to be rigorous and based on learning standards evaluating student achievement, core competencies, essential learning and literacy and numeracy. However, more flexibility will be introduced into the assessment process wherever possible.

Supporting ongoing assessment

Directions for ongoing classroom assessment will emerge through a variety of strategies. As teachers work with the new curriculum and competencies this year, assessment will emerge from good practice of BC educators, guided by the sound principles of quality assessment. Reporting legislation, policy and guidelines will also be updated to reflect changing emphases and overall transformation directions.

“aligning our assessments to our curriculum is the only way to ensure that assessments yield accurate information about our students' levels of proficiency. Knowing what we're assessing should always drive our assessment methods. Balanced assessment isn't about favouring one type of assessment; it's about favouring the assessment method that is the most accurate fit for the curricular content or competency being assessed. This is especially true at the classroom level where we know assessment (and the subsequent descriptive feedback) can move learning forward, lead to greater student engagement, and allow teachers to make pinpoint decisions about what comes next.” Tom Schimmer

Principles of quality assessment

The following principles provide a foundation for the development of classroom assessment, evaluation and communication of student learning. These principles are intended to provide teachers with guidance for classroom assessment that aligns with the redesigned curricula.

Quality assessment

- is fair, transparent, meaningful and responsive to all learners
- focuses on all three components of the curriculum model – knowing, doing, understanding
- provides ongoing descriptive feedback to students
- is ongoing, timely, specific, and embedded in day to day instruction
- provides varied and multiple opportunities for learners to demonstrate their learning
- involves student in their learning
- promotes development of student self-assessment and goal setting for next steps in learning
- allows for a collection of student work to be gathered over time to provide a full profile of the learner and learning
- communicates clearly to the learner and parents where the student is, what they are working towards and the ways that learning can be supported

Throughout the learning process, teachers and students intentionally gather evidence to inform teaching and learning. The teacher creates rich tasks, engages with the students in setting criteria, establishes exemplars, and leverages the power of questioning to allow for ongoing, timely, descriptive feedback to the student. This process assists students in moving forward toward their learning targets and goals. Students are encouraged to reflect and self-assess to build important meta-cognitive skills. Personalization lends itself to assessment as learning, where students participate in the setting of criteria and the design of inquiries, and self- and peer-assessment.

Teachers document student learning over time using collections of student work and demonstrations to create a profile of his or her strengths, areas of growth, and areas for further development. Students, teachers, and parents, use criteria and rubrics to determine the standards met and the level of performance attained. Through multiple means and varied strategies, the students learning is made visible, and their successes celebrated. In this process, new learning goals and targets are established and ways to support the students learning described.

During the 2015/16 school year, research, development and consultations will take place with educators and parents all leading to new assessment principles, guidelines and reporting orders for implementation in the fall of 2016.

Provincial Assessment

To align with curriculum changes, evolution in provincial assessment is underway. Following the recommendations received from the Advisory Group on Provincial Assessment (AGPA), a new elementary assessment is in the initial stages of development.

A working group on provincial assessment is now redesigning the specifications for BC's elementary assessment program based on AGPA directions. An assessment description and model will be shared with the field as soon as possible.

In the fall of 2015, a second AGPA report (AGPA II) was received, providing recommendations about BC's future provincial assessment program at the secondary level. The AGPA II report carries forward the general directions outlined in the first AGPA report. Both AGPA reports will inform decisions and directions for new assessment programs for BC.

Provincial assessments will continue to be developed by BC educators and be designed to complement and support teachers' ongoing assessments. The province plans to use a more transparent and inclusive process for these developments and build in more student choice and flexibility into their design.