



Guide to Student Assessment and Achievement 2024-2025

Grades 7-12

Thorsby Junior Senior High School (TJSHS)

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In Black Gold School Division, we recognize that successful student learning relies on a partnership between students, teachers, parents/guardians, and school administration. We believe that regular communication between these partners is an essential component of student assessment.

This guide will help you understand:

- responsibilities of teachers, students, parents/guardians, and school administration,
- how and when we will tell you about your student's progress and learning,
- how we assign grades/marks to your student,
- how your student is assessed, and
- steps we take if your student's work is missing or not finished.

What is assessment?

In this guide, we use the terms assessment and evaluation to describe what students have learned, and how well they have learned it. Assessment and evaluation are not just about tests and grades.

Student assessment is ongoing and cumulative. Teachers gather information about what students know and can demonstrate based on the Alberta Program of Study (curriculum) for each subject and grade level and, when applicable, the Instructional Support Plan (ISP) in grades 1-12, or the Individualized Program Plan (IPP) in Kindergarten. Marks are only earned through assessment of learning outcomes achieved in assignments, activities, projects, portfolios, performances, and tests. Teachers will not use your student's attendance, behaviour, effort, attitude, or work habits (except as they manifest in their submitted assessment items) to decide on their grades/marks, unless it is included in the Alberta programs of study for a specific subject.

To determine a student's current level of achievement in relation to curriculum, teachers use a variety of tools. Conversations, observations, and student work are some of the ways teachers discover students' strengths and where they might need extra help. This helps teachers shape their lesson plans and guide how they will explain a concept, to help every student meet their learning goals.

The activities also help inform the teacher's understanding so that they may assign each student a grade, course, or level of programming. All of this allows teachers to give you a clear and accurate picture of your student's progress in school.

Screening Assessments

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All Black Gold schools administer universal screening assessments for reading, writing and math at the beginning of the year to help teachers identify those students who may be at risk for not meeting grade-level learning outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy. The goal is to support success for every student and screening assessments help teachers check for indicators that a student may have some gaps in their learning and identify interventions that will help to reduce these gaps so students can be more successful.

Screening assessments in the classroom work the same way that an eye screening from a doctor does. In an eye screening, your student is asked to read the eye chart. If the results show their eyesight is fine, they are not screened again for a year. If the results show that your student has some trouble seeing, the doctor will likely suggest some strategies to reduce eye strain or prescribe glasses to help your student see better.

Reading screeners consist of three short assessments, two to three minutes each and the writing screener has students write a short story on a given topic (one class period). The math screener takes one class period. These screeners help teachers identify students who may have gaps in their understanding (based on material from the previous year) and are only used to see if your student is on track; they do not count for marks.

Teachers use this information to help plan their instruction (including lesson planning and grouping students) and determine which interventions are best for each student. Like the eye doctor, even though all students are given screening assessments, only the students with identified learning gaps will receive interventions. Teachers will re-administer screening assessments with the identified students periodically to check that the interventions are working.

Black Gold Screening Assessment Plan		
September	January - February	May - June
English Reading: Gr. 1-10 French Reading: Gr. 1-10 English Writing: Gr. 2-9 French Writing: Gr. 2-9 English Math: Gr. 1-10	English Reading and Math: Gr. 1-9 <i>Only those students who were identified below grade level in Sept.</i> Gr 10 – semester 2 courses	English Reading and Math: Gr. 1-9 <i>Only those students who were identified below grade level in Jan./Feb.</i>

Supporting Student Success

As a parent or guardian, you are your student's first teacher. We know that understanding how your student is doing in school is important to you. This guide will help you understand student assessment in your student's school. If you have any questions, contact the school or make an appointment to see your student's teacher or Principal.

You can support your student's learning (*Education Act, Section 32*) by:

- working in partnership with school staff;
- providing a quiet place for your student to study at home;
- keeping current with your student's progress online through the Power School Portal.
- staying informed and staying connected with school staff. This includes reading newsletters and other school materials; and
- participating in parent-teacher conferences.

Teachers will help your student succeed (*Education Act, Section 196*) by:

- providing programming that is suitable for your student;
- providing many opportunities and diverse ways for students to show what they know;
- giving students who have missed important assessments and activities the chance to complete the work, as specified in the course outline;
- providing a course outline for all courses that clearly explains what is expected of students and how student work will be graded/marked;
- keeping detailed, accurate notes describing your student's successes and challenges;
- communicating with you regularly about your student's progress and achievement; and providing opportunities for you to be involved in your student's learning.

