

The Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Plan

(Revised September 2000)

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

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Introduction

Originally released in 1994, the *Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Plan* described a number of significant program and policy changes intended to improve the quality of the B.C. education system. This revision reflects the major education program and policy changes that have been subsequently introduced. These include: changes in reporting student progress; the introduction of provincial performance standards to assist teachers in evaluating students' classroom learning; greater recognition of learning outside the classroom through the external credit program; introduction of a common credential (between K-12 and post-secondary systems) for adult learners; improvements to the monitoring and reporting of student performance through the Foundation Skills Assessment program; and changes to improve the academic success of Aboriginal students.

Our society, which depends on the individual contributions of its citizens, requires co-operative, principled individuals whose work and achievements benefit both their families and their communities. This Plan responds to the needs and expectations of society to ensure that schools prepare young people to live productive, satisfying lives, and sets out British Columbia's public education program policy for schooling from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

Schools have always been highly effective in preparing young people who have academic interests. They have been less successful, however, in providing a high-quality education for those who enter the workplace or vocational or technical institutions directly from school. In today's competitive world, no society can afford the high social and economic costs of an unprepared or undereducated population.

Economic restructuring and technical innovation have put a new emphasis on skills needed to succeed in a workplace where information and knowledge are critical resources. Secondary school completion is now the minimum standard for entry in almost all areas of employment. Employers expect graduates to be good learners, to think critically and solve problems, to communicate clearly, to be self-directed, and to work well with others. The new workplace also requires people to be knowledgeable about technology and able to search out and apply information from many sources.

The commitment to providing a high-quality education system in British Columbia applies to all students, regardless of their abilities, goals, or career aspirations. High standards for student achievement, a balanced and relevant curriculum, recognition of learning acquired outside the classroom, appropriate support for teachers and students, and cooperative relationships among schools, parents, and the wider community are emphasized in this education plan.

Other important features of the plan include clear, comprehensive communication with parents about student progress, and public reporting of the school system's progress toward meeting educational goals.

The Kindergarten to Grade 12 Program

The aim of the Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Program is for all students to graduate with a sound education that is relevant to their lives. The provincial curriculum contains content standards which are expressed as prescribed learning outcomes. These prescribed learning outcomes are realistic expectations of what students should know and be able to do, as they progress through thirteen years of schooling. They also reflect patterns of student development and provide a basis for evaluating student performance. In the primary years, prescribed learning outcomes are organized in two clusters: Kindergarten to Grade 1 and Grades 2 to 3. In Grades 4 to 12, they are provided by grade or course.

Performance standards in the key areas of reading, writing, numeracy, and social responsibility have been developed to assist teachers in evaluating students' classroom performance and discussing performance with students and parents.

Principles of Learning

Three principles support the foundation of the Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Program. They guide all aspects of educational practice including curriculum development, instructional planning and practice, learning resource selection, school and classroom organization, assessment, evaluation and reporting. These principles are:

- learning requires the active participation of the student;
- people learn in a variety of ways and at different rates;
- learning is both an individual and a group process.

Equity and Access for All Learners

British Columbia's schools include young people of varied backgrounds, interests, and abilities. The K to 12 Education Program is intended to meet the needs of all students, including those who face particular challenges because of geographical, physical, cognitive, social, and economic factors, or special needs. A variety of supports and programs exists to improve the success of these students relative to other K-12 students.

The education system is committed to helping both boys and girls succeed equally well. Teaching practices, assessment materials, learning activities and environments should acknowledge and encourage the experiences, perceptions and contributions of both sexes.

Government policy supports the integration of multicultural diversity and anti-racism education, which promotes understanding and respect. All students learn about the contributions and experiences of diverse cultures, and are provided with learning opportunities that support their cultural identity and the development of positive self-esteem. All students learn about the unique position of Aboriginal people in the historical and cultural development of British Columbia and Canada.

Government policy supports the principles of integration and inclusion of students who have English as a second language and of students with special needs. When students have special needs, teachers are required to consult with parents about the students' education programs. Specialized professionals, teachers and others

work together to develop, carry out, and review students' Individual Education Plans (IEPs), in consultation with parents.

The K to 12 Education Program is offered in French to francophone students. Curriculum and requirements are the same as in the English program. The course "Français" fulfills language arts requirements at all grade levels.

Schools and Their Communities

To support the needs of their students, schools must provide a safe and healthy learning environment. This requires that schools develop partnerships with parents and social agencies in their communities.

