

# Student-led reporting of academic progress

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## Introduction

This document describes one method for delivering student-led reporting of academic progress for students between the ages of 7 and 14. It is not prescriptive and, of course, should be modified to suit the learning context of students and the resources available to the school. For example, if the learning context is distance learning, the presentation may take the sole form of a video or online meeting.

The timeline described in this document is also not prescriptive, especially the inclusion of two annual reporting sessions. It may be more appropriate for a school to conduct similar reporting sessions at the end of each unit of inquiry or as a significant learning milestone is reached. Also, in schools implementing International Baccalaureate Organisation programs, the end of year reporting session would be replaced by such events as the Year 5 Exhibition.

## Purpose

The purpose of student-led reporting is to encourage and empower students to be increasingly responsible and accountable for their learning and to have a sense of control over it. It is also a means for students to practise and refine the skills and strategies required for delivering reports and obliges students to honestly reflect on their performance and plan for the future. These are necessary metacognition skills for a lifelong learning journey.

It achieves this by making each student responsible for making judgements about their learning, identifying continuing learning needs and reporting academic progress to their parents or care-givers. Because it takes an evidence-based approach, each student compiles a portfolio of work that represents their performance.

## The student portfolio

The examples of work gathered for a student portfolio need to provide evidence of progress over time and here are some suggestions for what can be included.

- dated samples of work organised sequentially
- workbooks progressively used throughout the year
- significant presentations of units of inquiry and assignments, including video recordings, photos and performances
- data analyses
- reading logs of books read
- photos of relevant classroom displays

Importantly, samples of working drafts are also important as they help show the creative process and some thinking behind the learning. These might include

- notes
- personal reflections on what has been learnt
- creative writing drafts
- practice essays
- sketches
- to-do lists
- mind maps
- concept maps
- research notes
- collaborations and team work photos
- trial solutions
- photo journals
- tentative hypotheses
- teacher feedback notes

It is advisable for teachers to regularly set aside time throughout the year for students to select work they'd like to include in their portfolios, and make sure all students have a dedicated online portal, folder, binder or art portfolio case they can store their work in.

## Time allocation

For a primary/elementary school, divide the class into two or three manageable groups and allow half an hour presentation time for each group. To decide how many groups are needed, determine how much space allows a student to sit with three adults around a table and how many of those tables the room can accommodate. Also consider the noise factor and the space needed for involved teachers to circulate and engage (including any subject specialist or support staff members).

If parents or care-givers wish to spend time talking to teachers alone, then have a schedule at hand for them to nominate a later time.

For a secondary/high school, use the same process, keeping students in their home groups, but allow one hour per group; half an hour for the student presentations and half an hour for

families to talk to teachers. More space is needed to allow multiple subject teachers to circulate and engage in the student-led presentations. Extra time, space and tables are also need for teachers to receive those parents or care-givers who wish to pursue further conversations about their student's learning. Also, have a schedule at hand for them to nominate a later time if needed.

## The ten-step process

### Step 1

At the beginning of each academic year, the school leadership team briefs all teachers and support staff on the student-led reporting process, including the timeline and key milestones to be reached. At this time, any recommendations for improvement to the approach are considered and any resulting fine-tuning done.

### Step 2

Also, at the beginning of each academic year and as new students enrol at the school, the coordinating teacher describes the student-led reporting program to the students and allocates the resources required to support the process. At this time, examples of a portfolio's contents are shared and lots of discussion is held to clarify the process. The teacher organises a dedicated storage space for the portfolios that is accessible to the students. This may include digital storage on a school-based server.

### Step 3

The school leadership team communicates the program and its process to all key stakeholders other than the students. For an example of such a newsletter article, see [Appendix 1](#).

### Step 4

At designated times throughout the year, students select and place samples of work in their portfolios. This is done in sequential, dated order and with careful guidance from the teachers involved, with students justifying their selections and ensuring that they indicate academic progress.

### Step 5

At about six weeks before the reporting event, the teachers demonstrate to the students how to conduct a reporting session and the students begin practising their presentations with each other. Usually, there is a practice session once each week before the event. During these practice sessions, the teachers circulate through the class and coach students with their performance. It is also a good time to make any adjustments to the content of the portfolios.

### Step 6

About one month before the reporting event, teachers meet to coordinate the venues and times for the reporting sessions to cater for families with more than one student at the school. The school leadership team then sends a reminder to parents and care-givers about the timing and format of the event. At this time, a meeting of parents and care-givers is also announced to provide a briefing about their role in the process and to field any questions or concerns they may have. For an example of this communication, see [Appendix 2](#).

