



**NORMA ROSE POINT SCHOOL**  
LEARNERS AT THE CENTRE



# Communicating Student Learning

## Table of Contents

BC's "New" Curriculum .....	p. 1
Quality Assessment .....	p. 2
Student Reporting Guidelines .....	p. 3
NRP Philosophy and Goals .....	p. 4
NRP Strengths-Based Rating Scale .....	p. 5
Descriptive Feedback vs. Letter Grades .....	p. 5
Portfolios .....	p. 6
What CSL Looks Like at NRP .....	p. 6
Parent Information Sessions .....	p. 9

## BC's "New" Curriculum

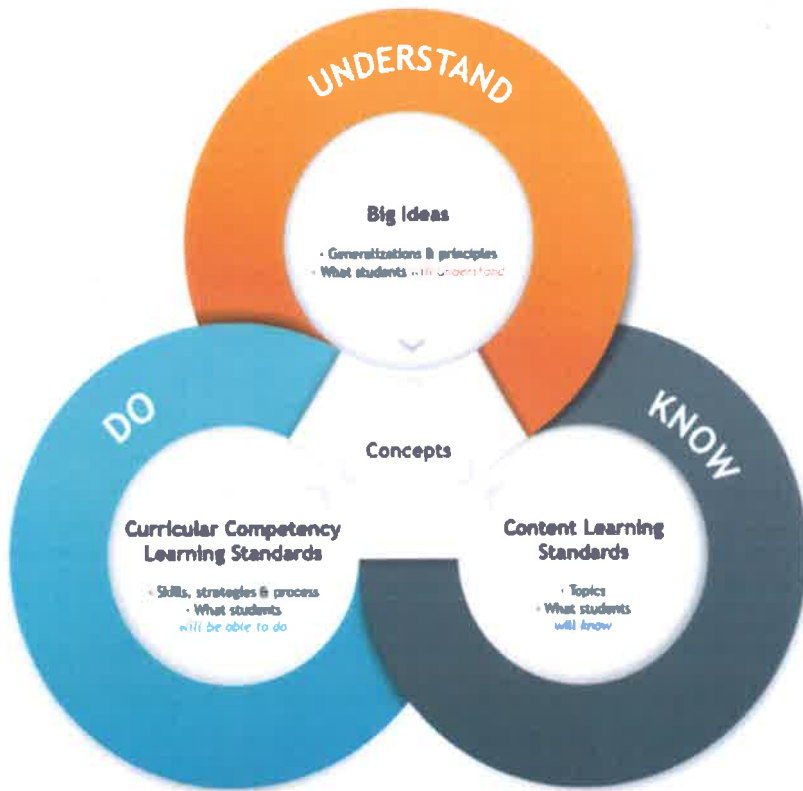
For the past decade, the BC Ministry of Education and teachers have been working to refine BC's curriculum based on world-leading research and successful classroom programs from across the globe to reflect the worldwide changes and expectations of what is awaiting learners of today and beyond.

In the words of BC's Minister of Education Mike Bernier:

While we call it "new" curriculum, it is also a reflection of what has been happening in our classrooms for years . . . Our new curriculum will still teach students the basics—reading, writing and math, but in a way that connects them to collaboration, communication and critical thinking skills, which are so important after high school. These are the core skills universities, colleges and employers tell us they are looking for. We are also bringing a new core skill into schools—coding, which teaches students the critical thinking and logical approach crucial for success in tech careers and in almost every other field.

Last year, the draft new curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 9 was introduced for possible implementation. This year it is being fully implemented by BC schools. For more details on BC's curriculum, please visit <http://www.curriculum.gov.bc.ca>.

Along with the new provincial curriculum, schools are being encouraged to use quality assessment practices and to explore more effective ways of communicating student learning. In so doing, we are asked to consider the Principles of Quality Assessment noted on the Ministry website <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/assessment-info> and below.



## Quality Assessment . . .

- is fair, transparent, meaningful and responsive to all learners
- focuses on all three components of the curriculum model – knowing, doing, understanding
- provides ongoing descriptive feedback to students
- is ongoing, timely, specific, and embedded in day to day instruction
- provides varied and multiple opportunities for learners to

demonstrate their learning

- involves students in their learning
- promotes development of student self-assessment and goal setting for next steps in learning
- allows for a collection of student work to be gathered over time to provide a full profile of the learner and learning
- communicates clearly to the learner and parents where the student is, what they are working towards and the ways that learning can be supported

The Ministry of Education has also revised the Student Reporting Policy and changed various Ministerial Orders to better align with the new curriculum. All are highlighted in the Guidelines for Student Reporting:

[https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/pdf/educator\\_update\\_student\\_progress\\_k-9.pdf](https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/pdf/educator_update_student_progress_k-9.pdf)