Schools are expected to:

- provide a safe, secure environment for students to ensure that they are safe from physical and psychological harm and can learn in a positive and supportive school environment;
- emphasize the community context of schooling, meaningful roles for parents, work-school partnerships, partnerships with businesses and community agencies, credentials for out-of-school learning.

A Common Core of Learning

The K to 12 Education Program is divided into three levels: primary (Kindergarten to Grade 3), intermediate (Grades 4 to 10) and graduation years (Grades 11 and 12).

Each level has particular emphases, which reflect the range of knowledge, skills and attitudes that students develop during these years. All levels of the program are developed around a common core of learning to ensure that students learn to read, write, do basic mathematics, solve problems and use computer-based technology. These basic skills are emphasized through studies in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, a second language, personal planning, fine arts and applied skills from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

This common core of learning, drawn from ministry-authorized curriculum, ensures that all students, not just those planning to go on to post-secondary education, will gain the knowledge, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and communication skills they need to continue learning throughout their lives.

Student Choice and Course Planning

The extent to which students make decisions about their learning changes as they move through the K to 12 Education Program. In the primary and intermediate years, teachers provide opportunities for students to develop their planning skills. By Grade 9, students, with the support of teachers and parents, develop formal learning plans to guide their course selections.

By the graduation years, students choose courses to complete their career and education plans and satisfy graduation requirements. Students select courses that either help them meet the entrance requirements of a post-secondary institution, or prepare them for the transition to work or an apprenticeship.

Students can include programs of study from sources outside schools. Programs may include courses such as those from community colleges, universities, or private post-secondary institutions, ministry-approved credentials (external courses), distance education or the Open Learning Agency.

Along with the ability to make choices, students are expected to take increased responsibility for developing and acting on learning plans that focus their scholastic efforts and prepare them for working life. Students set goals, develop plans toward meeting those goals, and study topics that promote their career and personal development.

The Primary Years (Kindergarten to Grade 3)

The school provides a secure transition from learning at home to learning at school. Children who enter Kindergarten are generally inquisitive, imaginative, active and eager to learn. They enjoy exploring, experimenting, playing and working with others in a safe, stimulating environment that promotes confidence in their ability to learn. Teachers organize learning to accommodate the full range of children's interests, learning needs and diverse social backgrounds.

In the primary years, students:

- study all required areas of learning, including language arts, social studies, science, mathematics, personal planning, physical education, fine arts and applied skills;
- learn foundation skills in oral language, reading, writing and mathematics;
- begin to develop strategies for healthy living, become aware of good nutrition, maintain physical fitness, learn safety procedures and develop an understanding of their personal responsibility to themselves, to others and to the environment;
- begin to develop critical thinking, decision-making and problem-solving skills.

The curriculum for these years is designed to:

- provide a firm foundation in the core areas of literacy, numeracy, social responsibility and citizenship;
- support the development of children aesthetically, socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically;
- foster the development of imagination;
- encourage children to share, co-operate, develop friendships and appreciate their own and others' abilities, cultural identity and heritage;
- develop traits and attitudes that contribute to career awareness and development, such as taking pride in one's work, working effectively with others, and understanding the relationship of work to everyday life.

The Intermediate Years (Grades 4 to 10)

Between Grades 4 and 10, students progress from childhood to adolescence. They experience physical, emotional and intellectual changes. This period is characterized by fluctuations in behaviour, attitudes, social growth and development. The influence of peers has an effect on student actions and decision-making processes. In the area of intellectual growth, students progress from concrete to abstract thought. This growth pattern varies widely between boys and girls as well as among individuals.

During the intermediate years, students need considerable support in order to deal with the changes they experience. Flexibility in classroom organization and methods of instruction is required to meet the challenges of these critically important years in the school system.

As students move through the intermediate years, they develop competency in foundation skills and reach higher levels of proficiency in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. In Grade 5, all students must begin to study a second language. Curriculum in the intermediate years includes theoretical concepts, as well as skills and knowledge that can be applied to everyday life and to the world of work.

In the intermediate years, students:

- study language arts, social studies, science, mathematics, physical education, information and communication technologies, applied skills, fine arts, a second language (in Grades 5-8) and personal planning;
- develop their ability to solve problems, think critically and make decisions;
- develop social and personal skills, good work habits confidence, sense of self-worth and understanding of the value of physical and emotional well-being.

