St Margaret's Bay Elementary

School Plan for Communicating Student Learning

At St. Margaret's Bay Elementary School we believe that student achievement depends upon the collaborative effort of students, parents/guardians, teachers, staff, community members and administration working together and learning from one another. All partners need to have a clear understanding of expectations and how we can work together to support learning. This document is intended to provide you with information about how students learn, how and why we assess student learning and how we can work together to support your child(ren) as they learn and grow.

Expectations for Learning

At St. Margaret's Bay School we have high expectations for student learning. The Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, in collaboration with the other Atlantic Provinces, developed an Outcomes Based Framework and the Principles of Learning. Instructional planning is developed based on a common understanding about *how* children learn, referred to as the Principles of Learning.

Principles of Learning
1. Students construct meaning and make it meaningful in terms of their prior knowledge and experiences.
2. Learning is a process of actively constructing knowledge.
3. Learning is enhanced when it takes place in a social and collaborative environment.
4. Students need to continue to view learning as an integrated whole.
5. Learners must see themselves as capable and successful.
6. Learners have different ways of knowing and representing knowledge.
7. Reflection is an integral part of learning.

The Department of Education has developed **Expected Learning Outcomes** for *what* students should learn in all subject areas and at each grade level. Assessment and Evaluation of student learning are based on the learning outcomes in the provincial curriculum.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Expected Learning Outcomes are the goal statements prescribed by the Department of Education that indicate what teachers are required to teach and students are expected to know and be able to do for each grade level.

How We Assess and Evaluate Student Learning

Assessment has the greatest impact on learning when it is integrated into classroom activities and aligned with the written curriculum. Instruction can then be based on students' strengths and areas of concern in order to outline their next steps for learning. Involving students in the assessment process helps them with their learning.

At St. Margaret's Bay teachers focus on **Assessment for Learning**, **Assessment as Learning** and **Assessment of Learning**, in order to support students.

The teachers at St. Margaret's Bay base assessment, evaluation, and communication of student learning on the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development programs and on statements of expected learning outcomes.

Assessment for Learning (formative assessment)

Assessment for learning takes place when teachers collect information through ongoing assessments in order to monitor student progress, and make instructional decisions. (Gather information that helps plan instruction.)

Assessment as Learning

Assessment as Learning takes place when students are involved in the assessment process. Teachers support students to be able to accurately and consistently assess their learning through self-reflection, self-monitoring, and self-adjustment.

Students become engaged in considering and challenging their thinking, and recording their own learning.

Teachers will provide timely, descriptive feedback of what each student knows and is able to do in relation to the expected learning outcomes, and what each student must do next to improve his/her learning to achieve the expected learning outcomes. Students will have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning.

External Large-Scale Assessments
Provincial Assessments will take place for Grade 6 students in Reading, Writing & Mathematics between Exact dates and more details will be provided by the classroom teacher.

Assessment of Learning (summative assessment)	Assessment of Learning happens when teachers analyze and judge information collected through ongoing assessment in order to place a "value" and recommendation(s) on the learner's achievement. This evaluation determines the extent to which learning occurs. (Example: Progress Reports)
External Large-Scale Assessments	External large-scale assessments are designed by a group outside the school in order to collect data for use at the national, provincial, regional and classroom levels.

Strategies and Tools to Assess Student Learning

Students have different strengths, various learning styles and multiple ways of demonstrating their learning; therefore teaching staff gather information on an on-going basis, using a variety of methods to ensure a fair and balanced assessment that reflects the diversity of our learners. The information gathered on student learning also provides direction for teachers to design learning opportunities that lead the learner to the expected learning outcomes. Students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge.

The following table describes some types of assessment strategies that are used to gather information about student learning. While no one teacher would necessarily use all of these strategies with each student, every teacher at St. Margaret's Bay is committed to a balanced and fair approach to assessing student learning.

Methods	Explanations
Conferencing	Discussion between student and teacher about student accomplishments and next steps for learning.
Observation Survey/Running Records	Structured assessments giving evidence of students' reading abilities.
Self-Assessment	Students reflecting on what they know and what they need to learn.
Portfolios	A collection of student and/or teacher selected work.
Work Samples	Published stories, journals, book reports, reflections, writing folders, projects, recordings, creations, models.
Oral and/or Written Reports, Projects and Presentations	Formal assignments extending over a period of time that allow students to demonstrate their understanding of a concept or topic.
Journals	Informal writing shared among students and teachers.
Performances	Skits, puppet shows, public speaking, debates, plays, role-playing, singing, and dance.
Quizzes, Tests	A time limited written or oral response to questions on a specific subject.
Checklists, Anecdotal Records, Observations	Specific methods that support continuous gathering of information on student learning.

Program Planning for Students with Special Needs

When students are identified as needing extra supports, teachers discuss additional ways to provide what is needed. Parents are contacted to discuss their child's needs. Referrals can be made to our School Planning Team requesting advice. This can lead to advice on teaching strategies or recommendations for observations or assessments by our school psychologist, speech-language pathologist, learning center teacher, resource teacher or other school board personnel. Interventions range for those challenged by learning to those requiring more challenges. Before students receive these services, contact will be made home to discuss how we can best support your child(ren).

