



**Wolf Creek
Academy**

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School Update on Learning Support Plans, Final Assessment Processes and At-Home Learning

During the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, Wolf Creek Public Schools has endeavored to support parents and students with specific at-home learning plans to ensure learning continues on the essential domains and focus areas identified by Alberta Education.

Along with those supports provided there was guidance on streamlining the number of hours students should attend to at-home learning with averages provided at different grade levels.

These guidelines along with an understanding of the many different challenges various families are facing at this time assisted us in framing expectations around student completion of work during the at-home delivery model. While parents, students and teachers learned how to interact and connect in a different type of learning environment we ensured our teachers were attempting to make contact with every family and student. Our primary concern continues to be the well being of our families during this potentially stressful time.

To that end, we encouraged families to:

- Communicate back with the teacher regularly.
- Focus on establishing new learning routines, daily structures and go slow.
- Leverage the different ways to communicate, by phone, email, video conference and other digital tools.
- Begin with focusing on what is manageable in your home contexts and adjust expectations accordingly.
- Assist your child with what they can understand and complete and keep in regular communication with the school.

Wolf Creek provided a variety of resources to the teachers in the development of learning plans to support parents and students while ensuring the teachers remained to be the architect of the learning plans. Each approach taken by teachers was unique and worked to personalize the learning experience for students. The approach taken varied depending on the grade level and subject content.

Teachers have continued to make themselves available to students and parents and many have set up some individual "office hours" or schedules where they can be contacted. Individualized supports through Social Workers, Speech and Language Pathologists and other service providers were put in place to carry on supports, where possible, for specific student and family needs.

Parents can continue to help by ensuring regular schedules of at-home learning exist in specific spaces that are free from distraction. While students will need regular breaks they will also need to be closely monitored to ensure learning activities are being completed each week to the best of their ability.

Parents are also encouraged to help their child communicate any struggles or barriers to learning with their teacher through regular communication. Keep in mind that students are not expected to be directly engaged in learning activities and courses for the same length of day as they would be in a classroom setting.

Determining Final Marks and Grades

What activities and assignments will count towards a student final mark?

Teachers have determined which essential outcomes (rocks) will be addressed in each subject. The focus will remain on the big ideas, the rocks and key learning components that students will need to be successful when they move to the next grade. It will be important for students to engage in these learning activities as much as possible. We recognize that families have many different responsibilities and concerns during this time. Teachers are considering what is reasonable and manageable for students through regular connection.

Feedback will play an important role in teachers determining the final mark. Each learning activity shared with students and parents is designed to continue to move the learning forward. Given that Alberta Education has cancelled all provincial assessments and to align with this direction, whole class final exams will not be utilized for grading purposes at any grade level.

Instead, during this period of time, students will be offered multiple opportunities to improve their learning and their grades that they may have received before in-school classes were cancelled. As students demonstrate a stronger understanding of essential outcomes their grades will be adjusted to match a final mark that represents their work and effort during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency.

Equally important to note is that potential final marks will also be adjusted in cases **where students have not engaged in attempting to complete any work assigned** and are not regularly communicating with their teachers around work completion. As each household situation is unique, our teachers and school administration will be in contact with students or families where completion of the work is of significant concern.

How are teachers determining the final mark for students during COVID-19 while recognizing the unique challenges in various at-home learning environments? Is every student getting a free pass to the next grade?

No, each student is not receiving a free pass to the next grade. Instead, students are still expected to continue working on the learning plans provided by their teacher in the coming weeks to ensure learning continues. Alberta Education has been clear that **teachers will be asked to assign a final mark for students**. As a school division, Wolf Creek has communicated an assessment plan for teachers to utilize in arriving at a final mark during COVID-19. This assessment plan respects the unique challenges in each household while expecting students to put forward a reasonable effort. Therefore we expect students to connect with their teachers regularly around the assigned work and work to the best of their abilities in completing what is assigned. Teachers in Junior High will share an update with the student to determine if their work prior to March 16 and their work since March 16 is acceptable towards achieving successful completion.

Why is it important that students continue to participate in at-home learning activities when in-school classes have been cancelled?

- Simply advancing students would cause difficulties for them at the next grade level therefore it is important that the remaining weeks and months are utilized in the best way possible to help students succeed in the future.
- Many subjects rely on the skill and knowledge developed in previous grade levels.
- For instance, Grade 8 Math relies on specific skills and content acquired from the Grade 7 Math course. Students need these skills to be successful moving into future grades and subject areas.