In the intermediate years, students begin to take more specialized courses that are directed toward their personal and career goals. As they move through the program, they have more opportunities to direct their learning.

The curriculum for these years is designed to:

- emphasize basic areas of learning to increase students' literacy and numeracy skills;
- introduce more formal personal and career planning and increase students' responsibility for their learning;
- develop citizenship/social responsibility skills which can be applied to problems, projects, or social issues;
- extend the development of creativity;
- use opportunities for learning that exist outside schools;
- develop a work ethic and further understanding of career opportunities.

The Graduation Years (Grades 11 and 12)

The graduation years focus on preparation for post-secondary studies or entry into the work force. As courses become increasingly specialized, students continue to expand their knowledge and refine their skills in language arts, social studies, science, mathematics, technology, fine arts and applied skills. They take courses that are directed toward the achievement of their personal and career goals. Students develop advanced skills and take more responsibility for their learning.

In the graduation years, students:

- apply knowledge and methods of inquiry in various disciplines;
- participate in career development and work experience while at school;
- solve problems, think critically and make decisions.

The curriculum for these years is designed to

- allow students to participate in a broad-based education;
- require greater personal and social responsibility by having students refine their personal and career plans and select areas of study that fit into these plans;
- allow students to engage in independent directed studies;
- allow students to select areas of specialization and interest from both ministry-authorized and locally-developed courses;
- allow students to receive credit for courses on the basis of their own general learning (challenge) and receive credit for equivalent documented learning acquired outside of school (equivalency);
- recognize learning through the review and approval of external credentials;
- guide students to value lifelong learning and to plan for and pursue educational and career choices that may include direct entry into work, preparation for vocational and technical education, apprenticeship training or post-secondary study.

Required Areas of Study, Recommended Time Allotments, and Graduation Requirements

In the primary years, students are taught all areas of the curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to combine various curriculums to enable students to integrate ideas and see applications of knowledge.

School boards are required to offer to each student enrolled in schools in the school district an amount of instructional time of no less than:

- 450 hours per year for Kindergarten;
- 23 hours 45 minutes per school week for Grades 1-7;
- 25 hours 45 minutes per school week for Grades 8-12.

In Grades 4 to 10, minimum time allotments, expressed as percentages, are recommended for each required area of study. These percentages (shown in the table on page 8) suggest the priority that the ministry expects schools to give to each area of study. It is up to each school to design an appropriate timetable. Variations in the recommended times are encouraged to address the learning needs of individual students and the particular needs of communities.

During their graduation years, students must complete at least 52 credits of course work to satisfy the minimum requirements for graduation. These must include at least:

- 28 credits chosen from ministry-authorized Foundation Studies courses. These courses meet the requirements of a common core of learning;
- 24 or more credits chosen from ministry-authorized or locally-developed Selected Studies courses. Students select these courses based on their interests and career plans, as set out in their Student Learning Plans.

In the credit system for the graduation years, the length and scope of courses are reflected in the credit value awarded to them. For example, courses may have a value of one, two, three, or four credits. A credit is the value attached to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that most students can acquire in approximately thirty hours of instruction. Individual students may require different amounts of time to demonstrate an acceptable level of

achievement. This represents a shift from previous provincial program policy in which all courses were equal in length (100 to 120 hours).

The chart that follows summarizes required areas of study for Grades K to 12, recommended time allotments for each subject area, and Graduation Requirements.

