# Demystify Grading and Assessment

## Supporting Your Child's Independence

# Part 1:

**The Purpose of Assessment**

**Summative vs. Formative**

# **Summative Assessment :**

- Typically referred to as assessment *OF* learning

- Usually signals students' relative position compared to other students

- Standards set for what are typical learning accomplishments at a particular age and grade levels

- Usually is the basis for forming grades for reporting

# **<u>Summative Assessment :</u>**
# cont'd

- Typically done at the end of a unit, course, key stage, or program

- Takes the form of tests or exams that include questions that are based on the material covered through teaching

- Results are expressed symbolically (marks or letter grades)

# Formative Assessment:

- Typically referred to as assessment *FOR* and assessment *AS* learning

- Provides feedback to teachers and students that can be used to adapt/adjust teaching to meet students' needs

- Informs the teacher of what students know and don't know, and this information is then used to guide the teacher in making instructional adjustments

# **Formative Assessment:**
## cont'd

- Instead of creating judgments, the focus is on creating descriptions that can be used to lead students into the next stage of learning

- Instead of comparing students the focus is on individual accomplishments with respect to set criteria, highlighting students' strengths and learning needs on an individual basis and providing students with feedback that will further their learning

- Sources of assessment include observations of daily work/assignments, students' responses to questioning, and conversations in student-teacher conferences

# **<u>Formative Assessment:</u>**
## cont'd

- Recordkeeping is typically in the form of notes or checklists (recording each child's progress in learning a particular skill or demonstrating understanding of a concept), OR collections of student work samples (to trace the progression of students' learning along a continuum over time)

- Includes teacher feedback:  specific comments that acknowledge what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve - the emphasis being on the idea that learning as an ongoing process

- Includes peer and self-evaluation/assessment

"Historically, educational assessment has largely been assessment *OF* learning, designed to accredit or judge the work of students"

Earl, Lorna M. (2003). *Assessment As Learning: Using Classroom Assessment to Maximize Student Learning.* Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin Press, Inc.

"We believe that assessment is a mechanism for providing ongoing feedback to the learner…as a necessary part of the spiraling processes of continual renewal:  self-managing, self-monitoring, and self-modifying.  We must constantly remind ourselves that the ultimate purpose of evaluation is to have students learn to become self-evaluative."
( p. 3)

Costa, A. & Kallick, B.  (2004).  *Assessment Strategies for Self-Directed Learning.*  Thousand Oaks,

CA: Corwin Press.

# Part 2:
# BC Performance Standards:
# What are they?

- Were developed based on input from a significant number BC educators and educational experts

- Are descriptions of standards and expectations for key areas of learning in the curriculum

  reading, writing, numeracy, social responsibility, information and communications technology integration

- Describe four levels of student learning in terms of Ministry prescribed learning outcomes

- Are based on performance assessment

# Performance Based Assessment

- Assessment of the application of knowledge, skills, work habits through performance tasks that are meaningful and engaging for students

- Can be formal (student knows they are being assessed) or informal (student is not aware of being assessed)

- Degrees of success are identified through the use of rubrics using criteria-referenced approach to evaluation (students' performance compared to established criteria instead of to the performance of other students)

# The BC Performance Standards

# Four Levels of Student Performance

# Not Yet Within Expectations

- The work does not meet grade level expectations

- There is little evidence of progress toward the relevant prescribed learning outcomes

- The situation needs intervention

# Minimally Meets Expectations

- The work may be inconsistent, but meets grade-level expectations at a minimal level
- There is evidence of progress toward relevant prescribed learning outcomes
- The student needs support in some areas

# Fully Meets Expectations

- The work meets grade level expectations
- There is evidence that relevant prescribed learning outcomes have been accomplished

# Exceeds Expectations

- The work exceeds grade level expectations in significant ways
- The student may benefit from extra challenge

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/perf_stands/using.htm

# BC Performance Standards:
## How are they used?
## How do they relate to letter grades?

- Provide resources for assessing or evaluating a specific piece or a collection of a student's work

- Are meant to be used as part of the regular classroom learning activities so students know what is expected of them

- Are used for creating scales for the purposes of grading

- Are intended to support instructional decision making

When converting rubric scores to grades, there is not a single "correct" way to do this, other than it is not appropriate to think of rubrics in terms of percentages.  It is "simply a process of logic".  There are typically more categories that represent the above-average to average categories (equating to letter grades of "C" or better) than the below average categories (C- or lower).

Mertler, Craig, A.  (2001).  Designing scoring rubrics for your classroom.

*Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation, 7 (25).*

"Teachers use their insight, knowledge about learning, and experience with students, along with specific criteria they establish, to make judgments about student performance in relation to prescribed learning outcomes."

"In criterion-referenced classroom assessment, a student's performance is compared to established criteria rather than to the performance of other students."

