

October 25th, 2016

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Re: Changes to provincial exam schedules

In January and in June of each school year, students in secondary schools are busy writing provincial exams. This school year there are several changes to the provincial exam schedule which means that there are fewer provincial exams and students will be in school longer than in the past. This letter highlights the changes and what parents can expect both in terms of fewer exams and adjusted number of days in regular classes.

As many parents are aware, since 2014, British Columbia has been undergoing a curriculum transformation for the entire Kindergarten to Grade 12 system. This school year is the first year the redesigned curriculum is the official curriculum for grades K-9, while in grades 10-12 the redesigned curriculum is currently in draft form and available for optional use by teachers. Next year, 2017-18, is the first year the redesigned curriculum becomes the official curriculum for grades 10-12.

Along with the new redesigned curriculum come changes to the provincial exams students are required to write. The Ministry of Education is moving towards a system in which most of the current provincial exams are replaced by a literacy assessment and a numeracy assessment in their senior years. This change is being phased in and will be in place for the 2017-18 school year. During this transition, **for the 2016-17 school year students will not be required to write grade 10 or grade 11 provincial exams. Students will still be required to write grade 12 provincial exams, and rewrites for grade 10 and 11 provincial exams will still be available until June 2017.**

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This change in provincial exams means that the school calendar at secondary schools will change as well. In previous years, the last week of each semester largely took the form of students writing exams and many students attending only if they had an exam. With the elimination of grade 10 and 11 provincial exams, the end of the semester will look different. While assessment and learning activities will continue, and in some cases take the form of a classroom assessment rather than a provincial exam, the semesters will go longer in January and June. **The last day of semester one regular classes will be January 26th, 2017 and the last day of semester two regular classes will be June 28th, 2017.** The final day of each semester, January 27th, 2017 and June 29th, 2017, will be Semester Completion Days in which schools are open and teachers are working with students, but in many cases it will be students completing assignments or projects, or rewriting an exam. Further details and schedules for these days will be provided by each secondary school.

For detailed information on the changes to the provincial exams, please go to <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/graduation-info> and for the 2016/17 Provincial Exam Schedule, please see https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams/handbook/1617/2016-17_exam_schedule.pdf.

British Columbia's education system is in a time of change. It is one of the best education systems in the world and it is evolving to align with what we know about learning. As the grade 10-12 curriculum changes from its current draft form to a final version, we will continue to update parents and guardians on important changes. Students and parents can also ask questions and get information from their school administrators and school counsellors. We look forward to further updates from the Ministry of Education and we wish all students and parents a successful school year.

Sincerely,



Jordan Tinney
Superintendent of Schools/CEO