



Where Everyone Is  
A Star

# IAN FORSYTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Ms. M.J. Scott  
Principal

Ms. C. Mitchell  
Vice-Principal

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## School Plan For Communicating Student Learning

### Introduction:

The Staff of Ian Forsyth Elementary School is dedicated to providing unique and challenging learning opportunities that reflect the cultural diversity of our school community. We believe student success is dependent upon the collaborative efforts of all those involved in the education of children. This partnership requires that children, parents, guardians and teachers share a common understanding of what students are expected to achieve through their educational experiences. We are committed to regularly communicating students' learning progress to parents and to promoting an atmosphere where parents are encouraged to understand and support their child's development.

The purpose of this document is to present a plan for effective, on-going communication about student learning, and is prepared in accordance with the Halifax Region School Board Student Assessment and Evaluation Policy.

### Learning, Assessment and Evaluation:

Ian Forsyth staff is continually engaged in professional development around learning, assessment, evaluation and the communication of student achievement. Student learning is planned, assessed and evaluated based upon the *Nova Scotia Public School Programs* and the learning outcomes framework of the *Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation*. Improving student learning is the primary purpose of assessment and evaluation.

The *Learning Outcomes Framework* is comprised of a series of curriculum outcome statements describing the knowledge, skills and attitudes students are expected to demonstrate as a result of their cumulative learning experiences at each grade level. Assessment and evaluation are aligned with the outcomes of the Learning Outcomes Framework.

*Curriculum Outcomes* are statements that identify what students are expected to know and be able to do upon completion of study in a curriculum area. Outcomes can be specific to a grade level or more generalized to reflect learning at various points along a continuum from grade primary through twelve.

Learning outcomes are a reflection of the six *Essential Graduation Learnings* expected of students upon graduation and are a consequence of the total education experience: Aesthetic Expression, Citizenship, Communication, Personal Development, Problem Solving and Technical Competence.

Teachers at Ian Forsyth Elementary School are aware of the similarities among learners, as well as the differences, and work to ensure that all children are challenged at the appropriate level, and are therefore able to meet with success. In Nova Scotia the following *Principles of Learning* are used as the basis to develop meaningful learning experiences for our students:

- 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 Ian Forsyth Elementary School teachers apply the *Principles of Fair Assessment* to thoughtfully assess student progress in their academic, social, physical and emotional growth and development. In order to provide all children with ample and fair opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of the expected learning outcomes, teachers use a variety of assessment methods.

*Assessment* is the systematic process of gathering information on student learning.

*Evaluation* is the process of analyzing, reflecting upon and summarizing assessment information, and making judgements or decisions based upon the information gathered.

Teachers use a range of assessment tools and strategies, acknowledging the diverse ways in which learners demonstrate their understandings. The following are examples of assessment strategies teachers may use during the course of the school year in order to ensure a balance assessment:

- Formal and Informal Observations
- Anecdotal Records
- Checklists
- Portfolios and Goal Setting
- Oral Reading Records

- Rubrics
- Daily Work Samples
- Reports, Projects, Presentations
- Tests, Quizzes
- Conferencing and Questioning
- Class Trips, Special Events, Concerts
- Self and Peer Evaluation
- Journals
- Models
- Student-Led Conferences
- Performances, Presentations, Demonstrations and Dramatizations

### **Supporting Students with Special Needs:**

Ian Forsyth Elementary School is committed to supporting the needs of all students. Our School Planning Team meets regularly to discuss how best to meet the academic, physical, social and emotional needs of the children being referred to this team. Ian Forsyth Elementary School has the support of resource, learning centre and early literacy teachers, a guidance counsellor and African Nova Scotian Student Support Worker, school psychologist, speech language pathologist, social worker, Autism team and other professionals who can become involved in the Program Planning Process of individual students as required. Parents play an integral role in the programming needs of their children.

### **Learning At Home:**

Formal learning at home activities or homework is not required from grades primary to three. Activities, games and books are often sent home to encourage family sharing and learning outside the classroom in a natural way. These experiences are intended to cultivate a love for learning.

Provincial learning at home guidelines for grades four through six vary in length: grade 4 from 20-30 minutes, grade 5 from 30-40 minutes and grade 6 from 40-50 minutes daily over four days. While assigned activities are engaging and positively associated with student learning they are not a form of assessment included in final grades.

### **Parent Concerns:**

Communication is open and on-going between home and school; it is through a team approach that we can successfully assist our children to reach their full potential. We encourage parents who have a concern regarding their child's progress to contact their child's classroom or subject teacher; contact may be made by phone, through the student agenda, written note and/or interview. Parent teacher conferences and report cards are more formal ways to communicate student progress. Parents who still have a concern after discussions with the teacher may contact the principal or vice-principal.

**Review of the Communication Plan:**

The School Plan For Communicating Student Learning will be reviewed every three years by the school staff and School Advisory Council. The calendar for communicating expectations and reporting on student progress will be reviewed and updated annually.

**Calendar:**

In addition to our newsletter and calendar published monthly on our school website, the following events are currently planned for the 2013-2014 school year:

<b>September</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Back to School Night—September 26<sup>th</sup></li> <li>• September Assembly</li> </ul>
<b>October</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• October assembly</li> </ul>
<b>November</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remembrance Day Assembly</li> <li>• Parent-Teacher Conferences—November 13<sup>th</sup> (1-7 pm)</li> <li>• November assembly</li> </ul>
<b>December</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christmas Concert—December 4<sup>th</sup></li> <li>• Term One Report Cards—December 12<sup>th</sup></li> <li>• December Assembly</li> </ul>
<b>January</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Literacy Week—January 27<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup></li> <li>• January Assembly</li> </ul>
<b>February</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• February Assembly</li> </ul>
<b>March</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March Assembly</li> </ul>
<b>April</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Term Two Report Cards—April 3<sup>rd</sup></li> <li>• Parent-Teacher Conferences—April 30<sup>th</sup> (1-7)</li> <li>• April Assembly</li> </ul>
<b>May</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary Orientation</li> <li>• May Assembly</li> </ul>
<b>June</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade Six Celebration</li> <li>• June Assembly</li> <li>• Final Report Cards—June 30<sup>th</sup></li> </ul>

*Revised August 2013*