

## FINAL EXAMS AND ASSESSMENTS

### Background

Assessment of student learning and reporting of grades needs to be consistent within and among schools in the Good Spirit School Division (GSSD). The quality of assessment largely determines the quality of evaluation. Valid judgements can be made only if accurate and complete assessment data are collected in a variety of contexts over time.

The determination of grades based on achievement of curriculum outcomes is a critical factor in ensuring equitable opportunities for all students as they transition from Kindergarten to Grade 12. To achieve equity for students in the Good Spirit School Division, we expect that teachers will use a balanced, differentiated, and culturally responsive approach to assessment. *“A balanced assessment system takes advantage of assessment **for** learning (formative) and assessment **of** learning (summative). When both are present in the system, assessment becomes more than just an index of school success. It also serves as the cause of that success” (Stiggins, 2004, p.25).* Comprehensive final exams are only one tool as part of a balanced assessment approach and should never be the sole or main source of summative assessment.

There may be times when high school students in GSSD are required to complete comprehensive semester-end and year-end final assessments in selected courses of study. These assessments may include various ways of demonstrating understanding, including inquiry projects, personal responses, graphic organizers, comprehensive final exams, etc. When deciding to include a comprehensive final exam as part of one’s assessment plan, determination of its purpose and the degree to which it is able to determine achievement of curricular outcomes is important. There are many outcomes in provincial curricula where the learning cannot be determined by a traditional comprehensive final exam.

### Definition

**Comprehensive Final Exam** – An examination written at the conclusion of a course that encompasses all the outcomes taught throughout the course period, typically completed within a designated period of time.

### Procedures

1. High schools must submit the dates for their semester-end comprehensive final assessment periods (falling within the allotted window) for both semesters. Final assessment schedules for Semester 1 must be submitted to the Superintendent of School Operations no later than September 30 while Semester 2 schedules must be submitted no later than March 1. Final assessments should not be scheduled on June 21 in recognition of National Indigenous Peoples Day.

## 2. Comprehensive Final Exams: Courses and Weights

- 2.1 Comprehensive final exams may only be written in Grades 10 through 12. Under no circumstances should comprehensive final exams be administered in grades earlier than Grade 10.
- 2.2 Comprehensive final exams may be written in the following subjects.
  - ELA
  - Math
  - Science
- 2.3. If a classroom teacher does not have a comprehensive final exam as part of their course assessment plan, students can request to write a comprehensive final exam for the designated class(es) listed in 2.1. The request to write the comprehensive final must be made no later than the mid-term point of the semester.
  - 2.3.1 In circumstances where there is more than one section of a course being offered in the same school, the in-school administrator will ensure there is a common balanced assessment plan for each section.
- 2.4 The weighting of types of final/summative assessments in all courses will not exceed:
  - 2.4.1 Grade 10 - 10%;
  - 2.4.2 Grade 11 - 15%; and
  - 2.4.3 Grade 12 - 20%.
- 2.5 Supports for students writing comprehensive final exams or alternate assessment options will be made in advance through consultation with parents/guardians, Student Support Services and the classroom teacher.
- 2.6 As per the Ministry of Education, all non-accredited teachers of the following 30 level courses will prepare their students for the provincial exam (Departmental exams):
  - English Language Arts A30;
  - English Language Arts B30;
  - Biology 30;
  - Chemistry 30;
  - Physics 30;
  - Workplace and Apprenticeship Mathematics 30;
  - Foundation of Mathematics 30; and,
  - Pre-Calculus 30.
- 2.7 Ministry of Education Provincial Examinations (Departmental exams) will be weighted as per the *Ministry of Education Registrar's Handbook for School Administrators*.

3. Teachers shall provide written descriptions of their balanced assessment plan to the in-school administrator and should make these available to the students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) at the beginning of the school year/semester within the course syllabus. This information will include the weighting of final assessments.
4. Administrators will review high school teacher's gradebooks to ensure they are in alignment with this administrative procedure.
5. Student attendance is to be recorded during the comprehensive final assessment periods.
6. In the case of inclement weather, students who arrive at school to complete a final assessment should be permitted to complete that assessment whenever possible.
7. In the case of student suspension, wherever possible, students are to write final assessments during the scheduled time. An alternate location may be assigned for the assessment and should be arranged in consultation with the Superintendent of School Operations.
8. Where it is determined by the in-school administrator that a student has missed a final assessment for an unacceptable reason, the student may be required to complete an alternate assessment constructed by the classroom teacher or may be required to write a Ministry Departmental Exam.

Legal Reference: Government of Saskatchewan - Registrar's Handbook for School Administrators;  
Classroom Assessment for Student Learning: Doing it Right -- Using it Well;  
Sections 85, 87, 175, 231, the Education Act, 1995

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