



Education

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June 2013

To: Superintendents of School Divisions
Principals of Schools

Dear Colleagues,

Re: Manitoba Provincial Report Card—Fall 2013 Implementation

Manitoba Education recently introduced a provincial report card with the goal of providing clear, consistent information to parents. Starting in the Fall of 2013, all public schools will be required to use the report card templates as provided by the Department. The report card templates (for illustration, not direct use) may be found at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/assess/report_cards/index.html.

This letter provides updates on the provincial report card, including the following:

- implementation
- policy and support document
- business requirements document
- feedback from the report card implementation monitoring process

To begin with, we wish to acknowledge and commend educators for their excellent work in implementing the new provincial report card. Evident throughout the process has been a shared commitment to what we seek to accomplish with a common report card—a coherent approach to sharing information with parents about their children's achievements and behaviour in school in ways that are clear and transparent for parents, and supportive of learning.

The development and implementation of the report card has been supported by important partnerships with schools and school divisions, as well as other stakeholder organizations. The feedback, advice, and working relationships have all contributed in critical ways to the development and implementation of the report card.

This commitment was also evident in the implementation monitoring feedback process which took place in January and February of this school year. We recognize the significant investment of time and effort involved in collecting and preparing this feedback which has been invaluable in identifying key changes and support strategies for the report card process.

Implementation

As previously announced, the implementation of the provincial report card is mandatory in public schools beginning in the Fall of 2013. Manitoba schools outside of the public school system may also use it; however, they may only identify it as the provincial report card if all requirements related to its use are followed.

The *Completion of Credits Requirements for Graduation* chart on the high school report card is to be used as of January 2014. Until that time, the option remains to exclude the chart from the report card. In an earlier communication, changes regarding course coding for non-Manitoba Education credits were provided to facilitate automating the completion of this chart.

The attached Appendix 1 summarizes these changes and other changes which will impact the report card and its use.

Policy and Support Document

The policy and support document, now entitled *Manitoba Provincial Report Card Policy and Guidelines: Partners for Learning*, is available at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/assess/report_cards/index.html. No print copies have been produced. The document includes highlighted policy statements regarding the provincial report card and its use.

Business Requirements Document

The business requirements document is being provided electronically (pdf) to superintendents of school divisions, technology leaders, and student information system vendors. Others needing a copy should contact either Rachel Soufi or Bruce Lyons at the coordinates listed on the following page in order to receive a copy by email.

This document provides detailed technical information related to the design and completion of the report card and, as such, is most useful to technology leaders and to student information system vendors.

Teacher Comments–Samples

This support document is being provided electronically (pdf) to superintendents. Others needing a copy should contact either Rachel Soufi or Bruce Lyons at the coordinates listed on the following page in order to receive a copy by email.

Feedback from the Report Card Implementation Monitoring Process

As mentioned earlier, the feedback received from divisions based on their experiences during the 2012/2013 school year implementation was invaluable. A summary, including follow-up steps, is provided in Appendix 2 (see attached).

We thank you for your ongoing commitment to the implementation of the provincial report card.

If you have any questions, please contact one of the following individuals.

French Immersion Program and Français Program	English Program
Rachel Soufi, 204-945-6926 rachel.soufi@gov.mb.ca	Bruce Lyons, 204-945-5008 bruce.lyons@gov.mb.ca

Sincerely,

Original signed by

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Assistant Deputy Minister
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Original signed by

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Bureau de l'éducation française Division

- c. Chairs of School Boards
 - Principals of Independent Schools
 - Principals of First Nations Schools
 - Principals of Institutional Schools
 - Manitoba School Boards Association
 - Manitoba Teachers' Society
 - Manitoba Association of School Superintendents
 - Manitoba Association of School Business Officials
 - Manitoba Association of Parent Councils
 - Manitoba Federation of Independent Schools
 - Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre

Appendix 1: Changes That Impact the Report Card and Its Use

Courses and Subject Codes

The following changes will be reflected in the 2013/2014 edition of the *Subject Table Handbook*.

School-based Learning Experiences—Grades 1 to 8

Many students participate in learning experiences that are significant in nature, for which schools have developed learning outcomes and assessment strategies and for which students receive report card grades (e.g., Outdoor Education, Aboriginal Studies, and so on).

Student achievement in such experiences may be reported on the report card using a single-subject grading box (with 3 to 5 locally developed subject categories), or the multi-subject grading box.

The course code to apply is 9026. It takes effect in September 2013. The title is locally determined.

A student's report card may reflect more than one school-based learning experience.

Non-Manitoba Education Credits—Grades 9 to 12

Details regarding this were communicated earlier. The following changes to course codes take effect as of September 1, 2013. Codes 0691 and 9990 will no longer be used as of August 31, 2013.

