



"Together We Learn"

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 23
(CENTRAL OKANAGAN)
1940 Underhill Street, Kelowna, BC V1X 5X7
Tel. (250) 860-8888 Fax (250) 860-9799
Website: www.sd23.bc.ca

January 9, 2012

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The annual B.C. Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) for all grade 4 and 7 students is set to begin on January 16, 2012. The following are the instructions provided by the Ministry of Education in regards to which students should write the FSA. We hope this information will be helpful to you in understanding the expectation of student participation.

Who Should Write the Assessment?

- All students enrolled in Grade 4 or Grade 7, including students enrolled in a distributed learning program as well as students enrolled in French Immersion or Programme Francophone;
- All students enrolled in non-graded programs who were born in:
 - 2002 write grade 4 level
 - 1999 write grade 7 level
- English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) students;
- Students with special needs who require adaptations, as documented in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs);
- Students receiving learning assistance services.

Which students do not have to write the Assessment?

- Students who have previously written the FSA. Students write the FSA for a specific grade once only. If a student is retained, s/he does not write a second time;
- Students who have IEPs documenting a disability that significantly impacts their performance in reading, writing or numeracy and who cannot meaningfully participate in all or part of the assessment, even with adaptations;
- Students with IEPs who would need extensive adaptations or who would need such extended periods of time as to create a hardship for the individual student; or
- Those students who are reported and funded as receiving ESL support who have not yet reached a level of proficiency sufficient for them to provide meaningful responses to the reading or writing or numeracy sections of the FSA.

Principals are the ones who identify which students, if any, are excused from one, two or all three components of the FSA. Principals will notify a parent or guardian if they intend to excuse a student from participating in one or more components of the FSA. Principals may also excuse a student who would normally write the assessment in the event of a family emergency, a lengthy illness or other extenuating circumstances.

There is a continued expectation of the Ministry of Education that all able students in grades 4 and 7 will write the assessment, unless they meet one of the above criteria. If you feel your child has an extenuating circumstance of which we are not aware, please contact your school principal to discuss the situation. The principal will be able to determine whether or not your child may be excused from this year's testing.

In addition, due to the fact that teacher job action continues, principals and vice-principals will administer all the FSA sessions. These sessions, as mentioned earlier, will take place between January 16 and February 24. Administrators will communicate scheduling of the FSA for your child's grade level/class.

For further information on this topic, including access to a Parent Information Brochure, please refer to the Ministry website: <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/assessment/fsa/> or contact your school principal or the School Board Office.

Sincerely,

Hugh Gloster
Superintendent of Schools