Students have a responsibility for their own learning (*Education Act, Section 31*) and are expected to:

- come to school every day and on time;
- finish their assignments, projects, and tasks to the best of their ability;
- participate in activities to celebrate learning;
- demonstrate that they are learning; and
- take advantage of chances offered to revise or redo assignments or tests so they can show growth in their knowledge and skills.

Our Communication Plan for Reporting Progress

PowerTeacher Pro Electronic Gradebook:

All teachers will use PowerTeacher Pro to record and communicate student assessments and provide comments to parents/guardians and students. Students and parents/guardians can access current marks at any time.

- Schools will provide parents/guardians with instructions on the school's website on how to access PowerSchool Parent Portal, view student grades and learning outcomes.
- If you have questions about your student's mark at any time, please contact your student's teacher to discuss them.
- If parents/guardians do not have access to technology to view student grades, please contact the school to make arrangements to view your student's grade.
- If you would like assistance in accessing the PowerSchool Parent Portal, please contact us at 780-789-3983.
- Teachers at TJSHS will work to grade and report submitted assignments within 10 school days of the due date. In some situations, particularly essay work at higher grades, this may take longer to complete.
- A teacher's grade book will be considered current if they are entering a summative assignment approximately every two weeks. Formative work will be reported throughout the school year.

Reporting Periods:

Quarter One: *August 28, 2024 - November 1, 2024*

Quarter Two / Final Marks Semester One: *November 2, 2024 – January 29, 2025*

Quarter Three: *January 30, 2025 – April 14, 2025*

Quarter Four / Final Marks Semester Two: *April 15, 2023 – June 25, 2023*

Formal Reports Issued:

The process are currently being reviewed by the government

Parent communication is important, and parents/guardians are always welcome to contact their student's teacher at any time during the school year to discuss their student's progress. Each school will provide a minimum of two separate opportunities per year for their parents/guardians to

meet with teachers to discuss student achievement and progress. The intention of these conferences is to celebrate growth in learning and set future goals.

The dates for these conferences are tentatively set for October 10th, 2024, and March 13th, 2025. These dates are subject to change based on teacher availability. If there is any change in date parents will be notified as soon as possible.

Prior to these meetings Parents/Guardians will be notified that they can begin booking appointments. TJSHS uses the web service <https://thorsby.schoolappointments.com> and appointments can also be booked by calling the office (780 789 3983 subsequent to the notification process.

Instructional Support Plan (Gr 1 – 12):

For students who need specialized services and supports, the ISP, is a working document that is developed at the beginning of the school year. The ISP is a record of specific goals for a student. It provides information about accommodations and strategies a student is using to succeed. It is reviewed a minimum of three times per year. The student and the parents/guardians are expected to provide input into the ISP.

The ISP is updated as students show growth and learning. ISP co-planning conferences or phone conversations will take place prior to October 21, 2024.

- ISP planning input forms will be sent home when a student is identified to need an ISP.
- ISPs for students identified prior to the start of the school year will be shared by the end of October. Students identified to need an ISP throughout the school year will have one completed within one month of the decision to create an ISP.
- Parents will complete a digital signature page through PowerSchool.
- Reviews will be completed by February 15 and June 25.

English Language Learners:

For students learning English, the ESL Proficiency Benchmarks are used to measure a student's English abilities in four areas: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Teachers use this tool to help them plan lessons and communicate with you about your student's progress in learning English.

In addition to student progress reports and/or conferences, teachers may share the student's ESL Proficiency Benchmark. Teachers will inform parents/guardians of goals, accommodations or supports provided to students which may be associated with the ESL Proficiency Benchmark.

Grades/Marks and Codes

To decide on your student's grade/mark at the end of a reporting period, teachers use evidence of what your student has learned and their professional judgment. All marks are cumulative. When percentages are used, 47.5 and up will be rounded to 50 as a final grade only.