SUMMARY OF REQUIRED AREAS OF STUDY, RECOMMENDED TIME ALLOTMENTS, AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

REQUIRED AREAS OF STUDY AND RECOMMENDED TIME ALLOTMENTS						GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
COMMON CORE	Grades K to 3 <small>(* in the primary years, teachers determine time allotments for each required subject area)</small>	Grades 4	Grades 5, 6 and 7	Grade 8	Grades 9 and 10	Grades 11 and 12 Foundation Studies <small>The complete list of courses required to meet the following subject areas is found in the Handbook of Procedures. For example, BC First Nations Studies 12 meets the graduation requirement for a Social Studies course</small>
Humanities	*	35%	35%	35%	30%	
Language Arts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Language Arts 11 (4 credits) Language Arts 12 (4 credits) Social Studies [4 credits]
Social Studies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Second Language			✓	✓		
Mathematics, Science and Technology (ICT)	*	30%	30%	30%	30%	
Mathematics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Mathematics [4 credits] Science [4 credits]
Science	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Information and Communication Technologies	(Skills and concepts integrated in other subjects)	(Skills and concepts integrated in other subjects)	(Skills and concepts integrated in other subjects)	(Skills and concepts integrated in other subjects)	(Skills and concepts integrated in other subjects)	
Physical Education	*	10%	10%	10%	10%	
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Fine Arts	*	10%	10%	5%	5%	Fine Arts [2 credits]
				✓At least one Fine Arts subject	✓At least one Fine Arts subject	
Dance	✓	✓	✓			
Drama	✓	✓	✓			
Music	✓	✓	✓			
Visual Arts	✓	✓	✓			
Applied Skills	(Skills and concepts integrated in other subjects)	(Skills and concepts integrated in other subjects)	(Skills and concepts integrated in other subjects)	5%	5%	Applied Skills [2 credits]
				✓At least one Applied Skills subject	✓At least one Applied Skills subject	
Business Education						
Home Economics Technology Education						
Personal Planning	*	5%	5%	5%	5%	
Personal Planning	✓	✓	✓			Career and Personal Planning 11 [2 credits] Career and Personal Planning 12 [2 credits]
Career and Personal Planning				✓	✓	
<p>School boards are required to offer to each student enrolled in schools in the school district an amount of instructional time of no less than:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 450 hours per year for Kindergarten • 23 hours 45 minutes per school week for Grades 1-7 • 25 hours 45 minutes per school week for Grades 8-12 	<p>In Grades 4 to 8, ten per cent additional time may be allocated to any of the above areas of study. Either provincial or locally developed curriculum may be used for additional time.</p>			<p>In Grades 9 and 10, fifteen per cent additional time may be applied to any of the above areas of study, career explorations/work experience, or courses from the graduation years. Provincial or locally developed curriculum may be used for additional time.</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Grades 11 and 12 Selected Studies</p> <p>Of the 24 required credits in Selected Studies, at least 10 credits must come from Grade 12 level ministry-authorized courses. A maximum of 8 of the 24 required credits may come from locally developed courses, unless they are part of an approved career preparation program.</p>
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Program Features

The following features of provincial programs, curriculum, and resources are intended to make schools more relevant to students and responsive to public needs and expectations. Schools continue to use ministry-authorized and locally-developed curriculum, in support of all requirements.

Personal Planning and Career and Personal Planning

The Personal Planning (K-7) and Career and Personal Planning (8-12) curriculums are required areas of study. These curriculums are designed to have students set learning goals, develop plans to achieve them and study topics that promote career and personal development. Students study topics that promote personal health and human development, as well as selected topics in business and consumer education. A main objective is to encourage students to take increased responsibility for their learning. These curriculums recognize that emotional and social development are as important as academic achievement and intellectual and physical skills.

In the primary years, the emphasis is on activities related to students developing safety and health skills, setting goals, making decisions, communication and developing an understanding of their own strengths and interests.

In the intermediate and graduation years, the development of personal and career plans becomes more formalized. By Grade 9, students must develop a Student Learning Plan in which they begin to identify their desired career and personal goals and explore plans to realize those goals. The Student Learning Plan can be used for communication between the home and school. Students develop and regularly update their Student Learning Plans with guidance from teachers and parents.

In Grades 11 and 12, students must take Career and Personal Planning, which focuses on the Planning Process (including the development and maintenance of Student Learning Plans), Personal Planning, and Career Development (including 30 hours of work experience). Students successfully completing this area of study receive four credits toward graduation.

Work Experience

Work experience allows students to connect what they learn in school with the application of skills and knowledge in the workplace. The experience helps students understand what they need to learn to be successful in post-secondary training and the workplace. In order to satisfy graduation requirements, all students must have participated in thirty hours of work experience related to their career, educational, and personal goals as described in their Student Learning Plans.

Information and Communication Technologies

All Integrated Resource Packages (IRPs) promote the use of appropriate technology to achieve prescribed learning outcomes. Many IRPs include specific learning outcomes directly related to the development of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) skills such as analyzing and evaluating information, using productivity tools, database analysis, information management, graphics and multimedia applications. At the secondary level, specific IRPs in areas such as Information Technology, Technology Education and Business

Education allow students to develop specialized ICT skills. Students also address the ethical and social issues related to the appropriate use of technology.

Students need access to a range of resources to develop the information literacy skills demanded in the workplace and at home. Teachers can choose from a range of digital resources to support learning outcomes at any particular level. In addition to textbooks, reference books and video, the ministry recommends software, multimedia resource kits and CD-ROMs.

