

Student Learning Communication Policy

At AGS 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.

To support our belief of improving student achievement all partners need to have a clear understanding of expectations and how we can work together to support learning.

Our School Plan for Communicating Student Learning identifies:

Expectations for learning, how we assess and evaluate student learning, and how we can communicate and work together as partners to support your children.

Expectations for Learning

At AGS we have high expectations for student learning. Instructional planning is developed based on a common understanding of 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.

How to assess and evaluate student learning

Assessment has the greatest impact on learning then it is integrated into all classroom activities, aligned with the written curriculum and instruction, used to identify students' strengths and areas of concern in order to outline next steps for learning, and when students are involved. Feedback, provided to students throughout the learning process, has the potential for significantly impacting student achievement.

At AGS teachers focus on Assessment for Learning principles to support student progress and achievement. The ongoing research and the associated practices have evolved over time and now embed Assessment for Learning, Assessment as Learning and Assessment of Learning, rather than referring to them separately. The practices are:

- Clarifying and Understanding learning intentions and criteria for success.

- Engineering effective classroom discussion, questions and tasks that elicit evidence of learning.
- providing feedback that moves learning forward.
- Activating students as teaching and learning resources for each other.
- Activating students as owners of their own learning.

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.

Internal Large-Scale Assessments: Internal large-scale assessments are assessments that are designed by a school for internal use.

The teachers at AGS base assessment, evaluation and communication of student learning on the Department of Education’s programs and on statements of expected learning outcomes.

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.

Assessment and Evaluation Policy

Teachers understand and practice policy and procedures outlined in HRSB’s Assessments and Evaluation Policy.

Tools for Assessment: The following table describes 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 AGS is committed to a balanced and fair approach to assessing student learning.

Format	Description
Conferencing	Discussion between student and teacher about student accomplishments and next steps for learning.
Observation Survey/Running Records	Structured assessments giving evidence of student's reading abilities.
Self Assessment	Students reflection 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. Used as examples or models of work.
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 between student and teacher.
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 the continuous gathering of information on student learning.

Special Services: We are able to refer students with special needs for consultation, assessment or additional support to our resource teachers through the School Planning Team. Interventions range for those challenged by learning to those requiring challenges. Before any referrals for services are made, contact will be made with the home to obtain permission.

The School has a Planning Team that meets on a regular basis to discuss student support issues. Any questions regarding student support can be directed to this team.

Assessment is the process of gathering, from a variety of sources, information that accurately reflects how well a student is achieving the learning outcomes in a subject or course. The action that is taken in response to an assessment determines its formative or summative nature.

Assessment Formats are the ways in which information about the student achievement is collected. Assessment information may be gathered in three categories : through *observations* of student performance, *conversations* had with students and *products* that students create.

Assessment Tools are the instruments that teachers use to gather information about student achievement. Examples of assessment tools include but are not limited to work samples, presentations, tests/quizzes, debates, portfolios, labs, demonstrations, and anecdotal notes.

Descriptive Feedback is specific information (e.g., oral, written,) that helps students understand what they are doing well, understand what they need to do next in order to improve and to think and talk about their own learning (metacognition).

Learning Outcomes are the statements prescribed by the Department of Education, or a student's Individual Program Plan, that indicate what students are expected to know, to show (demonstrate), and be able to do. Each outcome has identified concepts and skills that work together to assist students in achieving the outcomes for the course. In P-8 and currently in some High School courses indicators have been developed to show how to develop the concepts and skills. Curriculum development is in process for Grades 9-12.

Alignment is achieved when the curriculum learning outcomes align with instruction, assessment, evaluation and reporting practices.

Gradebook Category refers to the organization of assessments within the *PowerTeacher Pro*. Teachers organize Gradebook categories by curriculum content (e.g., outcomes, modules, strands, units) not by assessment tools/type (e.g., tests/quizzes, projects).

Process Skills are the habits of mind/attitudes that define a subject area or discipline (e.g., thinking like a mathematician, an author, or a scientist).

Cumulative Assessment is an assessment designed to assess students' understanding and ability to make connections among the "big ideas", concept and procedure learned to date.

Evaluation is the process of analyzing, reflecting upon, and summarizing assessment information and making judgments and/or decisions based upon the information gathered (e.g., to determine student achievement of the learning outcomes of the purposes of grading and reporting).

Professional Judgment Teacher professional judgment is informed by professional knowledge of curriculum expectations, context, evidence of learning, research-informed methods of instruction and assessment and criteria for success. Teachers use professional judgment in their ongoing decision making, i.e., when planning instruction and assessment, when considering what success looks like for students, when reviewing evidence of learning (including conversations, observations, and products), and when making evaluative decisions.

Grading is the process of summarizing evidence of student achievement in relation to the learning outcomes to determine the report card descriptor and grade.

Reporting is the process of communicating student progress and/or achievement learning outcomes. up to a point in time.

External Large-Scale Assessments are summative assessments designed by a group outside the school in order to provide data for use at the national, provincial, school and classroom levels. AGS participates in external assessments created by the Department of Education in Nova Scotia

School Community consists of students, parents/guardians, teaching and non-teaching staff serving the school, school governing bodies, school groups, community members, partners, School Admin, and others with a connection to the school.

Promotion indicates that the student has satisfied the program requirements and met the curriculum outcomes for that grade or course. The student will advance to the next higher grade or course.

*with reference to the former Halifax Regional School Board Assessment Policy