

Compliance with the *Independent School Act* through Course Overviews

Group 1, 2 and 4 independent schools are through the *Independent School Act* required to meet the Minister's Educational Standards Order for independent schools. The Educational Standards Order (Sections 4 and 5) requires that in:

- **Kindergarten – Grade 9** for educational programs in “English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Sciences, and Second Language, instruction meets the learning outcomes set out in the applicable education program guide for that course or subject and grade” (Section 4(4)).
- **Kindergarten – Grade 9** for educational programs in any other courses that are part of the school's educational program (such as Fine Arts, Physical Education, Health and Career Education, Applied Skills, and locally developed subjects), instruction meets either
 - the learning outcomes set out in the applicable educational program guide for that course or subject and grade, or
 - the learning outcomes established by the authority for that course or subject and grade as they support the curriculum organizers as set out in the applicable educational program guide. (Section 4(5(b)))
- **Grades 10 – 12** educational programs in all courses meet the learning outcomes specified in the applicable educational program guide (listed in Ministerial Order 333/99, the Educational Program Guide Order) for that course or the learning outcomes for a Board/Authority Authorized Course (BAA) (Section 5(10)).

The “applicable education program guides” are the Integrated Resource Packages (IRPs). All IRPs contain sections on Prescribed Learning Outcomes, which are the legally required content standards for the provincial education system. The learning outcomes define the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes for each subject. They are statements of what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of the course. Additional teacher resources in the IRPs include suggested achievement indicators, listings of instructional resources, and considerations for program delivery.

Teachers' course outlines/overviews should reflect the delivery of the educational program at the school and are an important component of the independent school external evaluation process. Course outlines should provide information about time-lines, content, assessment strategies of and for achievement, and link with the IRP prescribed learning outcomes. Course outlines demonstrate to the Inspector that courses are designed to meet required learning outcomes. In reviewing course outlines, together with teacher planning, student work and assessment, inspection teams determine that the school's educational program is meeting the curriculum requirements of the Educational Standards Order. Course outlines should be available for all courses listed in the Educational Standards Order and any additional courses that are part of the school's educational program.

With recent curriculum changes and reformatting, many learning outcomes have been condensed. Course content, planning for assessment, and achievement indicators should be linked with IRP prescribed learning outcomes, rather than IRP curriculum organizers. In some courses such as English Language Arts, where the number of specific learning outcomes is still extensive, the use of reference codes for the individual learning outcomes may be more practical. (A key to the codes should be included with course overviews where schools are using a coding system different from the Ministry IRP.)

Course outlines for *core subjects* Grade K-9 should include:

- Content;
- Planning for Assessment / Teaching strategies & Learning activities;
- Achievement Indicators / Assessment & Evaluation methods; and,
- Link to Prescribed Learning Outcomes specified in the applicable educational program guide (IRP). (Educational Standards Order; Sections 4(1), 4(2), and 4(3))

Course outlines in *non-core subject* K-9 courses should include:

- Course content;
- Planning for Assessment (Teaching strategies/learning activities);
- Achievement Indicators (Assessment/evaluation methods); and,
- Link to either
 - Prescribed Learning Outcomes specified in the applicable education program guide (IRP), or
 - Learning Outcomes established by the authority for that course (or subject and grade) in accordance with the Curriculum Organizers set out in the applicable educational program guide (IRP). (Educational Standards Order, Sections 4(4) and 4(5))

Course outlines in Graduation Program (Grades 10-12) and BAA courses should include:

- Course content;
- Planning for Assessment / Teaching strategies & Learning activities;
- Achievement Indicators / Assessment & Evaluation methods; and,
- Link to either
 - Prescribed Learning Outcomes specified in the applicable educational program guide (IRP), or
 - Learning Outcomes established by the Authority for the Board/Authority Authorized course. (Educational Standards Order, Section 5(10))

Course overview samples are available on our website at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/independentschools

These course overviews are provided as SAMPLES ONLY. They have been gleaned from a variety of schools and used with permission as examples to assist other schools in the development of their course overviews. Each school may develop their course outlines/overviews in a format consistent with its educational program and teacher philosophy, providing that the overview include clear evidence of the four elements required.