The ministry is committed to:

- ensuring all schools have access to on-line services and the Internet through the Provincial Learning Network (PLN);
- helping school boards plan for the implementation of educational technology;
- exploring strategies for providing digital resources and information and communications technology to schools;

Fine Arts and Applied Skills

To ensure that they receive a broad education program, all students must take studies in the areas of fine arts and applied skills at all levels. In Kindergarten to Grade 7, it is expected that students will receive Fine Arts instruction in Dance, Drama, Music and Visual Arts. Also, in Kindergarten to Grade 7, teachers integrate skills and concepts related to Applied Skills subjects (Business Education, Home Economics and Technology Education) with other curriculum areas. In Grades 8 to 10, students must take at least one Fine Arts subject (Dance, Drama Music and Visual Arts) and at least one Applied Skills subject (Business Education, Home Economics and Technology Education). In the graduation years, students must earn two credits of Fine Arts and two credits of Applied Skills in order to graduate.

Balance of Theoretical and Applied Studies

In the past, students planning to attend university took courses that were "academic" or theoretical in nature. Students planning for vocational or trade areas took "non-academic" or applied studies. Changes in the workplace have made it necessary for workers at all levels to understand theories and concepts as well as how this knowledge can be applied. For example, university-bound students who are skilled at analyzing literature and writing literary essays also need skills they will use in the workplace, such as technical reading and writing. Similarly, students bound for skilled trades require a sound understanding of scientific theories and concepts, as well as practical or applied skills.

The provincial curriculum now places more emphasis on practical applications of learning. These changes contribute to the relevance, rigor and high standards in all courses leading to further education.

Second Language

The provincial language education policy recognizes the strong educational benefits associated with learning a second language, and it also recognizes the cultural and linguistic diversity of the province.

All students must take a second language as part of the required curriculum in Grades 5 to 8 unless they are eligible for an exemption. The languages taught will be chosen by the school board. If no alternative is selected by the school board, French will be the language taught. School boards will base their selection of alternative second languages on community demand, student enrolment, and the availability of quality curriculum and teaching resources. Curriculum for second languages offered in Grades 5 to 12 must be ministry-authorized. When an assessment indicates that a student should be exempted because of special needs, the exemption must be documented in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Local school boards should support the language preferences of Aboriginal students. Whenever possible, school boards should consult widely with the Aboriginal communities to determine which languages should be offered.

Equivalency

Equivalency gives students in Grades 11 and 12 the opportunity to pursue learning beyond the school setting. In granting equivalency, schools recognize documented learning that is determined to be equivalent to provincial or locally developed curriculum. Where the ministry has not assessed equivalency credentials from other institutions, school boards have the authority to determine equivalency.

Challenge

Students in Grades 11 and 12 are entitled to challenge eligible courses that are offered by a school board. A course may be challenged when there is no documentation to review for equivalency and students provide compelling evidence that success in the process is probable.

Independent Directed Studies

Independent directed studies provide opportunities to pursue learning outcomes that extend beyond those normally taught in the classroom and/or to study independently of the classroom schedule. Independent directed studies are initiated by students, conducted under the supervision of a teacher. These studies must be based on one or more learning outcomes in the provincial or locally developed curriculum. One or two credits may be earned for each independent directed studies course reported.

External Courses

External Courses are credentials and courses developed and/or offered outside the British Columbia school system. Students may earn credit for successfully completing an External Course approved by the ministry and set out in the Graduation Requirements Order. The standards of these courses meet or exceed those of ministry-authorized senior secondary courses.

Partial Credit

The ministry has specified a list of ministry-authorized courses for which school districts may choose to offer partial credit. This list may be found in the most recent Handbook of Procedures.

Reporting on Student Progress

Reporting involves communication among educators, students, and parents about student learning. Teachers gather evidence of what students know and are able to do in each subject or course. This evidence may take various forms: student portfolios, observations, work samples, student self-evaluations, presentations, performances and projects as well as more traditional methods such as paper-and-pencil tests. Teachers use this evidence to evaluate students' progress and report this to students and parents.

Teachers and parents work with students to decide what action is needed to help them succeed. In schools, this may mean providing learning assistance, extra time, different materials, or a different form of instruction. Similarly, it may mean providing additional challenges for students who are achieving excellence and exceeding expectations. In either case it may involve adjustments in the school, in the home, or on the part of the student.

