



Outcome Based Grading and Reporting Position Paper Best Practices

Title: Exemptions

Definition:

- **Exemptions: discontinuing the assessment of a student using a final summative assessment**

Beliefs:

Exemptions need to be based solely on evidence, collected from quality formative and summative assessments completed throughout the academic term, that demonstrate students have mastered the objectives presented in the course.

Research Summary:

In standards-based systems all marks and grades (pass/fail, A/B/C/D/F, etc.) should be determined by proficiency, not by seat time. Grades are broken if there is a direct impact because a behavioural variable is being allowed to distort achievement.

~ Ken O'Connor, A Repair Kit for Grading

BTPS Guidelines:

Responsibilities:

Teacher: The teacher will collect sufficient evidence of student achievement to help determine whether the student has met a level of proficiency which will allow them to be exempted from the final summative assessment in the course. The instruments used in the assessment will follow guidelines found in research based assessment guidelines in order to ensure fairness and accuracy and will not include any non academic indicators such as attendance, behavior, and/or student's attitudes. (*Threshold is established at 80%*)

Student: In order to earn an exemption, the student must demonstrate an established level of proficiency with the course objectives.

Schools: The choice to stop assessing using a final summative assessment tool resides in the local school in accordance with their school community culture which aligns with research based assessment practices. Schools will implement procedures that adhere to the district beliefs for the use of exemptions based solely on academic indicators.

Procedures:

Schools, if so willing to exempt students will, through a collaborative process, establish procedures for staff to follow for allowing students to forego a final summative assessment piece using only academic indicators.

Teachers will collect sufficient evidence that will allow them to determine whether a student has met established levels of proficiency before granting an exemption to a student.

Question and Answers:

Q: Can a student be granted an exemption from a final summative assessment based solely on their attendance and citizenship?

A: No, because an exemption needs to be based on evidence of achievement.

Q: At what threshold should a student stop being assessed and be excused from writing a final summative assessment piece?

A: The school, through a collaborative process, will establish a threshold. A suggestion mirroring Alberta Education's "Standard of Excellence" on standardized provincial testing is recommended.