

A NOTE TO PARENTS ABOUT FSA INDIVIDUAL STUDENT RESULTS

Dear Parent,

As a teacher I am opposed to tests like the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) because they do not help students learn or teachers teach. The tests take valuable time away from teaching and learning, and they take much-needed resources from classrooms and students. The test results bring no additional funding or support to students or schools, and the results are misused by the Fraser Institute to rank schools according to a very narrow measure.

Although I am opposed to FSA tests, I would like to give you some specific information about the tests and the individual student results report so that you are not unduly concerned as a parent.

The scores on the FSA student results report do NOT count towards student's report card marks. The FSA scores are based on raw scores on a single test of reading, writing, and numeracy. Report card marks are based on teachers' professional judgment of your child's overall progress with evidence drawn from many diverse assessments over the course of the term.

Your child's FSA score for writing is based on the two pieces of writing that you see in your child's FSA booklet. Please bear in mind that this was first draft writing only and may not represent the quality of writing your child is able to produce when she or he engages in the whole writing process in our classroom.

The ministry requires that schools send you your child's FSA scores plus your child's FSA booklet. However, in the case of the reading and numeracy portions of the test, the booklet does not contain most of the work that your child did to achieve these scores.

For example, in reading, there were eight passages to read on the FSA test. Your child answered about 40 multiple choice questions on the first six passages and did one long answer response on the last two passages combined. You are only able to see your child's answer to one of about 40 questions.

Similarly, the numeracy test consisted of 42 questions, 40 multiple choice, and the two written response questions that appear in the booklet. Without seeing the other 40 questions that were machine-scored, it may be difficult to see how your child attained the score reported.

If your child did not write the FSA test, you will have received a blank booklet as required by the ministry. Please do not worry about this. It does not affect your child's report card and I have comprehensive assessment information with which to evaluate your child's progress.

If you would like more comprehensive information about your child's progress in reading, writing, numeracy, or any of the other equally important subject areas, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you.

Your child's teacher