- Teachers are very aware of the developmental progressions from grade to grade and are applying their professional knowledge to develop a learning plan that focuses on the most critical outcomes for students to learn while at home.

Knowing that teachers will adjust the work expectation for students during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, how will teachers mark students' work in a way that reflects the unique circumstances each household faces during this time?

Alberta Education has also provided school boards with specific direction that "Teachers will be responsible for assessing a student's progress and assigning a final grade." Through regular and ongoing communication, teachers will ask students to complete various learning tasks that will reveal to what extent students are learning. Many teachers are also holding individual conversations with students or a set time for group instruction and conversations.

The assessment of learning can be done in many different ways and it will vary from grade to grade and subject to subject. To further support determining how well students are doing academically during this time, school administration is continuing to work with teachers in assisting them with making professional decisions about a students' academic progress.

What will happen to address student gaps in learning when students return to in-school classes in the future?

When school resumes, it is realistic to expect that teachers will need to assess where students are at in their learning and in some cases there will be a need for re-teaching. We know that there will be some gaps in the learning process due to the disruption that the COVID-19 pandemic emergency caused for students. Our staff is prepared to address those learning challenges once students return to school and will utilize several approaches to determine what outcomes may need to be re-taught or addressed for individual students at various grade levels. This challenge highlights the importance of students being engaged in the current learning plan to avoid having to learn extra concepts when school resumes.

Will Report Cards be issued at the end of June?

Yes, final report cards will be issued by your school at the end of June. These report cards will indicate the final mark and may include some comments around the coursework that was completed. The final mark will reflect the work completed prior to March 16 as well as work done until the end of June. Therefore it is important to have students apply themselves in the coming days and weeks towards the learning activities their teachers are providing to them. All of these efforts will be factored into determining the final mark.

Please give your child's teacher or myself a call if you have any questions.

Visit our COVID-19 Information page on www.wolfcreek.ab.ca for further updates.

Parents can continue to help by ensuring regular schedules of at-home learning exist in specific spaces that are free from distraction. While students will need regular breaks they will also need to be closely monitored to ensure learning activities are being completed each week to the best of their ability.

Parents are also encouraged to help their child communicate any struggles or barriers to learning with their teacher through regular communication. Keep in mind that students are not expected to be directly engaged in learning activities and courses for the same length of day as they would be in a classroom setting. Alberta Education guidelines direct what and how much time students will focus on learning while in-school classes are

cancelled. Your child's teacher is aware of this which is why they are adjusting the content and the learning expectations accordingly.

Determining Final Marks and Grades

What activities and assignments will count towards a student final mark?

Teachers have determined which essential outcomes will be addressed in each course. The focus will remain on the big ideas, the rocks and key learning components that students will need to be successful when they move to the next grade, subject or course. It will be important for students to engage in these learning activities as much as possible. We recognize that families have many different responsibilities and concerns during this time. Teachers are considering what is reasonable and manageable for students and families through regular connection with you.

Feedback will play an important role in teachers determining the final mark. Each learning activity shared with students and parents is designed to continue to move the learning forward. Given that Alberta Education has cancelled all provincial assessments and to align with this direction, whole class final exams will not be utilized for grading purposes at any grade level.

Instead, during this period of time, students will be offered multiple opportunities to improve their learning and their grades that they may have received before in-school classes were cancelled. As students demonstrate a stronger understanding of essential outcomes their grades will be adjusted to match a final mark that represents their work and effort during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency.

Equally important to note is that potential final marks will also be adjusted in cases where students have not engaged in attempting to complete any work assigned and are not regularly communicating with their teachers around work completion. As each household situation is unique, our teachers and school administration will be in contact with students or families where completion of the work is of significant concern.

How are teachers determining the final mark for students during COVID-19 while recognizing the unique challenges in various at-home learning environments? Is every student getting a free pass to the next grade?

No, each student is not receiving a free pass to the next grade. Instead, students are still expected to continue working on the learning plans provided by their teacher in the coming weeks to ensure learning continues. Alberta Education has been clear that **teachers will be asked to assign a final mark for students**. As a school division, Wolf Creek has communicated an assessment plan for teachers to utilize in arriving at a final mark during COVID-19. This assessment plan respects the unique challenges in each household while expecting students to put forward a reasonable effort.

Therefore:

- We expect students to connect with their teachers regularly around the assigned work and work to the best of their abilities in completing what is assigned.
- Each teacher will share an update with the student to determine if their work prior to March 16 and their work since March 16 is acceptable towards achieving successful completion.

