



Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools

District Results

2014-15

**Student Learning Assessments,
Provincial Achievement Tests**

&

Diploma Examinations

Executive Summary

**Report to the Board of Trustees
October 26, 2015**

*Report by David Quick,
Assistant Superintendent of
Learning Services*

The Role of Assessment as an Integral Part of Instruction

Assessment of learning is a critical part of the instructional process as it enables educators to regularly use achievement data to identify and address areas of concern and identify areas of strength. **Assessment for learning** strategies used throughout the instructional process assist teachers to ensure that students have learned what they were taught and are ready to move to new concepts. Teachers use assessment of and for learning to guide quality instruction.

The Student Learning Assessment, Provincial Achievement Tests and the Diploma Examinations are considered to be summative assessments but the results can also guide instruction in the following year. These assessments are one of the tools available to teachers. Other assessment for learning opportunities include: teacher assessments including mid-year and final exams, unit exams and performance-based assessments to name a few.

Students learn many other skills that are not assessed with standardized testing, most notably how to live and work with others, and how to become contributing members of society in a Christ-like manner. These important learning goals in our District and the province are included in our Three-Year Education Plan. These learning goals cannot be measured by paper-and-pencil tests.

Provincial assessments are designed to assess the achievement of provincial standards, although, many important learning outcomes cannot be measured by time-limited paper-and-pencil tests. In addition, the interpretation of the Student Learning Assessment data, achievement test results and Diploma Examination results can vary and involves many factors that contribute to achievement. It should be noted that for the Provincial Achievement Tests results, the results included in this report are based on all of the students enrolled in a particular grade (the cohort) and not just the students who wrote the tests. Results for the Diploma Examinations are based only on those who wrote the exams.

Discussion of individual school results will form part of the presentations by school administrators in their School Results Reports in November.

The Student Learning Assessment, Achievement Tests and Diploma Examinations provide only a part of the overall picture of the performance of the province, a school jurisdiction, or a school.

Overview of Results of the Student Learning Assessment, Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Examinations

Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools (GSACRD) is proud of the achievement of its students and staff on the Student Learning Assessment, Provincial Achievement Tests and the Diploma Examinations. GSACRD students consistently outperformed their provincial counterparts in the core subject achievement tests at both the Acceptable Standard and the Standard of Excellence. On the Diploma Examinations, GSACRD students matched or bettered their colleagues on **9 of 11** examinations at the Acceptable Standard and in 10 of 11 at the Standard of Excellence.

Some of the highlights of GSACRD results include:

Grade 3 Student Learning Assessment (SLA) Results

- This year saw the first implementation of the new Student Learning Assessment (SLA) at the grade 3 level. The Student Learning Assessment is designed to assist teachers and students in planning for their learning for the remainder of the grade 3 year and into grade 4 where results indicate a need for further intervention. Unlike the PAT and Diploma Exams the SLA's are written in Sept and October rather than the end of the school year.
- All GSACRD grade 3 teachers and students participated in the pilot implementation of the SLA.
- Provincially about 95% of grade 3 students participated in the pilot SLA implementation.
- GSACRD students were able to complete both the digital and performance tasks on the exam that were designed as competency based questions rather than content or skill based questions as in the past.
- Alberta Education released only student based data that could be reported to parents and did not provide any school to school or district comparison data in the pilot year.
- Teachers found the pilot to be very time consuming in both the administration of the exam items and the correcting of the performance tasks. It was however an excellent learning experience for all involved as we move toward a competency based curriculum.

Grade 6 PAT Results

- GSACRD students significantly exceeded the provincial results at both the Acceptable Standard and Standard of Excellence in **all** curriculum areas; English Language, French Language Arts, Math, Social Studies and Science.

- The overall percentage of GSACRD students not meeting the Acceptable Standard was better than the province.
- Both French Immersion and English students continued their long tradition of success with results above the province.
- The 5-year trend indicates that the number of students achieving the Acceptable Standard and the Standard of Excellence has remained very high and relatively constant over time.

