

Appendix C: Frequently asked questions

1. How does this policy pertain to inclusive education, adult education, English language learners, French language learners and hybrid or distance learning situations?

The K-12 Student Reporting Policy pertains to all learners in the B.C. education system. A student who is an English language learner, a French language learner in a Francophone program, a learner with disabilities and diverse abilities, an adult learner, or a learner in hybrid or distance learning programs should receive regular communications of student learning in the same way as their peers in any other program.

2. How many reporting communications are required?

There are at least five reporting communications per school year: four Learning Updates (two written and two informal) and one written Summary of Learning.

While these are the official reporting requirements, teachers are at liberty to communicate student learning at any point based on the needs of students, parents, and caregivers. Reporting should be timely and flexible and is not limited to specific reporting communications. The frequency of reporting may also vary based on program and/or school calendar.

For more information on the reporting requirements, see [Types of Reporting](#).

3. When does each reporting communication need to take place?

Requirements are based on a year-long calendar and can be scaled to fit varying schedules. Since a wide variety of school calendars and delivery models are used in B.C., the Ministry is purposefully not prescriptive regarding the scheduling of reports.

Schools and districts are encouraged to develop responsive schedules aligned with the policy. Examples of possible [reporting schedules](#) have been included in these guidelines. Ideally, all partners within a school and/or district will work together to devise locally responsive scheduling of their communications of student learning.

4. Are the two written Learning Updates like a report card?

They can be, but schools and districts may choose another written format for the Learning Updates that fit their local context and meet the needs of the students, parents, and caregivers in their community.

5. Does a digital portfolio count as a written Learning Update?

Yes. A digital portfolio post can count as a Learning Update if it:

- Communicates learning in relation to the learning standards for a student's current areas of learning, using the Provincial Proficiency Scale and descriptive feedback (Grades K-9) or letter grades and percentages and descriptive feedback (Grades 10-12)

- Provides feedback on student attendance, areas of significant growth, and opportunities for further development
- Includes student-generated content, including self-reflection on the Core Competencies and goal setting

The value of a Learning Update is that provides very clear information about student learning in all current areas of learning. A portfolio can be used as a reporting tool, as long as it meets the requirements listed above.

6. Does every area of learning need to be reported on in a written Learning Update?

Each written Learning Update should communicate student learning in each of the student's current areas of learning. For example, if a student hasn't started Arts Education by the October written Learning Update, Arts Education won't be reported on at that time.

The [Required Areas of Study Order](#) (Grades K-9) and [Graduation Program Order](#) (Grades 10-12) outline which areas of learning need to be instructed on and thus reported on. Schools and/or districts have the autonomy to determine the frequency of reporting for each area of learning in their local reporting policies.

7. Does a parent/caregiver-teacher conference or student-led conference still count as a Learning Update?

Yes. Any format of [conference](#) involving parents, caregivers, and/or students can count as an informal Learning Update (e.g., parent/caregiver-teacher conference or student-led conference).

8. When communicating student learning, is clustering areas of learning allowed?

Clustering areas of learning (e.g., Explore and Investigate for Science and Social Studies; Literacy – ELA, Science, Social Studies, etc.; and Numeracy – PHE, Math, ADST) is possible for instructional purposes. The curriculum was designed to enable cross-curricular and interdisciplinary teaching practices.

However, for the two written Learning Updates and the Summary of Learning (and on the Permanent Student Record), schools are required to assign a separate proficiency scale indicator and/or letter grade and percentage, depending on grade, for each area of learning.

9. What should be included in descriptive feedback?

Descriptive feedback consists of strengths-based, written comments or documented conversations that describe student learning and identify specific goals for future growth. Descriptive feedback can provide evidence to students, parents, and caregivers about how the student demonstrated their abilities by connecting with real learning experiences that occurred in class.

However, the learning standards do not need to be quoted or included in descriptive feedback. Descriptive feedback should instead focus on significant events in the student's growth and learning.

10. How are attendance, behaviour, and work habits reported on?

Reporting on student learning habits and engagement can be based on a combination of student self-reflection on Core Competencies and goal setting, and descriptive feedback.

How attendance is communicated to parents and caregivers will be decided at the school and/or district level. An autogenerated number on any of the written reports is sufficient.

11. Can attendance, behaviour, and work habits factor into a student's overall mark?

No. Assessment judgments or decisions for each area of learning should be in relation to the [learning standards](#) or individualized goals alone. Therefore, student learning habits and engagement and academic learning should be reported on separately.

Assessment and reporting are also not a disciplinary tool. Students cannot be penalized for missing classes or behaviour they demonstrate by reducing their marks. However if a student has not attended enough classes for a teacher to be able to observe their learning or submitted enough student work samples for a teacher to evaluate evidence of learning and assign a proficiency scale indicator or letter grade and percentage, the student, parents, caregivers, teachers, and/or school administration would come together to decide on the best path forward. The student could be [promoted with supports](#), assigned an [IE letter grade](#), or be required to [retake the course](#).

12. Can participation or attendance be worth a specified percentage of a student's overall mark?

No. A student's mark should be in relation to the learning standards alone. Therefore, allotting 10% for participation or 5% for attendance isn't appropriate. Making students' behaviours such as putting up their hand to respond to questions part of their grade unfairly penalizes students who don't have the confidence to speak up in class.

13. Should attendance, behaviour and work habits be given a letter or numeric mark?

Reporting on student learning habits and engagement and academic learning needs to be done separately. A numeric or letter mark for behaviour, such as a G, S, or N, is not the most effective mechanism.