- Teachers will continue to work with students to meet their needs as the situation evolves.

Why is it important that students continue to participate in at-home learning activities when in-school classes have been cancelled?

- Simply advancing students would cause difficulties for them at the next level therefore it is important that the remaining weeks and months are utilized in the best way possible to help students succeed in the future.
- Many courses rely on the skill and knowledge developed in previous grade levels.
- For instance, Grade 10 Math relies on specific skills and content acquired from the Grade 9 Math course. Students need these skills to be successful moving into future grades and subject areas.
- Teachers are very aware of the developmental progressions from grade to grade and are applying their professional knowledge to develop a learning plan that focuses on the most critical outcomes for students to learn while at home.

Knowing that teachers will adjust the work expectation for students during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, how will teachers mark students' work in a way that reflects the unique circumstances each household faces during this time?

Alberta Education has also provided school boards with specific direction that “Teachers will be responsible for assessing a student’s progress and assigning a final grade.” Through regular and ongoing communication, teachers will ask students to complete various learning tasks that will reveal to what extent students are learning. Many teachers are also holding individual conversations with students or a set time for group instruction and conversations.

The assessment of learning can be done in many different ways and it will vary from grade to grade and subject to subject. To further support determining how well students are doing academically during this time, school administration is continuing to work with teachers in assisting them with making professional decisions about a students’ academic progress.

In many of our high school programs students completed work prior to March 16 as part of the start of Semester Two. The work completed at that time is being taken into account along with efforts to complete ongoing work that is assigned. **A final grade is not automatically going to be a passing grade if circumstances warrant concern.** In those cases, parents and students will be communicated with regularly between now and the end of June to discuss the concerns and work towards students achieving a passing grade.

In recent Alberta Education communications it was mentioned that students needed to be “on track” for graduation. For our High School students what does it mean to be “on track” to graduate?

Alberta Education indicated that: *“Those who are on track to receive 100 or more credits will still be eligible to graduate and receive a high school diploma.”* This refers to a high school student who successfully completed all requirements in their learning plan from Semester One and has enrolled in the necessary courses for Semester Two (as of February 1) and prior to the in-school class cancellation has been attending classes and

achieving passing marks. Students in that situation need to continue to attend to the learning goals provided by their teachers during the at-home delivery model so that they can be successful.

Alberta Education continued to emphasize that: *“Every student will receive final grades and will receive a report card, appropriate to their grade level.”* This means that students need to continue to apply themselves to the at-home learning plans in order to be successful.

We recognize that this might look different in each household depending on the circumstances each family faces during the COVID-19 pandemic, which is why our teachers and school administration continue to reach out to families.

For High School students, how do the “Unallocated Credits” announced by Alberta Education work to support them?

Alberta Education stated: *“If the student is unable to complete a course that would have led them to achieving a high school diploma, such as a work experience or a career and technology studies course, principals have the ability to award credits to ensure the student graduates.”*

School administrators have been provided with detailed information on how they can exercise their judgement in assigning credit to courses that a student was previously successfully enrolled in and completing prior to March 16, but is unable to do as a result of course delivery challenges. Students or their parents who believe they should be awarded unallocated credits need to discuss their situations with the school principal. In cases where this is necessary, school administration may also decide to contact students and parents to discuss this further.

What will happen to address student gaps in learning when students return to in-school classes in the future?

When school resumes, it is realistic to expect that teachers will need to assess where students are at in their learning and in some cases there will be a need for re-teaching. We know that there will be some gaps in the learning process due to the disruption that the COVID-19 pandemic emergency caused for students. Our staff is prepared to address those learning challenges once students return to school and will utilize several approaches to determine what outcomes may need to be re-taught or addressed for individual students at various grade levels. This challenge highlights the importance of students being engaged in the current learning plan to avoid having to learn extra concepts when school resumes.

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Thank You!

On behalf of all of us in Wolf Creek Public Schools, we would like to thank you for your support and understanding during this time. Our teachers recognize and appreciate that some students are learning at different hours of the day and week while maintaining many other responsibilities. We further recognize and

appreciate the hard work parents are doing to balance work, home responsibilities and supporting the learning plans that teachers are providing. If you have any concerns about the ongoing learning for your child, please contact your child's teacher directly as you would normally do throughout the school year.

Visit our COVID-19 Information page on www.wolfcreek.ab.ca for further updates.

I appreciate all that you do!

Mr. J. Bouvier



Principal: Joe Bouvier