



Dear Parents/Guardians of Grade 7-8 Students,

Over the past few years, the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has been working on updating the curriculum for grade 7 and 8 students. The purpose of this renewed curriculum is twofold: to provide opportunities for students to develop twenty-first century skills necessary for our changing society, as well as to provide students with learning opportunities that are more engaging and motivating.

One of the main building blocks of this renewed curriculum is Inquiry Based Learning. This may be a new term for many of you. Inquiry Based Learning is: *an approach that promotes inquiry, the creation of ideas, and observation. The process typically involves investigations, aimed at answering a big question or solving a problem. These investigations require that students learn how to develop questions, look for information, and to identify possible solutions or conclusions* (NS renewed curricula).

What does this mean for your student?

Instead of being content driven, this curriculum is built around skill development and is considered to be outcomes based learning. That means that students are not assessed in the traditional manner; they are marked using an achievement scale (1, 1+, 2, 2+, 3, 3+, or 4) that measures their achievement of the specific outcomes. (See below for descriptions of achievement levels.)

This year, you will notice that students have marks out of four for each outcome that has been assessed in an assignment. For report cards, a percentage grade will still appear; however, in subjects like English Language Arts and French Language Arts, a single grade will now be given instead of separate marks for each strand (i.e. writing and other ways of representing, reading/viewing, speaking/listening, etc) as it was in the past. This applies to all subjects at this time, except for Mathematics, which reports by strand (i.e. numbers/operation, patterns/relationships, measurement, geometry, data management/probability) with percentage grades.

All schools in TCRCE, as well as most schools in the province, are following the renewed curriculum. This is an exciting time in education. The renewed curriculum will help meet the needs of our 21st century learners and provide them with the tools necessary to more meaningfully engage in their own learning.

We appreciate your patience as we navigate through these changes. Should you want to know more about this, please engage in conversation with your child, teacher and school administration.

Thank you for continuing to support your child with their educational endeavours.

TCRCE

Achievement Levels

Achievement levels are used to describe the level of achievement with an outcome/or outcomes. Achievement levels focus on the depth of knowledge and understanding, and the extent of the application of the outcome.

Level:	Explanation:
4	In-depth knowledge and understanding of content and concepts. Able to extend the application of related skills.
3+	Competent +
3	Competent knowledge and understanding of content and concepts. Appropriate application of related skills.
2+	Developing +
2	Developing knowledge and understanding of content and concepts. Developing in the application of related skills.
1+	Limited +
1	Limited knowledge and understanding of content and concepts. Limited application of related skills.

+ Indicates growth towards the next level of achievement.