

Hammonds Plains Consolidated School

COMMUNICATING STUDENT LEARNING

2019-2020

Introduction

Hammonds Plains Consolidated School believes that student success depends upon the collaborative efforts of all those involved in the education of the child. Collaboration requires that teachers, children, parents/guardians share a common understanding of what children are expected to achieve through their educational experiences, as well as a clear idea of where the child is in his/her learning. This school plan will explain what we do at the school to assess and evaluate your child's learning, and how we will communicate to you our expectations for his/her learning as well as his/her achievements.

How Children Learn

At Hammonds Plains Consolidated School, we develop our educational programs on the basis of a common set of understandings about how students learn, referred to as the Principles of Learning. It is our responsibility as teachers to plan for our students with the following 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.*

Several of these principles give direction to how we assess, evaluate and communicate student learning. For example, we plan assessment tasks that require students to apply their knowledge in solving interesting, authentic and complex problems. The teachers at HPCS invite you to discuss the implications of these principles for teaching and learning in the classroom.

What Children Learn

The Principles of Learning give direction as to how children learn. The Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) also gives direction to teachers on what children should learn. Teachers are provided by the province 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. There are "outcomes", which indicate the knowledge and skills that typify that level of ability. We have "outcomes" for almost all curriculum areas from Mathematics and English Language Arts, to Art, and Physical Education. Altogether, this set of expectations about what children will learn as a result of their educational experiences is referred to as the Learning Outcomes Framework. Parents/guardians can learn more about this Framework by discussing it with your child's teacher or visiting the EECD website.

Teachers use the expected learning outcomes 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. Teachers gather information that relates to what children are expected to learn; that is, the expected learning outcomes outlined in the Provincial curriculum guides. Evaluation is the process of analyzing, summarizing, and making decisions based on the information collected. The decisions teachers make in evaluating student learning relate to where each child is on the continuum of learning, and also where the child needs to go next in their learning. As parent/guardians, you can expect to receive information from teachers about your child's learning in relation to the expected learning outcomes.

Parents/guardians can become more knowledgeable about outcomes by attending information sessions at the school, searching the Internet, reading the curriculum information that the school provides, participating in interactive curriculum sessions at the school, observing your child's school work, monitoring homework, asking your child about school, asking questions about curriculum, and attending Open Houses.

How Teachers Assess and Evaluate Student Learning

In order to provide all children with ample and fair opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of the expected learning outcomes, teachers use a variety of different assessment methods. Because children not only learn in different ways (referred as learning style) but also demonstrate their learning in different ways, teachers use a range of methods, realizing that any one method suits some students more than others. In addition, gathering information on student learning from several different types of tasks ensures that the teacher has a fuller and more accurate picture of what a child knows and can do. This enables not only clearer communication with students and parents/guardians, but also allows the teacher to plan more effectively for individuals and groups of children.

At HPCS our goal for this year is to continue to work to ensure fair and balanced assessment that reflects the diversity of our learners. In meeting this goal, teachers will assess student learning using some of the following methods: rubrics, portfolios, work samples, models, oral and written journals/reports/logs/presentations, performances, graphic/visual representations, experiments, concept maps, quizzes, tests, debates, projects, checklists, anecdotal records, conferences, surveys, and observation. While no one teacher necessarily would use all of the above with each student, every teacher at HPCS is committed to a balanced and fair approach to assessing student learning. Your child's teacher would be pleased to discuss how they are meeting this goal.

Communicating With Care

Reporting on student learning should be clear, accurate and of practical value to you as the parent/guardian. We use a variety of methods to communicate your child's progress and achievement. If additional forms of communication are necessary, we will make every effort to provide the information you require in a form that is useful to you.

Teachers are not able to meet on an impromptu basis nor are they able to discuss a student's program or progress during class time. Instructional time includes supervision duty as well as time spent meeting and greeting students. Parents/guardians are invited to meet with teachers by appointment, by calling the school at 902-832-8412.

Teacher/parent/guardian conferences focus on your child and always from the starting point of the child's strengths. Areas for further development for the child are approached in a collaborative, problem solving manner, and a follow-up action plan states expectations for the school and the home. The guiding principle is always what is in the best interest of the child.

How We Communicate Student Learning

Information about your child's learning can be communicated to students, parents/guardians, and teachers in a variety of ways. These methods include but are not limited to: curriculum sessions for parents/guardians; monthly school and/or class newsletters; calendars; special events; student homework; work samples; published stories; reading-at home programs; records of books read; writing folders; journals; projects; investigations; displays; visits; phone calls; performances; recordings; portfolios; conferences; progress reports. Some of the possible ways for communicating student learning in relation to the expected outcomes will be undertaken on a school-wide basis and others are particular to individual classes and teachers.

The school year is organized into three terms, each of which concludes with a progress report. The first reporting session ends in November, the second one in March and the final term in June. Just as our curriculum planning and assessment are focused on the curriculum outcomes outlined in our provincial curriculum guides, this report will provide information about your child's progress in meeting these outcomes.

There are two scheduled parent/guardian/teacher conferences: the first, a collaborative session in the fall (Nov28) and the second, a progress update in the spring (April 1pm April 2 afternoon). Parents/guardians are encouraged to make an appointment with the teacher to discuss their child's progress at other times if they feel that further conferencing is necessary.

The goal of HPCS is to have a monthly communication of student learning in relation to the learning outcomes framework. Some of these communications will be general in nature and some will be specific to the individual student. The following is a proposed calendar for the 2019-2020 school year:

Hammonds Plains Consolidated School Calendar 2019-2020

<i>September 2019</i>	<i>Curriculum Night</i>
<i>November 2019</i>	<i>Parent teacher</i>
<i>December 2019</i>	<i>Report cards/Holiday Concerts</i>
<i>January 2020</i>	<i>Family Literacy Week</i>
<i>March 2020</i>	<i>Report cards</i>
<i>April 2020</i>	<i>Parent/Guardian-Teacher Interviews/Report Cards</i>
<i>May 2020</i>	<i>French Culture Week</i>
<i>June 2020</i>	<i>Final Report card/Assessment and Evaluation Day/</i>

Program Planning Team

The majority of our students follow the prescribed provincial learning outcomes. In some cases, adaptations are required. HPCS has a School Team that works collaboratively to coordinate the planning and development of programming for students with special needs. The Team consists

of the principal and vice-principal, a resource teacher, and several other teachers. Any teacher may refer students to the team whom they feel may benefit from adaptations to their program. Teachers generally inform parents of their concerns prior to or at the time a referral is made to the School Planning Team.

Parents are required to give written consent before any formal individual assessment is conducted and before additional support outside the classroom is provided.

As a result of team meetings, it may be decided that adaptations be made to the student's program. Where an IPP (Individual Program Plan) is needed, a team is developed around the needs of the child, which includes a resource teacher, a school administrator, the classroom teacher(s), and a parent/guardian. The development and implementation of an Individual Program Plan follows a process outlined by the EECD.

Review of School Plan

The School Plan for Communicating Student Learning will be reviewed and amended as needed by the principal after consulting with staff and School Advisory Council.

Our on-going work on effective teaching, engaged student learning, appropriate assessment and evaluation, and quality communication about student learning in relation to the expected learning outcomes truly qualifies HPCS as a professional learning community.