

January 13, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians of students in Grades 4 and 7,

Re: Upcoming Foundation Skills Assessment

Last fall, I had written to you regarding the [Foundation Skills Assessment](#) (FSA), an annual province-wide assessment of British Columbia students' academic skills, which provides a snapshot of students' foundational skills in reading, writing and numeracy. All students in grades 4 and 7, including French Immersion students, are required by the Ministry of Education to write the FSA. A copy of the [letter dated September 25, 2020](#), is attached for your reference.

As you are aware, the Ministry of Education announced late September that the FSA writing period would be postponed, and I subsequently wrote to inform you of that change. A copy of this [letter dated September 30, 2020](#), is also attached for your reference.

The Ministry of Education has recently announced an additional postponement to the FSA writing period. I would therefore like to update you with the revised dates and also provide you with a reminder about this upcoming assessment.

The FSA will be administered at NVSD schools between **February 15 and March 12, 2021**. The reading and numeracy sections consist of online multiple choice and written response questions. The writing section consists of one writing task. The written responses will be marked within the school district by our teachers and administrators.

As I had shared with you in the [September 25, 2020, letter](#), there are few Ministry of Education exemptions to writing this assessment. School principals will excuse students whose personalized learning standards significantly differ from provincial curricular standards, and whose Individual Education Plan (IEP) documents a learning need that precludes the student from writing the FSA. English Language Learners (ELL) students who have not reached a level of proficiency sufficient to provide meaningful responses to the reading or writing or numeracy sections of the FSA are also excused. In addition, principals may excuse a student in the event of a family emergency, lengthy illness, or other extenuating circumstances of similar seriousness. A parent's/guardian's submission of a letter to the principal will not, of itself, constitute proof of extenuating circumstances.

Students who are in the Temporary Elementary Transition Support Option can attend in person at their school site to write the FSA. Schedules can be provided by your child's classroom teacher.

I trust you will find this update helpful. Should you require any further information regarding your child's writing of the FSA, please communicate directly with your school Principal. Additional information is available through:

- The BC Ministry of Education [website](#)
- FSA Parent/Guardian [Brochure](#)

Thank you for your ongoing support of our efforts to provide our students with the best possible educational programming.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Pearmain".

Mark Pearmain
Superintendent of Schools