Reporting on student learning habits and engagement can be achieved through a combination of student self-reflection of Core Competencies, goal setting, and descriptive feedback.

14. Do all students receive a passing grade even if they don't attend classes or submit enough work?

No. Some students may not attend enough classes for teachers to observe their learning, engage in conversations or turn in enough work samples to provide sufficient evidence of learning. If a teacher does not have enough evidence of learning to assign a proficiency scale indicator or letter grade and percentage, then the teacher will meet with the student, parents, and caregivers to decide the best path forward.

If a time comes when the student is unable to demonstrate sufficient evidence of learning, then a promotion-with-supports or retention process will need to be undertaken. For more information, see [Promotion and Retention](#).

15. Should marks be averaged over a term, semester, or year?

While classroom assessment practices are up to individual teachers, the ongoing nature of learning should be considered when assessing and reporting on student learning. Averaging marks over the course of a term, semester, or year does not provide an accurate picture of where a student is currently at in their learning in relation to the learning standards. For example, if marks were averaged, a student who was struggling at the start of the year, when they had just begun exploring the concepts, would have their overall mark impacted regardless of the robust learning they demonstrate later in the year because of the lower marks they received earlier.

Each communication of student learning should report on the student's current learning in relation to the learning standards, and take into account the most recent evidence of learning. Averaging marks is also a significant demotivator for students and can impede their engagement and the ongoing nature of their learning.

16. What is expected for reporting on the Core Competencies?

During the school year, students self-reflect on and self-assess their Core Competency development, and this is shared in the two written Learning Updates and one Summary of Learning. Self-reflection on the Core Competencies encourages students to reflect on their learning and speak to how they have developed, and will continue to develop, their Communication, Thinking, and Personal and Social competencies.

17. What is the expected format for student self-reflection on Core Competencies and goal setting?

In the interest of flexibility for students and their learning, the Ministry does not prescribe how the Core Competencies should be self-assessed or how goal setting should be undertaken. Districts determine formats and procedures, ensuring that the self-reflection and goal-setting process is meaningful.

For examples of student self-reflection on the Core Competencies and goal setting, see [Self-Reflection on Core Competencies and Goal Setting](#).

18. What specific Core Competencies do students need to reflect on over the course of the school year?

In the interest of flexibility for students and their learning, self-reflection on specific Core Competencies or all Core Competencies during the school year is not required, unless mandated by a local school and/or district policy.

19. For the goal-setting requirement, do students need to set goals based on the Core Competencies?

Although it is a natural fit, student goal setting does not need to be in relation to the Core Competencies, unless decided on by the student, teacher, school and/or district. Student goals can

be personal, academic, athletic, creative and/or career-oriented. This flexibility ensures that students are able to engage in the goal-setting process in a way that is most meaningful to them.

20. Who is responsible for including self-reflection on Core Competencies and goal setting in the reporting communications?

There are a variety of school-based professionals who can support students in the self-reflection on Core Competencies and goal-setting components of the reporting process. Districts and/or schools have a variety of structures they can use to ensure that this requirement is met, and they are encouraged to design a system that best meets the needs of their teachers, students, parents, and caregivers.

For suggestions on how the self-reflection on Core Competencies and goal-setting requirement can be structured, see [Self-Reflection on Core Competencies and Goal Setting](#).

21. Do we continue to use the Permanent Student Record (PSR)?

Yes. All schools will continue to follow the [Permanent Student Record Order](#) and PSR [instructions](#).

22. Do the self-reflection on Core Competencies and goal-setting components need to be included in the Permanent Student Record (PSR)?

No. The self-reflection on Core Competencies and goal-setting components do not need to be retained in the student's permanent record.

23. If a student has an IEP, are they automatically assessed as Emerging or Developing or at a lower letter grade and percentage?

No. A student with an IEP or student learning plan should not be assessed automatically as "Emerging," "Developing" or at a lower letter grade and percentage because they use supports to further their learning. If, with the supports, the student is demonstrating learning in relation to the learning standards, they should be assigned a proficiency scale indicator or letter grade and percentage according to the learning they have demonstrated. The use of supports does not mean they are not adequately meeting the learning standards.

For more information, see [Inclusive Reporting Practices](#).

24. If a student uses assessment supports to demonstrate their learning, does this mean they are Emerging or Developing or should be assigned a lower letter grade and percentage?

No. All students are entitled to use supports to demonstrate their learning. If, with the supports, the student is demonstrating learning in relation to the learning standards, then they should be assigned a proficiency scale indicator or letter grade and percentage according to the learning they have demonstrated. The use of supports does not mean they are not adequately meeting the learning standards of the curriculum.

For more information on assessment supports, see [Inclusive Assessment Practices](#).

25. What if a student is on a School Completion Certificate (also known as an Evergreen certificate)?

There will be rare occasions where students with significant cognitive disabilities and diverse abilities are working on a School Completion Certificate (Evergreen Certificate), not a Certification of Graduation (Dogwood Diploma). These students are still taught in connection with the learning standards of the curriculum, but they are assessed and evaluated in relation to the individualized learning goals outlined in their IEP. They will receive communications of student learning in the same format and on the same schedule as all other students in their learning community.

Written Learning Updates and the Summary of Learning should note when a student is working toward a School Completion Certificate and is being assessed and evaluated in relation to the individualized learning goals outlined in their IEP.