

Information Bulletin for Parents and Guardians Provincial Mathematics Assessment at Grade 8 June 5th - June 6th, 2012

Mathematics is very important in our technological world. It involves not just the work we do in school, but is a part of life. All of us, parents/guardians and educators, need to encourage children to think of themselves as mathematicians who can reason and solve problems. As New Brunswick continues to strengthen the mathematics curriculum, it is also committed to assessing how well students are progressing. This is done in an effort to determine how we can help students do better.

In preparation for this assessment, students should schedule review periods well in advance of the assessment dates. Many students keep a folder or portfolio of assignments and tests for this purpose. Also, by writing summaries of class and text notes, making a list of terms with definitions and/or drawings, and by reworking problems which were done earlier in the year, students can prepare themselves for the assessment.

When will the assessment take place?

Students will write the Provincial Mathematics Assessment at Grade 8 over two days:

Tuesday, June 5	Calculator	60 minutes
Wednesday, June 6	Non-Calculator	60 minutes

What will the assessment cover?

The Provincial Mathematics Assessment at Grade 8 is based on the current Mathematics Grade 8 Curriculum which describes what students are expected to know within each of the following strands:

- Number Concepts and Operations
- Patterns and Relations
- Measurement and Geometry
- Data Management and Probability

What skills are being assessed?

Some questions test computational skills and basic math facts. Others are designed to assess a student's problem-solving, reasoning, and communication abilities. These skills are taught and assessed through all strands of the curriculum.

Will students use calculators when writing the assessment?

Students are required to have a calculator for the first day of the assessment. Each student should have a calculator which performs addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, and has memory, percent, square root, exponent, reciprocal, and +/- keys.

Students are expected to do the mental mathematics and non-calculator parts of the assessment without the use of a calculator. Knowledge of basic facts and procedures is critical in doing mental arithmetic and estimation. Our curriculum promotes the learning of computation and estimation for the purpose of fostering a solid understanding of, and proficiency with, simple calculations.

Will French Immersion students be doing the assessment in French?

French Immersion students will be given a bilingual version of the assessment. Since students in New Brunswick may enter the French Immersion program at different points, a bilingual version will accommodate the diversity of second language competencies. French Immersion students will be able to respond to items in either French or English so that language does not interfere with their ability to demonstrate proficiency in mathematics.

Who developed the assessment and who will score it?

The assessment was developed by a committee composed of teachers, school district personnel and members of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development curriculum and evaluation branches. The scoring process, which will be the responsibility of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, will involve teachers.

How will results be reported?

Early in the school year, results will be produced showing how well grade 8 students have performed. Districts and schools will be provided with provincial, district and school level information, as well as individual student results.

For more information about this assessment, please contact the Assessment and Evaluation Branch at the New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (Tel: (506) 453-2744).