### Step 7

About one week before the event, the involved teachers send home to the parents and care-givers a reminder of the event and a written description of each person's role in the reporting session. For an example of this communication, see [Appendix 3](#).

**Step 8**

The day before the event, the venues are arranged to accommodate the reporting sessions and resources are set out as needed. This includes refreshments for the parents, care-givers and any guests. The students are familiarised with the physical arrangements of the venue.

**Step 9**

At the event, parents and care-givers are individually greeted and guided to their student's presentation table. Half an hour is allocated to each round of presentations. During this time, teachers and members of the leadership team circulate to ensure that students are coping well and to be available for any questions parents and care-givers may have. It is important for teachers to have minimal input into the reporting sessions and to be merely available if needed.

When a student has completed their presentation, their parents or care-givers complete a brief feedback form and give it to the coordinating teacher, such as the '*2 stars, 1 wish & 1 action*' example in [Appendix 4](#). The teacher makes a copy of the form for their files and gives the original to the student the day after the event.

Immediately after the reporting sessions, teachers and members of the leadership team invite parents and care-givers for refreshments and make themselves available for informal discussions. If the event is able to be completed in the morning, a large part of the afternoon is spent supporting students to reflect on and record impressions of their reporting session.

**Step 10**

The day after the reporting event, the leadership team sends a communication to parents and care-givers inviting them to request individual meetings with teachers to further discuss any concerns or joys they may have about their student's learning journey. If this invitation is accepted, each parent or care-giver negotiates a mutually convenient time for a meeting.

## Who does what?

### School leadership team

The leadership team determines the process, sets the reporting date(s) and resources the event. The team also brokers any training that teachers may need to understand and facilitate the process. The members of the leadership team also attend the event and make themselves available for questions, feedback and clarification. It can be a good public relations exercise to have refreshments available for visitors.

### Coordinating teacher

The coordinating teacher acts as an instructor, coach and advisor to the students and also as an advisor to parents and care-givers.

### Student

The student is the presenter and chairperson of the reporting meeting. It is their meeting and their opportunity to showcase their achievements. Because of this, the students need an agenda to share with their parents and care-givers. For an example of such an agenda, see [Appendix 5](#).

### Parent or Care-giver

The role of a parent or care-giver is to listen carefully to their student's presentation, ask questions that help their student progress with the presentation, seek clarification and depth of understanding, occasionally reflect as an active listener, and generally be a positive and

encouraging presence. It is important for parents and care-givers to congratulate their student at the end of the presentation and to affirm their progress at school.

It is best to discuss any resulting concerns with the coordinating teacher rather than with the student so that a coordinated response can be planned together.

## Program modifications

The student-led reporting process described in this document mainly applies to students in the 7 to 14 year old age group. However, as with most programs, it can be adapted to suit any school level. To explore an article of how to modify the program for different stages of schooling, visit the Prodigy website via this link; <https://www.prodigygame.com/main-en/blog/student-led-conferences/>

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Student-led Reporting – an introduction

Dear Families

Our school consults with you about student academic progress in several ways. Early each year, we meet individual parents and care-givers to gather family insights about the learning strengths and challenges of each student.

We also invite parents and care-givers to make an appointment to discuss any learning issues that need extra support or attention. For students requiring ongoing, more intensive support, we conduct regular meetings between the involved adults to check in on progress, share observations and fine-tune the supports that may be needed.

During the mid-year period and towards the end of our academic year, our students lead reporting conferences with their parents or care-givers. At these conferences, they present evidence of their academic progress, including insights into their learning journeys, successes, challenges and future intentions.

It is a time for them to celebrate their achievements with you and a time for you to provide some feedback and share your pride in their progress. It is also a time to explore the challenges they encountered and how your family can support them to successfully meet future challenges.

Student-led reporting has many benefits. It not only obliges students to accept a degree of responsibility and accountability for their learning but also to understand what their learning strengths and challenges are. They are then better able to optimise their use of strengths and address their challenges and needs. In this way, students bolster their knowledge of how to learn; honing strategies that will stand them in good stead throughout their lives.

As the student-led reporting sessions draw closer, we will contact you with more information about how the process works and your role in the process. We will also conduct a meeting of parents and care-givers to demonstrate a reporting session and field any queries or concerns you may have.

Towards the end of each academic year, our teachers also send a written report of academic progress home to families and parents and care-givers are welcome to make individual appointments to discuss those reports, if they feel the need.

