

Atlantic Memorial Terence Bay School



Plan for Communicating Student Learning

Introduction

Atlantic Memorial Terence Bay School believes that student success depends upon the collective efforts of all those involved in the education of the child. Collaboration requires that teachers, children, parents/guardians share a common understanding of what children are expected to achieve through their educational experiences, as well as a clear idea of where the child is in his/her learning. This school plan will explain what we do at the school to assess and evaluate your child's learning, and how we will communicate to you our expectations for his/her learning as well as his/her achievements.

We develop our education programs on the basis of a common set of understandings about how students learn. These understandings were developed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and are referred to as the Principles of Learning.

The Principles of Learning state that:

Learning is a process of actively constructing knowledge.

Students construct knowledge and make it meaningful in terms of their prior knowledge and experiences.

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 knowing and representing knowledge.

Reflection is an integral part of learning.

At AMTB we work collectively and collaboratively to create learning environments based on these principles so that all students can achieve to the best of their abilities.

Curriculum Outcomes

There are two major goals of the Public School Program (PSP). The first is "to help all students develop to their full potential cognitively, affectively, physically, and socially" (p. A-4, PSP). The second goal of public school education is "to help all students acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary for them to continue as thinking, learning, physically active, valued members of society" (p. A-4, PSP).

There are a number of ways parents/guardians can become more informed about the prescribed learning outcomes. These include, but are not limited to:

1. attending information sessions at the school, such as curriculum night and parent in-servicing nights
2. accessing the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development website for curriculum documents (<http://www.ednet.ns.ca/> or <http://camef-camef.ca/>)
3. observing your child's school work
4. volunteering in the school

5. reading the curriculum information the school and classroom teachers provide
6. requesting meetings with the teacher or administration to ask questions about curriculum
7. monitoring homework
8. attend parent-teacher conferences

Assessing and Evaluating Student Learning

In order to provide all children with ample and equitable opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of the expected learning outcomes, teachers use a variety of assessment methods. Because children learn in different ways, referred to as learning styles, and demonstrate their learning in different ways, teachers use a range of methods. In addition, gathering information on student learning from several different types of tasks ensures that the teacher has a full and accurate picture of what a child knows and is able to do. Comprehensive assessment enables not only clear communication with students and parents/guardians, but also allows the teacher to plan effective instruction for individuals and groups of children.

In working to ensure fair and balanced assessment that reflects the diversity of our learners, teachers at AMTB use a variety of assessment methods. These may include:

- **Work Samples**- collected and dated daily assignments
- **Journals**- informal, personal writing shared among students and teachers
- **Informal Observations/Anecdotal Records/Checklists**- specific methods that support continuous gathering of information on student learning
- **School / Class Based Assessments**- oral or written response to prepared questions on a specific concept or a topic, or a demonstration of the understanding of a concept or skill
- **Peer Evaluation**- students assessing the learning of their peers, using clear guidelines such as rubrics (a specific set of criteria that the class creates for a specific activity or piece of work) against which their work will be assessed
- **Self-Evaluation**- students assessing their own learning and setting goals using clear guidelines, such as rubrics
- **Projects/Presentations**- formal assignments extending over a period of time demonstrating an understanding of a concept or topic
- **Special Events/Performances**- public speaking, concerts, plays, skits, showcase assemblies, Readers' Theatre, puppet shows, singing and dance, instrumental music, role playing
- **Standardized Tests**- students may participate in HRCE or DEECD testing at a variety of grade levels in literacy and mathematics

Communicating Student Learning

At Atlantic Memorial Terence Bay School we recognize there are many ways to communicate student learning. To communicate student learning, we may utilize the following:

- **Home Folders/Message Bags** - provide an opportunity for daily communication between student, parent/guardian and teacher
- **Reading Logs**- provide ongoing communication about literacy development
- **Phone Calls**- provide parents/guardian and teacher opportunities to share successes and concerns
- **Projects**- provide diverse opportunities for communicating understanding of curriculum
- **Self-Evaluation**- provides communication about the student's perception and ownership of their learning
- **Peer Evaluation**- provides opportunities for students to communicate with one another
- **Curriculum Night**- provides parents/guardians with an overview of the curriculum and expectations for student learning

- **Parent Information Nights-** provides parents/guardians with an opportunity to understand educational theory and practices (focusing on literacy and mathematics) and how these practices can be best used to support a child at home;
- **Student Led Conferences-** provides students with the opportunity to share their learning experience (focusing on literacy and mathematics) with their parents/guardians
- **Newsletters-** provide ongoing communication about classroom and school events
- **Website-** provide on-line access to information about AMTB, its students, its programs and events.
- **Performances-** provide opportunities for students to showcase a variety of talents, such as drama, singing, dancing and instrumental music.

In addition to the ongoing communication of your child's progress, you can also expect to receive three written progress reports. The first reporting period will end in November and the second in March and the third at the end of June. Just as our curriculum planning and assessments are focused on the learning outcomes outlined in our provincial curriculum guides, these reports will provide information about your child's ongoing progress in meeting these outcomes.

There are two Parent–Teacher conferencing periods, the first in December and the second in April. It is important for parents to know that they are not limited to the scheduled conferencing times; all parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the teacher to discuss their child's progress at other times if they feel it is necessary.

Ongoing Forms of Communication

- Home Folders
- Newsletters- school and Classroom
- Phone Calls
- Website
- School Advisory Council
- Twitter Accounts @AMTBSchool

HOMEWORK

Homework is an out-of-classroom activity that provides an opportunity for students to practice what they are learning in class. It should be evaluated to provide feedback to students. Homework can help students develop academically and personally when the work is carefully planned, directly connected to classroom learning, meaningful to students, and appropriate for a student's age and stage of development.

The purpose of homework will vary by grade and subject:

Homework assigned in grades primary–6 will:

- enhance student learning of foundational skills in reading and math (e.g., reading for pleasure, educational games)
- gradually introduce time to practice or apply learning in other subject areas
- promote healthy growth and development (e.g., practicing physical skills, interviewing family members)

For more information on the new Homework policy please check out the website at <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/docs/homeworkpolicy.pdf>

SCHOOL PLANNING TEAM & PROGRAM PLANNING TEAMS

Most students have success following the prescribed curriculum as outlined in the Department of Education's learning outcomes documents. In some cases students require some additional support from the resource teacher to help them keep pace or are provided with some simple adaptations to help achieve the outcomes. In a small number of cases, if a student is unable to meet grade level outcomes the *School Planning Team* meets to formulate a revised educational plan. A teacher or parent may refer a student for consideration by the *School Planning Team*. Prior to the formal writing of an individual program plan (IPP), parents/guardians will be informed and involved. Parents/guardians will be part of the Program Planning Team for their child's learning. For further information, please see **The Program Planning Process: A Guide for Parents**, copies of which are available online at <http://www.ednet.ns.ca/pdfdocs/studentsvcs/program-planning-process.pdf>

PARENT CONCERN PROTOCOL

When concerns arise about a student's progress, parents are asked to first discuss the matter with the classroom teacher. If further discussion is required, the parents/guardians are always encouraged to approach the school administration. The goal in these discussions is to problem solve and work together in the best interest of the student. Such discussions are best held at mutually agreed upon appointment times. Our goal at AMTB is to promote an open, positive relationship between home and school.

CLOSING

It is our hope that our School Communication Plan provides parents with opportunities to understand and become involved their children's school experience and that it opens the door to a collaborative approach to improved student achievement and success.