## Student Reporting Guidelines

Norma Rose Point will be following the Interim Student Reporting Guidelines which state that:

- Schools commit to an ongoing and responsive form of reporting.
- The goal is to enhance and improve the reporting process so that parents have a clear picture of their child as a learner, a window into their child's educational experience, and an increased ability to support their child. In this way, reporting aligns with the redesigned curriculum and instruction, and enables communication and clarifies supports for students.
- Parents must be provided information that makes clear where students are in their learning, what they are working toward, any interventions they may require, and ways to further support their learning.
- Reporting on student progress should also make clear the extent to which a student is meeting age/grade expectations and developing the necessary knowledge, competencies, and understandings. Reports on student progress should clearly identify any concerns about student progress.
- The reporting on student progress should also provide a clear idea of students' interactions with peers, their ability to be personally aware and responsible, and their contributions to the classroom, school, and community.
- During the school year, ongoing communication with parents about their child's progress may take a variety of forms, such as: • student-led and three-way conferences • written interim reports • e-portfolio reviews • parent/teacher meetings • samples and demonstrations of student work, videos, written summaries, or portfolio entries
- Communications with parents may be provided in a variety of ways: in person; through telephone, email, text, Skype, and other electronic means; and through the use of reporting applications (NRP uses Edsby).

At NRP, we commit to using both the above quality assessment practices and to create ways to amplify the learning that emerges day in and day out. This pamphlet explains the why and how of doing so. However, we will also host Parent Information Sessions where our Communicating Student Learning approaches will be discussed and questions answered.

## NRP Philosophy and Goals

Before proceeding further, as our school population continues to grow rapidly bringing many new families, we would like to review a few highlights of how Norma Rose Point School functions in light of our school design, our philosophy and how this equates to communicating student learning.

An African proverb says "It takes a village to raise a child." At Norma Rose Point School, your child's learning community or pod is their village. Each pod is made up of 3-4 advisory (homeroom) teachers, one learning support teacher and often an education assistant. Teachers share the space, plan together and teach together in support of differentiated instruction (providing students with different ways of learning), collaboration (engaging students in collaborative work) and inquiry learning (having students pose questions and problems and then explore, investigate and research to learn).

Our school goals are to embed the core competencies (communication, creative and critical thinking, personal and social awareness) into our daily work, to instill a growth mindset in our learners (never give up, make the most of their mistakes, embrace challenges) and to communicate learner growth in meaningful ways (we will explain how this looks below).

When it comes to communicating student learning, all the educators in the community contribute to this process. As a team, and with student input, teachers determine where a child is at and develop a game plan for learning. Each student does not do the same thing because we recognize that students are unique individuals who start at different places, progress at different rates and learn in different ways.

## NRP Strengths-Based Rating Scale

Rather than using the traditional five-point scale (not yet meeting, minimally meeting, meeting, fully meeting and exceeding), we use strengths-based evaluation criteria that highlights the level of effort and independence displayed by the learner:

Acquiring	Student requires teacher direction and support to acquire skills
Developing	Student is learning to practice and apply skill with some teacher support
Refining	Student is refining skills with increasing consistency and independence
Mastering	Student consistently and independently demonstrates competence in applying skills
Extending	Student takes ownership and self-initiates innovative use of skills

This scale is not an equivalent to grades. More importantly, our assessment focus is on providing descriptive feedback that supports growth.

## Descriptive Feedback vs. Letter Grades

Descriptive feedback guides learners to improving outcomes by developing next steps in their learning journey. Researchers Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam, in their widely-cited work, propose that the use of descriptive feedback raises student academic achievement, while letter grades do not. The work of James Heckman, a Nobel Prize winning economist, shows that grades and test scores do not predict success later in life. Author Alfie Kohn summarizes:

1. Grades tend to diminish students' interest in whatever they are learning
2. Grades create a preference for the easiest possible task
3. Grades tend to reduce the quality of student's thinking

This is why, at NRP, we do not focus on letter grades or numerical marks. We have not issued letter grades since our school opened, unless requested by a parent. Moving forward, our December Interim reports and final June reports will continue to use the strengths based language that our community values. In addition, the June reports will include a letter grade issued in all curricular areas for our grade 6/7/8 students as submitted to the Ministry of Education at year end. Providing letter grades also satisfies the needs of our many students who return to their homeland or choose to attend external schools. Please keep in mind, though, that throughout the year our focus is not on grades. We want our students to be intrinsically motivated, not measuring themselves by percentages but by their growth as learners.

### Portfolios

Portfolios play a role in highlighting student growth. Our school is in the process of developing protocols for both digital and paper-based portfolios of student work. Each portfolio is a purposeful collection of a child's work showcasing their learning. It is not a display of random work, but rather a carefully chosen selection documenting the learning journey and highlighting the growth of each child as a learner. Some communities use Edsby as their primary portfolio platform. Edsby is a secure, online, internal communication system to showcase student portfolios and to allow dialogue amongst students, staff, and parents.

