

October 9, 2015

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Effective and clear communication of student learning has always been an important aspect of public schooling. Traditionally, this communication took the form of a standard report card with comments and letter grades sent home three times per year. This practice has remained fairly constant for the last 70+ years. Clearly the world has changed dramatically, and many new and exciting tools are now available to us. One thing that has not changed is the goal of providing parents and students with authentic, informative communication about their child's progress and learning.

Today, our provincial curriculum is designed to engage the passions and interests of our students to better meet their personalized needs. With these changes, quality assessment practices and communication of student learning takes on increased significance. The tools we now have to communicate allow for more responsive ways to keep parents informed and involved in their child's learning. It is important to provide evidence of how well each student is learning and what area(s) require additional attention. It is also imperative that students learn to recognize and understand their own learning.

Our goal is to design a reporting system that engages students and parents in the process. It is no longer just about the three reporting periods or the report card, but more about how to authentically communicate student learning and support learners in reaching their potential.

With this goal in mind, elementary schools in Surrey have been exploring a variety of methods and formats to communicate and report student learning to parents. Presently, three options are available for teachers:

- **Traditional report card:** Some teachers will continue to use the traditional report card, either by itself or in combination with a digital portfolio.
- **Digital electronic portfolios:** This initiative involves a web-based platform called FreshGrade that provides an online portfolio for teachers and students to electronically share each child's learning in an ongoing manner throughout the school year.
- **Communicating Student Learning Template:** This innovative template includes both teacher and student assessments and reflection on each student's learning goals, achievements, and challenges.

Teachers, schools, and the district are using these reporting tools in conjunction with preparations for the new curriculum that will be fully implemented at the elementary level during the 2016-2017 school year. The new tools will help inform and develop the assessment, evaluation and communication of student learning going forward.

For more information on these new tools for communicating student learning, please talk to your school principal or your child's classroom teacher.

Sincerely,



Elisa Carlson, Ed. D.  
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