

# Hillside Park Elementary School

## Communicating Student Learning

### 2023 - 2024

#### **Introduction**

Hillside Park Elementary School believes that children are most successful when collaborative partnerships exist between all those involved in the education of the child. We believe that learning alliances generate powerful learning outcomes. This collaboration of teachers, students, parents/guardians and community is an understanding of what children are expected to achieve and where the child is in his/her learning. The following plan for Communicating Student Learning will explain what we do at Hillside Park to assess and evaluate your child's learning, and how we will communicate our expectations for learning and achievement.

#### **What and How Children Learn**

Our educational programs are based on a common set of understandings about how children learn, referred to as the Principles of Learning (*Education and Early Childhood Development*). Students learn more effectively when they know and understand the learning goal. It is our responsibility as teachers to plan for our students with these principles in mind.

- Students construct knowledge and make it meaningful in terms of their prior knowledge and experiences.
- Learning is a process of actively constructing knowledge.
- Learning is enhanced when it takes place in a social and collaborative environment.
- Students need to continue to view learning as an integrated whole.
- Learners must see themselves as capable and successful.
- Learners have different ways of knowing and representing knowledge.
- Reflection is an integral part of learning.

#### **Assessment and Evaluation**

The evaluation and assessment of student learning will be based on the expected learning outcomes as established by the EECD in collaboration with the other Atlantic Provinces. The outcomes framework tells us *what* children will learn, while the Principles of Learning tell us *how* children learn. The province provides teachers with curriculum guides that describe what children are expected to know and be able to do at various points along a continuum of learning in each curriculum area.

- The Essential Graduation Competencies (EGCs) describes the knowledge, skills and attitudes expected of all students who graduate from high school.
- The General Curriculum Outcomes (GCOs) are statements of what students are expected to know and be able to do upon completion of study in a particular curriculum area.
- Specific Curriculum Outcomes (SCOs) are statements of what students are expected to know and be able to do at a particular grade level, or level of development.

#### **Assessing and Evaluating Student Learning**

Teachers use the expected learning outcomes framework as the basis for planning and teaching and also as the basis for assessing and evaluating student learning.

- Assessment is the systematic process of gathering information about what children know and can do. This is in relation to the expectations as set out in the learning outcomes.

- Evaluation is the process of analyzing, summarizing, and making decisions based on the information gathered. The decisions teachers make relate to where each child is on the continuum of learning, and also where the child needs to go next in his/her learning.

Teachers work to use assessments *for learning and of learning*. Teachers and students enter into learning and assessment tasks with the intention of understanding where the students are in their learning, where they want to go and how they will get there. Teachers use assessment information to identify student needs, set learning goals, and inform instruction. It is essential that feedback to students and parents is effective and done in a timely manner.

Children learn in different ways (learning style) and also demonstrate what they have learned in different ways. Because of this, teachers use a variety of assessment methods. Gathering information on student learning from several different types of tasks ensures that the teacher has a complete and accurate picture of what a child knows and can do. Throughout the year teachers will send work samples, assessment rubrics, and other assessment samples home to families.

The following is a list of assessment strategies. While no teacher would necessarily use all of those listed, every teacher at Hillside Park is committed to a balanced and fair approach to assessing student learning.

- Work samples – collected and dated daily assignments
- Observations of oral activities/ cooperative activities
- Checklists
- Presentations
- Reading Records
- Guided reading and writing
- Conferences
- Observation Survey
- Rubrics – specific criteria that are set for an activity against which a student’s work will be measured.
- Writer’s notebook
- Journals – informal writing share among students and teachers
- Reports/Projects/Presentations
- Performance – skits, puppet shows, public speaking, debates, music, show and tell, and physical activities.
- Test/Quizzes – a time limited written or oral response to teacher questions.
- Peer/Self Evaluation – students assessing their own, or each other’s work using clear guidelines.
- Observation/Anecdotal Records/Checklist – Specific checklist or a simple note in a teacher plan book.
- Portfolios – a collection of selected work that portrays a student’s effort, progress and achievement over a period of time.

*Students will be evaluated in relation to the expected learning outcomes for that grade level and not in comparison to other students in the class.*

**The teachers at Hillside Park Elementary also communicate with families using:**

- Websites
- Emails
- Phone calls
- Notes home
- Weekly or Monthly newsletters
- Calendars
- Online platforms

There is a scheduled parent/teacher conference: 10 minute session in November and a 10 minute session in April. This may be done virtually.

**The following is Hillside Park’s proposed plan for communicating student learning for the school year: 2023 - 2024**

- |            |                                       |
|------------|---------------------------------------|
| • November | First Term Report Cards               |
| • November | Parent/ Guardian -Teacher Conferences |
| • March    | Second Term Report Cards              |
| • April    | Parent/Guardian - Teacher Conferences |
| • June     | Third Term Report Cards               |

Parents/ Guardians are not limited to these scheduled times and communication tools and are encouraged to make an appointment with their child’s teacher at other times as the need arises.

**Student Planning Team**

The school has established a process for the identification, assessment and program planning for students with differentiated learning needs. Classroom teachers, resource teachers and parents/guardians may initiate and/or assist in identifying students with differentiated learning needs. A referral may be made to the Teaching Support Team or the Student Planning Team. These teams will consist of the principal/vice-principal, resource teacher, learning centre teacher, classroom teacher and supporting staff members (School based or Board based).

Parents/guardians are consulted and written permission is required for any formal individual assessment. Parents/guardians will be informed of the test results, which may be used, along with other information, in making adaptations to the student’s program, or developing an Individual Program Plan. The development and implementation of an Individual Program Plan involves the Student Planning Team, including parents or guardians.

**Information Relating to Parent/Guardian Concern**

If a matter of concern arises pertaining to a student, or an issue within the school, parent/guardians are asked to raise the issue first with the teacher. If resolution cannot be reached, a follow up meeting will be arranged with the principal.

**Review of the School Plan**

The School Plan for Communicating Student Learning will be reviewed and amended as needed by the principal after consultation with staff and School Advisory Council. This review will take place in conjunction with the annual updating of the Student Success Plan.

**For Further Information**

- [Provincial Student Assessment Policy](#)
- [Nova Scotia Curriculum Guides](#)