The following chart outlines the bases of evaluation and the form of reports that parents will receive for students in Kindergarten to Grade 12.

Evaluation and Reporting

	Evaluation is based on	Each year parents receive
Kindergarten to Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence of learning such as collections of children's work, observations of activities, quizzes students' progress towards achieving the prescribed learning outcomes for each grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 formal written reports with structured written comments 2 informal reports <p>(Note: all five reports contain oral or written comments on school progress related to expected development of students in a similar age range)</p>
Grades 4 to 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tests, projects, classroom assignments and teachers' observations students' progress towards achieving the prescribed learning outcomes for each grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 formal written reports with letter grades and structured written comments 2 informal reports
Grades 8 to 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tests, projects, classroom assignments and teachers' observations students' achievement in relation to prescribed learning outcomes established for each course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 formal written reports with letter grades and comments as required 2 informal reports
Grades 11 and 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> exams, projects, classroom assignments and teacher's observations student achievement in relation to prescribed learning outcomes for each course provincial exams in examinable courses demonstration of competency in non-examinable courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 formal written reports with letter grades and percentages. Comments as required 2 informal reports transcript of grades indicating all studies completed, achievement levels, and whether graduation requirements have been met

Reporting procedures are designed to enhance the communication between school and the home. From Kindergarten to Grade 12, reporting includes both formal and informal reports. Formal reports, for Kindergarten to Grade 7 and, when appropriate, for Grade 8 to 12, describe:

- what a student is able to do;
- areas of student learning that require further attention or development;
- additional ways of supporting students in their learning.

Informal reports to parents may include telephone calls, student-led conferences, parent-teacher conferences, and the use of journals.

Reports for all students (Kindergarten to Grade 12) contain evaluations of students' work habits and efforts.

From Grades 4 to 12, students receive letter grades describing what they are able to do in relation to prescribed learning outcomes. School boards will determine how letter grades are communicated to parents of students in Grades 4 to 7. For example, school boards may decide to report grades in conjunction with the structured written report or in parent-teacher conferences. Letter grades, with written comments when required, will be provided in student reports for Grades 8 to 12.

For students in Grades 11 and 12, letter grades will be accompanied by percentages. The following are percentages for use at Grades 11 and 12:

A	86-100%
B	73-85%
C+	67-72%
C	60-66%
C-	50-59%
F	0-49%

The successful completion of a course numbered 11 or 12 requires a minimum grade of C-.

When a student receives an "I" (in progress or incomplete), the teacher, parent, and student should examine ways in which the student's learning can be supported. When teachers assign an "I", they must:

- inform students and parents and provide them with an opportunity for consultation;
- be prepared to identify the problems and specify a plan of action;
- replace the "I" with a final letter grade before forwarding the student's records to another school, unless an agreement exists between the two schools;
- replace the "I" with a final letter grade when letter grades are recorded on the permanent student record;
- replace the "I" with a final letter grade for a student's Transcript of Grades (Grades 11 and 12).

For detailed information on reporting student progress, refer to Guidelines for Student Reporting, Policy Circular on Student Reporting 97-04, Student Progress Report Order M191/94, or Provincial Letter Grades Order M192/94.

Letter Grades and Symbols

Teachers choose from the following letter grades for use in student progress reports in Grades 4 to 12:

Letter Grade	Achievement Description
A	The student demonstrates excellent or outstanding performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
B	The student demonstrates very good performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
C+	The student demonstrates good performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
C	The student demonstrates satisfactory performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
C-	The student demonstrates minimally acceptable performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
I	In Progress or Incomplete. The student, for a variety of reasons, is not demonstrating minimally acceptable performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes. An “I” letter grade may only be assigned in accordance with Section 3 of the Provincial Letter Grades Order M192/94.
F	Failed or Failing. The student has not demonstrated, or is not demonstrating, the minimally acceptable performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade. "Failed" or “Failing” may only be used if an “I” has been previously assigned.