At Thorsby Junior-Senior High School we use the following Grading Scale(s):

Grades 7 - 9 Core Courses Grading Scale		
6 core courses (ELA, FLA, Math, Science, Social, PE) use % (can include Grades 7 - 9 Non-Core Grading Scale for formative assessment only)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage grades will be given for summative assessment in all core courses (0% - 100%). Teachers can choose to use percentages, checkmarks and/or the non-core scale for formative assessments as these do not count in final grades. 		
Grades 7 - 9 Non-Core Grading Scale		
All other courses (Fine Arts/Options, Second Languages, Health, CTF)		
Label	Scale	Description
E	Exemplary	Exemplary and consistent achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows in-depth understanding achieved independently.
P	Proficient	Consistent achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows substantial understanding with occasional support.
S	Satisfactory	Basic achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows adequate understanding with some support needed.
L	Limited	Inconsistent achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows inaccurate understanding and ongoing support is needed.
I	Insufficient	Insufficient evidence to assess.

Grades 10-12 Grading Scale for ALL subjects		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Every course uses % for summative assessments. ● Teachers can include Grades 10-12 Formative Assessment Letter Scale for formative assessment only. 		
Grades 10-12 Formative Assessment Letter Scale		
This scale can be used by any teacher who wishes to record formative assessment - these marks will not count towards a final grade.		
Label	Scale	Description
E	Exemplary	Exemplary and consistent achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows in-depth understanding achieved independently.
P	Proficient	Consistent achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows substantial understanding with occasional support.
S	Satisfactory	Basic achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows adequate understanding with some support needed.
L	Limited	Inconsistent achievement of grade level outcomes; evidence shows inaccurate understanding and ongoing support is needed.
I	Insufficient	Insufficient evidence to assess.

Missing or Incomplete Student Work:

Principals will ensure that teachers communicate with parents/guardians promptly and regularly about missing or incomplete student work. When your student has missing or incomplete work, we will do one or more of the following:

- provide the student with additional time to complete the assignment
- assign an alternative assignment
- assign the student to complete the activity at lunchtime or after school
- provide targeted tutorials
- contact student's parent/guardian
- meet with parents/guardians, teachers, students, and administration to emphasize consequences if work is not completed
- create a behavioural contract between the student and the teacher
- assign a "Not Handed In (NHI)" which awards a mark of 0 on the assignment.
- A mark of "Incomplete (INC)" will be awarded as a final grade for high school CTS credits which a student started but did not complete.

If your student will be away from school for an extended period of time, except for vacations, please contact their teacher/administrator so we can work together to design a plan to meet your student's needs and support them through their course. Students can, in most cases, use Google

Classroom for assignments and classwork details. Clarification can be requested from their teacher or through the school office for extended illness, etc.

Vacations:

It is the expectation that students will attend school on scheduled school days and take holidays according to the school year calendar. If parents/guardians choose to take their student out of school at times other than school holidays, teachers will not provide work for that time. Any missed work or tests will be made up when the student returns, at the teacher's discretion.

Types of Assessment:

Student assessment relies on both assessment for learning (formative) and assessment of learning (summative). While it is crucial that students' work, abilities, and progress be tracked and assessed throughout the entire learning process, it is also important that teachers have evidence of what the students have learned during that process.

Formative Assessment:











Formative assessment provides an ongoing exchange of information between students and teachers about student progress, but it does not provide marks/grades. It is also referred to as "assessment for learning" as it is intended for the student and teacher to know what the student's strengths are and where they can still improve. Many of these activities help students increase what they know and practice their skills. Teachers also use this information to adjust their teaching, give your student feedback to help them improve and prepare your student for summative assessment.

Summative Assessment:

Summative assessment is the evidence used to determine grades/marks and future directions for students. This is also known as assessment of learning. Your student will have many opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of learning outcomes and receive grades/marks for their work. These summative assessments are evidence of student learning and come in many forms; assignments, performance tasks, projects, performances, quizzes, tests, videos, etc. Using their judgment as professionals, teachers make decisions and give grades/marks to your student. They base these decisions on what they have seen your student do (observations), discussions they've had with your student (conversations) and the work your student has completed (products).

Additional Mark Codes and definitions:

In addition to the marks from the grade scale, the following mark codes may be used within PowerTeacher Pro for individual assignments.

<i>Other Icons</i>		
Icon	Label	Description
	Missing	Assignment was not handed in. Please contact your teacher to discuss.
	Collected	Work has been collected but no mark will be assigned (often used for formative assessment).
	Late	Assignment is late or was handed in late. Please contact your teacher to discuss.
	Incomplete	Assignment is not complete. Please contact your teacher to discuss.
	Exempt	Student is exempt from this assignment.
	Absent	Student was absent. Please contact your teacher to discuss.
	Comment	Click the icon to read a comment on this assignment from the teacher.
	Excluded	This assignment is not required from this student.
ISP	ISP	The student has an Instructional Support Plan.
	Has Description	Click the icon to see the description of the assignment.
	Outcomes/Standards	Click the icon to see the learning outcomes assessed by this assignment.

