



March 3, 2015

Dear Parents / Guardians of Grade 6 Students

On February 5th, the Deputy Minister of Education advised that the plan to phase Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs) out of Grade 6 programming has been postponed. This change in policy forced the Board of Trustees, at their regular meeting in February, to repeal their motion from the October board meeting, which stated that they supported not administering the Grade 6 PATs in our schools. This new direction means that Holy Spirit Catholic Schools' Grade 6 students will write Provincial Achievement Tests in May / June 2015.

With the understanding that PATs would not be written this coming year, our teachers re-emphasized the use of innovative practices in the classrooms, resulting in deeper learning experiences for students. While literacy and numeracy have always been, and will continue to be, focuses in our classrooms, teachers have begun structuring learning around projects or other activities that more fully engage students and develop the necessary competencies for future success. Success in our future world requires students to develop skills such as collaboration, communication, critical thinking and creativity; all of which cannot be assessed with a paper and pencil test like the PATs.

For some students, the announcement of PATs may cause some heightened anxiety. There should be no pressure on students writing these exams as they carry no weight for future educational endeavours. At the Council of School Council Chairs' meeting last night this fact was emphasized. School Council Chairs will be bringing this topic up at their next meeting and bringing forth more information regarding the writing of PATs.

If you have questions regarding the administration of Grade 6 PATs, please contact your child's school principal.

Sincerely,

Chris Smeaton, Superintendent of Schools

cc. School Council Chairs
Learning Leadership Team
Board of Trustees

All
AG od's
Children

Excellence
in
Learning

Sacramentality

Our
Collaborative
Community

Ministry

Stewardship



Holy Spirit Catholic Schools...

Christ-centered learning

communities where students are cherished and achieve their potential.

St. Basil Education Centre

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