



Date: April 5, 2012

To: School Administrators

From: Steve Cardwell, Superintendent

Re: Reporting of Student Progress

I am writing with regard to the approach that we will take around the matter of reporting of student progress. Our first priority is for the success of each and every student in our school district. Here in Vancouver, we value and appreciate the exceptional work that our teachers carry out on a daily basis. It is largely because of the contributions, dedication and high quality teaching of our staff that our students do so well.

The Education Improvement Act (Bill 22) has been enacted, and continues to exacerbate, the labour unrest that initially resulted from a bargaining impasse between teachers and the provincial government. Even though the teachers' strike action has ended, various forms of disruption remain. While unfortunate, this unstable labour climate has put into question the normal processes for reporting of student progress. Not wishing to add to the instability of our system, I am taking the following approach:

1. To restate other messages, as educators are aware, sections 4 (2) and 4 (3) of the School Act regulation clearly outline the duties of teachers regarding student reporting. Teachers are required to provide formal report cards for each student each year. In addition, there is a requirement for the provision of informal report cards. The latter is typically handled at various times in between regular reporting periods and, as well at times when a student is struggling. We are now into the final term of the school year and the final period of reporting concludes in June. In a letter to Superintendents dated, March 27, 2012, the Deputy Minister of Education outlined his expectations that normal reporting resume in the usual manner.
2. The imperative for parents to be aware of their child's progress is clear. Of utmost importance is the need for all teachers to inform parents whenever a student is experiencing some difficulty in their learning. This is so that parents are not surprised at term or year-end to find unexpected outcomes with regard to their child's progress. I am aware and appreciative of the fact that teachers have supported this direction throughout the labour dispute that began last September.

My expectation is that this form of reporting to parents will continue to be done in a timely manner in such circumstances so that parents do not receive unanticipated final marks about their child's progress at the end of the year. This will also provide parents an opportunity to assist in support of children who are struggling with their learning.

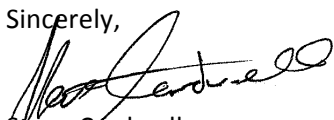
3. Teachers are encouraged to be in contact with parents. There is no reason why teachers cannot provide interim progress reports to parents in whatever manner they have done in the past and as described under the circumstances above - some districts are reaching agreement with their unions on the format of interim reports. However, given the wide variety of permissible ways of informal reporting to parents, this will be left to the discretion of teachers to keep parents informed. Again, there should be no surprises for parents.
4. Post-secondary institutions require *verified marks* and as such, students should not be used as intermediaries. Therefore, there is an expectation that spring term marks for Grade 12 students for courses required for graduation (including semester courses that ended in January), post-secondary applications and scholarship purposes will be submitted and entered by teachers into BCeSIS by April 23, 2012 (TRAX submission window will be open from April 13 – 26).
5. Meetings with parents will continue if previously planned and with additional meetings scheduled as necessary to discuss a child's progress.
6. Formal report cards (elementary and secondary) representing cumulative progress (with all necessary information) to year-end are expected and will be forthcoming and entered into BCeSIS (secondary) by teachers at year-end.
7. Given the confusion and inconsistency that will potentially be created in having a few schools formally report at this time and most not, the above approach will be followed by all schools.

Teachers are continuing to plan, teach, gather and record assessment and evaluation information for all students. Teachers are also continuing to communicate progress to their students through individual feedback, marks on assignments, tests and other indications of progress.

We encourage parents to contact their child's teacher directly or contact the school office to leave a message asking that the teacher contact the parent, should they have any questions about their child's progress.

We appreciate that these situations can be difficult, however we remain committed to providing excellent learning experiences for our students in safe and caring learning environments. We further hope that we can return to normality in our schools very soon.

Sincerely,



Steve Cardwell
Superintendent of Schools