Grade 9 PAT Results

- The participation rate for grade 9 students decreased slightly as a result of parents asking to have their child excused from the Provincial Achievement Tests.
- GSACRD students have significantly exceeded the provincial results at the Acceptable Standard in all areas tested by the Provincial Achievement Tests (English Language Arts, French Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics).
- The percentage of GSACRD students not meeting the Acceptable Standard is well below the provincial results.
- The number of students achieving at the Standard of Excellence declined slightly in Math, Science and Socials but overall remained above the provincial result.
- The 5-year trend indicates that the outstanding success of GSACRD grade 9 students has remained stable in all areas tested by the Provincial Achievement Tests.

Diploma Examination Results

- Participation rates in academic high school courses required by post-secondary continues to surpass the level of the province.
- GSACRD students have exceeded the provincial results on 10 of 11 examinations at the Acceptable Standard.
- The average mark attained by GSACRD exceeded the province.
- Overall, GSACRD students have exceeded the provincial results.



Looking Ahead

1. The SLA pilot is ongoing with all GSACRD grade 3 teachers and students participating. Individual student data will be made available to teachers and parents. No district comparative data is expected. Once again this year, district office staff will work with grade 3 teachers in the setting of standards and the correcting of the exams.
2. The results are being carefully examined by the Central Office Leadership Team and school-based administrators to determine our successes and areas of focus to improve student learning.
3. The overall district results will be shared with our community through our Communications Manager.
4. School-based administrators are in the process of sharing the results with their teachers and will collaboratively determine a plan of action to either maintain successful results or to improve results. Celebration of achievement will be encouraged at the school level to recognize the work of teachers and the success of our students.
5. School-based administrators will share the results with their school councils and parent communities.
6. School-based administrators will share their school results with the district's senior administrative team during the School Results Reviews in late October and November. Strategies to address those areas requiring improvement at the school level will be shared with trustees and the Central Office Leadership Team at that time.
7. As a District, we will continue to focus on building our strength in the Standard of Excellence throughout the all grade levels.

Provincial Achievement Test Results 2014-15

	Acceptable			Excellence		
	GSACRD	Prov.	+/-	GSACRD	Prov.	+/-
ELA 6	92.7	82.8	+9.9	21.3	19.5	+1.8
Math 6 All	84.8	73.3	+11.5	16.5	14.1	+2.4
Science 6 All	88.1	76.4	+11.7	31.9	25.3	+6.6
Socials 6 All	80.2	69.8	+10.4	19.2	18.1	+1.1
FLA 6	91.3	87.5	+3.8	16.5	13.6	+2.9
ELA 9	87.3	75.6	+11.7	16.9	14.4	+2.5
Math 9	77.3	65.3	+12.0	16.9	18.0	-1.1
Science 9 All	84.3	74.1	+10.2	20.7	22.9	-2.2
Socials 9 All	74.8	65.1	+9.7	18.9	19.8	-0.9
FLA 9	92.9	85.8	+7.1	13.5	10.1	+3.4
Overall Avg. +/-			+9.8			+1.7

Diploma Exam Results 2014-15

	Acceptable			Excellence		
	GSACRD	Prov.	+/-	GSACRD	Prov.	+/-
Biology 30	91.0	85.9	5.1	32.8	33.0	0.2
Chemistry 30	85.1	82.2	3.0	25.0	34.2	9.2
ELA 30-1	96.0	86.5	9.4	13.0	11.5	1.6
ELA 30-2	91.5	88.7	2.9	16.9	11.3	5.6
FLA 30-1	100	95.5	4.5	8.1	9.9	1.8
Physics 30	86.7	83.9	2.7	20.0	35.8	15.8
Math 30-1	78.5	76.2	2.4	26.7	31.7	5.0
Math 30-2	78.2	73.9	4.2	17.6	15.5	2.1
Science 30	95.3	83.9	11.3	43.5	26.7	16.9
Socials 30-1	90.1	87.1	3.0	12.5	16.2	3.7
Socials 30-2	79.7	81.3	1.6	5.1	12.5	7.4
Overall Avg. +/-			+4.3			-1.5