How We Determine Student Grades/Marks

Course Outlines:

Teachers will provide a course outline to all students and parents/guardians within the first two days of the course. This will highlight the topics and units that students will be learning and explain how student grades are determined for the course. Please contact your student's teacher(s) if you do not receive one.

Reluctant Zeroes at Late Assignments:

Students are expected to take ownership of their own learning. If they fail to complete a daily task or assignment, they must talk to their teacher about catching up on the assignment. If students do not take the opportunity to complete the assignment, they may receive a zero.

Parameters:

1. A reluctant zero policy applies to daily tasks and assignments. Completion of major projects and evaluations is expected in a timely manner. Parent and grade advisor communication will be used for students not completing these assessment items.
2. Students can access their marks through PowerSchool or printouts from their teacher to keep track of their incomplete assignments.
3. Students may only work to complete tasks in the current reporting period. Once report periods conclude, marks are locked, and zeros will be reluctantly awarded.
4. Teachers will consider the reasons for absences before awarding a zero. Excused absences may be considered as a reason to take in work beyond a scheduled due date. If a teacher feels that a student is overusing the reluctant zero policy, he/she will contact a parent to discuss work ethic and homework habits of the student.
5. If it is determined a student is abusing the policy, the privilege can be rescinded.

Late submission of assignments negatively impacts learning and the learning environment. It can also delay timely returning of assignments to the class and increase teacher workload. As a result, teachers will create policies for their classes regarding the submission of late assignments. At the discretion of the teacher, students incur late penalties, and a teacher reserves the right not to accept an assignment for credit if they have returned the assignment back to the class.

Students are expected to keep up with assigned materials even in the case of absences. Under extenuating circumstances, a teacher may choose to accept late assignments with no penalty; however, that is at the teacher's discretion.

Academic Integrity:

Cheating is unacceptable. This includes plagiarism (copying someone or something else's work and passing it off as your own e.g. other students or AI), copying, taking work from a source without citing the source (including electronic sources), stealing tests or assignments and getting answers for a test or assignment in advance. Cheating also includes giving answers or work to others to claim as their own. If your student is suspected of plagiarism or cheating, the school administration will meet with them and discuss possible consequences that may include:

- The student receiving a zero on the assignment
- Completing an alternate assignment
- Contacting parent/guardian

Grades/Marks Appeal Process:

To appeal a mark (assignment, test or final mark), students/parents/guardians are encouraged to talk to the teacher within 10 school days of receiving the grade. If they can't resolve the appeal with the teacher, they should contact the principal who will make the final decision. The principal's decision is final.

Exams

- Please do not book family vacations during this time.
- Please note that there are also diploma writings in November and April that can be utilized by students*

Junior High Exam Dates

Junior High Midterms – January 23 to 28 (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies)

Grade 7-8 Final Exam – June 19-25 (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies)

Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests – May 29 (ELA Part A), June 19 (Math Part A), June 20 (ELA Part B), , June 23 (Math Part B), June 24 (Social Studies), and June 25 (Science)

Senior High Exam Dates

Grade 10-12 School Final Exam Semester 1 – January 22 to 28

Grade 10-12 School Final Exam Semester 2 – June 18 to 25

Grade 12 Diploma Exams – See dates and times on the next page

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Diploma Examinations

The Grade 12 Diploma Examinations Program

- certifies the level of individual student achievement in selected Grade 12 courses.
- helps maintain province-wide standards of achievement.
- reports individual and group results.

For all 30-level diploma courses, the school mark will be weighted at 80% of the total mark, and the diploma examination mark will be weighted at 20% of the total mark. To pass a diploma course, a student must earn a final 'blended' mark of at least 50%. More information about the Diploma Examination Program is available online at <https://www.alberta.ca/diploma-exams.aspx>

Dates

***NEW Jan 2025**

Diploma exams **must** be administered in accordance with the scheduled dates and times.

All diploma exams must remain SECURED before and during the administration. Teacher perusals are permitted (see Diploma Exam Rules and Policies for rules).

