

**Grade Level Achievement Assessment and Reporting:**  
*Information for Parents*



## Overview

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This handbook is designed to help parents understand Grade Level Achievement (GLA) assessment and reporting in Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science, Social Studies and French Language Arts (*where applicable*). Grade Level Achievement is one component of the assessment and reporting system provided for each student within the Calgary Board of Education: it is one of the many ways teachers understand their students as learners and one of the many ways teachers communicate with parents and students about learning. Since 2007, GLA has been reported for Mathematics, English Language Arts and French Language Arts; reporting for Science and Social Studies will be new to the CBE in the 2010/2011 school year.

This handbook answers many questions parents may have about GLA assessment and reporting; if you have any further questions please contact your child's teacher. Some of the information in this handbook has been adapted from Alberta Education's *Grade Level of Achievement Reporting Teacher and Administrator Handbook*, which is available at: <http://education.alberta.ca/admin/resources/gla.aspx>

## Questions and Answers

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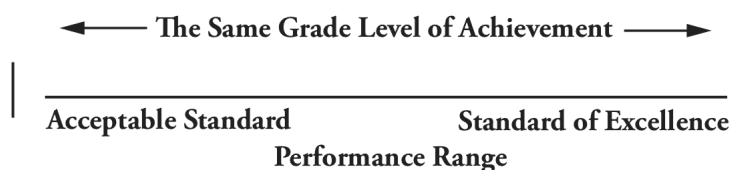
### 1. What is Grade Level Achievement reporting or GLA?

Teachers are required to assess and report GLA for each student who is studying the Alberta Program of Studies in English Language Arts, French Language Arts (Immersion), Mathematics, Science and Social Studies in Grades 1 to 9. GLA will be reported as **At**, **Above** or **Below** the student's enrolled grade level. It will be a broad indicator, summing up the more detailed information you have received about your child's achievement throughout the year.

### 2. How will teachers determine my child's Grade Level Achievement?

The Alberta Program of Studies states learner outcomes for each subject area at each grade level; the teacher will determine the student's GLA in relation to these outcomes. A student's GLA, as indicated on their June report card, will be based on the evidence of his/her achievement gathered from a **full range** of classroom work and assessments throughout the school year.

Within a typical classroom, individual students may demonstrate a wide range of performance: their performance may be stronger in relation to some learner outcomes and weaker in others. Students do not need to have met all of the learner outcomes at a specific grade level to achieve an acceptable level of performance at that grade level in the Program of Studies.

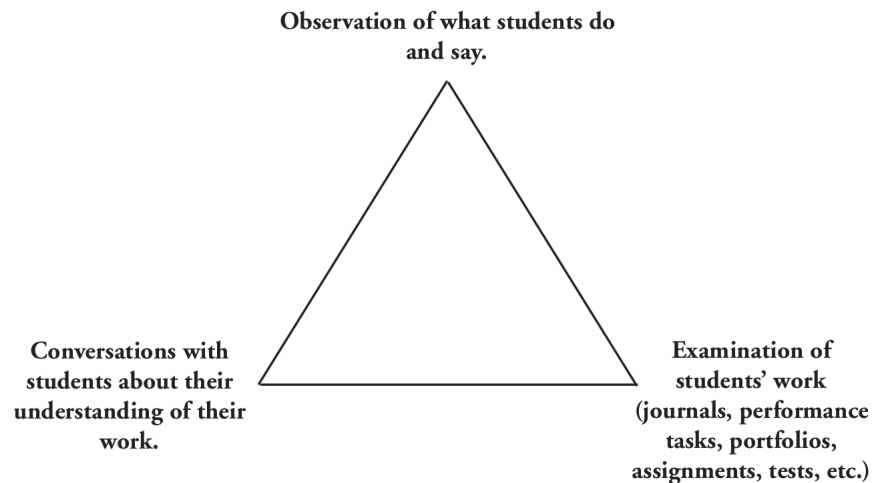


GLA is **not** based on a single assessment.

GLA is **not** based solely on standardized tests.

GLA is **not** based on factors such as participation, attitude, neatness, effort or behaviour.

Teachers use a **variety of methods** to gather evidence of students' achievement of learner outcomes.



