



January 29, 2021

Ref: 243405

Dear Parents and Caregivers of students in Grades 4 and 7:

Between February 15 and March 12, 2021, schools across British Columbia will be administering the annual Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) to all students in grades 4 and 7. The FSA is intended to show how well children are doing developing basic reading, writing and numeracy skills over time and is the beginning of a series of assessments that continue through high school. This year's assessment is being conducted later in the year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Results allow for early interventions that can enhance success in a child's schooling. The results are also used to monitor educational outcomes and assist school districts and schools in providing help to students who need it most. They are also an important source of information regarding vulnerable students and are used by the First Nations Education Steering Committee and the Representative for Children and Youth to monitor the outcome of Indigenous students and those with special needs. Results are never intended to be used for ranking schools.

The snapshot of student learning provided by the FSA is especially important this year to help determine whether COVID-19 had an impact on student learning and make sure supports are provided to students if gaps are identified. For parents, assessment results provide a valuable insight into how your child is doing and can assist educators to support your child going forward.

Participation in the FSA is expected for all students in grades 4 and 7 across the province and schools have plans in place to make sure all health and safety protocols set by the Provincial Health Officer are followed to administer the assessment safely. Accommodations are available if needed and as documented in a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). School principals can exempt students from writing the FSA only in the event of a family emergency, a lengthy illness, or other extenuating circumstances.

Additional information about the Foundation Skills Assessment is provided in the following brochure.

Sincerely,

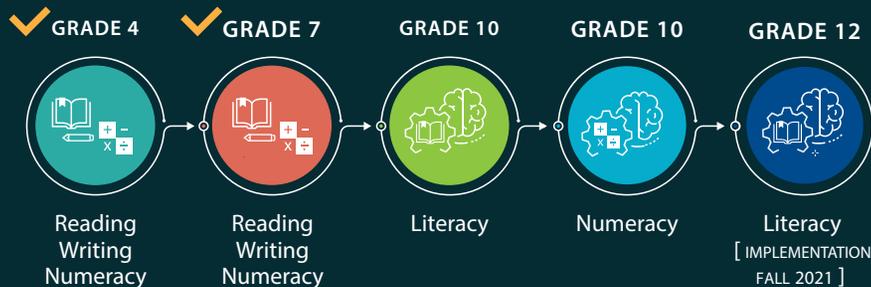
D. Scott MacDonald
Deputy Minister

FSA- Foundation Skills Assessment

CAREGIVER INFORMATION

What is the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA)?

The FSA is a set of interactive exercises designed by teachers and education experts that reliably indicates how your child is doing in literacy (understanding and communicating with language) and numeracy (understanding and working with numbers).



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How is the FSA conducted in schools?

- All Grade 4 and 7 students in BC are required to complete the FSA in their own classrooms, under the supervision of their classroom teacher.
- The FSA will take your child about 4½ hours to complete and is engaging and interactive.
- Your child may be excused from writing the FSA in the event of extenuating circumstances (e.g. illness or family emergency etc.)
- Your child will also be asked what their experience of writing the FSA is like.



What are the results of the FSA used for?

- Results are provided to you, your child, teachers, and the Ministry to ensure BC is providing high quality education to all of its students.
- Results ensure that no students are left behind in BC, regardless of their background.
- The FSA does not contribute to your child's report card and is not used to rank students, teachers, schools or districts.



Why do all students in BC write the FSA?

- The FSA is designed to indicate how your child and all students in British Columbia are doing in literacy and numeracy.
- The FSA ensures you, your child and your child's teachers and educators have early information on your child's achievement and can respond appropriately to shape learning over the school year.



What are the benefits of the FSA?

For Students and Parents

- You and your child will have an understanding of how your child is doing and what areas may need support.
- Assessment results help shape the support needed to meet the unique needs of every student.

For Teachers

- Your child's teacher will have confirmation of how your child is doing and what supports they may need.

For The Ministry of Education

- Your government will have information about how to improve and deliver high quality education for all students in British Columbia.



TO LEARN MORE VISIT:

[www.gov.bc.ca/
foundation-skills-assessment](http://www.gov.bc.ca/foundation-skills-assessment)



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