The Principal is responsible for receiving reports of formal individual assessments from School Board personnel and/or outside agencies and making these results known to the members of the School Planning Team. Professional support staff (resource teachers, speech-language pathologists, school psychologists) will report in writing on students with identified needs for whom they have provided support services. The school has a Planning Team that meets on a regular basis to discuss how we can best support students.

How We Can Communicate and Work Together as Partners to Support Your Children

Throughout the school year there may be questions and concerns that arise concerning your child's progress. If you have concerns please contact your child's teacher first. The teacher will respond within a reasonable time (within a couple of days). If you then feel that participation of the principal would help bring about a satisfactory resolution, the principal will meet with all involved, separately or together as seems appropriate. If attempts to resolve concerns have not been successful parents can refer to the Parent Concern Protocol on the school board website. http://www.hrsb.ca

If you wish to have a conversation with the teacher, please arrange a time that will allow for privacy and uninterrupted discussion such as an after school appointment or phone call.

Ongoing, informal conversations, phone calls, letters, and notes provide opportunities to discuss your child's success, to encourage progress, request assistance, set up meetings or comment on behaviour. Parent/teacher/child conferences may be requested at any time should there be a perceived need.

Communicating About Student Learning

Communicating about student learning takes place in a variety of ways throughout the year, both individually in each classroom and school wide. Some of the ways we communicate about student learning may include but are not limited to the following:

Curriculum Night or Curriculum Sessions	An evening or event when the school staff communicates to parents/guardians about what their children will be learning and the methods of how they will be taught based on the Provincial Curriculum.
Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences	School-wide scheduled conferences are held twice a year. Requests for conferences or meetings can be made for any time.
Home/School Communication	Notebooks, phone calls, e-mail, Message Bags, Agendas.
Work Samples	Samples of student work.
Assemblies	A gathering of everyone in the school to celebrate student learning. Parents/Guardians are welcome to attend.
Newsletters	Each month a newsletter is sent out via email and is posted on our website celebrating successes, identifying upcoming events.
School Website	Our school website is www.smb.hrsb.ca
Progress Reports	Progress reports are sent home three times during the school year (December, April and June).
PowerSchool Parent Portal	The parent portal to PowerSchool can be accessed at https://sishrsb.ednet.ns.ca/public/home.html using the individual ID's that parents received. In Elementary schools PowerSchool can be used to view your child's progress report, days absent and when they are late for school.
Homework	The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has development a Provincial Homework Policy (Primary—12). Homework is defined "as an out-of-classroom activity that provides an opportunity for students to practice what they are learning in class." Homework has one or more of the following purposes: **Prepare** information or materials for future learning activities. **Practice** new knowledge or new skills. **Enrich** students' understanding of a topic and apply it in new ways. Please click on the following link for additional information about homework. https://www.ednet.ns.ca/educationreview/

Progress Reports

St. Margaret's Bay Elementary School uses provincial standard progress reports.

- The reports have a Student Profile page measuring work habits and social development.
- Grade Primary will have anecdotal reports.
- Letter Codes (A-D) will be given to all Grade 1 -6 students along with a written comment for integrated literacy and integrated math.
- Students on Individual Program Plans (IPPs) will have separate reports.

Please note that the letter grade assigned is specific to the outcomes addressed during the reporting period. Therefore the letter grade may vary each term depending on the student's achievements in each area of focus.

Specialist and Learner Profile Letter Codes are ND (Needs Development), D (Developing as Expected), and WD (Well Developed).

There is a place on the envelope for parents/guardians to comment on their child's progress report.

Progress reports will be sent home three times during the school year.

A	The student demonstrates achievement with **thorough** understanding and application of concepts and skills in relation to the expected learning outcomes.
B	The student demonstrates achievement with **good** understanding and application of concepts and skills in relation to the expected learning outcomes.
C	The student demonstrates achievement with **basic** understanding and application of concepts and skills in relation to the expected learning outcomes.
D	The student demonstrates achievement with **limited** understanding and application of concepts and skills in relation to the expected learning outcomes. The student has not met expectations.
N/A	Not applicable at this time.
INS	Insufficient evidence to report on achievement of the expected learning outcomes.

School Calendar for Communicating Student Learning		
September	**October**	**November**

• School Website
• Google Calendar
• Classroom Communication
• Curriculum Night
	• School Website
	• Google Calendar
	• Classroom Communication
	• Provincial Assessments
	  Grade 6 Reading, Writing &
	  Mathematics
		• School Website
		• Google Calendar
		• Classroom Communication

December	**January**	**February**
• School Website • Google Calendar • Classroom Communication • Parent/Teacher Interviews • Progress Reports	• School Website • Google Calendar • Classroom Communication	• School Website • Google Calendar • Classroom Communication
March	**April**	**May**
• School Website • Google Calendar • Classroom Communication	• School Website • Google Calendar • Classroom Communication • Progress Reports • Parent/Teacher Interviews	• School Website • Google Calendar • Classroom Communication
June		
• School Website • Google Calendar • Classroom Communication • Grade 6 Closing TBA • Progress Reports		