



## **SCHOOL DISTRICT 64 (GULF ISLANDS)**

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### **Communicating Student Learning Information for Parents**

#### **Moving from 'Reporting' to 'Communicating Student Learning' in School District 64**

"When students communicate with others about what they have learned, they come to understand what they have learned, what they need to learn, and what kind of support may be available to them. They receive feedback and recognition from themselves and from others that guide and support their learning. This teaches them to self-monitor; an essential skill for self-directed, independent, lifelong learners." (Davies, 2004)

#### **Your child's involvement in self-assessment leads to greater progress and success.**

Educational research has found that when students understand what success looks like, what learning expectations are, and use these criteria to assess their work and behaviour, they have a much better understanding of what they are doing well, and what they need to work on next.

Parents have said:

"I want to share what I know about my child."

"Sometimes the report card doesn't really tell me the information I want to know."

"It's not clear to me what's really going on."

"I find report cards too long and too wordy. What are they really trying to say?"

"I just want to know: Is my child OK? If not, how can I help?"

"Why didn't I know that my child was struggling? I don't like surprises."

"I see my child differently; I would like to have a conversation with my child's teacher."

"I don't see how a letter grade really tells me about my child or their learning."

The Ministry of Education has shared that there is overwhelming support for 'communicating student learning' versus 'reporting' as well as using performance standard language in lieu of letter grades.

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Teachers in our school district have been looking into finding more meaningful ways of communicating student learning to parents. This year, a new transformed curriculum has been introduced by the Ministry of Education. Teachers are looking to assessment and reporting practices that are more aligned with this 'new' curriculum. **We are looking for ways to involve students in self assessment in combination with increasing the amount of teacher descriptive feedback.**

Last spring, a group of our teachers and administrators applied for an **Innovation Grant** offered by the Ministry of Education to explore ways of communicating student learning. Gulf Islands schools have been chosen as one of 17 projects in this Innovation Partnership.

<http://k12innovation.ca/projects/communicating-student-learning/>

This past fall, teachers interested in this project met to discuss student portfolios, student-led conferences, pedagogical documentation (learning stories), competency based reporting, gradeless reporting, and student self-assessment. Early this year, 40 educators met on a Friday to co-create criteria and plan what communicating student learning may look like for the next reporting term.

Our involvement in the Innovation Partnership has allowed teacher innovators in our district an opportunity to choose different methods of communicating student learning to parents. This may take place in the form of a student-led conference or a student learning portfolio. This may look like a 3-way conversation that would include the student, teacher and parent. There are teachers who have already been using these methods to include students and parents in the learning process.

We look forward to working together with an emphasis on 'communicating student learning' in ways that include students, parents and teachers, rather than teachers 'reporting'.

To find out more, or to have your voice heard, look for information meetings to be held with PAC groups in the near future.

### **Steering Committee**

K-12 Innovation Partnership on Communicating Student Learning:

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