### 3. How will I be informed of my child's Grade Level Achievement?

Your child's GLA for each subject area is reported as **At**, **Above** or **Below** his/her enrolled grade level on his/her final report card in June. It appears as a sentence in the comment box below the reporting area for that subject.

### 4. Why are we reporting Grade Level Achievement?

Grade Level Achievement reporting is another way schools communicate with students and parents about academic achievement. Conversations about the work students are doing, the strengths they bring to that work and the areas that exist for further progress are essential to ongoing student growth and development.

Grade Level Achievement reports provide valuable information to schools, school jurisdictions and Alberta Education\* about the achievement of students in grades 1 to 9. GLA information helps determine how well different programs are working for different groups of students and what can be done to improve student learning. GLA information helps inform programming and policy decisions at the provincial, jurisdictional and school levels.

*\*Please note that while Alberta Education requires schools to report grade level of achievement to parents in English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies and French Language Arts (where applicable), information is collected at the provincial level only for English Language Arts, Math and French Language Arts.*

### 5. What will Grade Level Achievement assessment and reporting mean for teachers?

The CBE has worked with teachers to create resources that will help them assess a student's achievement in relation to the learning outcomes in each subject area. Ongoing assessment enables teachers to design

meaningful learning opportunities in relation to identified learner outcomes, as well as student learning needs, skills and interests. As well, GLA reporting can be an important piece of information for teachers as they support a student's transition from one grade to the next.

## 6. What will GLA assessment and reporting mean for students?

Grade Level Achievement reporting involves students significantly in the assessment process. Understanding learning goals, reflecting on learning processes, participating in self assessment and tracking one's own achievement are all ways students are involved in the assessment process.

Grade Level Achievement assessment and reporting will not change CBE practice with respect to retention or acceleration. Research shows that retention and acceleration do not improve student achievement, and in the vast majority of circumstances, the research supports keeping students with their peer group and differentiating instruction to meet their individual needs and talents. The ongoing assessment of students helps teachers determine how best align their instructional practices with the learning needs of each person.

## 7. What will Grade Level of Achievement assessment and reporting mean for parents?

Grade Level Achievement reporting is a way for schools to communicate with parents about their child's achievement in relation to the Alberta Program of Studies. A child's GLA should align with ongoing communication parents have already received throughout the school year.

## 8. How will Grade Level of Achievement be determined for English Language Learners?

Determining Grade Level of Achievement requires that the teacher collect many pieces of evidence over the course of the school year. In order to gather sufficient evidence about English Language Learners, teachers must often use alternative assessment techniques such as structured interviews, visual representations or demonstrations. If a teacher **cannot** collect sufficient evidence due to language barriers then the **NA** or **not available** indicator may be used.

## 9. How will Grade Level of Achievement be reported for students on Individualized Program Plans (IPPs)?

Most students on Individualized Program Plans are working towards learner outcomes from the Graded Program of Studies, although identified learning goals and objectives may be for outcomes below their enrolled grade level. Decisions about GLA are made on a student-by-student basis:

If **supports** and **accommodations** are in place to ensure the student has equal access to the Program of Studies (*for example, an audio version of the science textbook is made available to a student with low reading skills*), and with these supports in place the student meets at least 50% of outcomes in the given subject area (*in this case, science*), they will be assessed as being **At** grade level.

If, however, the student's IPP outlines goals and objectives for **grade level outcomes lower than the student's enrolled grade across a large portion of the subject area** (*for example, a student's IPP states that they will work towards grade two scientific process skills when their enrolled grade is grade five*), then the student would most likely be assessed as being **Below** grade level in that subject.

There is a relatively small group of students whose programs are not based on the learner outcomes of the Graded Program of Studies. These students are working on Academic Readiness, Foundational Skills and/or Life Skills. This is referred to as a non-graded program. For these students Alberta Education does not require GLA to be reported. In very rare instances a student's program is so unique that Not Applicable (N/A) may be reported. In these instances, school personnel will discuss the circumstances with you.

**10. How will Grade Level of Achievement be reported for students taking Knowledge and Employability (K and E) courses?**

The point of reference for determining GLA is the Program of Study in which the student is enrolled. A student enrolled in a Knowledge and Employability (K and E) course who has achieved at least 50% of the learning outcomes for *that* Program of Studies would be assessed as being **At** grade level. If the student has not met at least 50% of the outcomes, the teacher will report that the student's GLA is **Below** grade level.