



Implementing the B.C. Graduation Program



B.C.'s high school teachers are getting their first taste of the new modernized B.C. Graduation Program next school year, as well as an innovative new Grade 11-12 curriculum. The new curriculum offers increased flexibility to deeply explore areas of interest, create multiple entry points for all learners and empower students to take more responsibility for their learning.

Before they even began this school year, the current cohort of Grade 10 students already had two years' experience with B.C.'s redesigned curriculum under their belts. Curriculum changes, such as a focus on big ideas, increased choice, and the opportunity to go deeper into areas of interest, were rolled out from Kindergarten to Grade 9 in September 2016, and these kids had the opportunity to be part of it from the beginning.

The redesigned curriculum for Grade 10 was introduced in September 2018 and will be offered to Grade 11 and 12 students next September, as part of the new B.C. Graduation Program.



“One of the most noticeable differences in the new graduation program is the move away from the prescriptivist model of the past,” says Tammy Renyard, Principal of Esquimalt High School in Victoria and currently under secondment with the Ministry of Education to support the implementation of the new curriculum.

In Science 10, for example, one of the big ideas is focused on energy conservation and transformation. While the previous curriculum would have had a significant number of learning outcomes associated with this topic, the redesigned curriculum includes conceptual learning standards allowing for an exploration of a variety of topics connected to this big idea – from how radiation impacts living things in the environment to how nuclear energy is being harnessed into health care technologies.

Renyard appreciates that the redesigned curriculum embeds Aboriginal perspectives and knowledge in authentic and meaningful ways into every course. She’s also enthusiastic about the flexibility, choice and personalization options that are built into its modernized approach.



“With the new curriculum, there’s no longer that pressure to cover a vast amount of content,” Renyard explains. “Educators can now go deeper. There’s more flexibility to spend the time and to engage students in deep learning on things they are really passionate about.”

The new curriculum also provides learners with a strong foundation of Core Competencies – communication, thinking, and personal and social. “The Core Competencies, essential for students to develop for success in life beyond school, underpin all of the redesigned curriculum,” Renyard says.



Students in their graduation years will also benefit from a range of new course options in areas such as environmental science, web development, digital media, engineering and robotics. Two new career education courses are also being introduced, giving students an opportunity to explore career pathways and develop the skills needed to manage their career and life transitions.

In addition to the new curriculum, students will take three new provincial assessments:

- › Grade 10 Graduation Numeracy Assessment, which was introduced in 2017/18
- › Grade 10 Graduation Literacy Assessment, to be introduced in 2019/20
- › Grade 12 Graduation Literacy Assessment, to be introduced in 2020/21

These rigorous assessments will align with the new curriculum and will be required for graduation. The assessments are not based on specific courses but on the numeracy and literacy developed across all grades and areas of learning.



“Numeracy and literacy are skills developed across the curriculum,” says Renyard. “As educators we are collectively responsible for supporting students’ literacy and numeracy development.”

For all that is changing with the redesigned curriculum, there are many things that will remain the same. Students in Grades 10-12 will continue to receive report cards with letter grades and percentages for all courses. They will also still be required to complete at least 80 credits for graduation.



Learn More

- › The new B.C. Graduation Program Policy Guide and the B.C. Graduation Program Implementation Guide are available online at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/graduation>
- › BC K-12 Curriculum and additional resources can be found at: <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/>