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## Appendix 2: Student-led Reporting – Schedule and Family Meeting

Dear Families,

Early this year, we included a newsletter article about student-led reporting of academic progress. In the article, we provided an overview of how and why we conduct such reporting sessions and, if you would like a copy of that article, please feel welcome to collect one from our reception counter or request that a copy be sent home with your student.

These reporting sessions will be conducted on **[insert date]** and the schedule is as follows.

**[Example only]**

<b>Year Level</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>
1	9:00am – 10:00am	Student's homeroom
2	9:30am – 10:30am	Student's homeroom
3	10:00am – 11:00am	Student's homeroom
4	10:30am – 11:30am	Student's homeroom
5	11:00am – 12:00am	Student's homeroom
6	11:30am – 12:30pm	Student's homeroom
7	12:00pm – 1:00pm	Student's homeroom
8	12:30pm – 1:30pm	Student's homeroom

After your student has finished their presentation, you are invited to share light refreshments and chat informally about your report experience.

To accommodate our reporting schedule, regular classes will be suspended for the day. However, there will be a modified program available for students whose families are unable to arrange for the supervision and care of their students.

To provide you with more information and to field any queries or concerns you may have, we are conducting a general meeting of parents and care-givers on the evening of **[insert date]** at **[insert time]** in the assembly hall. Light refreshments will be provided.

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### Appendix 3: Student-led Reporting – Who does what?

Dear Families,

Last month, we included a newsletter article informing you of the times and venues for our student-led reporting sessions. If you missed that article, please feel welcome to collect a copy from our reception counter or request that a copy be sent home with your student. In the meantime, it would be wonderful if you are able to set aside **[insert date]** for the sessions.

When you attend your student's reporting session, you will be seated with your student at a dedicated table. Your student will then present you with key samples of the work they have done so far this year.

These samples are selected by your student, in consultation with the involved teachers, to help describe their learning journey. They will include working drafts, submitted work annotated by a teacher, any learning reflections, completed projects, units of inquiry, workbooks that show progress, reading logs and photo journals of other accomplishments.

We request that you take an active role in this reporting process and the following strategies are designed to help you do this. They will also help your student to deliver their report more comfortably and effectively. At the same time, please remember that the time allocation is 30 minutes, most of which will be taken up by your student.

- please listen carefully to your student's presentation and be an active listener, occasionally reflecting back to your student what they are telling you
- ask questions that help your student to progress with the presentation; using questions such as, "How did you do that?" "Did you work alone or in a team?" "What was your biggest challenge with that?" "Tell me about this piece of work?"
- seek clarification and depth of understanding
- be a positive and encouraging presence rather than a critical or over-challenging one, using affirmation statements such as, "I admire your persistence with this project." "I love the way you kept trying." "You obviously put a lot of time and effort into this." "You researched that really well."
- congratulate your student at the end of the presentation and tell them how you are feeling about their progress

Lastly, it is best to discuss any resulting concerns with the coordinating teacher after the reporting session, rather than with the student, so that a coordinated response can be planned together.

You will notice that the teachers will keep a very low profile during the reporting sessions and will keep any input to a minimum. However, they will also be ready to help a student if they are struggling with any part of their presentation. The homeroom teacher has already spent considerable time with the students, coaching, advising and supporting them through many rehearsals.

We look forward to meeting you on the day and hope that you enjoy the process very much.

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## Appendix 4: Student-led Reporting - Parent and care-giver feedback form

Dear Parent or Care-Giver,

When your student has finished their reporting session, please provide them with feedback by completing this form, together with them, and handing it to your student's homeroom teacher. The teacher will keep a copy in each student's portfolio and give your original form to your student to keep.

Many thanks.

### **Two Stars, One Wish and One Action**

Next to each of the stars below, please write one compliment to your student, congratulating them on what they did well.



Next to the 'magic wand' below, please write one wish that you have for your student's future work.



Next to 'Spiderman', please write one simple follow-up action that you, as a family, will do to support your student's future progress.



Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent or care-giver)

Date:

Thank you for your feedback.

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## Appendix 5: Student-led Reporting – The reporting session agenda

Item 1: Students meet and greet their parent(s) or care-giver(s) and usher them to their table

Item 2: At the table, students briefly describe what will happen during the reporting session

Item 3: Students lead their parent(s) or care-giver(s) through the presentation of work  
Parents or care-givers interact positively with their student

Item 4: Students conclude their presentation and ask their parent(s) or care-giver(s) to work through a feedback exercise with them

Item 5: The parents or students give the completed feedback forms to the homeroom teacher

Item 6: Parent and care givers share light refreshments and chat informally about the reporting process

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