### What CSL Looks Like at NRP

In light of our school design, philosophy, the curriculum and how quality assessment looks, here is what our communication of student learning looks like at NRP:

What Parents Can Expect	How It Will Be Communicated
<p><b>September: Kindergarten Intake Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each Kindergarten family is invited to an intake meeting with the K Team (Maple Community)</li> </ul>	<p>On the first day of Kindergarten, each family will sign up for an intake meeting for parents to share any pertinent information with the teaching team.</p>
<p><b>September - December: Curriculum Overview</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each learning community will provide an overview to parents</li> </ul>	<p>Some communities choose to communicate about their program during Meet the Staff Night, others choose to provide this overview with the December Interim report card.</p>
<p><b>October: Goal Setting Conference Note:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For K/1/2 students, the conference is a parent-teacher dialogue. No children attend.</li> <li>For grades 3 to 8 students, the conference is a three-way conference for student-parent-teacher.</li> </ol>	<p>During this goal setting conference, joint goals are determined for the child.</p> <p>Parents have an opportunity to ask questions and to determine how they can support their child's learning.</p> <p>Parents receive a copy of their child's goals (either on paper or in their personal digital portfolio on Edsby) by the end of December at the latest.</p>
<p><b>December: Interim Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>K/1/2 students are assessed on three aspects of the evaluation criteria (acquiring, developing and mastering) while the gr 3 – 8 students are assessed on all five (acquiring, developing, refining, mastering, extending)</li> <li>K/1/2 students reflect on their experience of school and Gr 3 – 8 students self assess and reflect on their learning. This will be included in the report.</li> </ul>	<p>A paper-based report is issued for each child prior to Winter Break. The report is a snapshot of the students' progress to date towards personal goals and their current performance and achievement level in Literacy, Numeracy and Inquiry/Integrated Studies.</p> <p>An example of this report will be shared at our Parent Information Session and an example posted to our school website shortly.</p>



<p><b>February: Student Led Conferences</b></p>	<p>This is an opportunity to review your child’s learning profile, the progress your child has made and to establish further goals and next steps. Parents will receive a copy of their child’s revised goals (either on Edsby or in their paper based portfolio).</p>
<p><b>K to 8 Celebrations of Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each K to 8 Learning Community will invite their respective families to an exhibition of learning. This happens at least once a year.</li> </ul>	<p>Each community sends out their own invitation to parents. Students share their learning for family to see and to ask questions.</p>
<p><b>June: Final Summative Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• K to 8 students are assessed with the same evaluation criteria scale mentioned above (acquiring, developing, refining, mastering, extending).</li> <li>• The gr 6/7/8 students also receive end of year letter grades for all curricular areas as submitted to the Ministry of Education. Providing letter grades also satisfies the needs of our many students who return to their homeland or choose to attend external schools.</li> </ul>	<p>A final paper based report will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comments and rating scale in all curricular areas (Literacy – English Language Arts, Numeracy -- Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Applied Design, Skills, and Technologies, Career Education, Arts Education, and a second language if applicable and depending on grade level)</li> <li>• A student self-assessment of core competencies</li> </ul>

**September - June:**

**EDSBY**

- An internal communication system that allows dialogue amongst students, staff, parents and showcases the student's personal portfolio

**AGENDA**

**Note:**

- Grades 1/2/3 use paper agendas for now to augment Edsby
- Grades 4/5 use their own version of an agenda to augment Edsby
- Grades 6/7/8 use Edsby solely

Parents receive an invitation to register for Edsby. Once registered, for the duration of your child's stay at NRP, parents will have access to Edsby. Parents can read general teacher posts to the community, personal correspondence with their own child and be able to view their child's personal learning portfolio.

**Other**

Communication between home and school is a building block for student success. While we have highlighted the more formal ways that teachers share information with families, phone calls, e-mails and other face to face interactions are also used to communicate important information, observations or to address specific concerns that may occur. Please remember that communication is a two-way endeavor.

Our goal is to build your child's independence as much as possible. However, should you feel you need to reach out to the school, please do so sooner rather than later.

## Parent Information Sessions

We appreciate your thoughtful contributions as we navigate through an exciting time in educational change. If you have any further questions, we are providing parents with an opportunity to attend one of two Parent Information Sessions where our Communicating Student Learning approaches will be discussed and questions answered. The Parent Information Sessions will be held in our School Learning Commons on:

Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 – 7:30pm and

Friday, December 9, 9:15am – 10:15am (with Mandarin translation)

The work of our CSL committee continues to evolve based on thoughtful and careful consideration involving students, parents, teachers and administration. We look forward to your continued contributions and ongoing support.

On behalf of NRP staff,

Rosa Fazio

Principal