



SCHOOL DISTRICT No.69 (QUALICUM)

September 25, 2020

Dear Parent(s) and Guardian(s):

RE: The Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA)

The Foundation Skills Assessment is an annual province-wide assessment of B.C. students' academic skills in grades 4 and 7, and provides a snapshot of how well B.C. students are learning foundation skills in Reading Comprehension, Writing, and Numeracy.

Please see the following BC Ministry of Education link:

- *Information for Parents* brochure: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/assessment/fsa-parent-brochure.pdf>

The *Information for Parents* brochure provides a description of the FSA, as well as the purpose, time, preparation and costs of this province-wide annual assessment of grade 4 and grade 7 students. It also outlines the value the FSA has for parents and educators and addresses some of the concerns that have been raised about it.

You may receive information from the Mount Arrowsmith Teachers' Association (MATA), a local of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF). This information may outline the BCTF/MATA concerns about the upcoming FSA. It reflects their point of view and not those of the Ministry of Education.

We would like you to know the following:

- The Ministry of Education expects that all students will write the assessment, except those with exceptional needs or extenuating circumstances such as illness or family emergency.
- The Principal of the school is given responsibility for determining any exclusions from writing the assessment based on criteria set by the Ministry of Education.
- Principals will notify parents of any students whose Individualized Education Plan (IEP) documents a rationale which would warrant exclusion from writing the FSA.
- If a parent believes their child should be excluded from writing the FSA on the basis of illness, family emergency, or other extenuating circumstance, that parent should contact the Principal *in advance* of the assessment dates to allow for proper adjudication of that request.

In School District 69, we use the assessment data in triangulation with classroom and school assessments. The information is reviewed to determine what we know about cohorts of students and individual students within our schools. From this process we can determine what, and if, additional supports are needed for individuals or groups of students.

A useful explanation of the FSA, that answers questions parents frequently ask, was developed by the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils. It is available online at:

<https://bccpac.bc.ca/index.php/resources/26-student-achievement/90-fsa-information-kit-for-parents>

Please contact your School Principal if you have any questions regarding the FSA.

Sincerely,

Gillian Wilson, Associate Superintendent of Schools

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(To be returned to School Principal, if applicable)



Dear Parent/Guardian:

If you feel your child(ren) may fit into an exceptions category (as outlined above) and should be considered by the School Principal for exception, please complete the following information and return it to your child's school principal for review on or before October 2, 2020.

School: _____

Student Legal Name: _____

Grade: _____

Exception Reason: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____