

Inglis Street Elementary School
Plan for Communicating Student Learning
2014-2015

INTRODUCTION

Inglis Street Elementary School is a learning environment committed to the success of all students. Research shows that children are far more likely to experience success in their school setting when parents/guardians and school staff work collaboratively towards achieving this goal. This requires that all individuals involved in the education of our children share a common understanding of what children are expected to achieve in school, a clear understanding of assessment procedures, and an awareness of the progress students are making in achieving the expected learning outcomes.

HOW CHILDREN LEARN

At Inglis Street Elementary School, we plan instruction and assessment on the basis of a common set of understandings about how students learn. These understandings are referred to as the Principles of Learning in the Nova Scotia Department of Education *Public School Programs* document:

- 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 achieving and representing knowledge.
- Reflection is an integral part of learning.

WHAT CHILDREN LEARN

In each subject area General Curriculum Outcomes identify what students are expected to have learned at various grade levels along a continuum of learning from primary to grade 12. Curriculum guides from the Nova Scotia Department of Education provide teachers with grade-specific outcomes, which identify knowledge, skills, and competencies that must be attained in each subject area.

There are many ways parents/guardians can become more familiar with these outcomes.

- attending and participating in information/curriculum sessions at the school;
- keeping open communication with your child's teacher;
- asking to see curriculum documents at school;
- accessing internet sites that describe and support school curriculum, such as:

<http://www.ednet.ns.ca> (Nova Scotia Department of Education), or
<http://www.hrsb.ns.ca> (Halifax Regional School Board).

How We Assess and Evaluate Student Learning

At Inglis Street Elementary School we are committed to ensuring that the diversity of our students is reflected in fair and balanced assessment. Our focus is on *Assessment for*

learning which is continuous and helps the teacher decide on further instructional directions for the child.

Staff use a wide variety of tools to assess student performance, which may include, but are not limited to:

- anecdotal observation notes;
- project work;
- performance tasks;
- oral presentations;
- individual conferences;
- school based common assessments;
- tests and quizzes;
- checklists;
- reading records;
- student-formulated questions;
- personal written responses;
- rubrics - specific criteria that are set for given tasks;
- portfolios - collections that contain samples of work that demonstrate student progress;
- reflection - student's evaluation of his/her own work and responses to material(s)/ outcomes that they have been learning.

HOW WE COMMUNICATE STUDENT LEARNING

Information regarding your child's learning can be communicated in a variety of ways. At Inglis Street Elementary School, a number of scheduled events provide parents with important information regarding curriculum in general as well as your child's learning in relation to curriculum outcomes. The calendar of important dates and activities includes:

- September – Curriculum Night;
- November - Parent/ Teacher conferences;
- December - Report Card, Holidays Concert;
- January – Family Literacy Day;
- February - Primary Registration;
- April - Report card, Parent/Teacher interviews;
- May - Literacy week / Spring Concert;
- June - Report Card, Annual Report to the Community.

Less formal methods of communicating include:

- Daily home agenda books and messages;
- Telephone calls;
- Newsletters;
- Home reading programs;
- E-mail;
- Homework;
- School website.

If parents/guardians have questions or concerns about curriculum or about their child's progress in achieving the curriculum outcomes *they are always welcome to contact the teacher for a meeting at any time during the school year.*

Power School

Real-time access to your child's grades, attendance and teacher's comments is available through the Internet using Power School. Parents can access this information using the Student-Parent Portal. Please see the quick reference guides – *How to Sign Up for the Student-Parent Portal* and *How to Use the Student-Parent Portal* – which are available at <http://inschool.ednet.ns.ca/portal>. You can also view a 5-minute online demonstrated video of the Student-Parent Portal. You may access information about your child (ren) at any time once you have signed up on the Student-Parent Portal website. If you have more than one child in the same school or at different schools, you can link all of your children to your web account. If you have any questions or comments, or to request paper copies of the Quick Reference Guides, please contact us at ises@hrsb.ns.ca or call 902-421-6767. Grades and teacher's comments are not available while report cards are in progress.

Children Requiring Additional Support

Our school community is committed to supporting the success of all students. Using the resources available to our school, we address the needs of children who require changes and/or adaptation of programs.

Students requiring additional support in one or more areas will be assisted through Inglis Street School's Program Planning Process. The School Planning Team will make recommendations about the nature and level of support required, and will allocate school resources to support their recommendations. For further information, please see *The Program Planning Process: A Guide for Parents*, copies of which are available at the office, or online at <http://www.ednet.ns.ca/pdfdocs/studentsvcs/program-planning-process.pdf>.

At Inglis Street School we have a number of students who have English as an additional language (EAL). We have two programs which enable us to provide additional support to EAL students. We are fortunate to have a qualified EAL teacher who is based out of our school site. Additionally, we also have a community based YMCA Immigrant Youth Services, School Settlement and Youth Outreach worker who works with our EAL students and their families. For more information please contact the YMCA Centre for Immigration Programs, 65 Main Avenue, Halifax, NS, B3M 1A4 or telephone (902) 457-9622.

Homework Guidelines:

Parents / guardians often have questions regarding homework. The staff at Inglis Street will refer to Nova Scotia's Provincial Homework Guidelines. Based on these guidelines:

Homework is...

- An assigned activity that is completed outside of regular class time;

- Clear and purposeful;
- Engaging;
- Of high quality;
- Given in moderation;
- Positively associated with student learning;
- Equitable for ALL students;
- Considerate of resources available at home;
- Should include student choice;
- Differentiated to support student's learning needs;
- Not a form of assessment included in final grades.

Homework Time Guidelines:

P-3: Formal homework not required

- Activities, games and books are often sent home to encourage family sharing, and learning outside the classroom in a natural way. These experiences are intended to cultivate a love for learning.
- Recognition that play is an important factor in the development of a healthy brain and body, especially at this age.

Grades 4-6: (Daily maximum total time in all subjects, based on 4 nights / wk)

- Grade 4: 20-30 minutes / day (2 hrs/wk)
- Grade 5: 30-40 minutes / day (2.6 hrs / wk)
- Grade 6: 40-50 minutes / day (3.3 hrs / wk)

CONCLUSION

At Inglis Street Elementary School, we believe that assessment for learning is an ongoing process. As a staff, our goal is to develop effective and fair assessment practices that will allow us to support and enhance the learning of all students. We welcome, therefore, the involvement and support of parents/guardians and other community partners who share in our commitment.