



École Élémentaire Laronde Elementary

1880 Laronde Drive, Surrey, BC V4A 9S4 Ph : (604) 536-1626 Fax : (604) 536-4829

January 22, 2021

Dear Grade 4 & 7 Parents/Guardians,

During the next few months your children will be completing two assessments and two surveys in order to look at where they are at in their learning and their social and emotional well-being.

These assessments and surveys are conducted by the ministry of education and are common assessments done each year with grade 4 and 7 students. The only new assessment that only our grade 4 students will complete this year is the PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study).

Here is the list of assessment and surveys:

- **FSA** (Foundational Skills Assessment) **parent information attached**
- **SLS** (Student Learning Survey) **parent information attached**
- **MDI** (Middle Years Development Instrument) (survey) **parent information attached**
- **SLS** (Student Learning Survey) **parent information attached**
- **PIRLS** (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) (assessment)

For blended students whose parents/guardians are wanting them to complete any one or all of these assessments and surveys, those students will need to attend Laronde in person in order to do so.

If you have any questions about anyone of the assessments or surveys please contact your child's classroom teacher or the school office.

Kind regards,

Mme Niro
Principal

Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) Important Information for Parents

What is the Foundation Skills Assessment?

All students in Grades 4 and 7 in B.C. take part in the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA), an annual assessment of reading comprehension, writing and numeracy (math skills). The assessments are based on the provincial curriculum and are developed by classroom teachers. The main purpose of the assessment is to help the Ministry of Education, school districts and schools track how well students are learning core academic skills. The information is used by the ministry, the district and by schools in planning for improvement.

The FSA provides a snapshot of how well students have learned important basic skills at a particular point in time. The information is best used together with teacher assessments and other school information.

When do we see FSA results?

For the current school year, the FSA will be administered in January and February. By the end of the school year, district and school-level results will be made available to schools and the public. **Individual student results, along with the answer booklets, will be sent home with students by the end of March. This will give parents the opportunity to see the assessment items and how their child responded.** Again, this is only a snapshot and does not provide a complete picture of your child's ability. That information is best obtained from your child's teacher.

Does the FSA count toward students' marks?

No. The results show a student's skills at a particular point in time. They are not related to marks in a specific subject or grade level but show progress in the development of foundations skills across grades and curriculum areas. For example, students read in science and social studies as well as in language arts and they work with numbers in activities or subjects besides math.

Who writes the FSA?

All Grade 4 and 7 students are expected to write the FSA. The only exceptions are: a) students who have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) documenting a disability that significantly impacts their performance in reading, writing or numeracy; b) students with IEPs who would need extensive adaptations (e.g., readers, scribes); or c) ESL students who have not yet reached a level of proficiency sufficient for them to provide meaningful responses. Principals determine which students, if any, are excused. If it is recommended that your child be excused from one or more components, you will be contacted prior to the beginning of the assessment. If you wish further clarification, please consult your school principal. Students are encouraged to do their best as this helps the province and school district make informed decisions about how best to provide resources to schools in order to support learners.

Where can I get more information?

Information will be provided by the district and your school. You can also find information on the Ministry of Education's web site at <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/assessment/fsa/>.

January 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Student Learning Survey (SLS) has been administered every year in B.C. public schools since 2001. Prior to 2016-17 it was known as the Student Satisfaction Survey. The SLS provides feedback on the implementation of the curriculum changes, learning environment, student wellness and satisfaction, student belonging and engagement, and career preparation. The SLS is the only source of province-wide information about students' learning experiences through the perspectives of students, parents/guardians, and school staff. Schools and districts use the SLS to make informed decisions around long-term planning and goal-setting, and in providing individual students personalized support.

We've worked in collaboration with the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) to update the parent/guardian survey and make it more useful for parents, teachers, and schools. Your valued participation is an important contribution to improving the educational experiences of children.

The parent/guardian survey is now available online at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sat_survey/access.htm . It is available in 18 different languages. The survey will be available until April 30, 2021 and will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Your responses are voluntary and anonymous, and your child will not be identified as a result of your participation in the survey. Any personal or identifying information will be deleted before results are stored. Data will be stored and accessible only within Canada.

The results of the parent SLS survey will be available through the Ministry of Education website in Summer 2021.

Please contact the web survey provider (AWIS) if you have technical difficulties; call toll free: 1-866-558-5339 or email support@awinfosys.com.

We sincerely appreciate your input and thank-you in advance for your participation.

Nicole Gardner
Director, Education System Outcomes
Governance and Analytics Division
Ministry of Education
Nicole.Gardner@gov.bc.ca

MDI QUESTIONS BRIEF

This brief highlights questions on the Middle Years Development Instrument that children could potentially find sensitive or uncomfortable.



► What questions are on the MDI?

The Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) is a self-report questionnaire that asks children in middle childhood about their thoughts, feelings and experiences. The MDI is the first survey of its kind to gather information about the lives of children both in school, in the home and in the community, from their own perspective. The survey questions align with the BC Ministry of Education's K-12 curriculum which includes a focus on promoting children's personal and social competencies. The MDI includes questions related to five areas of children's lives and experiences:



Social & Emotional Development

Children respond to questions about their current social and emotional functioning in 7 areas: optimism, self-esteem, happiness, empathy, prosocial behaviour, sadness and worries.



Physical Health & Well-being

Children evaluate their own physical well-being in the areas of overall health including active transportation, nutrition and sleeping habits.



Connectedness to Peers and Adults

Children are asked about their experiences of support and connection with the adults in their schools and neighbourhoods, with their parents or guardians at home, and with their peers.



