



# Continuous Improvement Framework

## Questions & Answers

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### 1. What is the Continuous Improvement Framework?

The Saskatchewan Pre-K-12 Continuous Improvement Framework provides a common strategic planning mechanism for Saskatchewan Learning, boards of education and school community councils to advance the provincial *Pre-K-12 Renewal Priorities* of:

- *Higher levels of literacy and achievement;*
- *Equitable opportunities for all students;*
- *Smooth transitions into and through the system; and,*
- *Strong system-wide accountability and governance.*

### 2. How did the Continuous Improvement Framework originate?

Saskatchewan's Continuous Improvement Framework has evolved over a period of 15 years as educators, trustees and policy makers have carefully watched the experiences in other jurisdictions as learning improvement initiatives have been introduced, studied the literature, and sought expert advice on the most constructive and effective approaches for this province. The system's caution in moving forward has resulted today in the existence of a broadly supported, *principle-based approach* that is uniquely Saskatchewan's and includes a shared commitment and shared responsibility among educators, administrators, trustees, School Community Councils, families and students.

### 3. Does the Continuous Improvement Framework support the development of the whole child and youth?

In keeping with Saskatchewan Learning's emphasis on developing the whole child and youth, the Framework supports a *core set of broad-based learner outcomes* enabling all learners to:

- *Attain high levels of literacy and achievement in a broad range of studies commensurate with ability;*
- *Demonstrate personal and social skills for well being and citizenship;*
- *Attain high school completion; and,*
- *Make successful transitions to post-secondary education and/or employment.*

### 4. How does the Continuous Improvement Framework work?

The Continuous Improvement Framework builds on current practice in Saskatchewan school divisions by supporting an annual cycle of planning, monitoring and reporting to align system operations for improved student learning. The Framework will assist school divisions in identifying strategies to advance priorities, monitor and report on progress. It will also assist School Community Councils and school staffs in the development of Learning Improvement Plans to better engage the community in support of the learning program.

### 5. Does the Continuous Improvement Framework recognize that teaching and learning is a complex process?

Saskatchewan Learning acknowledges the complexity of the teaching-learning environment and is committed to a Continuous Improvement Framework that:

- collects and reports broad-based information (*context, process* and *outcome* measures) to provide a *comprehensive picture* of the education system;
- uses *authentic assessment practices* – bias-free, linked to curricula/learning objectives, and performance-based measures of what students can do, as well as what they know;
- supports the *central role of the teacher in authentic assessment;*

- involves all stakeholders in an environment of *mutual respect, collaboration and joint decision-making* to ensure that outcomes are attainable and sustainable;
- *uses ethical, inclusive and constructive practices* in the interpretation and use of information; and,
- *supports long term planning and appropriate resourcing* to foster improvements in teaching and learning.

**6. Is the Assessment for Learning Program part of the Continuous Improvement Framework?**

The Saskatchewan Assessment for Learning Program is a major component of the Continuous Improvement Framework. Introduced province-wide in 2003, the Assessment for Learning Program provides curriculum-based assessments in mathematics (grades 5, 8 & 11) and reading comprehension (grades 4, 7 & 10) and accompanying opportunity-to-learn surveys for students and teachers.

Developed in collaboration with Saskatchewan teachers, the program is modelled on authentic assessment practices and provides school and division- specific student achievement data for effective instructional planning, professional development and learning resource acquisition. The program focuses on formative assessment practices and the demonstration of progress over time and is based on a learning community philosophy of shared leadership and decision-making.

To support the implementation of the Continuous Improvement Framework and to provide Saskatchewan educators with additional authentic student assessment information, Saskatchewan Learning is expanding the Assessment for Learning Program to include writing, science, and personal and social skill assessments over the next several years.

**Working Together for Improvement**

Saskatchewan Learning is committed to working collaboratively with teachers, students, parents, administrators, trustees and school community council members in a meaningful and manageable process of continuous improvement for the Pre-K-12 system. Working together we will continue to ensure a bright and prosperous future for our province's children and youth.

**If you have questions or comments related to the Continuous Improvement Framework and the Assessment for Learning Program, please contact your Regional Director of Learning, the Accountability, Assessment and Records Branch at (306) 787-2494 or visit the Saskatchewan Learning website at [www.sasklearning.gov.sk.ca](http://www.sasklearning.gov.sk.ca)**