# What is the meaning of C+?

# PROVINCIAL LETTER GRADES ORDER

BC Ministry of Education
Governance and Legislation Unit E-76 September 8, 2006

# A
The student demonstrates excellent or outstanding performance in relation
to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
(86% - 100%)

# B
The student demonstrates very good performance in relation to expected
learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
(73% - 85%)

# C+

The student demonstrates good performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
(67% - 72%)

# C

The student demonstrates satisfactory performance in relation to expected
learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
(60% - 66%)

# C-

The student demonstrates minimally acceptable performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade. (50% - 59%)

# I

## In Progress or Incomplete

The student, for a variety of reasons, is not demonstrating minimally acceptable performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes.

# F (Failing)

The student has not demonstrated, or is not demonstrating, the
minimally acceptable performance in relation to the expected learning
outcomes for the course or subject and
grade. The letter grade "F" may
only be assigned if an "I" (In Progress) letter
grade has been previously
assigned for that course or subject and grade.
(0% - 49%)

# Part 3:

## How to Talk to Your Child About Their Learning

# A successful Learner:

- Can apply knowledge to new situations

- Has a deepening knowledge of the facts and the skills taught

- Is able to evaluate his/her learning success and set goals for future learning

- Is developing intellectually, socially, and emotionally

- Is engaged in learning both alone and with others

- Knows how to use resources to find answers

From "*The Partnership*" www2.sd38.bc.ca:8004/Learning%matters/The %20Partnership

"Students who believe that academic achievement is determined by fixed ability are more likely to work toward <u>performance</u> goals (grades) to please the teacher and <u>appear</u> competent. For these students, grades are the currency in school, and the exchange value for grades is more important than the learning….Students who attribute academic success to their own efforts are more likely to adopt <u>learning</u> goals, which means they are motivated by an increasing sense of mastery and by the desire to <u>become</u> competent."

Earl, Lorna M. (2003). *Assessment As Learning: Using Classroom Assessment to Maximize Student Learning.* Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin Press, Inc.

"When people succeed or fail, they explain their success or failure to themselves in various ways: effort, ability, task factors, or luck.  Only the first of these attributes is likely to promote adaptive motivational tendencies.  The student can decide to try harder and be more successful.  The other explanations- ability, task difficulty, or luck – are all out of the students' control.  When students do not believe they have control over their achievements, they are much less motivated to work in school." (p. 36)

Earl, Lorna M. (2003).  *Assessment As Learning:  Using Classroom Assessment to Maximize Student Learning.* Thousand Oaks, California:  Corwin Press, Inc.

# When responding to your child's schoolwork, try the following :

- Give specific, positive feedback  (I like how you____.)
- Ask your child questions, refraining from responding by passing personal judgments (I think you could have…).  Instead, use questions to lead your child to personally reflect on what they have learned and how well they did.

# Examples of questions to ask:

- What were you supposed to do? What was the assignment?
- What was your favourite part when doing the activity and why?
- What was your least favourite part of the task and why?
- What did you find easy? Difficult? What took the greatest effort?
- What did you learn from doing this?
- Do you think you did well on this task? Why or why not?
- If you were to do this activity/task again what would you do differently and why?

# Listen First!

- Listen carefully to what children have to say in response to your questions , encouraging explanation (Tell me more about….; What do you mean by…?) and rationalization of their thoughts and ideas (Why do you think that?).

- Encourage constructive reflections (I think I could do better next time if I…) instead of negative self-talk  (I can't…).

# Set Goals

- Help your child set realistic learning goals with specific timelines and strategies

  What do you need to do next in your learning?

  What do you need to do to achieve this goal?


- Support your child in their efforts to work towards the goal and through questioning, lead them to reflect on their level of achievement without imposing your own views (Did you achieve your goal?  Why or Why not?)

" We must constantly remind ourselves that the ultimate purpose of evaluation is to have students become self-evaluating.  If students graduate from our school still dependent upon others to tell them when they are adequate, good, or excellent, then we've missed the whole point of what education is about" (p. 280)

Costa, A. & Kallick, B.  1992.   *Defining Indicators of Achievement.*

ThousandOaks, CA: Corwin Press.

"We believe that assessment is a mechanism for providing ongoing feedback to the learner…as a necessary part of the spiraling processes of continual renewal:  self-managing, self-monitoring, and self-modifying.  We must constantly remind ourselves that the ultimate purpose of evaluation is to have students learn to become self-evaluative."
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" When students graduate from our schools we want them to have methods of self-evaluation and to know how to turn to external critique for self-improvement.  We want them to know how to give and receive feedback and how to revise their work based on such feedback." (p.3)

Costa, A. & Kallick, B.  (2004).  *Assessment Strategies for Self-Directed Learning.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.