School Experiences

Children are asked about their school experiences in four areas: academic self-concept, school climate, school belonging, and experiences with peer victimization.



Use of After-school Time

Children are asked about the time they spend engaged in organized activities such as sports, music and art, as well as the time they spend watching TV, doing homework and playing video games.

► Can I see the MDI questionnaire?

The entire MDI questionnaire, including questions referenced in this brief is available online at earlylearning.ubc.ca/mdi.



Important Links

For resources to promote children's mental health and wellness:

keltymentalhealth.ca

For information on bullying or where to find help for your child:

www.preynet.ca/bullying/parents

www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/erase

For more information and ideas on how to talk with your children about family diversity and gender identity:

www.sogieducation.org/parents

Contact Us

If you have further questions or do not want your child to participate in the MDI, please contact the project staff:

mdi@help.ubc.ca

1-888-908-4050 (toll free)

604-827-5504

HUMAN
EARLY LEARNING
PARTNERSHIP



► Could any of the questions make children uncomfortable?

Generally, most children who participate in the MDI enjoy the opportunity to share their opinions and experiences. We worked with children on the development of the MDI and from them we have learned what questions they believe are important to ask. In our attempt to gather a complete picture of children's experiences, there may be questions that children could potentially find sensitive or uncomfortable.

We work hard to minimize any potential negative emotional impact on children. First, children are given the choice whether or not to participate. They can also skip questions, stop, or withdraw from the survey at any time. In addition, we provide them with the opportunity to request to speak with an adult at their school confidentially.

The MDI asks questions about happiness and experiences of victimization at school:

- **Happiness.** Children with a positive, friendly attitude are more likely to attract positive attention from peers and adults, thus broadening and strengthening their social resources. The MDI questionnaire asks children about how happy and satisfied they are with their lives. These questions could potentially be uncomfortable for some children if they are very unhappy, unsatisfied with their life, or depressed. However, children's responses provide schools and communities with important information on the mental health of their children, which can inform programming to promote well-being.
- **Victimization at School:** Being bullied may have a lasting effect on a child's self-esteem and negative thoughts can continue long after the bullying stops. The MDI questionnaire asks children about how often they have experienced four different types of bullying: Cyber, Physical, Social, and Verbal. Although these questions could be sensitive for children who have been bullied, the information gathered by asking questions on bullying and the school environment could prompt teachers and principals to take action to create safer and more caring schools.

► Will children have any questions for me after completing the MDI?

Some of the questions on the MDI might be on topics that are new to children and therefore might cause them to ask their parents/caregivers or teachers questions about these topics.

- **Gender Identity:** Gender identity and expression are protected under the BC Human Rights Code. It is important for schools to be inclusive and safe spaces for children of all gender identities. On the MDI, children are asked if they describe their gender as "boy," "girl" or, if they describe their gender "in another way," they may describe their gender using their own words.
- **Parents and Caregivers:** In order to understand the family structures of the children who take the survey, children are asked which adults they live with most of the time. The possible responses include: mother, father, step-parents, grandparents, foster parents or caregivers, second mother (two mothers), second father (two fathers), or other.



What is PIRLS?

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) is an international assessment that measures the knowledge and skills of Grade 4 students in reading, sponsored by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA).

PIRLS has been conducted every five years since 2001. More than 50 countries will be participating in PIRLS 2021. In Canada, provincial/territorial participation in PIRLS is coordinated by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC).

What is the purpose of PIRLS?

The information obtained through PIRLS is valued by policy-makers, administrators, schools, teachers, and researchers. This data helps to determine how prepared Grade 4 students are for future academic challenges and to enable evidence-based decisions for educational improvement.



Progress in International Reading Literacy Study

Information for Parents/Guardians and Students

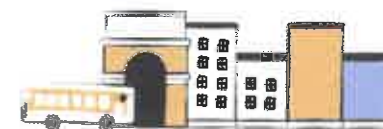
Who will take part in PIRLS?

PIRLS will be administered from April 12 to May 14, 2021. Canada's participation will consist of six provinces: Alberta, British Columbia, New Brunswick (Anglophone), Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario, and Quebec. Approximately 29,000 students selected at random from over 1,000 schools in Canada will be taking part in PIRLS. The assessment will be administered for both Anglophone and Francophone student populations.

What will participating students have to do?

Students will complete a test that assesses their skills in reading. The test takes about 80 minutes to complete. An additional 30 minutes will be required for students to complete a contextual questionnaire intended to collect information on students' characteristics and attitudes toward reading.

The parents/guardians, teachers, and school principals of the participating students will also be asked to respond to a questionnaire. The questionnaires collect valuable information that expands the results and scope of the assessment as a whole and helps to understand the factors that may influence student achievement. The questionnaire responses will remain confidential and will not permit individual participants to be identified.



Do students need to prepare for PIRLS?

No. Students do not need to study for this assessment. Normal classroom activities in language arts provide ample preparation for this assessment.

Will the results affect students' marks?

No. The results of this assessment will not affect students' academic records in any way. The results will be compiled only at the provincial and Pan-Canadian levels.

What are the benefits of participating?

PIRLS provides school administrators, teachers, and students with an opportunity to be involved with a high-quality assessment that will influence how reading is taught and learned in the future.

More information on PIRLS is available on the web at: <https://cmecc.ca/399/Overview.html>.

**When you take this assessment, you will help us make education better for all students in Canada.
Thank you in advance for participating in PIRLS!**