



# Fraser Wood Elementary School

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*“Effective communication is at the heart of what we wish to do. We want to support students and to encourage their learning; we want parents to be informed regularly. We do not feel that the “event” that we call report cards do a very good job of actually informing parents about their child’s progress”.*

Jordan Tinney  
Superintendent SD#36 Surrey

Dear Parents and/or Guardians:

## **IMPORTANT “REPORT CARD” INFORMATION FOR FRASER WOOD**

### **1. Re: Ongoing communication of your child’s learning:**

As you are already aware, our school has been using Freshgrade portfolios to provide more meaningful and informative ways to communicate your child’s learning. This format allows you the opportunity to have access to your child’s learning in an ongoing and continuous manner (rather than only three times per year). The information you receive is in “real time” and includes informal notes, pictures, video and/or audio. Our school goal is to engage students, parents and teachers in the process of communicating and discussing learning in an authentic way that supports learners in reaching their fullest potential.

This communication is being sent to remind you that our entire school will, for the second year, be using FreshGrade as our format for communicating your child’s learning. As such, you will have immediate access to your child’s password-protected learning portfolio and you will also be informed when new items are uploaded. Please note that you will **not be receiving the former traditional paper reports in December or March that you may have seen in years past**. Instead, you will receive regular updates through Freshgrade, parent conferences, regular feedback and one final summative written report at the end of the school year. Please also remember that dialogue with your child’s teacher about progress and learning is always most valuable and appreciated.

Feedback on your child’s FreshGrade portfolio will continue to describe:

- Your child’s accomplishments
- Evidence of your child’s learning, explorations and discoveries
- Areas of learning your child needs to focus more on and
- Ways you can support your child’s learning at home

Parents are encouraged to comment within the portfolio on their child’s progress and learning efforts. As a parent, your first instinct may be to respond with comments such as, “nice job”, “excellent” or “I’m proud of you!” While all of this is true, these comments don’t encourage student

reflection or support further learning. Please see the attached information for suggested prompts that you may choose to try using which will engage your child in conversation and further thinking.

## **2. Re: Informal Interim communication/reports on Learning October 19, 2017**

You may have noticed that informal “Interim Reports” have been scheduled for October 19<sup>th</sup>. Interims are a type of communication designed to provide students, parents and teachers with an opportunity to discuss the individual learning so far of every child in every classroom. These informal reports, however, ***will not look the same for every classroom***. Some teachers have been up and running with their Freshgrade portfolios and will simply ask you to review the progress on Freshgrade with your child. Others may choose to send home a paper checklist, a learning reflection written by your child, a telephone call or other form of communication. Whatever it looks like, the intent is to provide you with a snapshot of how your child is settling into the classroom at this point in time.

As always, the most informative type of learning communication is through conversation. If you have any questions, comments or concerns regarding your child’s learning please feel free to contact your classroom teacher (at any time) to make an appointment for further discussion.

## **3. Re: Parent & Teacher Conferences December 7, 2017**

Finally, we have planned for an early dismissal on December 7<sup>th</sup> so that parents can meet with teachers. Teacher-parent conferences give everyone the opportunity to increase communication between everyone; keeping students and family members informed about student learning. It is also an opportunity to collaboratively develop goals and set plans for future learning throughout the remainder of the school year. Student-led conferences will also be taking place on February 28<sup>th</sup> and an early dismissal has been planned for this day as well.

If you have any questions about these forms of communicating your child’s learning, please do not hesitate to ask. Again, teachers are always available to set a meeting time with you to discuss your child’s learning outside the published dates as well. We are excited about this opportunity to share authentic student learning with you!

Sincerely,

*Shauna Ross*

Shauna Ross  
Principal

*\*\*Please see attachment for ways to support learning using your child’s Freshgrade portfolio \*\**

## Supporting Learning: Interacting with your child's digital portfolio

Meaningful learning requires personal commitment and partnerships. The most important contributor outside the school is parents or guardians; their participation and interest are crucial to students' motivation and success.

An important part of the work parents do with their child involves the conversations they have with them daily, and interacting with their digital portfolio. Your involvement will strengthen your child's achievement in school.

### Examples of parent comments:

This parent connects with their child's ideas and then poses a question to move the child's thinking and learning. The parent has offered an invitation to move the learning deeper.



*"Interesting facts about polar bears. You mentioned that polar bears are becoming an endangered species. Scientists are also finding that polar bears aren't growing as big as they were in the past. They believe that global warming is the reason for this. How do you think a warmer Earth can cause polar bears to become more endangered and smaller as a species?"*

*I remember when you signed up to be an "Earth Ranger" last year on their website. You should check it out again! What was your favourite activity you did at the workshop?"*

Another parent makes a comment prizing and acknowledging their child's strengths and work ethic. They share a personal comment about how they are touched by their child's work.



*"Putting your best foot forward in everything you do shows how strong, determined, and hard-working you are. I love how you are never swayed to be anything but yourself!"*

These parents respond to their child's reflections, acknowledging and prizing his learning. The parents also add an observation regarding the learning demonstrated.

### STUDENT:



*"In six months I have improved my writing by adding more detail and describing words and my printing is better. I think my stories are more interesting for the reader. For example, you can notice how I try to pull in the reader with my first sentence, like 'I really, really want a dog!' So the reader obviously wants to find out why."*

### PARENT:



*You have really improved parts of your writing in six months. A strong opening is very important so your reader wants to continue. I also see how you chose to write three short pieces and drew lines to separate each and made a new title for each write.*

### Suggested "conversation starters":

Acknowledge the learning:

✓ "Today I noticed how you..."

Make an observation:

✓ "I noticed how you..."

Ask a question

✓ "How did you..."

Share a feeling or personal or home connection:

✓ "Seeing your learning today reminds me of..."

Offer a suggestion or a next step

✓ "Have you thought about..."

Ask for more explanation:

✓ "Tell me more about..."