All diploma exams, except those that are asterisked (*), must remain SECURED after the administration and be returned to Alberta Education.

Monday, Jan. 13	9 AM–12 PM	Français 30–1 Partie A* French Language Arts 30–1 Partie A*
Tuesday, Jan. 14	9 AM–12 PM	English Language Arts 30–1 Part A* English Language Arts 30–2 Part A*
Wednesday, Jan. 15	9 AM–12 PM 9 AM–11:30	Social Studies 30–1 Part(ie) A* Social Studies 30–2 Part(ie) A*
Thursday, Jan. 16	9 AM–12 PM	Français 30–1 Partie B French Language Arts 30–1 Partie B
Friday, Jan. 17	9 AM–12 PM	Mathematics 30–1 Mathematics 30–2
Monday, Jan. 20	9 AM–12 PM	English Language Arts 30–1 Part B English Language Arts 30–2 Part B
Tuesday, Jan. 21	9 AM–11:30 AM	Social Studies 30–1 Part(ie) B Social Studies 30–2 Part(ie) B
Wednesday, Jan. 22	9 AM–12 PM	Biology 30
Thursday, Jan. 23	9 AM–12 PM	Chemistry 30
Friday, Jan. 24	9 AM–12 PM	Physics 30
Monday, Jan. 27	9 AM–12 PM	Science 30

All students are provided with up to double the official time noted above if they require it.

***NEW June 2025**

Diploma exams **must** be administered in accordance with the scheduled dates and times.

All diploma exams must remain SECURED before and during the administration. Teacher perusals are permitted (see Diploma Exam Rules and Policies for rules).

All diploma exams, except those that are asterisked (*), must remain SECURED after the administration and be returned to Alberta Education.

Wednesday, June 11	9 AM–12 PM	English Language Arts 30–1 Part A* English Language Arts 30–2 Part A*
Thursday, June 12	9 AM–12 PM 9 AM–11:30 AM	Social Studies 30–1 Part(ie) A* Social Studies 30–2 Part(ie) A*
Friday, June 13	9 AM–12 PM	Français 30–1 Partie A* French Language Arts 30–1 Partie A*
Monday, June 16	9 AM–12 PM	Français 30–1 Partie B French Language Arts 30–1 Partie B
Tuesday, June 17	9 AM–12 PM	Mathematics 30–1 Mathematics 30–2
Wednesday, June 18	9 AM–12 PM	English Language Arts 30–1 Part B English Language Arts 30–2 Part B
Thursday, June 19	9 AM–11:30 AM	Social Studies 30–1 Part(ie) B Social Studies 30–2 Part(ie) B
Friday, June 20	9 AM–12 PM	Biology 30
Monday, June 23	9 AM–12 PM	Chemistry 30
Tuesday, June 24	9 AM–12 PM	Physics 30
Wednesday, June 25	9 AM–12 PM	Science 30

All students are provided with up to double the official time noted above if they require it.

Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs):

Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs) measure how well students are learning what they are expected to learn. Results are shared publicly to show how Alberta students are doing, compared to provincial standards. Results from PATs help schools, school authorities and the province monitor and improve student learning.

Students in Grade 9 English and French language arts, math, science, and social studies write PATs. The date for administration of these exams is set by school divisions individually within a window set by the Government of Alberta.

Black Gold has provisionally set the following dates for administering PAT examinations on the following dates. Information about any changes to this schedule will be made in a timely fashion to staff, students, and parents/caregivers.

Grade 9 PAT Schedule June 18-25

May 29 - ELA Part A

June 19-Math Part A

June 20- ELA Part B

June 23- Math Part-B

June 24- Social

June 25-Science

While PATs are an important part of determining student growth and achievement, they address only those learning outcomes that can be readily assessed by a paper-and-pencil test. The clearest picture of students' growth and development is gained when a wide variety of assessment information is considered. The achievement tests provide part of the picture.

How do PAT scores affect student marks?

Student final marks will be determined by the classroom teacher and approved by the principal. The weightings and grade calculations will be consistent with what was shared with parents/guardians and students prior to the beginning of the course on the course outline.

In Grade 9, the final exam category will be weighted at 10% of the student's final mark in English and French Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies. The final exam category may include the PAT and/or a teacher developed final exam at the discretion of the principal.

The Alberta government requires that we report the raw scores from Grade 9 PATs. Unofficial results will be reported on the final formal report in June. Official results will be available when released from Alberta Education according to their timeline.