Code	Title	System Name	Credits	Grade/Level
0142	Non-Manitoba Education Compulsory English Language Arts/ <i>Anglais</i>	NON-MB ED COMPULSORY ELA	1.0	12G, 22G, 32G, 42G
0172	Hors Éducation Manitoba crédit obligatoire en français	HORS ÉD-MB CRÉDIT OBLIG. EN FRANÇAIS	1.0	12G, 22G, 32G, 42G
0143	Non-Manitoba Education Compulsory Mathematics	NON-MB ED COMPULSORY MATHEMATICS	1.0	12G, 22G, 32G, 42G
0146	Non-Manitoba Education Compulsory Physical Education/Health Education	NON-MB ED COMPULSORY PHYS ED/HEALTH ED	1.0	12G, 22G, 32G, 42G
0149	Non-Manitoba Education Compulsory Science	NON-MB ED COMPULSORY SCIENCE	1.0	12G, 22G
0148	Non-Manitoba Education Compulsory Social Studies	NON-MB ED COMPULSORY SOCIAL STUDIES	1.0	12G, 22G, 32G
0117	Non-Manitoba Education Optional Course(s) (Note: Code 0691 and Code 9990 will no longer be used as of August 31, 2013.)	NON-MANITOBA ED OPTIONAL COURSE	0.5–13.0	N/A

The descriptions of the 2nd character ('2') and 3rd character ('G') in the *Subject Table Handbook* will be modified to list non-Manitoba Education credits as an example. These transfer codes apply to all types of credits, including for students whose subsequent programming may result in the use of the 'M', 'E', and 'L' designations.

Students may need to request transcripts from other provinces to be able to supply complete and accurate information about credits earned outside of Manitoba; for example, applications to post-secondary institutions.

Report Card Templates

Students' Cumulative Files

Student information system vendors will be required to provide the option to generate a special version of the report card that includes all teacher comments from the beginning of the school year. This option is for cumulative file purposes, only.

Grading Scale Descriptors—Changes

The descriptors associated with the grading scale are changed as per the following table. The wording changes affect all report card templates.

Grade Scale (no change to this column)	New Descriptors—Effective as of Fall 2013
4 80% to 100%	Very good to excellent understanding and application of concepts and skills
3 70% to 79%	Good understanding and application of concepts and skills
2 60% to 69%	Basic understanding and application of concepts and skills
1 50% to 59%	Limited understanding and application of concepts and skills; see teacher comments
ND Less than 50%	No change

The wording of the descriptor at Level 4 has been broadened and simplified. Level 4 represents a broader range of achievement than Levels 1 to 3, which is now reflected in the descriptor. Also, the word 'excellent' replaces 'thorough' and 'in-depth' as characterizing achievement at the upper end of Level 4. The meaning remains the same—a student's achievement is 'excellent' when it reflects a thorough and in-depth grasp of concepts and skills as characterized by, for example, fluency in transferring the concepts and skills across learning goals and to novel situations.

Learning Behaviours

French Immersion schools are required to have an additional learning behaviour that addresses the use of French in the classroom and at school.

Engagement in using French	Speaks French with the teacher and classmates in a variety of situations; contributes to the French ambiance by taking initiative in speaking French
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This change takes effect as of the first reporting period of the 2013/2014 school year. Two additional local option learning behaviours remain available.

High School Templates—Additional Codes (front page)

New descriptors are required for the codes CO and IN as these codes now apply as final grades for certain courses (as explicitly identified by the Department) other than Grades 11 and 12 Physical Education/Health Education.

New Descriptions—Effective Fall 2013
Course Complete: Final passing grade for courses using CO/IN for grades, e.g., Grades 11 and 12 Physical Education/Health Education.
Course Incomplete: Final grade showing insufficient evidence of learning for courses using CO/IN for grades, e.g., Grades 11 and 12 Physical Education/Health Education. May also be used in other courses but not as a final grade.

Completion of Credit Requirements for Graduation Table—English Program and French Immersion Program Templates Only

A change to wording is made to clarify the meaning of the headings. No changes are required in this regard to the French templates. Note that, generally, the column ‘Credits earned this report’ will contain values other than zero (0) only at the end of a course.

Table Heading					
Currently	Credits Required for Graduation	Enrolled This Year	Earned This Report	Total Earned to Date	Total Earned to Date from Courses Taught In French*
New Effective Fall 2013	No Change	Credits—Enrolled This Year	Credits Earned This Report	Total Credits Earned to Date	Total Credits Earned to Date From Courses Taught in French*

* This heading appears in the French Immersion report card template only.

Student Programming—French Immersion

The last page of the French Immersion high school report card template describes two types of course code designations—‘E’ and ‘M’—that indicate when a student has individual learning goals that differ from the grade-level curriculum in the subject.

Though the designation ‘L’ from the *Guide des matières enseignées* (French version of the Subject Table Handbook) is not mentioned in the template, the code may be used in the French Immersion Program, Grades 9 to 12.

Course Inclusion—Term Reports (High School)

High school courses in which a student is enrolled, that have not yet begun, should not be included in term report cards. Courses taken in an earlier term need not be included in a subsequent term report card. The end-of-year report card must include all courses taken by the student during the school year, including courses that were not completed.

