

Introduction

Brookhouse Elementary believes that children are most successful when a collaborative effort exists between all those involved in the education of the child. We believe that partnership generates powerful learning outcomes. This collaboration of teachers, students and parents/guardians, and community requires a shared understanding of what children are expected to achieve and where the child is in their learning. The following plan for Communicating Student Learning will explain what we do at the school 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.

Parents/Guardians can learn more about this framework by discussing it with school staff, attending information sessions, or visiting the Nova Scotia Department of Education website: <https://curriculum.novascotia.ca/>

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 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 their 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.

Teachers of both single and combined grades assess the skills, abilities, knowledge, and interests of their students. They share with students the curriculum expectations for their grade. Using differentiated instruction, teachers design whole and small group activities to address varying student strengths, needs, and interests. As in any classroom, the main focus in a combined grade classroom continues to be supporting the learning needs of all students.

Differentiated instruction is a key component of any classroom. Teachers work to meet each student where they are on their learning journey, and help move them along in the way they learn best, regardless of their grade level. Teachers have an amazing ability to find creative ways to teach to every level. The teacher will use a variety of assessment strategies to help your child learn the curriculum and to ensure each child's learning needs are met. 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.

The following is a list of assessment strategies. While no teacher would necessarily use all of those listed, every teacher at Brookhouse Elementary 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 observations/notes
- Conferences/Conversations
- 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 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 following is Brookhouse's proposed plan for communicating student learning for the

school year: 2024 - 2025

September Curriculum Night

November Report Cards – first Term

December Parent/ Guardian -Teacher Conferences

March Report Cards – second term

April Parent/Guardian - Teacher Conferences

June Final Progress Reports sent home

Throughout the year teachers will also be sending work samples, assessment rubrics, and other assessment samples home to families.

The teachers at Brookhouse Elementary also communicate with parents using:

- Websites
- Emails
- Phone calls
- Notes home
- Reading logs
- Weekly or Monthly newsletters
- Calendars
- "X" (formally Twitter) @BrookhouseElem

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.

Program 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 Student Planning Team. This team will consist of the principal/vice-principal, resource teacher, learning centre teacher and 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 Program Planning Team, including the 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, parents/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

Parents/Guardians wishing to review the relevant provincial curriculum guides may access them

through the government websites: <https://beta.novascotia.ca/government/education-and-early-childhood-development> The Halifax Centre for Education Policy on Student Assessment and Evaluation can be accessed by visiting the HRCE's website: <http://www.hrce.ca>