Administrative officers may assign the following on student progress reports:

W	Withdrawal. According to board policy, the administrative officer may grant permission to a student to withdraw from a course or subject. This may be done on the request of the parents or guardians or, when appropriate, the student.
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The following may be used only on final reports in Grades 4 to 12:

SG	Standing Granted. Although the completion of normal requirements is not possible, a sufficient level of performance has been attained to warrant, consistent with the best interests of the student, the granting of standing for the course or subject or grade. This symbol can be used in such cases as serious illness, hospitalization, late entry, or early leaving, but may only be granted by an adjudication process authorized by the administrative officer in charge of the school.
TS	Transfer Standing. Transfer standing may be granted by the administrative officer in charge of a school on the basis of an examination of records from an institution other than a school as defined in the <i>School Act</i> . Alternatively, the administrative officer in charge of a school may assign a letter grade on the basis of an examination of those records.

For more information see Provincial Letter Grades Order M192/94.

Students with Special Needs

Where a student with special needs is expected to achieve or surpass the learning outcomes set out in the provincial curriculum, regular grading practices and reporting procedures will be followed. However, instructional and assessment methods for some students with special needs may differ, and this will be reflected in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). Students working on the outcomes of the prescribed curriculum with adaptations to instructional materials or the learning environment will receive regular grading.

Where it is determined that a student is not capable of achieving the learning outcomes set out in the provincial curriculum and substantial modification to the learning outcomes is necessary because of the student's special needs, specific individual goals and objectives will be established for the student in his or her IEP. In this case, letter grades are not appropriate, and structured written comments will be used to report on the level of the student's success in achieving these modified goals and objectives.

Placement

The purpose of the placement policy is not to determine who should pass or fail, but to make sure that all students get the most out of their years in school and leave school with the skills they need for work or further learning.

In the primary years, students should not repeat a year. In Grades 4 to 12, the decision for a student to advance or repeat a grade or course will be made in the best interest of that student by the teachers, parents and the school principal. In making placement decisions, those involved should consider the available research, the age of the student, and the intervention support available.

Students generally spend thirteen years in the BC school system. In most cases during their school years, students will meet the expectations of the subject and grade or course and have acquired the confidence they need to move on to the next grade or course.

In some cases, students may have difficulty meeting the expected learning outcomes. For example, if a Grade 7 student has not met expectations in mathematics in that school year but is succeeding in all other areas, the decision would most likely be to enrol him or her in Grade 8 in a secondary school. In this case, the student could attend an available summer school upgrading program, continue with Grade 7 Mathematics in a Grade 8 Mathematics class, receive special instruction through learning assistance, or participate in an upgrading program designed by the secondary school.

In some cases, a student will be ready for more advanced learning. For example, if a Grade 8 student has demonstrated an exceptionally high level of achievement in English, the teachers, parents, and student will need to consider placement alternatives such as promoting the student to English 10, or allowing the student to remain with peers and be taught more advanced English skills in an enrichment program designed by the school.

It is the responsibility of schools to structure learning environments that help students achieve expected learning outcomes:

- For the student who has not met the prescribed learning outcomes and has received an "I" (in progress), schools need to consider what has been done previously to establish a specific plan for intervention. An

intervention plan is required whether the student repeats the subject grade, or course or moves with peers and continues where he or she left off in the studies.

- For those students who are simply not motivated in a regular school environment or have particular problems that inhibit learning, schools need to consider alternate programs or community-based strategies that may differ considerably from what may be offered in a standard school setting.
- In cases where a student is identified as having special needs, policy and procedures are in place to provide him or her with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which outlines the appropriate placement and any adaptations or modifications to the educational program.

Credentials in the Graduation Years

Credentials are provided in four separate documents: the Certificate of Graduation (Dogwood Diploma), the School Completion Certificate, the Adult Graduation Diploma and the Transcript of Grades. Each document represents a statement of student achievement that may be used in applications for work or for admission to post-secondary institutions.

BC Certificate of Graduation

The BC Certificate of Graduation, or the Dogwood Diploma, is awarded after the successful completion of prescribed provincial graduation requirements. These requirements reflect society's expectations for secondary school graduates who are continuing to post-secondary education or to the workplace.

BC School Completion Certificate

This School Completion Certificate signifies that students have met the goals stated in their Student Learning Plans. It is a statement of personal achievement and reflects the goals that a student has accomplished during the graduation years.

BC Adult Graduation Diploma

Adult students (19 and over) who successfully complete the adult graduation program are awarded the BC Adult Graduation Diploma. Adult graduation programs are tuition-free for non-graduates and are offered in every school district in the province.

Transcript of Grades

The Transcript of Grades is an official record of all the courses a student has successfully completed in the graduation years. It contains a list of the credits earned, achievement levels, completion dates, and specific program participation. It also states whether or not provincial requirements for graduation have been met. As such, it provides prospective employers and post-secondary institutions with relevant information about students' accomplishments. Outstanding student achievement is acknowledged on the Transcript of Grades with the statement "Achievement with Honours".