Appendix 2: Feedback from the Report Card Implementation Monitoring Process

Overall

- Report card templates were usually correctly designed and completed in accordance with business requirements.
- Teachers' comments generally followed guidelines and were brief and concise.
- Student-specific principals' comments were encouraging and supportive; however, quite often they provided general school information.
- The use of the grading scales was generally consistent and coherent, including correspondence between the 1–4 scale and the percentage scale at Grades 7 and 8.
- There is an appreciation for the opportunity that the provincial report card provides to foster coherent approaches to assessment and grading.

Observation	Action (current and pending)
Attendance Recording	
Generally consistent with requirements; occasional use of half-day frequencies (e.g., 3 half-days rather than 1.5 days in total)	Business requirements clarified
Grading	
More use than intended of 'NA' at Grades 1 to 8, indicating certain content not taught, including cases where the teacher comment does not explain the situation	Policy/support document clarified regarding conditions for use of 'NA'
Use of the asterisk to indicate a provincial exam mark at Grade 12—missing or used for school-based exams as well	Policy/support document clarified
Frequent use of 'NA' in areas such as critical thinking, creative expression, design process; teachers found these elements challenging to define and assess	Follow up with schools
Occasional use of invalid grades such as 2.5 or 2–3	Follow up with schools
Confusion about when the various codes apply (NA, IN, ND, NE), as defined on the front page of the report card	Policy/support document—Q & A added
Level 4 (80% to 100%) is too wide and the word descriptors are not appropriate	Descriptor for level 4 has been revised to reflect its broader range
Interest in more detailed indicators and exemplars of work associated with each level of performance	Under review
Challenge with determining overall percentage grades at Grades 7 and 8 when trying to do so from subject category grades (1–4 scale) rather than directly from pooled assessment evidence	Policy/support document clarified; direct support to schools
Percentage scale at Grades 7 and 8 not consistent with assessment and grading philosophy in the Middle Years	Discussion with schools
Heightened interest in general theory and practice of student assessment and grading; focus of considerable local professional development	Support to schools

Observation	Action
Teacher Comments	
Occasionally included results from measures such as standardized tests, diagnostic tools (which are not to be reported in the comment box)	Policy/support document clarified
Unclear whether comment can or must address learning behaviours as opposed to strictly academic performance (Grades 7 to 12)	Policy/support document clarified—comments regarding behaviour may be provided, but not required, in subject grading boxes
Challenging to comment on behaviour by subject at Grades 7 and 8 in the case of a homeroom teacher teaching several subjects, without being repetitive	See above comments regarding behaviour not being required for each subject
Some schools received direction to provide comments to all students for all subjects in all terms	Policy document clarified—discretion may apply
Interest in exemplars from the province	Brochure provided
Challenging to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write comments for very high-achieving students, especially ‘challenges’ and ‘next steps’ • keep comments brief and concise, and still personalized 	Support to schools; brochure
Most divisions provided direction about comment writing, usually to follow provincial guidelines	N/A

Student Programming	
Indicator boxes (IEP, E, L) occasionally missing from the subject grading box (Grades 1 to 8)	Monitor and follow up as required
Mandatory comment associated with individual programming occasionally missing or altered (Grades 1 to 8)	Monitor and follow up as required
Understanding when it is appropriate to use the IEP or EAL indicator box is a challenge	Support to schools; new content regarding EAL in policy/support document
At high school, concern about how to report for students whose programming is different from grade-level expectations, but for whom the ‘M’ course designation is not applicable	Under review by the Department
The provincial report card has afforded an opportunity to consider how and when to use individual learning plans and how to report to parents in this regard	Support to schools

Observation	Action
Learning Behaviours	
Generally no issues—typically already reported separately, distinct from grades	N/A
Occasional use of, for example, U–S (between Usually and Sometimes), contrary to business requirements	Monitor and follow up as required
Some concern about consistency/subjectivity—divisional sessions focused on the understanding and elaboration of indicators, the development of checklists	Support to schools as appropriate
Interest in province-wide learning behaviour related to the use of the French, French Immersion program	Provincial learning behaviour added

Technology	
Report card templates generally well designed and consistent with business requirements	N/A
<p>Issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vendor challenges to have templates ready on time • user training on new systems (time, effort) • operational “glitches,” but being sorted out 	Ongoing contact with vendors to help address issues
High school table summarizing credits towards graduation is challenging to use with regard to credits granted by the school based on non-Manitoba Education learning experiences (e.g., out-of-province)	New subject coding system developed (May 2013)

Parental Response
About two-thirds of divisions formally collected feedback from parents about the new report card. Most reported that parents found the new report cards about as good as what was in place before (about 40% to 50%), and 17% to 25% reported parents found the new report card was an improvement, depending on grade level (17%—Grades 1 to 6; 25%—Grades 7/8; 21%—high school).