Accountability

The Ministry of Education is responsible for demonstrating the effectiveness of the educational system from a province-wide perspective. The following initiatives and programs provide a clear picture of how well the school system is serving British Columbians, and a basis for making improvements at each level of the system.

School Accreditation: All public schools must be accredited every six years. A school accreditation consists of three parts:

- (1) the school conducts an internal evaluation of its progress and prepares a growth plan for the next five years;
- (2) the school reports annually on how well it is meeting its growth plan goals and on key indicators of student achievement; and
- (3) an external team conducts an independent review and prepares a report to the school, the school board, and the ministry.

District Annual Reports: Each school board must include in its annual report a set of key indicators of student and school performance, such as: district graduation rates, participation rates in provincial examinations, examination results and career preparation enrolments.

Provincial Annual Report: The ministry annually publishes a report that summarizes the general effectiveness of educational programs in the BC education system.

Provincial Learning Assessment Program: The ministry regularly conducts province-wide assessments of student performance in relation to selected areas of the provincial curriculum. The BC Foundation Skills Assessment in reading comprehension, writing and numeracy, is administered annually to students in Grades 4, 7, and 10. Results are provided at the provincial, school district and student level. The ministry conducts assessments in specific subjects on a sample basis.

National and International Assessment: Schools take part in national and international assessments to see how students in BC compare with those in the rest of Canada and the world. The ministry reviews the standards of the provincial education program in light of the performance of BC students on national and international assessments.

Grade 12 Provincial Examinations: The Provincial Examination Program sets provincial standards for student performance on specific Grade 12 courses. It communicates these expected levels of performance to students, teachers and parents, and gives students the opportunity to demonstrate excellence. The results inform decisions made in schools, as well as improvements to the provincial curriculum. Provincial examinations are currently offered in 21 Grade 12 subjects.

Program Evaluations: To ensure that the ministry monitors what is working and what is not in the Kindergarten to Grade 12 education system, the ministry conducts evaluations of selected programs. The results of the evaluations provide a basis for program improvement and policy development.

Performance Planning: Under the terms of the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act* the ministry must publish an annually updated three-year performance plan. The performance plan sets long-term goals and objectives, and specific strategies and activities which the ministry will undertake to achieve its goals and objectives. Achievement of the goals and objectives requires the involvement of school boards and schools, as

the plan calls for improved results from the education system as a whole. The ministry will use the key performance measures identified in the performance plan to report annually on the achievement of desired outcomes.

The Mission Statement

The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable all learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy, democratic and pluralistic society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.

Goals

Prime Goal of Public Schools – Supported by the Family and Community

Intellectual Development To develop the ability of students to analyze critically, reason and think independently, and acquire basic learning skills and bodies of knowledge; to develop in students lifelong appreciation of learning, a curiosity about the world around them and a capacity for creative thought and expression.

Goals that are Shared Among Schools, the Family, and the Community

Human and Social Development To develop in students a sense of self-worth and personal initiative; to develop an appreciation of the fine arts and an understanding of cultural heritage; to develop an understanding of the importance of physical health and well-being; to develop a sense of social responsibility, and a tolerance and respect for the ideas and beliefs of others.

Career Development To prepare students to attain their career and occupational objectives; to assist in the development of effective work habits and the flexibility to deal with changes in the workplace.

Attributes of the School System

Quality and Standards: British Columbia's school system is committed to high standards of achievement consistent with the best public education systems in the world. This commitment requires high standards in both provincial curriculum and the evaluation of the system's achievement in relation to these world standards.

Relevance: The education system is committed to delivering education that is relevant to students' individual needs and teaching them to be responsible, ethical citizens who contribute to a healthy and productive society.

Equity and Access: The education system is committed to providing programs designed to provide equitable opportunities for all students, including those who face particular challenges because of geographical, physical, mental, or social factors. This commitment requires new approaches to delivering services to students.

Accountability: Regular monitoring and assessment of students, curriculum, schools and the education system are essential to achieving excellence. These measures ensure that the province identifies what is working in the system and what is not and provides an informed basis for change and policy development.

Cost Effectiveness: The education system will maintain a funding system that provides adequate levels of funding, allocates funds equitably, is understandable to the public, and is accountable for results.